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THE DOUBLE-LIFE OF THE SCOTTISH PAST

DISCOURSES OF COMMEMORATION IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY SCOTLAND

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ABSTRACT

The nineteenth century has been seen as a period in which the Scots abandoned any conception of a coherent, informing history in favour of an emasculated cultural sub-nationalism. Lacking a nationalist movement on the model of other smaller European nations, the Scots have been represented as retreating into a cultural and historiographical kailyard, dominated by tartanised sentimentality, or deflected from consideration of their past by the rewards of Empire.

This thesis proposes that the Scottish past lived a double-life, both as history and as memory. This is achieved through an analysis of the discourse of commemoration in Scotland, focusing on the commemorative representation of William Wallace, Robert the Bruce, John Knox and the Scottish Reformation, as well as the seventeenth-century Covenanters. In common with other nations in Europe and further afield, Scottish civil society was adept at commemorating its past as a means of proving its national legitimacy in the present. Analysis of these practices shows that, far from the Scottish past being elided from discourses of Scottish national identity in the nineteenth century, collective memories of Wallace, Bruce, Knox and the Covenanters were invoked and deployed in order to assert Scotland's historic independence and 'nationality.' Furthermore, whereas until recently, the tension between Scottishness and Britishness was seen as having undermined attempts to express a coherent and viable Scottish nationality at this time, collective memories of the legacies of Scotland's national heroes were used to assert Scotland's role as an equal, partner nation in the enterprise of Great Britain and the British Empire. Not only were these memories used to prove this point in the present, they were also projected backwards into the past in order to demonstrate that, since the time of Wallace and Bruce, the Scots had been contributing to the very virtues that had made Britain great.

At the core of this national memory was the concept of 'civil and religious liberty,' whereby the Scottish past was defined by the struggle for and achievement of civil and religious deliverance from the hands of tyranny. As each period had its own set of heroes whose efforts had returned Scotland to its true path of civil and religious liberty, so each hero had faced his or her own despot intent on undermining Scottish nationality: for Wallace and Bruce it had been the Plantagenet monarchy, for Knox and his fellow Reformers it was the Roman Catholic Church,

and for the Covenanters it was the later Stuart kings. These victories were woven, implicitly and explicitly, into an unbroken narrative of civil and religious liberty, sustaining Scotland's historic nationality.

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ABBREVIATIONS

BWARP	*Commemoration of the Bicentenary of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, and of the Centenary of the Reformed Presbytery, at Glasgow, July 4, 5, 6, 1843, by the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Scotland*, (Glasgow, 1843)
DNB	*Dictionary of National Biography*
DSCHT	*Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology* (Cameron, N M deS; Wright, D F; Lachman, D C; Meek, D E (eds.) (Downers Grove, 1993))
GH	*Glasgow Herald*
MLB	*Mitchell Library Burns Papers*
NBDM	*North British Daily Mail*
ODNB	*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*
PGAFCS	*Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Free Church of Scotland*
SJ	*Stirling Journal*
SO	*Stirling Observer*
TSR	*Ter-Centenary of the Scottish Reformation as commemorated at Edinburgh, August,1860*, (Wylie, J A (ed.), (Edinburgh, 1860))
UPM	*United Presbyterian Magazine*

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©University of Glasgow / James Taylor, The Pictorial History of Scotland, from the Roman Invasion to the close of the Jacobite Rebellion A. D. 79-1746. 2 vols. (London: James S. Virtue, 1859) vol. 2, p712.. Licensor www.scran.ac.uk.

1. Introduction

The Scottish Past and Civil Society in nineteenth-century Scotland

This thesis is concerned with commemoration of the past in nineteenth-century Scotland, specifically the discourses of commemorative practice produced by Scottish civil society in the period from the early 1830s through to 1900. Despite the fact that civil society in Victorian Scotland ranged from Episcopalian Toryism to dissenting radicalism, it was, on the whole, politically Liberal, ecclesiastically Presbyterian and culturally conservative. This, however, did not necessarily entail political or religious uniformity: both Liberalism and Presbyterianism were very broad churches.[1] Historians have traditionally, divided those loyal to the Liberal party between anglocentric Whigs intent on maintenance of the post-1832 status-quo, and a radically-inclined bourgeois liberalism that sought more rapid change. Within Scottish Presbyterianism, the Established Church tended to be more moderate in its composition, yet contained a significant and vocal Evangelical component, whereas the Secession churches, the majority of which combined to form the United Presbyterians in 1847, were more politically active, enthusiastically engaged in the campaign for disestablishment. After the Disruption in 1843, the Free Church was deeply Evangelical and dogmatically Calvinist, yet, as the century progressed, became increasingly divided between conservative hard-liners clinging to the principal of establishment and progressives who looked towards union. Nevertheless, placing thick lines of demarcation between different parties is an awkward and imprecise undertaking; even within the dominant centre-ground of respectable, moralistic Liberalism, there existed a complex matrix of loyalties.[2] Victorian Scottish civil society was not composed of competing camps so much as a host of individuals, each located at a separate point on a heterogeneous landscape. Over the course of the century, this heterogeneity within both Liberalism and Presbyterianism was to be their undoing. The Established Kirk, already having

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[1] Smout, T C: *A Century of the Scottish People: 1830-1950*, (London, 1986), p240; Fry, M: *Patronage and Principle: A Political History of Modern Scotland*, (Aberdeen, 1987), pp66, 69-70

[2] Fry, *Patronage and Principle*, p66

suffered numerous secessions in the eighteenth century, was broken in two by the Disruption in 1843 and the formation of the Free Church. That the Liberal party endured for such a considerable length of time was a testament to the need for overall unity in the face of clearly-defined political opponents, yet, when the Liberals did finally experience their own disruption in the 1880s, the split came about as a direct result of the complex composition of the party in Scotland.

The discourses of Scottish politics and cultural expression were manifestations of a more deeply-rooted moral, Protestant conservatism. Scottish dedication to the Liberal party was largely based upon moral rather than political conviction: those Scots who possessed the vote – even after the second Reform Act of 1868 – voted *en masse* for the Liberal party because it was seen as the party most in sympathy with Scottish Presbyterian morality and respectability.[3] That most resonant example of Victorian Scottish political loyalties, the face of William Gladstone, 'lowering down from the wall of many a humble Scottish home,' was principally the result of widespread identification with the expressively moral foundation to Gladstone's political rhetoric, as opposed to considered support for his policies.[4] Any one of a variety of manifestations of Scottish Protestantism or Presbyterianism might prevail in different electoral constituencies, with an emphasis upon either Whiggishness or radicalism dependant upon the dominant character of the voters, yet by and large the Scots upheld this moral-force Liberalism as being somehow representative of the Scottish national character. Within Scottish civil society, Presbyterianism and Scottishness were synonymous.

If there was a political discourse that can be said to inform the commemoration of the past in this period it is undoubtedly the relationship between the British state and Scottish Presbyterian civil society. Many of the most significant milestones in the political and cultural history of Victorian Scotland, including the Disruption and the issue of Home Rule, came about to some extent as a result of the tensions between Scotland and Britain.[5] One of the questions this thesis will

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[3] Fry, *Patronage and Principle*, p74; Smout, *Century of the Scottish People*, p246

[4] Checkland, O & S, *Industry and Ethos: Scotland, 1832-1914*, (Edinburgh, 1984), p77; see also Fry, *Patronage and Principle*, pp92-93

[5] Fry, M, 'The Disruption and the Union,' in Brown, S J & Fry, M (eds.): *Scotland in the Age of the Disruption*, (Edinburgh, 1993), pp32-37

attempt to answer is, what role did the commemoration of the Scottish past play in this century, and how did it reflect contemporary concerns over Scotland's role in the British state and British Empire? The most volubly national voices were to be heard at the extremes of the political spectrum, whether romantically-inclined Tories or proto-nationalist radicals. The importance of Scottish nationality to the political aims of these two generally opposed groups could bring them together with common cause, yet their nationality was not of a kind that would keep these disparate bands aligned long enough to develop into some form of coherent nationalist pressure-group. The Whig-Liberal centre ground – with its political if not its cultural eye firmly fixed on Britain – was too securely held.

Until recently, an incompatibility between Scottish identity and British loyalty was perceived as being the rock upon which Scottish-national culture foundered. Whereas in the 'normal' model of nationalist development, civil society ought to follow the nationalist paradigm as a means of reaping the benefits of capitalist progress, Scottish civil society was far too busy taking advantage of the commercial benefits of the Union to risk it all for an independent Scottish nation-state. That is to say, in Tom Nairn's view, what made the Scottish experience such an aberration was that the Scots were already enjoying the benefits of the modern nation-state; to have agitated for dramatic constitutional change would have been to risk the benefits derived from Union.[6] Lacking the focus of 'proper' nationalism, Scottish civil society broke-up into numerous and often opposing strands, unable to combine to create a coherent Scottishness, capable of providing the foundation for nationalism proper. The notion of civil society's heterogeneity carrying the can for Scotland's manifold national deficiencies in the nineteenth century, lies at the heart of a number of analyses of Scottish identity and culture for this period. In the late 1960s, H J Hanham saw the heterogeneity of the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights as its fatal flaw: divided between romantics and radicals, the NAVSR could not be reconciled with itself and was doomed to fail. At the same time, all forms of Scottish national self-expression were caught in the tension between, on the one hand, those who sought to promote Scottish national self-worth through the erection of monuments, and, on the other hand, a set of

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[6] Nairn, T: *The Break-Up of Britain: Crisis and Neo-nationalism*, 2nd edition (London, 1981), pp135-143

more pragmatic proto-nationalists.[7] Drawing on different roots, but reaching a similar conclusion, one of the most resonant critiques of this period is Marinell Ash's *The Strange Death of Scottish History*, published around the same time as Nairn's *Break-Up of Britain*. Ash charts the decline of Scotland's 'history' following the death of Sir Walter Scott, whose legacy had been to provide a coherent vision of the Scottish past, upon which future generations might erect a truly national culture.[8] Ash lays the blame for this decline firmly at the feet of Scotland's heterogeneous civil society, splintered into incompatible groups, each with their own reading of the past, deployed to their own ends. Lacking either a state apparatus of its own, or a nationalist movement intent on achieving one, Scottish civil society was left to its own devices, nurturing a national culture that was, at worst, both inward and backward looking or, at best, concerned more with the demands of the imperial present than with any sense of identity predicated upon the achievements of the past.[9] Scotland's 'junior partnership in the New Rome' meant that the Scots were unable to develop those cultural 'raw materials' that would normally have been used as a spur to nationalism for fear of rocking the Great-British boat. Instead, Victorian Scots opted for an 'emasculated' sub-nationalism, defined by cringe-inducing signifiers of Scottishness such as the cult of tartanry and the parochial niceties of the kailyard.[10] In Ash's words, instead of 'an historical consensus' of the kind that Walter Scott had hoped to create, the Scots instead 'grew and cultivated… a succession of historical kailyards.'[11] Alternatively, though the British Empire provided one outlet for Scottish national aspirations, such expressions were focused firmly on the present and the future: Victorian Scots were far too busy with the imperial present to concern themselves with the national past.[12] If that had any role at all, it was merely as a source for romantic tales of heroism and hi-jinks, with

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[7] Hanham, H J: 'Mid-Century Scottish Nationalism: Romantic and Radical,' in Robson, R (ed.): *Ideas and Institutions of Victorian Britain: Essays in honour of George Kitson Clark*, (London, 1967)

[8] Ash, M: *The Strange Death of Scottish History*, (Edinburgh, 1980), ch1

[9] Nairn, *Break-Up of Britain*, p135

[10] Nairn, *Break-Up of Britain*, pp152-161

[11] Ash, *Strange Death*, p152

[12] Finlay, R J: 'Controlling the Past: Scottish Historiography and Scottish Identity in the 19th and 20th centuries,' *Scottish Affairs*, no. 9, Autumn 1994, pp128-131

neither explanatory significance nor legitimising power for the Scotland of the nineteenth century – the Scot in search of a history that meant something, must needs turn to the precedents provided by the constitutional history of England.[13]

Examinations of the role played by the Scottish past in the nineteenth century have largely been carried out in an attempt to explain the absence of 'proper' nationalism, or a 'proper' national historiography. Had there been a Scottish state, providing coherence for civil society, it might have acted as a focus for representations of the national past. This view tends to involve a rejection of those cultural practices that the Scots did indulge in: for instance, Ash refers to the raising of commemorative statuary as a 'meaningless and highly selective' practice.[14] This tendency to focus on *lacunae*, has been convincingly challenged by Graeme Morton, who has argued that the gap between the British state and Scottish civil society gave the Scots a degree of national autonomy that *permitted* rather than retarded the expression of their national identity. Opposed to the evils of administrative 'centralisation' – which these Scots saw as one of the deficiencies of continental nation-states – so-called 'unionist-nationalism' flourished in the space between those aspects of governance that remained in Scottish hands, and those within the remit of the British state.[15] The autonomy of Scottish civil society, Morton claims, acted as the necessary focus for Scottish national self-expression, an autonomy that bodies such as the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights sought to defend through the deployment of a variety of Scottish signs and symbols.[16] Morton paints a picture of Scottish civil society that, instead of being defined by an enervating heterogeneity, gained strength, at least in part, from its *plurality* – Scottish civil society and 'the unthinking patriotism of the British state,' were entirely complementary.[17] Though multi-faceted, civil society nurtured a sense

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[13] Kidd, C: *Subverting Scotland's Past: Scottish Whig historians and the creation of an Anglo-British identity, 1689 – c.1830*, (Cambridge, 1993)

[14] Ash, *Strange Death*, pp10-11

[15] Morton, G: *Unionist-Nationalism: Governing Urban Scotland, 1830-1860*, (East Linton, 1999), pp193-196

[16] Morton: *Unionist-Nationalism*, p154; Morton, G, 'Scottish rights and "centralisation" in the mid-nineteenth century,' *Nations and Nationalism 2* (2), 1996, pp269-273

[17] Morton, G: 'What if?: The Significance of Scotland's Missing Nationalism in the Nineteenth Century,' in Broun, D, Finlay, R J & Lynch, M (eds.): *Image and Identity: The Making and Re-making of Scotland Through the Ages*, (Edinburgh, 1998) ,p169

of Scottish distinctiveness beneath which other considerations – political, religious, cultural – could operate. To illustrate this, Morton turns to Anthony Smith's theory of ethno-symbolic nationalism, where the analytical emphasis is on the nation's 'ethnic' past as the spur for nationalism, rather than the socio-economic, or socio-cultural emphases.[18] In his examination of the Scottish *ethnie*, Morton considers the commemoration of Robert Burns, Walter Scott and William Wallace, showing how these heroes of the Scottish nation, were represented as having made a crucial contribution not only to the development of the Scottish character, but also to the greatness of the British Empire.[19]

The 'unionist-nationalist' thesis offers an alternative perspective on the role civil society played in promoting a sense of Scottishness in the nineteenth century, re-casting it as the preserver of Scottish national identity rather than the cause of its enfeeblement. Morton's analysis has shown that by analysing elements of Scottish national expression once rejected by those seeking to explaining the absence of Scottish nationalism, it is possible to develop a more rounded view of the meaning of the past in nineteenth-century Scotland. In opening up this field of study, certain questions become apparent, principally, how coherent and widespread was the unionist-nationalist reading of the Scottish *ethnie* across Scottish society? It is clear that the spirits of Wallace and of Bruce were invoked by the 'unionist-nationalist' patriotic cult, but what of other heroes of the Scottish past such as John Knox and the Covenanters – what use, if any, was made of these Scottish shibboleths? This ground has been covered, in part, by Richard Finlay, who highlights the Victorian re-invention of Wallace as 'the Great Liberal,' an image of the hero 'tainted by mid-Victorian [liberal] ideology.'[20] Finlay also notes the rejection of the aristocratic Bruce, as well as the inability of Jacobitism to be moulded into the dominant cultural paradigms of this period: the 'Presbyterian democratic tradition,' the Victorian meritocracy that Wallace was made to represent, and the 'notion of the "bloodless" Union.'[21] Though these examinations have made an important contribution to our

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[18] Smith, A D: *Myths and Memories of the Nation*, (Oxford, 1999), p7

[19] Morton, *Unionist-Nationalism*, pp154-188

[20] Finlay, R J: 'Heroes, Myths and Anniversaries in Modern Scotland', *Scottish Affairs*, no. 18, Winter 1997, pp114-116, 120-121

[21] Finlay, 'Heroes, Myths and Anniversaries,' pp120-121

understanding of the role the past played in this period, there is still much that needs to be done: Morton and Finlay's analyses have merely sketched out the territory – further exploration is required.

National Memory and Commemorative Practice

In an attempt to effect these discoveries, this thesis will follow the route illuminated by the analytical model of collective or social memory. Collective memory is, in essence, a recollection of the past shared by the members of any given group, whether a family, a locality, a religious denomination or an entire nation. The classic theories of collective memory propose that the identity of each member of that community is formed and negotiated through collective remembering.[22] Collective memory is, therefore, fundamental to the identity of both the individual and the community, by means of identification between members of that group. Collective remembering gives meaning to the experience of belonging. By its very nature, this phenomenon occurs across time, depending for its survival on so-called 'acts of transfer,' means by which the shared memory can be transmitted from one generation to the next. Without such acts, the memory would, quite literally, be forgotten.[23] Commemoration is an act of memory transfer.[24] In articulating the role of collective memory, it is enlightening to make the distinction between acts of memory transfer and historiography. As Connerton writes, 'Historians are their own authority; their thought is autonomous vis-à-vis their evidence, in the sense that they possess criteria by reference to which that evidence is criticised.'[25] The purpose of historiography is to set us free from the vagaries of memory, to produce 'a historically tutored memory,' rather than an 'unreflective traditional memory.'[26] Pierre Nora proposes that we have gone,

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[22] The classic work on collective memory is Halbwachs, M: *On Collective Memory*, (trans. Coser, L S), (Chicago, 1992). See also, Connerton, P: *How Societies Remember*, (Cambridge, 1989)

[23] Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, p39

[24] Gillis, J: 'Memory and Identity: the History of a Relationship,' in Gillis, J (ed.): *Commemorations: the Politics of National Identity* (Princeton, 1994), p5

[25] Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, pp13-14; Nora, P: 'Between Memory and History: *Les Lieux De Mémoire*,' *Representations*, vol 0, Issue 26, Spring 1989, p8

[26] Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, p16

> ...from the idea of a visible past to an invisible one; from a solid steady past to our fractured past; from a history sought in the continuity of memory to a memory cast in the discontinuity of history.[27]

Whereas through historiography the past becomes a foreign country, memory is concerned with making the past familiar, with establishing direct and potent connections between the moment being recalled and the present. The differentiation between memory and history allows us to identify some of the deficiencies of those analyses that have considered the role played by the past in nineteenth-century Scotland. Terms such as 'the past' and 'history' are by no means synonymous: the latter is a representation of the former, and the death of history does not necessarily signify that the past must also suffer the same fate. Whereas prior analyses viewed the role of memory from the perspective of traditional historiography – i.e., that it is not to be trusted; that it is the poor relation of 'proper' historiography – it is the very fact that expressions of collective memory are more 'culturally diffused' that makes them worthy of our attention. Furthermore, collective memory is 'ritualistic and performative:' its transmission is achieved through 'the repetition of specific bodily practices associated with commemorations, demonstrations, and other ritual activities.' That is to say, contrary to the emphasis that has been placed upon the construction or 'invention' of commemorative traditions, the expression and transference of the collective memory is contained promoted and sustained by participation in recurring activities.[28] The invention of traditions – just as with the deployment of the *ethnie* for national(ist) ends – is merely one form of the constant evolution of commemorative ritual, a new role given to an ageless process.[29] One of the principal means for effecting the transfer of collective memory is through the practice of commemoration, those ceremonies or rituals intended to embody and transmit the collective memory, to keep it alive by repetition or invocation.[30] In this way, the act of commemoration is fundamental to the 'imagining' of communities, as these memories can be shared by members of the

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[27] Nora, '*Les Lieux De Mémoire*,' p17

[28] Hobsbawm, E: 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions,' in Hobsbawm, E & Ranger, T (eds.): *The Invention of Tradition*, (Cambridge, 1983)

[29] Koshar, R: *From Monuments to Traces: Artefacts of German Memory, 1870-1990*, (Berkeley, 2000), p8

[30] Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, p48

community who are entirely unknown to one another, yet who imagine themselves to share a common nationality and a common past.[31]

What makes these commemorative practices and associated discourses such fertile ground for the historian, is that they are deployed or invoked with the intent to claim continuity with the past, and to transmit the meaning of that continuity into the future.[32] Pierre Nora articulates this idea through the concept of the *lieu de mémoire*, or 'realm of memory,' the necessary component of which is the 'intention to remember.' At the moment of its inception, the *lieu de mémoire* is intended to represent and transmit a fixed idea of the meaning of the collective memory.[33] However, not all *lieux de mémoire* are originally composed with the intent to remember: some realms of memory are created to preserve and transmit a given conception of the collective memory; some achieve this role, and others have it thrust upon them. For example, commemorative monuments are the *lieu de mémoire par excellence*, as their explicit aim is to encourage the act of remembrance through fixing in stone the monument-builders' conception of their subject's significance. Alternatively, other symbols become *lieux de mémoire* by having significance projected on to them. To take a Scottish example, the mask of the Covenanting preacher Alexander Peden was originally intended as a disguise that might allow the preacher to elude his pursuers. Over time, however, the mask has had a new meaning attached to it – it now acts as a resonant symbol of the extremes to which the Covenanters had to go in order to continue to worship as they chose. In other words, any meaning that a *lieu de mémoire* may transmit tends to be attributed to it from an external source. One result of this phenomenon, is that the significance of the *lieu de mémoire* changes over time, accreting meaning, with each layer obscuring the last. As commemorative practices transfer collective memory from one generation to the next, the process falls victim to shifting cultural, political and social demands.[34] As a result, collective memory does not remain fixed but is itself a narrative, in a constant state of becoming, of metamorphosis. As Nora recognises, this is the paradox of the *lieux de mémoire*: though their intention is 'to block the work

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[31] Gillis, 'Memory and Identity,' p8

[32] Connerton, *How Societies Remember*, p48

[33] Nora, '*Les Lieux De Mémoire*,' pp19-22

[34] Nora, '*Les Lieux De Mémoire*,' p19

of forgetting,' it is their capacity for change that allows them to endure. By examining the commemoration of the national past – the representation and transmission of aspects of the nation's collective memory – the evolution of national identity, of what it meant to belong to that national community, can be traced. Our task, then, is to clear away the layers of meaning that have built up on these signifiers of collective memory, to uncover prior meanings, many of which may be entirely at odds with their present significance.

Taken that commemoration is such a powerful signifier of national identity, it is apparent that control of the selection and representation of these memories, as well as of the means through which they are transmitted, would provide a considerable degree of authority over the very essence of the community. It is for this reason that commemorative practices are of such importance to both nation and nation-state, whether emergent or self-consciously 'ancient.' Drawing the term from the work of Irwin-Zarecka, Rudi Koshar refers to such attempts at controlling the meaning of national memory as 'framing strategies and devices.' Elites and other 'key groups' determine a range of meanings for any 'texts' that might invoke or represent aspects of the collective memory:

> These framing strategies do not impose a single meaning, but if deployed successfully, they do delimit the number of possible meanings and private interpretations, and they disperse the effect of competing or subversive meanings.[35]

This concept of 'framing strategies' provides us with a context for analysis of the manner in which nations commemorate their past: that is, what framing strategies does the nation employ when it represents key moments from the past that it is in the process of creating for itself? Framing strategies are implicit in the concept of the *lieu de mémoire*, wherein potent symbols from the nation's past have their meaning 'delimited' through the application of framing strategies. These framing strategies are not necessarily imposed from above, they are not the preserve of the state, but rather they 'emerge from negotiation and conflict.'[36] When the state attempts to deploy framing strategies it does so, as in the 'invention of tradition' argument, by co-opting existing conceptions of the *lieu de mémoire*, rather than necessarily constructing new ones: even invented traditions derive their power by

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[35] Koshar, *From Monuments to Traces*, p10

[36] *ibid.*

resonating with some aspect of the 'ethnic myth.'[37] This is a vital consideration for the examination of Scottish commemorative practice and rhetoric. Such discourses are not an unmediated reflection of the national memory, but a selectively edited and framed projection of the past, broadcast with the assumption that the listener or reader will accept that projection as conclusive, timeless, and national. Such attempts to frame the significance of the past emphasise the importance of the 'invention of tradition' thesis. Hobsbawm recognises that, in order for the nation-state to be able to claim legitimacy as a *state*, it must also prove its essential character as a *nation*, and in so doing gain the loyalty of those who find themselves living under its jurisdiction.[38] In other words, the nation-state re-invents existing traditions, takes control of their meaning by implementing its own framing strategies, and legitimises itself by associating those traditions with the defining characteristics of the new or burgeoning nation-state – the process of 'turning peasants into Frenchmen,' 'nationalising the masses,' or, in the words of d'Azeglio, as quoted by Hobsbawm, 'we have made Italy: now we must make Italians.'[39] Faced with the potentially disruptive or revolutionary influences of class-based loyalties or older, regional identities, state deployment of collective memory was intended to ensure the obedience and loyalty to a national ideal more deeply-rooted in a collective memory.[40]

A selectively framed version of collective memory could be deployed to any one of a number of national ends; alternatively, where no shared memory could be said to have existed, one needed to be synthesised from formerly disparate elements of the new nation-state. Prior to 1871, commemoration of the German past was predicated on the need to promote an ideal of German cultural, linguistic or racial integrity, encouraging the unification of the German nation.[41] The commemoration of the German past promoted a shared national identity, often defined by

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[37] Smith, *Myths and Memories of the Nation,* p62

[38] Hobsbawm, E: 'Mass-Producing Nations: Europe, 1870-1914,' in Hobsbawm & Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, pp263-268

[39] Hobsbawm, 'Mass-Producing Nations', pp267

[40] Hobsbawm, 'Mass-Producing Nations', pp266-268

[41] Mosse, G L: *The Nationalisation of the Masses: Political Symbolism and Mass Movements in Germany from the Napoleonic Wars Through the Third Reich*, (New York, 1975); Koshar, *From Monuments to Traces*

opposition to and the successful repulsion of a hostile invader. After unification, the focus shifted to inculcate loyalty to the new regime. Though the framing strategies may have differed, as did the motivations, the aims and the processes were roughly similar: to forge a sense of national identity and patriotism in the face of heterogeneity. The intended product of these commemorative practices and any associated discourse was to unify, to inspire loyalty to a single, coherent German nation.[42] Whereas the Germans were keen to establish a collective memory based upon continuity between the past and the present, French commemoration was almost entirely concerned with a break from the past as each new regime sought to undermine its predecessor.[43] Memory was itself a contested territory on which the political and ideological conflicts of the present were fought, with each competing element of the French 'political community' campaigning 'for the widest possible acceptance of its own more favourable version of events.'[44] For instance, there were almost as many versions of Joan of Arc as there were facets to French civil society.[45] If the past was too awkward a fit, it was necessary to create symbols that represented a shared cultural space within which the disparate and competing ideologies could operate, avoiding the past in favour of allegorical symbols concerned with timeless values of Frenchness: the tricolor, '*liberté*, *egalité*, *fraternité*, 'Marianne.'[46] The aim, as in Germany, and whether sanctioned by the state or representing dissonant voices, was to overcome divisive heterogeneity and produce an authoritative national motif. Even a problematic past could be turned around to signify the heroic characteristics of the nation. After the Civil War in the USA, the process of apparent reconciliation was remarkably rapid and replete with signs and symbols of a nation

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[42] See Mazon, P, 'Germania Triumphant: the Neiderwald National Monument and the Liberal Moment in Imperial Germany, *German History*, Vol 18, No 2, 2000

[43] Gildea, R: *The Past in French History*, (New Haven, 1994), p113

[44] Gildea, R: *The Past in French History*, p341

[45] Gildea, *The Past in French History*, pp154-157; Winock, M, 'Joan of Arc,' in Kritzman, L D (ed.); *Realms of Memory: the Construction of the French Past, vol III: Symbols*, (New York, 1998); see also Pastoreau, M: 'The Gallic Cock,' and Pomian, K, 'Franks and Gauls,' in the same volume.

[46] Hobsbawm, 'Mass-Producing Nations', p272; Agulhon, M: 'Politics, Images, and Symbols in Post-Revolutionary France,' in Willentz, S (ed.): *Rites of Power: Symbolism, Ritual and Politics Since the Middle Ages*, (Philadelphia, 1985), pp180-181

attempting to move beyond awkward memories of internal conflict.[47] At a time when all were aware of the nation's fragility, Americans from North and South buried the hatchet beneath layers of self-glorification, emphasising the personal qualities of the protagonists and the virtues of loyalty and duty shown by both sides, rather than remembering the causes of the war or the inevitable fact of who won and who lost.[48] When not commemorating illustrious individuals, Civil War monuments tended to be highly generic representations of Union or Confederate soldiers, avoiding controversy in recording the war's causes or significance by emphasising the fairly compatible 'Union' in the North, and 'State Sovereignty' in the South.[49] The role of commemoration in all three of these examples stands in marked contrast to its position in nineteenth-century Ireland, where commemoration of the past was defined by the tension between the collective memories of loyalists and republicans. Loyalist memory followed the model of a providential, Protestant deliverance, the chosen people having been set free from Papal bondage, a narrative that was mirrored in the commemorative rhetoric of Scottish Presbyterianism.[50] On the other hand, republican memory focused on the sacrifices of individual martyrs, and the redemption of the Irish nation through the spilling of their blood, a tradition re-invented in 1898 with the commemoration of the 1798 rising: over thirty memorials were erected, culminating in the laying of the foundation stone of a monument to Wolfe Tone in Dublin, attended by 100,000 people.[51]

Different nations may have deployed collective remembering to distinct ends, yet, as Koshar identifies, 'differing political contexts led to roughly similar outcomes in the appropriation of historical memories.'[52] Some nations commemorated a break from the past, a moment of rupture when the old age ended

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[47] Kammen, M: *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture*, (New York, 1993), p106

[48] Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory*, p115-118; Savage, 'The Politics of Memory: Black Emancipation and the Civil War Monument,' in Gillis, J (ed.): *Commemorations: the Politics of National Identity* (Princeton, 1994), pp131-132

[49] Savage, 'The Politics of Memory', p131

[50] McBride, I, 'Memory and national identity in modern Ireland,' in McBride, I (ed.): *History and Memory in Modern Ireland*, (Cambridge, 2001), pp19-21, 26-27

[51] *ibid.*, pp28-35

[52] Koshar, *From Monuments to Traces*, p29

and the new began; other nations stressed continuity, of a special path that the nation had followed since 'history' began, whilst others, as in Ireland, had still to struggle with the co-existence of competing discourses of collective memory. Regardless of whether these memories were defined by rupture or continuity, the range of commemorative practices open to the nation were remarkably alike: the erection of monuments, the celebration of anniversaries, and the creation or 'recovery' of potent national symbols.[53] Each nation might experience its own particular challenge when attempting to foster loyalty and patriotism, yet each nation adopted very similar methods of representing or re-inventing collective memory. John Gillis uses the term 'fragile nation' to describe those nations that needed to deploy their past in order to buttress national unity: 'If the conflicts of the present seemed intractable, the past offered a screen on which desires for unity and continuity, that is, identity, could be projected.'[54] The nation may be persistently fragile, constantly threatened by internal tensions or by external pressures, yet one of the factors that defines the fragile nation is its heterogeneity – the need for the state, a nationalist movement and/ or civil society to bring together these diverse elements, each with its own memories and commemorative discourses, and bind them into a coherent national memory. Whether the solution was a *sonderweg*, the identification of ageless national ideals, the cult of founding fathers, or the promotion of a monarchical dynasty to national rather than regional significance, each of these solutions was achieved, in part, through the set of practices noted above, particularly the resuscitation or innovation of commemorative practices and associated discourses. In a century defined by nations and nationalism, both the fragile nation, and the fragile nation-state, needed to legitimise their existence through recourse to the timeless and the historical.

Civil and Religious Liberty, and the Importance of 'Nationality'

It must be acknowledged that Scotland's statelessness and the heterogeneity of its civil society contributed to the nation's frailty as a coherent and self-expressive unit, yet at the same time the Scots appear to have been confidently engaging in

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[53] Gillis, 'Memory and Identity,' p8

[54] Gillis, 'Memory and Identity,' p10

those practices employed by other nations to buttress their nationality. Nineteenth-century Scots marked the anniversaries of important events from the national past, they erected monuments to national heroes, both past and present, and they composed and participated in public ceremonials, celebrating their identity as Scots. In other words, the Scots were engaging in precisely the same commemorative practices as their European and North American counterparts – though the ends differed, the means bear comparison. It might be fruitless to compare French, German or Hungarian nationalism with Scottish nationalism – if anything of the sort could even be said to have existed – but there is much to be learned by comparing the manner in which *patriotism* was inculcated and transmitted in these nations, principally as each nation tended to employ similar acts of transfer. That Scotland had neither a state nor a potent nationalist movement to sanction its collective memory does not undermine the importance of that memory, it merely provides different motivations for its commemoration.

If there is a problem with the new 'unionist-nationalist' orthodoxy, inspired by Morton's work, it is that it suggests a unity of meaning in the representation of Scottish national heroes, a unity that fits uneasily with the problematic heterogeneity already identified within Scottish society. The landscape of national memory was not designed and laid out by a dominant, agenda-setting state; in a stateless-nation, the commemoration of the Scottish past was left to civil society. The question is, then, how did the rhetoric of commemoration represent the Scottish past at this time? Was it a past splintered and undermined by the contesting discourses of region, religion, class and political tension, or is it possible to identify some form of hegemonic discourse of Scottishness on the liberal-Presbyterian model? At the same time, building on the foundations provided by Graeme Morton, how did Scottish framing strategies allow Scottish civil society to transmit its preferred version of national memory without rocking the Great British boat, and how far were these framing strategies accepted within Scotland, and successful within Great Britain? In essence, the response to this challenge was to represent the Scottish past as fundamental to the development of British history, primarily through the binding theme of 'civil and religious liberty.' As this thesis aims to prove, Scotland's past, from William Wallace to the Covenanters, was defined by a distinctively Scottish-national struggle to achieve and maintain civil and religious freedoms in the face of a tyrannical oppressor. Whether the tyrant in question was Edward the First (or

Second), the Church of Rome, or the later Stuart monarchs, the Scottish past was consistently represented as having involved a conflict between those despots who sought to undermine Scotland's hard-won civil and religious liberty, and those brave patriots who defended it. In a conception of Scoto-Britishness familiar from the analysis of 'unionist-nationalism,' these freedoms represented the foundation of the Scottish nation, had forged the Scottish national character and, in being maintained from generation to generation, brought the Scots into a union of equals with the English. Britain and its Empire benefited from the contribution made by the distinctive national virtues of the Scots, virtues formed and defended during the Wars of Independence, the Scottish Reformation, and the Covenanting period. Fundamental to this conception of the national character was the contemporary term 'nationality,' signifying more than a simple classification of national origin, but, instead, distinctive shared characteristics, a loyal patriotism, and the inherent unity of the nation itself. Nationality was a term of approbation, something to aspire to and, when achieved, to be retained at all costs. Historic Scottish nationality was seen as being defined by civil and religious liberty. Indeed, the very fact that the Scots had always retained their nationality, and would continue to do so, was viewed as a key influence in their role as Imperial partners with England.

Scottish nationality was not, however, a consistent phenomenon. Just as one could be both a political radical yet a religious conservative, the landscape of Scottish nationality was broad and diverse. Drawing our terms from H J Hanham, these nationalities ranged from the romantic to the radical, Hanham having identified these as the two dominant strains in Scottish 'nationalism' in the nineteenth century.[55] For Hanham, the distinction lay between, on the one hand, the radical proponents of Scottish national issues, such as the Free Church clergyman James Begg or the radical-Liberal politician, Duncan McLaren, and, on the other, those whose attachment to the Scottish nation was more sentimental, a body mainly composed of Tory aristocrats and artists, including the historical novelist James Grant.[56] Hanham's model provides the basis for our analysis of commemorative practice in nineteenth-century Scotland, yet to this model it is necessary to add necessary refinement: that between the two poles of romantic and

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[55] Hanham, 'Mid-Century Scottish Nationalism,' *op cit.*

[56] Hanham, 'Mid-Century Scottish Nationalism,' pp154-156

radical lay a far more influential and hegemonic moderate centre-ground. It was this moderate expression of Scottish nationality that defined the character of the vast majority of commemorations taking place in Scotland in this period.

The contrast between romantic, moderate and radical Scottish nationalities was defined by opposed interpretations of what the Scottish past signified for the present, as well as the position of Scottish nationality within that present. The moderate, middle ground emphasised the debt owed to the grand narrative of Scottish memory, articulated the necessity of commemorating that debt, but still ensured that these memories remained firmly in the past. That is to say, moderates argued that the struggles of the Scottish past were responsible for the present, glorious state of the Scottish and British nations, but those struggles were now over. It was for this reason that the Scottish past could be safely commemorated. Furthermore, and in contrast to both romantics and radicals, moderate Scottish nationality did not identify any significant potential threats to its existence. In contrast, both the romantic and radical poles of Scottish nationality were more intent on change and on resisting threats. Whereas for the moderates, the Scottish past shone a golden light upon the present, for romantics and radicals it cast a long shadow, and where the moderates saw an imperial partnership of equals, romantics and radicals saw the ever-present threat of anglicisation, of sublimation or assimilation and the resultant disappearance of Scottish nationality. The distinction between romantic and radical resided principally in their political outlook – radical or Tory – yet a further distinction was present, not in their view of the significance of the past, but in the details of that past. As we might infer, the romantic framing of Scottish memory focused the eye on the aristocracy and monarchy, the radical highlighted the common people and the middle-classes; romantic nationality was essentially backward-looking; radical nationality tended towards the progressive.[57]

It is the intention of this thesis to gauge the character of Scottish nationality through the prism of commemorative discourse, considering the commemoration of William Wallace and Robert the Bruce, John Knox and the Scottish Reformation, as well as both the early and later Covenanters. If we accept that Scottish 'history' may

[57] For an enlightening analysis of the framing strategies adopted by romantic Scottish nationality see, Tyrell, A: 'Paternalism, Public Memory and National Identity in Early Victorian Scotland: The Robert Burns Festival at Ayr in 1844,' *History*, vol 90, no. 297, January 2005

have died a strange death in this period, we must ask whether Scottish memory suffered the same fate? In order to respond to this question we will mine a seam of source material that has, hitherto, been somewhat neglected: alongside contemporary pamphlet literature and other published records of commemorative events, our principal source for the rhetoric of commemoration will be the newspaper press. The nineteenth century saw the newspaper press in Scotland take on a truly national role, as both technological innovation and burgeoning political enfranchisement meant that the news was not only more efficiently reported – with less reliance on the London press – but that the audience was constantly growing in size and sophistication.[58] The 1832 Reform Act gave fresh impetus to the newspaper press, as an increasingly enfranchised populace demanded to be kept informed of political events, yet for a time, politics – and advertising – remained the core interest of the newspaper proprietors, with home-grown cultural activities receiving only sporadic attention.[59] A significant step forward was achieved in the 1850s, as abolition of duty on advertisements in 1853, and Stamp Duty in 1855, rendered the production of newspapers more commercially viable on a smaller or local level, spawning numerous new – and many short-lived – newspapers. Scotland had received its first viable daily paper in 1847, with the publication of the *North British Daily Mail*, yet it was not until the mid-1850s, and the appearance of these smaller, penny papers that the daily press really took off. The old guard responded to the threat posed by the fledgling dailies by joining in the fray: soon after the repeal of Stamp Duty, both the *Scotsman* and the *Caledonian Mercury* went daily, the former at a penny, the latter at twopence.[60] Not only were there more newspapers more often, they were also increasing in size and constantly improving their layout and the range of subjects thought fit to cover.[61] With more space and more editions came a broader range of coverage, with a resultant widening in the scope of the editorial.[62] It is for this reason that, particularly from the mid-1850s, the newspaper

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[58] Robbins, K: *Nineteenth-Century Britain: Integration and Diversity*, (Oxford, 1988), pp159-160; Cowan, R MW: *The Newspaper in Scotland: a Study of its First Expansion*, (Glasgow, 1946), p279.

[59] Cowan, *Newspaper in Scotland*, p135, *et seq.*

[60] *ibid.*, pp275-276

[61] *ibid.*, pp277-278

[62] *ibid.*, pp269-270

represents such a vital resource in the analysis of commemorative practice. The rude health of the provincial and city press provides a daunting array of potential sources: as the political complexion of the Victorian press reflected the heterogeneity of Scottish society, every conceivable corner of the political landscape was represented. Scottish newspapers often contrasted themselves with their English counterparts, and, though following British issues, were not unafraid of promoting a specifically Scottish angle or defending Scottish national or cultural distinctiveness.[63] R M W Cowan states, for instance, that during the short life of the NAVSR, of thirty papers examined, sixteen supported the movement, five were neutral, another five were hostile, whilst the remainder, 'prudently became hostile as the cause drooped.'[64] Crucially, however, even the Association's harshest critics claimed to have made their own complaints regarding the treatment of Scottish issues at Westminster: the *Scotsman* argued that, 'it had often voiced "the just complaint that Scotland had been used shabbily."'"[65] Even when looking down upon such expressions of Scottish-national sentiment as the NAVSR, the Scottish press still spoke with a Scottish voice. As we shall see, the fact that many newspapers looked down upon much of commemorative practice was owed primarily to their disapproval of the character of the commemorative acts, rather than any sense of their being inappropriate.

In relying upon newspaper reports to give us access to the content of nineteenth-century commemorations – particularly rhetorical content – this analysis benefits from the style of reporting prevalent at that time: rather than giving a few choice sound-bites from the contributors with the highest public profile, nineteenth-century newspapers tended to print speeches at length, occasionally verbatim. As noted above, with the expansion of the newspaper from tri- or bi-weekly to daily, and with the increased number of pages, there was more space to fill up. In particular, provincial newspapers keenly reported all aspects of any large-scale public demonstrations taking place within their locality, with reports of some commemorative events running to well over two densely printed pages, or deserving

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[63] Robbins, *Nineteenth-Century Britain*, p160

[64] Cowan, *Newspaper in Scotland*, p326

[65] *ibid.*, p327

a supplement of their own.[66] This reproduction of huge swathes of speeches and sermons allows for a relatively detailed analysis of the rhetorical character of commemorative events in this period, as so much of the content has been able to survive, albeit hidden away in the files of local and national newspapers. In addition, reports of commemorative events often included or were printed alongside editorial comment on the content or nature of the event, particularly from the 1850s, the very period when the commemoration of the Scottish past was beginning to adopt a more formally national aspect. Where possible, carrying out a survey of editorial commentary from across a range of the Scottish press allows us to gauge precisely how 'national' were the sentiments expressed at any given event. This is a consideration that is particularly important when examining commemorative events that aspired to the title of 'national,' the National Wallace Monument being perhaps the most resonant example. Simply because the speakers at an event were convinced of its national significance, did not automatically indicate that those views were widely shared. Where possible, the use of editorial commentary drawn from across the political and geographical spectrum of the Scottish press allows us to gauge reaction to these attempts to define and represent the nation through commemorative practice.

It is the contention of this thesis that, rather than lacking any potency in the nineteenth century, the Scottish past played a vigorous and meaningful role in the expression of Scottish national identity at that time. Whereas it has been argued that Scottish history, or more accurately Scottish *historiography*, died a 'strange death' in this period, this thesis proposes that the Scottish past lived a double-life, both as history and as memory. If the representation of the Scottish past through historiography was insufficient to sustain any meaningful Scottish nationality, the same cannot be said for the invocation of the Scottish past manifested in the commemorative practice and rhetoric of this period. This analysis of the discourse of commemoration of key events and figures drawn from Scottish collective memory, aims to prove both that the past informed the present and that the present informed the past. While historiography may not have informed or moulded present culture or nationality, the relationship between the expression of collective

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[66] For examples of this tendency see *Stirling Observer*, 3rd December, 1857; *Dumfries and Galloway Standard*, 23rd June, 1860; *Aberdeen Journal*, 30 June, 1888.

memory and the coherence of a shared reading of the Scottish past was one of the building blocks of Scottish national identity.

2. Wallace and Bruce before the National Wallace Monument

Introduction

This chapter is a survey of the commemoration of William Wallace and Robert Bruce prior to the advent of the National Wallace Monument movement in 1856. The reason for adopting the advent of the National Wallace Monument movement as a turning-point in the commemoration of the Wars of Independence is that, particularly in the wake of the NAVSR, the National Wallace Monument movement focused the attentions of Scottish civil society and the press more closely than hitherto upon the connected issues of Scottish 'nationality' and the commemoration of the Scottish past, as well as the related issue of the appropriateness or usefulness of monumental commemoration. This is not to say that the NAVSR and National Wallace Monument movement were directly responsible for problematising public statements concerning Scottish nationality, yet the politics of commemoration were clearly more apt to attract notice after these two organisations had entered the public mind, whether for good or for ill. This chapter will contend that prior to the National Wallace Monument movement, the commemoration of Wallace and Bruce was still more open to a variety of interpretations, to a variety of motivations and methods of representing national heroism. Despite the 'national' rhetoric often deployed in their name, any monuments erected to Wallace and Bruce prior to 1856 tended to belong to a specific locality, often erected by means of the philanthropy and determination of an individual. Moreover, the period prior to 1856 was notable as much for the failure of monument enterprises, as it was for any successes – despite the enormous debt the Scots proclaimed they owed to their national heroes, certain parts of Scotland, most notably Edinburgh and Glasgow, were conspicuously incapable of erecting a monument to either the 'Great Deliverer' or the 'Patriot-King.'

Before going on to examine the representation of the legacy of Wallace and Bruce in this period, it is worthwhile briefly considering current conceptions of Wallace and Bruce's significance for Victorian Scots. The core of Wallace's efficacy

as a symbol of Scottish identity is his historiographical vagueness.[1] Little was – and is – known about him, rendering his commemorative 'screen' all the more capable of receiving a variety of projected images. In 1990, Marinell Ash argued that Wallace and Bruce 'were not only surplus to requirements, but downright embarrassing,' in a Scotland intent on increased integration with England, a sentiment countered to some extent by proto-nationalist figures, such as John Steill.[2] Steill, one of the earliest but by no means most committed proponents of the National Wallace Monument, used Wallace as, 'a stick with which to beat the new "British" classes, especially the aristocracy.'[3] Steill's representation of Wallace as a hero of 'the peasantry, mechanics and middle classes of Scotland,' was a radical, anti-Union representation of Wallace as 'man of the people': someone born of relatively lowly birth, who rallied the commoners of Scotland in defence of their nation, an achievement sustained despite the machinations of a treacherous and 'contemptible' nobility.[4] This anti-aristocratic aspect of the Wallace cult has been developed further by Richard Finlay, who emphasises Wallace's role as a hero for the middle-classes, a thirteenth-century self-made man, who, without the benefit of aristocratic privilege, had risen through the ranks of Scottish society to its highest echelon.[5] The sword of the Victorian Wallace was double-edged: one aspect of his cult mirrored the middle-class desire for increased social and political enfranchisement, yet at the same time, the anti-aristocratic Wallace was based upon the notion of the 'inherently meritocratic' character of the Scottish nation.[6] Unlike Ash, Finlay emphasises that Wallace was a necessary reminder that Scotland possessed a 'different and distinctive history which would remind the Scots of who they were.' For the myth of Bruce, the anti-aristocratic Wallace had, Finlay proposes, had an inverse effect: Wallace represented 'the qualities of self-sacrifice, civic duty, patriotism, individualism and the belief in meritocracy,' so dear to the

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[1] Morton, G, 'The Most Efficacious Patriot: The Heritage of William Wallace in Nineteenth-Century Scotland,' *Scottish Historical Review*, vol LXXVII, 2: no 204: October 1998

[2] Ash, 'William Wallace and Robert the Bruce,' p91.

[3] *ibid.*

[4] *ibid,* pp83-84, 91

[5] Finlay, R J, 'Heroes, Myths and Anniversaries in Modern Scotland,' *Scottish Affairs*, no. 18, Winter 1997, p115

[6] *ibid.*

hearts of Victorian liberals, while Bruce, as a nobleman, was the beneficiary of inherited rank, the problem rather than the solution.[7]

Both Graeme Morton and Colin Kidd have highlighted the importance of Wallace in permitting the Scots to maintain their national distinctiveness within 'a partnership of historic sovereign equals.'[8] In this reading, the hero represented the equality and distinctiveness of Scotland within the Union and emphasised the historic Britishness of Wallace's legacy. Using the rhetoric of commemorative practice in this period, Morton has discovered a sustained discourse of 'unionist-nationalism,' which permitted the expression of a distinct Scottish nationality within and complementary to Britishness.[9] As Morton explains, the National Wallace Monument was intended as both a symbol of Scotland's contribution to Union and Empire, as well as a celebration of Scotland's historic independence. Morton quotes the Rev Charles Rogers, at the laying of the monument's foundation stone:

> Well may the government of Britain recognise the proceedings of this day, for we are celebrating the memory of a chief who made Scotland a nation, placed a new dynasty upon the English throne, and, under Providence, was the means of uniting these kingdoms together in equal terms, and with equal rights.[10]

This statement represents the archetype of unionist-nationalist rhetoric: the cult of Wallace was unquestionably British, commemorating Scotland's place in the British-imperial project. If there was any contentious aspect to this deployment, it was, as Morton argues, that 'the Wallace cult was first and foremost a debate about the nation and how it should be governed as an equal in union with England.'[11] That is to say, Scotland's place in the British present required a synthesis with the British past, side-stepping the potential for anti-Englishness.

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[7] *ibid.*, p116

[8] Kidd, C: 'Sentiment, Race and Revival: Scottish identities in the aftermath of Enlightenment,' in Brockliss, L & Eastwood, D (eds.): *A Union of Multiple Identities: the British Isles, c. 1750-1850*, (Manchester, 1997), pp118-122; Morton, *Unionist-Nationalism*

[9] Morton, *Unionist-Nationalism*, pp179-180, 188-193. The analysis of the cults of Wallace and Bruce in this period, and indeed the identification of commemorative practice as being fundamental to the expression of Scottish 'nationality', has been inspired by and intends to build upon the ground-breaking work carried out by Graeme Morton on this subject.

[10] quoted in Morton, *Unionist-Nationalism*, p179

[11] Morton, G, 'Efficacious Patriot,' pp250-251; Morton, *Unionist-Nationalism*, pp193-195

These representations of the myth of Wallace and Bruce in the nineteenth century pose a number of questions. To what extent do these representations resonate with the rhetorical projection of the two heroes encountered at their commemoration? Does the predominantly unionist-nationalist projection of Wallace outlined by Morton apply more broadly across the century, or was this one of a number of competing discourses? If no hegemonic Wallace or Bruce existed, how often were opposed readings of these heroes in competition with one another? Furthermore, tensions between the cults of Wallace and Bruce have been identified by Ash and more fully by Richard Finlay: how did these tensions play out across the period in question? If Wallace did indeed occupy the place of honour in the Scottish pantheon, in what terms were the achievements of Robert Bruce commemorated?

The Commemoration of Wallace and Bruce in the 1810s

One of the principal difficulties in constructing an historiographical picture of early-nineteenth-century commemoration of Wallace and Bruce is the relative lack of source material. Partly owing to the nature of the newspaper press at this time, little of the rhetoric of commemoration surrounding these heroes survives, rendering it difficult to recognise any pattern in the meanings attributed to them. Where motivations can be derived, these must often be drawn indirectly through biographical material, inferred from what press coverage there was, or what little primary source material exists. Three of the earliest examples of Wallacian commemoration reflect this paucity of evidence: the earlier of the two statues to Wallace in Ayr, erected in 1809; the pillar to the Battle of Falkirk, erected at Redding Ridge in 1810; and David Stuart Erskine, the eleventh Earl of Buchan's statue to Wallace from 1814. Buchan's statue remains one of the better known commemorative monuments to Wallace, and the reasons for its erection are closely bound to the Earl's political views – Buchan was deeply interested in questions of constitutional liberty, which no doubt informed or resonated with his decision to erect the statue. He was certainly an enthusiast for the Scottish past, being the founder of the Society of Antiquaries Scotland, as well as a somewhat eccentric patron of the arts, with an attitude to Union that might be inferred from his

biography of Andrew Fletcher of Saltoun.[12] Buchan's Wallace statue, sculpted by the self-taught John Smith, and placed on a site overlooking the Tweed near Dryburgh on the 22nd September 1814, was said to be based upon one of the few 'authentic' likenesses of its subject.[13] The closest the Dryburgh Wallace gets to signifying any specific reading of the hero is in the monument's inscription, which describes Wallace as 'Great Patriot Hero! Ill Requited Chief!' An urn was placed in front of the monument with a poetic inscription taken from the address delivered by Buchan at the monument's 'dedication,' which describes Wallace as waving, 'on Ayr's romantic shore, The beamy torch of liberty.' This is a representation of one of the core components of the Wallace myth – the hero as 'Great Liberator,' – where Wallace is the embodiment of liberation from oppression and tyranny, whether Scottish or international, a libertarianism that transcends mere nationality.

Unsurprisingly, one of the earliest dates in this period for the commemoration of Robert Bruce was the 500th anniversary of the battle of Bannockburn, celebrated at the site in June of 1814. Contemporary press accounts describe a procession of about 500 people, 'with the Scottish thistle as a cockade, and a great number dressed in tartan,' marching to the Bore Stone, in which 'the cross of St Andrew' was placed, with speeches delivered to upwards of 15,000 people.[14] The content of the addresses does not appear to have survived, nor was there any particular comment in the press on the commemoration or its character, other than the *Edinburgh Evening Courant* referring to the battle as the moment when, 'our ancestors fought for, and gloriously obtained, the freedom of their country.'[15] As there is so little material to indicate the rhetorical content of this anniversary, however, it is almost impossible to determine its character in any detail, though T C

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[12] Cant, R G, 'David Steuart Erskine, 11th Earl of Buchan: Founder of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland,' in Bell, A S (ed.): *The Scottish Antiquarian Tradition: Essays to Mark the Bicentenary of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and its Museum, 1780-1980*, (Edinburgh, 1981), pp8, 20-21; Morton, 'Efficacious Patriot,' p242

[13] Rogers, C: *Monuments and Monumental Inscriptions in Scotland*, vol I, (London, 1871), p234. For a survey of portraits of Wallace contemporaneous with the National Wallace Monument movement, see Laing, D, 'A Few Remarks on the Portraits of Sir William Wallace,' *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, vol II, 1854-1857, p310.

[14] 'Bannockburn,' *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 23rd June, 1814. This article was reprinted in the *Glasgow Chronicle*, 25th June, 1814, the *Dumfries and Galloway Courier*, 28th June, 1814, and the *Glasgow Courier*, 28th June, 1814.

[15] *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 23rd June, 1814

Smout, in *A Century of the Scottish People*, cites this gathering as an early example of working-class radicalism, connecting it with the gathering of 10,000 'democratic people' that took place at Drumclog in 1815.[16] Another event commemorating the Bannockburn anniversary suggests that the battle could be remembered by those occupying a very different position on the political scale. As reported in the moderate-liberal *Glasgow Chronicle*, a celebration of the anniversary at Rutherglen included toasts not only to Wallace, as 'the patriotic defender of his country,' and Bruce as having 'obtained his country's freedom,' but also one in favour of – amongst others – the Tory MP and former Lord Provost of Glasgow, Kirkman Finlay.[17] As well as being a favourite of Glasgow's merchants for his successes in opening up trade with India, Finlay was an advocate of high duties on imported grain, for which he was 'accosted' by a mob of radicals in 1815.[18] That the Rutherglen commemoration should propose a toast to Finlay, as well as a further toast to 'A good understanding between the Prince Regent and the Princess of Wales,' would suggest that the memory of Bannockburn was not merely the preserve of radicals, but that Wallace and Bruce were made equally at home when deployed by the mercantile classes of the west of Scotland.

One of the defining features of the commemoration of Wallace and Bruce throughout the century was the number of unsuccessful attempts to raise monuments to the two heroes. In the second volume of his *Book of Wallace*, the Rev Dr Charles Rogers listed six separate failed attempts to raise Wallace monuments in Edinburgh and Glasgow.[19] One of the main obstacles faced by any monument enterprise appears to have been the relative apathy of potential donors, or the inability of the monument's promoters to follow through on early promises of success. The difficulties of erecting a monument by public subscription were made evident when, at Glasgow in 1818, it was proposed to erect a monument to Wallace in the Merchants' Park. The poet William Motherwell issued a prospectus in which he argued that words alone were not sufficient to remember Wallace, and that the

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[16] Smout, T C: *A Century of the Scottish People: 1830-1950*, (London, 1986), pp236-237

[17] *Glasgow Chronicle*, 28th June, 1814

[18] Fry, *Patronage and Principle*, p23

[19] Rogers, C: *The Book of Wallace*, vol II, (Edinburgh, 1889), pp254-259

absence of a monument to the patriot-hero was a 'glaring' sign of neglect.[20] The monument was intended to act as,

> [A]n ample dial of Time to which History will point and display to the present and after ages scenes of former greatness all calculated to awaken those reminiscences and emotions that nerve the arm and steel the breast of the patriot when his country and his liberty are at stake.[21]

Here we see the naïve conception of commemorative monuments and their role in the formation and encouragement of nationality: that by gazing on the monument and its subject, and by reflecting on the subject's achievements, the viewer will be instilled with a sense of patriotism attaching them more deeply to the essential character of the nation. Ten years earlier, prior to laying the foundation stone of the Nelson obelisk on Glasgow Green, the Rev William Ritchie had described the commemoration of heroism as something that,

> exalts the national character, and extends the public influence, by commanding the general admiration of mankind. It fosters the principle of conscious rectitude, and imparts the most dignified sentiment that patriotism can indulge…[22]

Intended as a 'lofty circular tower of unhewn whinstone,' the Glasgow Wallace monument would, in a sense, be a Scottish-national counterpart to the British-national monument to Nelson: a Scotch tower to complement the neo-classicism of Nelson's obelisk. Motherwell was clearly aware, however, that any monument to Wallace might carry with it unwelcome resonances of intra-British strife. Such concerns were discarded by appealing to Wallace's supreme patriotism, a virtue that lifted the hero's veneration above such mundane considerations:

> Patriotism, no matter in what age, in what country, or in what manner called forth, is so much in unison with every feeling and chord of a great mind, that admiration becomes a duty with all, and national and local prejudices a crime when they interfere in withholding it.[23]

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[20] *Album Scoticarum Rerum*, (Mitchell Library, #B151243)

[21] *ibid.*

[22] Ritchie, W: *The Duty of Rendering Public Honours for Public Services: A Sermon, delivered in the High Church of Glasgow, on Friday, August 1st, 1806, on occasion of laying the foundation-stone of a monument in honour of Vice-Admiral Horatio Lord Viscount Nelson*, (Glasgow: 1806), p12

[23] *Album Scoticarum Rerum*

As at Dryburgh, Wallace represented liberty, first and foremost, and it was for this that he should be endeared to memory. Whereas the National Wallace Monument movement would adopt the tactic of representing Wallace as a proto-Briton, responsible for the successful union of two partner nations, Motherwell's proposal projected Wallace as an emblem of the universal virtue of liberty and freedom. That this aspect of the Wallace cult was one of the most enduring, was no doubt owed to its being a-historical, with Wallace freed from the demands of any given historical moment, a sufficiently blank screen on to which the viewer's requirements might be projected, appealing to a quality so much to be desired that no one could possibly object to its glorification.

In the short term, Motherwell's appeal received a significant response, the subscription list in the *Album Scoticarum Rerum* containing 252 names.[24] To further the movement, a meeting was held in Glasgow on the 10th March, 1819, with Henry Monteith, the Lord Provost, in the chair, and a speech being made by none other than the Earl of Buchan, builder of the Dryburgh Wallace, who was greeted 'with every token of approbation.'[25] The principal resolution of the meeting consisted of a catalogue of Wallace's magnificent virtues, notable for its mildly anti-aristocratic sentiment, describing the hero as,

> a Patriot who endured every privation, and despised every danger, in the cause of liberty; who withstood not only the insidious and powerful attempts of a foreign foe, but the pusillanimity of the King, and the turbulence of the Nobles; who rescued his companions from oppression, and his posterity from slavery.[26]

This meeting was the high point of the monument's progress: further meetings did take place but there is no record of their content, and a final meeting of the committee was called in June of 1824, almost certainly with the aim of winding the affair up – a total of £60 had been collected.[27] Though unsuccessful, there are a couple of points worth noting about the Glasgow monument enterprise. Firstly, the number of noblemen suggested as members of the monument

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[24] *ibid.* See also, 'Some Notices of the Monument Proposed to be Erected to Wallace in Glasgow in 1818,' *GH*, 25th March, 1853

[25] *GH*, 12th March, 1819

[26] *ibid.*

[27] *GH*, 25th March, 1853; Rogers, C: *Monuments and Monumental Inscriptions in Scotland*, vol I, (London, 1871), p472

committee, including Buchan, the Dukes of Hamilton and Montrose, and the Earls of Eglinton and Glasgow, tends to suggest that their 'turbulent' ancestors were not necessarily being held up as warnings from history, with the identification of England as a 'foreign foe' no doubt saying more about Europe in the early nineteenth century than the state of the United Kingdom.[28] Secondly, the inclusion of such titled sponsors casts light upon the National Wallace Monument movement of the 1850s: in the mid-1820s, the aristocracy were willing to lend their names to a monument in Wallace's name, whilst aligning oneself with the national movement begun in 1856 would prove much more problematic.

The commemoration of Robert Bruce edges more fully into the spotlight of historiographical examination at Dunfermline around the same time as the Glasgow Wallace monument when, during the construction of the new Abbey church in February 1818, Bruce's grave and skeleton were discovered.[29] After an initial inspection, the grave was closed over, with a more complete investigation of the remains not occurring until the 5th of November, 1819, in the presence of the Lord Chief Baron of the Court of Exchequer of Scotland; the Hon. Baron Clerk Rattray; Sir Henry Jardine, the King's Remembrancer; and Dr James Gregory, the King's First Physician, as well as an array of the 'principal inhabitants of Dunfermline.'[30] After the investigation, the coffin was filled with pitch to preserve its contents and the gathered worthies retired to Dunfermline Town-House where the freedom of the burgh was bestowed upon a large proportion of the event's attendees.[31] At the presentation, the Provost of Dunfermline described Bruce as, 'one of the most illustrious of Kings – the glory and boast of every Scotsman, and, I believe, I may say of every Briton – the assertor [*sic*] of the liberties and independence of his country.'[32] In responding to the Provost, the Lord Chief Baron assured his listeners that, though not a Scot, he was every bit as enthusiastic about the day's events as they were. The Baron Clerk Rattray, another Englishmen, said that, '...it is not,

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[28] *ibid.*

[29] Chalmers, P: *Historical and Statistical Account of Dunfermline*, vol I, (Edinburgh, 1841), pp140-141; 'King Robert Bruce: Re-internment of the Body of King Robert Bruce, Dunfermline, Nov. 5,' *Times*, 12th November, 1819

[30] *ibid.*

[31] *Times*, 12th November, 1819

[32] *ibid.*

perhaps, saying too much, that it is to Robert Bruce that our present Monarch owes his seat on the throne of these realms… so that well may every Englishman, no less than every Scotsman, glory in the scene which has this day been presented to us.'[33] The Lord Chief Baron, Samuel Shepherd, was a prominent lawyer who had recently been raised to the Privy Council, and, the following year, would assist in the application of English law to the trial for treason of those involved in the 1820 radical rising. A member of the Bannatyne and Blair-Adam clubs, and a friend of Sir Walter Scott, Shepherd's presence and statements at the Dunfermline re-internment indicate the flexibility of the Bruce legacy, as a memory that could be commemorated by Bannockburn radicals, Rutherglen free-traders and Edinburgh lawyers. The Dunfermline Bruce was represented in terms very similar to the Glasgow Wallace, viewed as having won his country's independence, and as a champion of liberty that might be remembered by every Briton – to commemorate the deeds of Bruce was not to stir up old animosities, a point confirmed by Rattray and Shepherd.

Soon after the re-internment, Dr Gregory composed a Latin inscription, the intention being to inscribe it upon a monument over the king's grave. The text described Bruce as having, 're-established the almost ruined and hopeless state of Scotland, long cruelly oppressed by an inveterate and most powerful enemy,' by restoring 'the ancient liberty and glory of his country.'[34] The monument was never erected, yet Dr Gregory was evidently keen that some inscription commemorative of Bruce be erected somewhere: a letter to the *Stirling Journal* in July of 1830, contains another Latin inscription composed by him, this one intended for a monument to be erected at the Bannockburn Borestone. The proposed, and somewhat lengthy, Latin inscription proclaimed that Edward II had endeavoured, 'with all his might, utterly to destroy the Scottish nation.' Bruce was described as 'prudent, just, mild, pious, prosperous; the restorer and ornament, the avenger, and the father of his country.'[35] From the text of a further inscription, intended for the opposite face of the monument, it is evident that such a monument was deemed – certainly by the author of the inscription – as long overdue and unquestionably

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[33] *ibid.*

[34] Chalmers, *Historical and Statistical Account of Dunfermline*, p146

[35] Letter from 'Medicus,' *SJ*, 15th July, 1830

necessary.[36] In the period before the 1850s, then, we can see at least one example of the representation of Robert Bruce that is familiar from the commemorative rhetoric of Wallace: not only that Bruce restored the Scots to their 'ancient liberty and glory,' after the incursions of a foreign tyranny, but that this restoration of Scottish liberty was worthy of commemoration by 'every Briton.' With the possible exception of the Glasgow meeting's mild references to 'the turbulence of the Nobles,' the rhetorical portrayal of both heroes and the reasons for their commemoration are remarkably similar. There was, however, no mention of each hero's counterpart at either event, no sense of a hierarchy with Wallace at the top and Bruce just below. One distinction can be identified, however, in Rattray's speech at Dunfermline: not only should Bruce be sacred to British memory as a result of his battle for liberty, but that in so doing he represented one of the foundations of the British monarchy: 'the line of connexion between the former and the latter Prince, through the family of the Stuarts, being easily traced.'[37] At the very least, these early examples of the rhetorical representation of King Robert Bruce and of Bannockburn, suggest that the king and the battle were not sources of embarrassment for those who sought to promote their commemoration – there does not appear to have been anything awkward about remembering the English defeat.

EDINBURGH: THE HUGH REID BEQUEST AND PATRICK PARK'S 'WALLACE GROUP'

In common with the Glasgow Wallace, neither of the monuments suggested by Gregory was ever erected. Contemporaneous with both of these failures, an anonymous patron offered £1,000 towards the erection of a monument to Wallace on Arthur's Seat or Salisbury Crags in Edinburgh, and, as a means of encouraging such a project, the patron offered prize money totalling £50 for the three best poems submitted on the subject.[38] The winner of the competition was the English poet, Felicia Hemans, with a poem of 300 lines, entitled, 'The Meeting of Wallace

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[36] *ibid.*

[37] *Times*, 12th November, 1819

[38] Rogers, *Book of Wallace*, pp254-255

and Bruce on the Banks of the Carron.' In submitting her poem for consideration, Hemans had appended a short 'advertisement,' in which we find an early declaration of Wallace's burgeoning Britishness:

> It is a noble feature in the character of a generous and enlightened people, that in England, the memory of the patriots and martyrs of Scotland has long excited an interest, not exceeded by that which prevails in the Country which boasts their birth, their deeds, and their sufferings.[39]

A writer in the *Edinburgh Review*, commenting on the prize-winning poem, declared that an English poet winning such a prize demonstrated, 'the disappearance of those jealousies which, not a hundred years ago, would have denied to such a candidate anything like a fair chance with a native,' increasing, 'that confidence and sympathy which bind [Scotland and England] together in one great family.'[40] Despite these admirably British sentiments, and the relative success of the poetry competition, the monument proposal fell through.

A second Edinburgh proposal, and one that promised more success, was made in October, 1829, when a Mr Hugh Reid of London bequeathed to the Town Council of Edinburgh, 'a sum of which the principal and interest were to accumulate for twenty-five years,' from the date of death of his widow, with the intention of erecting a monument to both Wallace and Bruce in Princes Street Gardens. Reid stated that he wished the memorial to take the form of, 'an ornamental piece of water in the North Loch, with a fountain in the centre, and colossal statues, in bronze, of each of the two heroes.'[41] In December of 1844, a short correspondence occurred in the *Scotsman*, concerning the bequest and how it might be spent, with a variety of different sites and designs being offered.[42] At least one letter-writer, under the pseudonym of 'Scotus,' poured scorn on the idea of any monument, arguing that Scotland itself was the only monument worthy of Wallace and Bruce, citing Sir Christopher Wren's inscription in St Paul's, London: '*Si monumentum*

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[39] *An English View of the National Wallace Monument*, (nd). *MLB*, Mitchell Library #B115063

[40] *ibid.*

[41] Rogers, *Book of Wallace.*, p257; 'Proposed Memorial to Wallace and Bruce in Edinburgh,' *Scotsman*, 12th February, 1879

[42] Letter from 'A Scotsman by Adoption,' *Scotsman*, 7th December, 1844

requiris, circumspice.'[43] In outlining the role played by both heroes in the making of this truly national monument, 'Scotus' drew upon an argument that, paradoxically, had been used to support monumental commemoration of Wallace and Bruce: i.e., not only did Scotland owe her national character to these two great patriots, but that England also was, 'no less indebted – that instead of a discontented and turbulent dependency, she possesses in her sister kingdom, a generous rival and coadjutor in her mighty enterprise of the amelioration of mankind.'[44] One possible use for the Reid bequest arose in early 1850, when the sculptor, Patric Park, built a model for a colossal statue of Wallace that he hoped would be adopted as Edinburgh's national monument to the hero.[45] Best known for his portrait-busts – including Dickens and Napoleon III – Park was also a keen promoter of his own monumental designs, though few of his proposals seem to have achieved fruition. In 1846, for instance, Park had offered a statue of a highland soldier as a monument to mark the site of the battle of Culloden: though Park's design was described by the *Aberdeen Journal* as being 'of a truly national character,' this was not enough to sustain the enterprise and the monument committee's inability to raise the necessary funds saw the project fall through.[46] The 'Wallace Group' was just such a speculative attempt by Park to raise interest in a 'national' monument of his own devising, one that met with considerable approval, including the support of 'several of [Scotland's] chief nobility.'[47] The model, as prepared in Park's studio, represented Wallace as 'the Governor as well as the Hero,' his left hand 'wreathed in the mane' of the Lion of Scotland, who 'trampled on a captured and torn banner of England.' Entitled, 'Wallace Victorious, controlling the Power of Scotland,' the model was intended to show the hero as 'firmly and easily' restraining the Scottish people, yet prepared to set the lion loose at the first sign of approaching tyranny.[48] Contrary to the

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[43] 'Proposed Monument to Wallace and Bruce,' Letter from 'Scotus,' *Scotsman*, 18th December, 1844.

[44] 'Scotus,' *Scotsman*, 18th December, 1844

[45] 'Wallace – A Colossal Group by Patric Park,' *Scotsman*, 30th March, 1850.

[46] *Inverness Courier*, 15th April, 1846; *Aberdeen Journal*, 29th April, 1846. The acceptance of Park's offer may have been a result of his marriage to the daughter of Robert Carruthers, the proprietor of the *Inverness Courier*, and main proponents of the Culloden monument scheme.

[47] 'Mr Patric Park's Colossal Statue of Wallace,' *Scotsman*, 17th July, 1850

[48] *Scotsman*, 30th March, 1850; *Revised Report of the Speeches Delivered at The Second Grand Soiree of the Glasgow Athenaeum, Held in the City Hall, on Tuesday, 28th January, 1851*, (Glasgow, 1851), p29

withering editorials it would print on the subject of the National Wallace Monument, the *Scotsman* looked upon Park's design as, 'a cenotaph to Wallace as the Genius of our national independence,' suggesting that a movement should be instituted to have the full-scale sculpture erected. Indeed, in promoting Park's statue, the *Scotsman* employed an argument in favour of this monument that it would go on to oppose in 1856: responding to the accusation that Wallace did not need a commemorative monument, the *Scotsman* stated that, '...it may be answered that it is for *our* credit rather than for the perpetuation of his name that such a thing is needed.' [my emphasis] Wallace's name, the *Scotsman* argued, had become, 'a synonyme [*sic*] for heroism and national independence... for the proud sentiment of independence exercises on national character an influence stimulating and exalting in every department of enterprise, in politics and commerce, in arts and arms.'[49] 'Now is the time,' it went on, 'to ascertain whether the name of Wallace has yet sufficient power among his countrymen to excite in them any desire to consecrate to his fame so noble a monument,' suggesting that the Hugh Reid bequest might be best used as the basis for a national fund. A committee was formed in July, 1850, for the purposes of carrying the project forward. The model was prepared for public display, and advertisements were placed in the Edinburgh papers, announcing that Park's 'Wallace Group,' was now open to public view at a pavilion in Bellevue Crescent, admission one shilling. Despite its distinguished supporters, however, it would appear that the model was not popular, viewed as 'inauthentic' by not conforming to received ideas of the representation of the hero, or, by virtue of the hero's nudity, as not suited to the tastes of the wider public.[50] Eventually, there was not even sufficient support available for removing the model from its temporary home in Bellevue Crescent, where it remained until the summer of 1852.[51]

The likelihood of Edinburgh raising a Wallace Monument returned to public notice when, with Hugh Reid's wife having died in 1853, the Town Council of Edinburgh took possession of the legacy in 1878. The following year, the bequest

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[49] *ibid.*

[50] (Yule, P): *Traditions &c. Respecting Sir William Wallace, by a Former Subscriber for a Wallace Monument*, (Edinburgh, 1856), p16; Morton, 'Efficacious Patriot,' p232; see also, Gray, J M, 'Park, Patric (1811-1855),' rev. Diane King, *ODNB*

[51] 'Mr Park's Colossal Statue of Wallace,' *Scotsman*, 2nd June, 1852

amounted to £1722 7s. 5d., but no further steps seem to have been taken until 1882, when a notice appeared in the *Scotsman*, calling upon 'sculptors, artist and others,' to submit designs for the memorial in open competition. Seven proposals were entered for the competition – described by *The Builder* as, 'varying considerably in style and in merit,' – with a committee, appointed to judge the submitted designs, meeting in early September 1882.[52] None of the designs were 'of sufficient merit,' however, and it was resolved the bequest funds should be allowed to accumulate further.[53] Despite sporadic references to the bequest appearing in the Edinburgh newspapers for many years, nothing was to come of the bequest until well into the twentieth century.[54] According to Graeme Morton, it was not until 1929 that the monies were eventually used to erect statues to the two heroes, flanking the main gate of Edinburgh Castle – a whole century after Hugh Reid had first announced his bequest, and fifty years after Edinburgh Council had taken over the account.[55]

The Barnweill Monument

Despite Edinburgh and Glasgow's inability to raise a monument to Wallace and Bruce, in other parts of Scotland there were successes: in November of 1820, the sculptor Robert Forrest offered a statue of Wallace to the town of Lanark, the completed statue being unveiled in 1821; in 1833, a tower was erected in Ayr, designed by Thomas Hamilton, with a statue of Wallace by Thom.[56] That these monuments were erected at all, would appear to be down to either their being donated by the artist or a philanthropically minded individual, rather than the work of a committee attempting to raise public subscriptions. The same might be said of the statue to Wallace erected in front of Stirling's Athenaeum building: presented to the burgh by William Drummond of Rockdale Lodge, a local committee was formed to raise the money necessary to have the statue erected, led by the controversial Rev

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[52] 'The Wallace and Bruce Memorial, Edinburgh,' *The Builder*, vol XLIII, 16th September, 1882, p382

[53] 'The Wallace and Bruce Statues, Edinburgh,' *The Builder*, vol XLIII, 2nd December, 1882, p733

[54] Letter from John Wilson, *Scotsman*, 29th June, 1907; Letter from A. S., *Scotsman*, 14th May, 1912. 'A.S.'s' letter states that the fund had reached £4144, 2s.

[55] Morton, *Unionist-Nationalism*, pp183-184

[56] Rogers, *Book of Wallace*, p257

Dr Charles Rogers.[57] The statue by Handyside Ritchie was mounted on a porch designed by J. T. Rochead – whose design for the National Wallace Monument had been adopted two months previously – and raised into position without ceremony in November of 1859.[58]

The most notably successful monumental commemoration of Wallace or Bruce from the period prior to the National Wallace Monument movement, if also one of the most obscure, must be the gothic tower to Wallace, at Barnweill in the parish of Craigie, Ayrshire, in 1855. Perhaps more than any other Wallace monument, the Barnweill tower is symptomatic of what could be achieved when committees and public subscriptions failed to bring a monument into existence: this monument was funded wholly by the Ayrshire landowner, William Patrick of Roughwood, WS., who, having tried to raise the money for the monument through a public appeal in the local newspapers, and despairing at the paucity of the response, resolved to pay for a monument himself.[59] Patrick seems not to have been particularly impressed with the quality of those monuments already erected to Wallace, and considered it a discredit to Ayrshire that a worthy monument had not yet been erected.[60] Patrick approached General James George Smith Neill, who granted Patrick the Barnweill site free of charge, the monument being completed within the year.[61]

A letter to the *Ayrshire Advertiser* from December 1854, expressing satisfaction that money had been provided for such a monument to Wallace, is notable for the way in which the writer framed Wallace's legacy. Under the pseudonym of 'Pro-Patria,' the letter stated that it was thanks to Wallace and Bruce that the Scots had been able to,

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57 'The Wallace Porch,' *SO*, 1st December, 1859; 'Stirling – Memorial Statue of Sir William Wallace,' *Scotsman*, 26th November, 1859

58 ibid. Charles Rogers claimed in his *Autobiography* that it he who had bought and raised the statue, having raised £100, an amount matched by William Drummond. See Rogers, C: *Leaves From My Autobiography*, (London: Longmans Green, 1876), p110

59 *The Wallace Monument, Barnweill, Ayrshire*, (Glasgow, 1859), pp5-6; 'The Wallace Monument at Barnweill,' *Scotsman*, 1st October, 1902. See also Morton, 'Efficacious Patriot.'

60 *Scotsman*, 1st October, 1902

61 *Wallace Monument, Barnweill*, p6; *Scotsman*, 1st October, 1902

> maintain and preserve entire the independence of the nation – and at last to form a permanent union with their more powerful neighbour on the principles of most complete equality, – and now to take their proper share in all the transactions of the empire. How much better it is for England, than it would have been if the Scottish nation had been overpowered, conquered, and oppressed.[62]

This letter clearly represents one of the definitive 'frames' within which Wallace's legacy was placed: that it was thanks to Wallace's preservation of Scottish national independence that the union between Scotland and England occurred as a union of two equal partner nations, each contributing to 'the transactions of empire.' Furthermore, by maintaining Scottish national independence, Wallace had ensured that the Scots would not be a thorn in the English side.

Though lauded as a welcome mark of recognition, and despite reported intentions to the contrary, the Barnweill monument appears to have received no formal inauguration.

In August of 1855, a report appeared in the *Ayrshire Observer* stating that preparations were being made for the laying of the foundation-stone, with the expectation that a 'grand procession' would take place from Kilmarnock, but no ceremony is recorded as having taken place.[63] Despite the lack of any fanfare associated with its erection, the Barnweill monument is significant not only for being the product of one man's determination to see a suitable Wallace monument erected, but also for the prolix inscriptions that Patrick of Roughwood had placed on the north, west and south sides of the Tower, inscriptions that clearly frame Wallace in the familiar terms of great Scottish patriot, and transcendent champion of liberty. (Figure 1).

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62 'Monument to Sir William Wallace,' Letter from 'Pro-Patria,' *Ayrshire Advertiser*, 14th December, 1854. The letter concludes with an expression of surprise that the nation has not yet subscribed for a national monument to be erected to Wallace in Edinburgh.

63 'Monument to Sir William Wallace,' *Ayrshire Observer and Galloway Chronicle*, 21st August, 1855; 'Monument to Sir William Wallace,' Letter from 'Royal Arch Mason,' *Ayrshire Advertiser*, 27th September, 1855

Figure 1: The Barnweill Wallace Monument

The inscription on the north side of the tower refers to Wallace as 'Scotland's great National Hero,' whilst that on the west wall refers to the hero's achievements, 'in resistance to treacherous invasion, and in defence of the laws and liberties of his Country.'[64] The inscription on the south wall most fully contextualises this monument's reading of Wallace, describing him as having repelled 'the yoke of foreign oppression,' maintaining, 'the independence and nationality of Scotland.' The defence of nationality, and the retention of liberty were intimately connected: Wallace had, 'glorified this, his native land, and imperishably associated his name with the defence of national rights, and the liberties and immunities of free-born men,' – the echo of Walter Scott surely intentional. The western inscription closes by raising Wallace to the highest echelon of libertarian

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[64] *Wallace Monument, Barnweill*, p7

heroism: 'From Greece, arose Leonidas, from Scotland, Wallace, and from America, Washington – names which shall remain through all time the Watchwords and Beacons of Liberty.'[65] The Wallace evoked by the Barnweill monument is portrayed as having been great in terms of both Scottish and world history, comfortably assuming his place in a larger pantheon of the heroes of liberty: ancient, mediaeval, and modern. In this way, Wallace was Scotland's contribution to the grand narrative of liberty and independence, a narrative fundamental to modern nationality. Indeed, the use of the term 'nationality' in the Barnweill inscription is highly significant, signifying that the nation is worthy to refer to itself as such: independent, coherent and proud. Furthermore, references to Wallace as representing the 'defence of national rights and the liberties and immunities of free-born men,' seem to hint at a commemorative politics that is more than merely celebratory, reminding the viewer that their nation's independence was hard-fought, and that such a legacy should not be squandered. In this way, the Barnweill monument marks the beginning of this new paradigm in the commemoration of Wallace, one informed as much by the politics of 'Scotch nationality' as by the need to commemorate the national hero in his own terms. It is also worth noting that there is no sign on the monument of the rhetorical representation of Wallace's legacy set out in 'Pro-Patria's' letter to the *Ayr Advertiser*; that is to say, Wallace's role in the foundation of a fair and equal union with England is not part of the inscribed discourse of the Barnweill monument. Instead, read without reference to the informing discourse of an inauguration, or any public statements from Patrick of Roughwood, this monument's emphasis appears to be on Wallace as libertarian Scottish-national hero rather than as proto-Briton. Within a year of the completion of Roughwood's tower, however, the monumental commemoration of Wallace would be rendered considerably more problematic by the advent of the National Wallace Monument movement. Local monuments, erected unobtrusively by private individuals appear to have been acceptable to the taste of Victorian civil society; colossal towers raised by public subscription in a highly visible location, however, were quite another matter.

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[65] *ibid.*, p8

CONCLUSION

It is apparent that if we are to attempt to identify any shared, defining discourse in the commemoration of Wallace and Bruce prior to 1856, it must be the identification of the two heroes with a transcendent patriotism. Both heroes – though principally Wallace – were associated with a love of liberty that rose above the tensions inherent in the Wars of Independence. Liberty and the results of independence in the present were still in the process of developing a self-consciously British or 'unionist-nationalist' element. Viewed through the lens of commemorative practices, this somewhat vague foundation for the myth of both heroes appears to have allowed for shared ownership of their myths. The concepts of liberty and independence, synonymous with the virtues of nationality and patriotism, were sufficiently malleable to permit their deployment by any one of a number of causes. The legacy of Wallace and Bruce does not appear to have been contested territory – there was enough space within Scottish society for opposed readings of the heroes to co-exist. Romantic, moderate and radical could each cleave to their own depiction of the hero's significance. With the National Wallace Monument movement, however, these different versions would be forced into sharing the same public space.

3. National Wallace Monument: From Inception to Design

Introduction

The National Wallace Monument represents one of the most public and controversial commemorations of Scottish national memory in the nineteenth century, clearly signifying the tensions between moderate and radical Scottish nationality, and the difficulties inherent in any attempt to accommodate both readings of the past. If the National Wallace Monument was to be erected on anything close to the scale intended, it would become one of the most colossal and lasting symbols of the meaning of the Scottish past that the Scots had ever raised, and the movement's greatest challenge was to distil conflicting readings of Wallace's legacy into a lasting, material memorial of national significance. The Wallace Monument movement attracted a variety of members of Scottish civil and political society, each with their own axes to grind: whether delivering a speech in support of the monument, or by joining one of the committees charged with co-ordinating the fund-raising and building operations, these readings of Scottish national memory and its resonance in the present were broadcast into the public realm. As a result, the process of its erection was defined by tension and outright schism, as each participant or faction fought to ensure the monument reflected the reading of Wallace they deemed most appropriate. Was this monument to be a symbol of Scotland's prominence in Great Britain's past and present, or was it to have a more assertively nationalist significance, projecting an image of Scotland as a fiercely independent nation, intent on retaining that independence in the face of English neglect?

Part of the difficulty in constructing the story of the National Wallace Monument Movement is that much of the material left to us has come from the pen of the Rev Dr Charles Rogers, secretary of the monument's Acting Committee from its inception in 1856 until his resignation from that post in July of 1861. Rogers, a minister of the Church of Scotland, was chaplain to the garrison at Stirling Castle. He had published numerous pieces of journalism and a number of books, including a popular guidebook, *A Week at Bridge of Allan*, in which he had first proposed the Abbey Craig as a suitable site for a monument to Wallace. Both during and after his

involvement in the National Wallace Monument movement, Rogers was a prolific author on historical matters, as well as launching both the Grampian Club and Royal Historical Society in 1868.[1] His enthusiasm for historical and genealogical publication was aligned with an 'entrepreneurial spirit' that often led Rogers in to confrontations, many of which resulted in litigation, one leading to his being declared bankrupt November of 1863. He developed a reputation not only as a difficult man to work with, but also as someone who was not be trusted in financial matters, the culmination of his exploits coming with his dismissal from the post of 'historiographer' for the Royal Historical Society for maladministration.

Assertively moderate in his nationality, and in his representation of the Scottish past, Rogers was one of the National Wallace Monument's most able propagandists, and there is little doubt that during his time as secretary, and even after his resignation, he worked tirelessly, gathering subscriptions, writing a variety of pamphlets and at least one book, touring Scotland and England to speak at fund-raising meetings as well as despatching letters around the globe.[2] That said, despite his undoubted importance, Rogers's version of events must be handled with extreme care. Rogers had a tendency to promote himself as being at the vanguard of the movement at all times, and, whenever controversy erupted, he persistently represented himself as the wronged party, blaming many of the obstacles experienced by the Monument committees on others. Rogers seems to have divided opinion between those who saw him as an admirably disinterested and patriotic antiquarian, and those who viewed him as being motivated primarily by his own aggrandisement, the thrill of consorting with elite society, and of making money out of the bewildering variety of monumental and antiquarian pursuits which he initiated or with which he was involved – a difference of opinion that cut across the ideologies of moderate or radical nationality.[3] That the history of the Wallace

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[1] Rogers, C: *Leaves From My Autobiography*, (London, 1876), p130, 180-182. For a biographical summary of Rogers's life, see Allan, J M; 'Who Was Charles Rogers?', *Forth Valley Naturalist and Historian*, vol XIII, 1990. See also, Henry Paton, 'Rogers, Charles (1825–1890)' (rev. Burns, J H), *ODNB*, Oxford, 2004 [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/23968]

[2] 'The National Wallace Monument,' letter from C R Brown, *Scotsman*, 8th August, 1892

[3] Rogers's highly litigious nature means that the accusations of his enemies, and Rogers's defences, are a matter of public record: for examples see, 'Rogers vs Dick,' *Scotsman*, 21st July, 1863, 9th January, 1864; 'Action for Libel – Rev Charles Rogers,' *Scotsman*, 2nd October, 1869, 'The Rev Charles Rogers and the *Stirling Observer*,' *Scotsman*,

Monument has vindicated Rogers's role in its erection is primarily down to the fact that Rogers's own writings, by virtue of their accessibility, have tended to set the agenda for historiographical analysis of the monument's history. Rogers's highly specific conception of what ought and ought not to be recorded as the defining discourses of the movement's promoters, means that any attempt to discover some sort of historiographical truth concerning the Wallace Monument Movement, must disentangle itself from Rogers's self-promotion and self-justification after the fact. To that end, wherever possible this chapter will draw primarily upon newspaper reports of the movement and of the deliberations of its committee, as well as the published accounts of other persons who participated in the various stages of the monument's evolution, so that Rogers, rather than being viewed as the authority, is but one voice amongst many.

THE ORIGINS OF THE NATIONAL WALLACE MONUMENT MOVEMENT

A telling example of Rogers's persistent attempts to portray himself as having been critical to the monument's progress at every turn, is encountered when attempting to determine the origins of the National Monument movement. During the life of the movement, and of the tower itself, a number of persons laid claim to having been the originators of the enterprise, arguing that they had begun the movement itself, or in claiming to have first suggested the Abbey Craig as the most suitable site. As noted above, it is largely owing to the availability of Rogers's writings on the subject that he has been acknowledged as one the monument's principal driving forces, yet even in the matter of the identification of the Abbey Craig, there is evidence to suggest that Rogers was not the first to see the potential of the site.[4] As far as Rogers was concerned, it was his promotion of the Abbey Craig that represented the birth of the movement to erect the National Monument, yet it was not until this suggestion dove-tailed with a proposal made in Glasgow that

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9th October, 1869; 'Libel on Dr Charles Rogers,' *Scotsman*, 10th May, 1879; 'The Wallace Memorial,' *Scotsman*, 17th November, 1880.

[4] Rogers, C: *A Week at Bridge of Allan, comprising an account of the spa, and a series of six excursions to the interesting scenery of central Scotland,* (Edinburgh., 1851); 'The Wallace Monument,' Letter to A Alison and H Glassford Bell, *SO*, 11th July, 1861; Rogers, *Autobiography*, p128

the process truly got underway. In March, 1856, the proto-nationalist John Steill wrote a letter to the *Glasgow Daily Bulletin* in response to an accusation made in the *North British Review*, concerning Wallace's motives and character, in which Steill returned to the idea of a Glaswegian monument to Wallace. Picking up on Steill's suggestion, Colin Rae-Brown, who was editor of the *Bulletin*, instigated an appeal through his paper to raise a monument to Wallace on Glasgow Green, an appeal that brought him in to contact with Rogers, who suggested to Rae-Brown that the Abbey Craig might be a more suitable site.[5] Rae-Brown agreed, and the movement proceeded with the Abbey Craig as the new preferred option. At this time, Rogers credited Rae-Brown as the originator in Glasgow of this latest enterprise. Subsequently, however, Rogers was careful to stress that Rae-Brown's Glasgow proposal was merely another stage in the process begun by Rogers in 1851.[6] Colin Rae-Brown saw it differently, viewing himself as 'the founder of the monument enterprise,' relegating Rogers to the role of promoter for the Abbey Craig.[7] Furthermore, whereas Rogers keenly promoted the movement as being a national one, with its Executive Committee meeting in Stirling, Rae-Brown was still referring to it as 'the Glasgow Movement of 1856,' in a letter to the *Scotsman*, written in 1892.[8]

After some correspondence between Rogers and Rae-Brown, in which the latter approved of the new site, a meeting was called in Glasgow at the Globe Hotel on the 1st of May, 1856, in order to set the process in motion. The chairman at this meeting was the Glasgow solicitor, William Burns, one of nineteenth-century Scotland's most ardent proto-nationalists. A prominent Liberal, Burns had appointed himself to the role of 'advocate for Scotland,' and, in fulfilling his brief, was the author of a considerable pamphlet literature on the neglect of Scottish interests, the substitution of 'England' for 'Scotland' or 'Britain' in the discourse of newspapers and public speeches, as well as, towards the end of his life, penning a two volume history of the *Scottish War of Independence*.[9] If Burns was the advocate,

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[5] Charles Rogers to Colin Rae-Brown, reprinted in *Scotsman*, 8th August, 1892; Rogers, *Autobiography*, pp128-129

[6] ibid.; 'Rogers vs Dick,' *The Scotsman*, 21st July 1863; Rogers, *Book of Wallace*, pp259-260; 'Unveiling of the Wallace Statue,' *SJ*, 1st July, 1887

[7] 'The National Wallace Monument,' *Scotsman*, 2nd August, 1892

[8] *ibid.*

[9] Hanham, 'Mid-Century Scottish Nationalism,' pp161-162

Scotland was the wronged client, and Burns appears to have been highly sensitive to any perceived slights upon his client's character or independence. An account of the monument movement printed by the *North British Daily Mail*, one of Glasgow's leading Liberal newspapers, placed Burns at the forefront of the organisation, and emphasised the centrality of the Glaswegian committee in taking the movement forward.[10] In this version, the *Mail* claimed that it was William Burns, not Colin Rae-Brown, who had called the Glasgow meeting of the 1st of May.[11]

Considering that the combative William Burns was, in terms of Scottish nationality, the radical's radical, and that the equally argumentative Rogers was the moderate's moderate, a collision of some form was perhaps inevitable, not least over the prickly issue of who had been responsible for the monument in the first place. Rogers would later claim that Burns attempted to take credit for originating the movement, based upon the fact that he – Burns – had presided at this early meeting in Glasgow.[12] Though ultimately it appears to have been as much a clash of personalities as of 'national' ideologies, the tension between William Burns and Charles Rogers is symptomatic of the tensions that constantly dogged the National Wallace Monument Movement and perceptions of the monument after its completion in 1869. The roots of the problem lay in the agitation brought about by the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights. The NAVSR – also known as the Scottish Rights Society – grew out of a fairly widespread dissatisfaction within Scottish civil society that Scotland was suffering from perceived imbalances in the operation of the union with England, whether these imbalances were constitutional, parliamentary, terminological, heraldic or cultural.[13] Both the NAVSR's main strength and weakness was the fact that it was composed of disgruntled Scots from across the political and cultural spectrum: at one extreme were romantic Tories such as James Grant, on the other radical proto-nationalists such as William Burns, with more moderate Tories or Whigs such as Archibald

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[10] 'The Wallace Monument: Laying of the Foundation Stone, on the Abbey Craig, Stirling,' *NBDM*, 25th June, 1861

[11] Cowan, *Newspaper in Scotland*, pp288-289, 290-291. The *Bulletin* merged with the *NBDM* in 1861.

[12] Rogers, *Autobiography*, p129

[13] Hanham, 'Mid-Century Scottish Nationalism,' pp161-171; Morton; *Unionist-Nationalism*, pp135-153

Alison somewhere in between.[14] Though it managed to achieve a good deal of notoriety, as well as being backed by a majority of the Scottish press, the Association lacked the necessary groundswell of support from the Scottish people, and as a result the light shed by the NAVSR was more in the nature of a dazzling firework than a new sun rising in the Scottish national firmament.[15] The deeply incompatible ideologies within the NAVSR doomed the association to failure: moderate liberals felt the demands of the romantics were somewhat pointless, yet, at the same time, abhorred some of the objectives aimed at by the radicals at the other extreme.[16] The Tory historian Archibald Alison, wrote of the NAVSR in his autobiography that, though the first meeting had been 'very successful,' there were also some, 'elements of a dangerous character,' intent on expressing anti-Union sentiments. Indeed, some members had gone so far as to suggest, '*dissolution of the Union* as the only remedy likely to be at all effectual to obviate the admitted evils of the present state of things.'[17] [original emphasis]. If Charles Rogers is to be believed – and subsequent events in the National Wallace Monument Movement would appear to bear him out, at least in part – William Burns was one of these, 'more ardent and hot-headed patriots.' The encounter within the NAVSR, between Alison and romantically-inclined noblemen such as the Earl of Eglinton, set against the more radical nationalists like William Burns and John Steill, would go on to resonate through the progress of the Wallace Monument's fund-raising and construction, as the members of the Wallace Monument committees attempted to disassociate the movement from the NAVSR's radical firebrands. Rogers, who had been a member of the NAVSR – a fact strangely absent from his withering portrait of the Association in his *Autobiography* – avers that this was one of the defining features of the movement's early stages.[18]

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[14] Hanham, 'Mid-Century Scottish Nationalism,' pp161-164

[15] *Times*, 21st July, 1853

[16] Hanham, 'Mid-Century Scottish Nationalism,' pp169-170

[17] Alison, A; *Some Account of My Life and Writings: An Autobiography*, (Edinburgh, 1883) vol II, pp30-31

[18] In a letter to Colin Rae-Brown, dated 15th March, 1856, Charles Rogers stated that, 'I am a member of the Scottish Rights Association, and am very sincerely devoted to its interests.' See also, Rogers, *Autobiography*, pp124-127

This need to emphasise the separation between the NAVSR and the National Wallace Monument movement, was not one that rested solely with the more moderate members of the Wallace committees. The principal result of the Globe Hotel meeting in Glasgow, was a letter to the Provost of Stirling, signed by William Burns as chairman, asking that the Provost call a national meeting in Stirling to launch a movement for a national monument to Wallace – a proposal that Charles Rogers attempted to take credit for in his *Autobiography*.[19] A meeting was then held in Stirling on the 12th of May, with Provost Sawers in the chair. Perhaps with the reputation of William Burns at the back of his mind, Sawers closed his response to the initial letter from the Glasgow meeting by suggesting, 'the impropriety of having the movement mixed up in any way with the Scottish Rights Association.'[20] Burns's response, replete with affirmations of support from Glasgow, and for the need to promote the movement on as national a basis as possible, closed with the declaration that, though many of the movement's 'most active promoters,' had been members of the NAVSR,

> we are quite alive to the necessity of avoiding any apparent connection between the association as such, and the present movement, as there are those who would make this a difficulty in their own case, and others who would make it a ground for evil speaking. We must endeavour to carry all parties with us, laying aside for the time all difference of opinion. Whig and Tory maun a' agree in this attempt to wipe out a blot from the honour of our common country.[21]

At this, the earliest stage of the monument movement, William Burns acknowledged the need for the setting aside of differences to favour the common end; there is no trace here of the Burns that Charles Rogers portrays in his *Autobiography* – a crotchety nationalist attempting to co-opt the monument movement to trumpet his radicalism. Burns's statements at public meetings held to promote the monument movement were, on the whole, of a decidedly moderate nature, emphasising the fact that he was prepared to set aside his cultural-political concerns to ensure that the monument movement could go about its work as smoothly as possible.

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[19] 'Monument to Sir William Wallace on the Abbey Craig: Preliminary Meeting,' *SJ*, 16th May, 1856

[20] *ibid.*

[21] *ibid.*

1856: The National Meeting at Stirling

The Stirling meeting on the 12th of May, 1856, adopted several resolutions in favour of the monument enterprise and the Abbey Craig site.[22] A provisional committee was then appointed with Rogers and the Stirling town-clerk depute being nominated as secretaries, with the purpose arranging a national meeting to be held on the 24th of June, the anniversary of the Battle of Bannockburn, to launch formally the National Wallace Monument movement.[23] The meeting would also appoint an acting committee to organise and administer the gathering of subscriptions, the selection of a design and the institution of the building work once sufficient funds had been gathered.[24] Rogers claims in his *Autobiography* that efforts to find a suitable president for the national meeting were hampered by the presence of a committee member so deeply associated with the more unsavoury aspects of the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights, Rogers making the claim that Lord Eglinton declined the office of president, remarking 'that he had been "burnt"'.[25] Furthermore, Rogers states that it was only because William Burns had made a declaration confirming that he would not 'obtrude' his objectionable views into the work of the committee, that the Earl of Elgin and other potential aristocratic members were convinced that taking part would not be injurious to their reputations.[26] Whether or not Rogers exaggerated these difficulties in order to demonise Burns – and to sanctify himself – it is fairly clear that, even before the monument movement had been formally instituted at a national level, the *perceived* incompatibility between the mainly Glaswegian radicals and the more moderate proponents from across Scotland was problematic.

The national meeting went ahead as planned at the King's Park on the 24th of June, with the Earl of Elgin presiding and an estimated 20,000 people in attendance. Amongst the resolutions made were: that a national monument to Wallace should be erected; that the Abbey Craig was the ideal location for it; that

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[22] *ibid.*

[23] Rogers, *Autobiography*, pp130

[24] *ibid.*, pp130,132

[25] *ibid.*, pp132-133

[26] Rogers, *Autobiography*, pp133-135

subscriptions be collected in Scotland, the rest of Great Britain and its colonies, and from 'our countrymen throughout the world;' that the working men of Scotland would 'cordially unite with their fellow countrymen' in seeing the movement to a successful conclusion; and that the design for the monument be 'publicly submitted to competition among native artists.'[27] The addresses made in support of these resolutions were of a largely moderate nature; Wallace was uniformly represented as being the champion and even the founder of Scottish national independence, one of the main progenitors of that essential strand of Scottish nationality: civil and religious liberty. In proposing in favour of the monument's erection, Lord Provost Melville of Edinburgh described Wallace as, 'the successful defender of the independence and liberty of Scotland, at a period when the kingdom was subjected to the domination of a foreign power,' through whose, 'courageous enterprise in war and prudent administration in peace, the first germ of that civil and religious liberty which we now enjoy,' had been set.[28] Melville, who had succeeded the radical Duncan MacLaren as Provost in 1854 and was distinguished for his 'freedom from bias and innate fairness,' appears to have been precisely the kind of moderate required for a meeting of this nature, and his resolution was tailor-made to appeal across the spectrum of Scottish nationality.[29] Not only did it make unambiguous reference to 'the domination of a foreign power,' as well as the 'servility of the rulers,' it also cited the subservience of those in the employ of that 'foreign power,' alongside the ubiquitous reference to 'civil and religious liberty.'

The characterisation of Wallace's legacy by the event's principal speakers was fairly uniform. For instance, Lord Elgin, a peer of liberal-conservative loyalties, who had been until recently the Governor-General of Canada, claimed that the honourable name Scotland bore amongst all other nations, and the fact that Scotland retained 'that spirit of national union which is the lifeblood and the force of a nation,' was owed to the achievements of Stirling Bridge and Bannockburn. Provost Melville said that Scotland's 'existence as a nation,' and its 'distinct characteristics which mark us as a people amongst the other nations of the world,' were owed to 'the prowess of Wallace, and the indomitable spirit of resistance which

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27 'The National Monument to Wallace – Meeting at Stirling,' *Scotsman*, 25th June, 1856

28 *Scotsman*, 25th June, 1856

29 *Anon: The Lord Provosts of Edinburgh*, (Edinburgh, 1932), p124

he manifested.'[30] Here we see one of the fundamental aspects of the Wallace myth: had it not been for Wallace's forging of the Scots into a unified nation, they would never have prevailed against an alien tyrant. Wallace had restored Scotland to itself and created a nationality that endured. It is, however, the shades of emphasis, that direct us more fully towards the intentions of individual speakers. For example, both Lord Elgin and Henry Glassford Bell, perhaps each with an eye on the shadow cast by memories of the NAVSR, stressed that, though Scotland could never lose its national independence, it was owing to this independence that the nation had achieved an equal partnership in Union with England.[31] A popular comparison – here made by Elgin – compared Scotland with Ireland, arguing that England's attempts to force 'its own foreign institutions, foreign laws, and foreign religion on [the] reluctant and high-spirited people' of Ireland was the cause of so many of Britain's present difficulties. Similarly, Sheriff Bell claimed that, 'Any Scotchman who now entertained animosity towards England, or any Englishman who entertained animosity towards Scotland, would be set down as simply insane,' though it is noteworthy that the aspects of Scottish nationality that Bell names as 'peculiarly her own,' are limited to literature, music, scenery, and 'her own grand historic reminiscences.'[32] In contrast, Melville's speech was much more assertive: Melville did not mention Britain or the Union once, preferring instead to focus on the necessity of resisting foreign tyranny, and saying that Scotland was a country with its own 'laws and institutions,' which, he added, 'we trust and believe we shall retain, and, if necessary, struggle to retain.'[33]

The composition of those invited to deliver the resolutions is also significant, in that they are drawn from across the political, ecclesiastical and social spectrum of Scotland: as well as the 'conservative-liberal' Lord Elgin, the moderate Melville and Sheriff Bell, a Tory of liberal sympathies, there were also present Alexander Campbell of Monzie, champion of the Free Church, who had laid the foundation-stone of the abortive Edinburgh Knox Monument in 1846; the Rev Dr Robert Gillan, described as 'a popular public speaker on platform as well as pulpit,' who

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[30] *Scotsman*, 25th June, 1856

[31] Morton, *Unionist-Nationalism*, p180

[32] *Scotsman*, 25th June, 1856

[33] *ibid.*

would go on to be Moderator of the Church of Scotland in 1873. Also present was a Mr Little, a Glasgow shoemaker, referred to in the press as 'a working-man,' who was present to second the resolution, proposed by Rev Mr Alexander Low of Keig, another Church of Scotland minister: 'that the chief supporters of Wallace in his struggle for independence being the Scottish peasantry, it is fully expected that this class will cordially unite with their fellow-countrymen in the present movement.'[34] Clearly, the assembly gathered for the purposes of inaugurating the Wallace Monument movement was drawn from every class, religion and political interest group, as a means of embodying the national character of the monument and to ensure that funds might be raised from every corner of Scottish society. The 1856 meeting was the movement's self-conscious attempt to overcome the heterogeneity of Scottish nationality, and to find common cause in the commemoration of its hero, whilst at the same time excluding any attempt to use the meeting or the monument as a focus for Scottish national grievances. The moderate Wallace, the Wallace that sought to disassociate himself from any accusations of vindicatory practices, was in possession of the high-ground.

Despite the Stirling meeting's attempts to appear moderate, the principal criticism of the monument movement from within those Scottish journals that expressed an opinion was not that the monument was inappropriate, but that it was wholly unnecessary. The *Scotsman's* editorial on the event argued that there were two reasons why such a monument should be built: that it preserved the memory of the man, and that it acted as a visible sign of the nation's gratitude. In response to its first condition, the *Scotsman* stated that there was no need to preserve Wallace's memory, as it was a, 'bond taken in the heart of the nation, and bequeathed from sire to son… a memorial nobler than sculpture can rear, and likely to live after stone and brass have crumbled.' As regarded the monument as a symbol of gratitude, the *Scotsman* argued that it would be all but impossible for a monument to do justice to the memory of a hero who had preserved Scottish 'freedom and nationality.'[35] The editorial closed by expressing the concern that there had been insufficient foresight in calculating whether or not the enterprise was likely to succeed, an anxiety shared by *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, 'a partisan magazine with

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[34] *ibid.*

[35] Editorial in *Scotsman*, 28th June, 1856

liberal leanings.'[36] Though it generally approved of the idea of the monument, *Tait's* was concerned that the monument would not only be unworthy of Wallace's memory but that 'a monument like a gauntlet of defiance,' might be an inappropriate symbol for a national hero whose 'value to English liberty was equal to his efforts for Scottish independence.'[37] In common with the *Scotsman*, *Tait's* sought to emphasise the importance of Wallace as having brought Scotland to a position of equality with England, both illustrating their point by making reference to Ireland as having suffered from English domination – the 'down-trodden shamrock,' as opposed to 'the defiant thistle.'[38] From a different corner of the political landscape, the *Scottish Journal*, a short-lived newspaper whose purpose was to counter 'those publications of a doubtful tendency that emanate weekly from London,' was not as certain of Wallace's Britishness as *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, stating that any benefits England may have gained from Wallace's victories were merely 'indirect.' The *Journal* did, however, believe equally that Englishmen were enabled, '*to respect the expression of manly national sentiments by their Scottish fellow-subjects* [original emphasis].'[39] Contrary to the *Scotsman's* claims, the *Scottish Journal* deemed the monument to be necessary, as, owing to increased imitation of 'English fashions and ideas,' the Scottish past was becoming 'dim and shadowy,' and the Scots needed 'an object of purely patriotic inspiration,' to remind them of their nationality. The *Glasgow Daily News*, another of the numerous short-lived newspapers from this time, though one that 'wore no political badge,' took a similar view to the *Scottish Journal.* Contrasting with the *Scotsman's* sanguine belief that Wallace's memory could never die, the *Daily News* believed the monument was necessary, 'to see that the memory of our Hero should no longer be a mere floating recollection, but an actual fact.' This celebratory editorial, proclaimed that the Scots had proved that the 'fires kindled effectually six centuries ago by Wallace,' still burned, as evidenced on 'the bloody plains of the distant east.'

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[36] 'Tait's Edinburgh Magazine,' North, John S (ed.): *Waterloo Directory of Scottish Newspapers and periodicals, 1800-1900*, (Waterloo, c. 1989)

[37] 'Wallace and his Monument,' *Tait's Edinburgh Magazine*, August, 1856

[38] *Scotsman*, 28th June, 1856

[39] 'National Wallace Monument,' *The Scottish Journal*, 4th October, 1856

1856 – 1861: Raising subscriptions and the Thundering *Times*

In early July, the committee named at the national meeting met, with the Duke of Montrose and Lord Elgin presiding, and Charles Baillie, MP – later Lord Jerviswoode, the Lord Advocate – nominated as Convener for the acting committee, with Charles Rogers as one of the secretaries.[40] An early indication of the agitation caused by opposing perspectives on Wallace's legacy, and the character of the rhetoric deemed appropriate in promoting the monument, is to be found in an extract from the minute book of the Glasgow committee, perhaps the most active of all the local committees set up to raise subscriptions. Having come up with the idea of circulating a 'popular address' to the 'industrial classes,' of Scotland, the Glasgow committee forwarded a copy of the proposed text to the central, 'Stirling committee.' In response, the Central Committee, 'declined to issue the proposed popular address for the Holidays out of an apprehension that this might give room for an attack by some of the Journals.'[41] Whatever the content of this popular address was, it was clearly too incendiary to merit the approval of the Central Committee, and was rejected.

In August, meetings were held at Dunfermline and Dumfries, at Ayr in September, and at Falkirk in October, whilst at the same time the Glasgow committee was very active, holding 'district meetings' throughout the city.[42] Meetings were also held in parts of Canada, the United States, New Zealand and Australia, as well as in England and throughout the Empire.[43] In all, over forty meetings took place during this first period of the monument movement. An examination of the rhetoric deployed at these regional meetings displays the variety of discourses being put to use in the name of the monument, even though the presence of members of the Acting Committee did lend some consistency to their content. At the Ayr meeting, held at the Court-House on the second of October, 1856, a number of members of the committee were present, namely Provost Sawers and Bailie Rankin of Stirling, William Burns, Charles Rogers, and, the 'London

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[40] Rogers, *Autobiography*, pp133-135; *Scotsman*, 2nd August, 1892

[41] *Minute Book of the Glasgow Wallace Committee*, *MLB*, #B115061, p28

[42] Rogers, *Book of Wallace*; pp270-273; *MLB*

[43] Rogers, *Book of Wallace*; pp273

Secretary' of the Central Committee, James Dodds, along with Thomas Murray, an Edinburgh lawyer, and Provost M'Queen of Lanark. Amongst the numerous local worthies were not only the town Provost but two local Tory MPs, Sir James Fergusson and James Baird, Fergusson as chair.[44] After a few preliminary remarks, in which he defended the choice of the Abbey Craig site, Fergusson called upon James Dodds to deliver the main address of the evening. Dodds, having praised the county of Ayr as a 'favoured spot' in the history of Scotland, outlined those facets of the patriot-hero that had made Wallace great: not only Wallace as the Great Liberator, but also Wallace as the Great Liberal. Of the first aspect, Dodds combined the argument that Wallace had managed to bring about the Union of 1707 as a union of equals, with the complementary argument that Scotland, by remaining independent, had no need to disturb the Union by attempting to achieve independence, retarding Britain's glorious progress as a result – the comparison Dodds makes is not with Ireland, however, but with Austria.[45] Dodds also argued that Wallace had not only been a great warrior but also a great administrator and statesman – a thirteenth-century proto-democrat. The office of Governor of Scotland had been conferred on Wallace, 'by the popular voice,' following which, having recognised that, 'the feudal system interposed a difficulty almost insurmountable to the progress of the nation… the first thing he did was to endeavour to sweep away many of the worst features of that system.'[46] Dodds echoed this sentiment at the Falkirk meeting, where he called the proposed monument the 'People's Monument,' a symbol of, 'the freedom of the people from all oppression and injustice, and their enfranchisement with all civil rights and privileges. (Great cheering.)' The product of these principles was inevitable: 'Power is passing away from the old traditionary [*sic*] hands, and the Government of the people will ere long be the work of the people themselves.'[47] Wallace was here represented as the great Liberal, a political reformer before his time who supported the ideal of constitutional monarchy and a society based upon resolutely liberal principles, opposed to landed privilege and suppression of individual rights.

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[44] 'The Wallace Monument,' *Ayr Observer and Galloway Chronicle*, 7th October, 1856

[45] *ibid.*

[46] *ibid.*

[47] 'Wallace Meeting,' *Falkirk Herald* (*nd*), cutting in *MLB*, #B115063

This was a reading of the Scottish past that Dodds was to promote consistently through the commemoration of Wallace, yet also of the Covenanters. Partly owing to the encouragement of Charles Rogers, Dodds would go on to become a very popular public speaker, principally on the subject of the Covenanters and their place in the historic Scottish narrative of civil and religious liberty – his series of lectures on the subject, when printed in book form, went through several editions. Dodds appears to have been highly favoured by the promoters of the National Wallace Monument as an orator capable of delivering speeches in terms suited to the moderate nationality that the monument movement needed to project in order to achieve acceptance across the range of Scottish society.[48] He spoke not only at the meetings in Ayr and Falkirk, but also at the meetings held in Glasgow, Dunfermline, Dumfries, and 'other important towns.'[49] We can see in his public statements why Dodds appears to have been so acceptable to both moderates such as Rogers and radicals such as Burns: Dodds stood firmly in the centre-ground of Scottish nationality, praising Wallace for his role in bringing about the union as a union of equals, yet also for delivering Scotland from the need for nationalist struggle. His nationality was assertive, rather than radical.

It is worth highlighting that, in common with much of mid-Victorian civil society, Dodds was deeply sympathetic to the aims of the Hungarian, Polish and Italian nationalists. As well as being a friend of Thomas Carlyle and of Leigh Hunt, Dodds also befriended Lajos Kossuth during the Hungarian's exile in London, and wrote a glowing profile of him in one of a series of sketches of 'eminent characters' written for the *Scotsman* newspaper. Recognising Dodds's sympathies in this respect is an important consideration when attempting to characterise the nature of mid-nineteenth-century Scottish nationality, particularly with regard to the moderate centre ground – compassion for the suffering of the Italian, Hungarian and Polish nationalists was not confined to those who expressed their Scottish nationality in more radical terms. In seeking fairly unequivocal evidence of this, we need look no further than Stirling when, shortly after the national meeting on the 24th of June, 1856, Lajos Kossuth gave a lecture on the Austrian Concordat. The evening's

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[48] Dodds, J: *Lays of the Covenanters, with a memoir of the Author by the Rev James Dodds, Dunbar*, (Edinburgh, 1880), pp92-93

[49] *ibid.*

speeches were replete with comparisons between Kossuth and Wallace, and contrasts between the freedom from oppression won at Stirling Bridge and the ongoing struggle in Hungary, not least by Kossuth himself:

> May that liberty dwell with you to the consummation of time, is my prayer, and may the monument you are about to raise to the noblest of your national heroes – (cheers) – may that monument… be a monitor of lasting inspiration to Scotland. (Loud and prolonged cheering.)… Two things at least I can claim to have in common with your William Wallace – that of having struggled for national independence – (cheers) – and that of being unfortunate.[50]

Kossuth's reception at Stirling, and the connections made between his nationalist endeavour and the meeting held to inaugurate the Wallace Monument movement, were sealed by the presence of none other than the movement's arch-moderate, Charles Rogers, who directly connected Wallace with Kossuth. Whereas two days beforehand the nation had gathered to hear, 'eloquent appeals on behalf of a fitting memorial of the greatest, the most untainted, and the most illustrious patriot of former times,' the people of Stirling were now assembled to listen, 'to the heart-stirring appeals of one of the greatest of living patriots. (Applause.)'[51]

Placing Kossuth, Garibaldi, Mazzini, *et al*, in direct connection with Wallace was common practice in Scotland during this period, and nor were such sympathies deemed problematic within the context of the union. Dodds's speeches at Ayr and Falkirk were replete with objections to any accusation that the monument might in any way be deemed antagonistic to the English:

> Awaken the ancient animosity of England! Why, the thing is impossible. We came together at the Union as equals, not as a superior on the one hand, and an inferior on the other… In doing something to embody our love for the nationality of Scotland, we do not offend Englishmen, and at the same time we do something to strengthen the nationality of the British empire. (Applause.)[52]

The idea that the monument would be an indication of Scottish national feeling, was one that Dodds returned to at the Glasgow meeting in April, 1857, when he stated that if there was to be any national monument at all, such a

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50 'Arrival of Kossuth, and the Meeting in John St Church,' *MLB*, #B115063

51 *ibid.*

52 *Ayr Observer and Galloway Chronicle*, 7th October, 1856

monument must by its very nature be in the name of one who was, 'if not the very author of our national existence, he was, at least, the champion by whom that national existence was maintained and defended.'[53]

The role given to William Burns at these regional meetings was that of the advocate called upon to counter those accusations being levelled at the Central Committee, whether with regard to the need for a monument, the selection of the site, the suggestion that no monument could be worthy of the subject, or the potential difficulties to be encountered when determining the form of the monument. At both the Edinburgh meeting in November, 1856, and at the Glasgow meeting in April, 1857, it was down to Burns to act as spokesman for the Central Committee, and, in articulating the Committee's responses to such indictments, Burns adopted a highly moderate tone, sharing the 'national' emphasis deployed by James Dodds. In his Glasgow speech, Burns urged those present to 'disregard all minor considerations and differences of opinion,' in aid of the monument's successful completion, going on to say that,

> the question is no longer whether Scotland ought to erect a monument to the memory of Wallace – is not whether Professor Blackie or the Caledonian Mercury may have used expressions which Professor Nichol or the North British Daily Mail may object to – expressions that may be forgotten ere the year has passed away – but whether the monument… is to be Scotland's honour or her shame. (Cheers.)

Burns here reaffirmed his commitment to the necessity of rising above 'differences of opinion,' in aid of the shared goal of paying a debt of gratitude to the nation's deliverer. The closest Burns appears to have got to a statement reflecting the radical nationality of his pamphleteering, was in his speech at the Ayr meeting, when he promoted the monument as not simply for the 'glorification' of Scotsmen, nor for 'the value of the Empire,' but for all 'who may have occasion to resist oppression,' going on to quote from William Motherwell's 1818 proposal for the Glasgow monument as a beacon of liberty.[54] This took the libertarian argument deployed by Dodds and others a step further: rather than celebrating Wallace as having delivered Scotland from oppression, and in so doing, rendering any further struggle unnecessary, Burns – fleetingly – promoted the monument as a focal point

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[53] 'National Monument to Wallace,' *NBDM*, 24th April, 1857

[54] *ibid.*

for those nationalities that did not enjoy the freedom and independence of the Scots, with the implicit distinction between the monument as simply representing liberty, and the monument as a light in the darkness for the victims of tyranny.

At Ayr, Burns's projection of the monument as a beacon to oppressed nationalities was the most radical this meeting became. Charles Rogers delivered 'a lengthened address' on the subject of the funds raised to date, and, of the local speakers, the only speech to have been recorded at any length was that of a Mr Cathcart of Auchendrane, who addressed the meeting in avowedly British terms, returning to the familiar theme of the blessings Wallace had brought to Union and Empire.[55] If Charles Rogers's records of this chapter in the movement's development were to be believed, such unionist-nationalist sentiment would have been all that was heard. In the *Book of Wallace*, Rogers reproduced a number of extracts from speeches delivered at these meetings, each extract chosen to reflect the movement's moderation and explicit Britishness, partly as an attempt, as Rogers argued, to undermine the link being made between the monument movement and the NAVSR.[56] For example, as quoted by Rogers, the speech made by Sheriff Tait of Clackmannan, delivered at the Edinburgh meeting on 27th of November, 1856, emphasised the harmonious relationship between Scotland and England within a mutually beneficial union, asserting that, in England, 'the name of Wallace inspires admiration and respect,' for that very reason.[57] Not quoted by Rogers, but representing one of the most strident acclamations of Britishness at any of the regional meetings, John Wilson, of Bantaskine, speaking at the Falkirk gathering, proclaimed that,

> Happily now, sir, England and Scotland are united on *equal* terms, – peacefully, industriously, and harmoniously, under a *British* crown, and it is no part of ours to disturb that union which has served the great end of making a *British* nation of the English and Scottish peoples; from their united capacity greater prosperity and blessing has attended them both.[58]

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[55] *ibid.*

[56] Rogers, *Autobiography*, pp136-141

[57] Rogers, *Book of Wallace*; pp272

[58] *Falkirk Herald, op cit.*

Contrary to Rogers's record, however, these meetings were by no means entirely defined by such blustering Britishness: for example, Rogers's extract from Sheriff Tait's speech does not mention that, 'he cordially approved of union, but not of fusion, of the different nations.'[59] Tait was seconding a motion moved by Professor John Stuart Blackie, whose speech was replete with calls for the defence of Scottish nationality. For Blackie, a national monument to Wallace was necessary, not so much out of a sentimental attachment to the past, but rather as a necessary expression of independent 'Scotch' nationality, one faced with the 'tendency to be Anglified.' Blackie said that, as the Scots were, 'exposed to so many insidious influences,' that tended to anglicise them, it was their, 'bounden duty to take every possible measure that will restore, reanimate and quicken your slumbering feelings of nationality.'[60] Blackie's speech also included a criticism of opinions expressed in *The Times*. Following an address delivered at Falkirk in early November, 1856, by the Lord Advocate – Jerviswoode's predecessor – *The Times* printed an editorial regarding this 'new Scotch Movement,' in which it argued that,

> [Scottish] peculiarities may be deemed provincialisms rather than nationality proper… we still regard [Scotland] as the welded portion of a greater whole, and have no sympathy with those who would give to the country the attributes of a separate existence under the high-sounding name of nationality.[61]

This editorial made no mention of the Wallace Monument movement – that would come soon after – dwelling, still, on the crotchets of the NAVSR, but the Scottish-national nerve was sensitive, and those who came forward to speak at the Edinburgh meeting clearly did so in order to publicly denounce these slights against Scottish nationality, as much as to support the Wallace Monument movement. It was against *The Times's* criticisms that Blackie, Tait and the rest were reacting, responding to accusations of provincialism by defending Scottish nationality as distinct and historic – the Wallace Monument was to be a symbol of this nationality. Speeches such as these by no means emphasised a distinction between the firebrands of the NAVSR and the Wallace Monument movement; instead, they covered similar ground, reiterating Scotland's claims to possess a nationality every

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59 'Scotch Nationality – The Monument to Wallace,' *The Times*, 4th December, 1856

60 *Times*, 4th December, 1856

61 *The Times*, 1st November, 1856

bit as genuine and historical as England's. John Stuart Blackie went so far as to claim that it was 'not the will of God,' that distinct nationalities should be 'absorbed.' As a result, the Wallace Monument movement was 'a fraction of the grand question of Scottish nationality,' and the success or failure of the appeal for funds ought to be 'received as an index of the amount of self-recognition and self-esteem in the Scottish bosom.' [62]

The Times by no means silently received the Scotch return of fire: in the same edition as its report of the Edinburgh meeting, the newspaper discharged another salvo in an editorial on the Wallace Monument movement, in which it made a direct connection between the monument and the NAVSR. As with the earlier piece, *The Times* characterised the Scots as 'relying on past achievements,' claiming that any distinctively Scottish greatness was now history: 'Scotchmen, in fact, seem to do nothing but masquerade in the garments of their forefathers.'[63] Scotland, it was argued, ought to bow to the inevitable and accept absorption: 'the more Scotland has striven to be a nation, the more she has sunk to be a province.'[64] Yet memories of the past were clearly seen as fundamental to Scottish nationality: in his Edinburgh address, responding to *The Times's* accusation that the Scots were no more entitled to claiming nationality than the people of Lancashire, Blackie said that, 'the days of Scotland are numbered so soon as the names of Wallace and of John Knox shall be mentioned without exciting memories and passions and aspirations which are not known… in the whole of England.'[65]

Appeals for the defence of Scottish nationality were not the only voices of assertive, if not necessarily radical Scottish nationality to be heard at the Edinburgh meeting: Sheriff Logan of Perthshire argued that not enough had yet been done to appeal to the 'common people of Scotland,' as it had been this class that had supported Wallace when 'those above him despised and distrusted him; those around him envied and would have supplanted him.'[66] Here we see, again, one of

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[62] 'National Wallace Monument,' *Scotsman*, 29th November, 1856

[63] *The Times*, 4th December, 1856

[64] *ibid.* Also quoted in Hanham, H J: *Scottish Nationalism*, (London, 1969), p80

[65] *Scotsman*, 29th November, 1856

[66] *ibid.*

the defining features of the Wallace myth, wherein the hero's legacy was defined as much by the support of the Scottish peasantry, and his rejection by the nobility, as it was by his personal virtues.[67] Logan went on to represent the Scottish people as being sacred to the retention of nationality, declaring that the people were, 'at all times the true type of a nation, and among whom lingering nationality longest remains, who are the last to be rubbed smooth into a common type by interchange with a greater people and a higher civilisation.'[68] Despite this complimentary description of England as a 'higher civilisation,' Logan's address would have left the listener in no doubt that the purpose of the monument was to preserve a necessary Scottish nationality, with the Scottish people as its heart and soul. This was a claim mirrored at a large-scale, city-wide meeting held in Glasgow in April 1857: the Rev Dr William Anderson, a United Presbyterian minister described by Drummond and Bulloch as, 'a brash if able controversialist,' gave a speech proclaiming that, 'The honour of erecting this monument belonged to the people and not the nobility – to you and me, and not to the Dukes and Barons.' In making this point, Anderson drew a novel reaction from the Glasgow crowd, one that arguably epitomises the necessity felt by the movement's promoters for retaining a moderate position The Rev Dr Anderson said,

> Wallace was one of the people, not of the aristocracy – the bane of our Commonwealth. (Loud cheers, intermingled with hisses.) Three times he freed Scotland from oppression; but only to have it sold and betrayed – by whom? By the Barons. (Cheers.)[69]

That Anderson drew such a reaction from the crowd suggests that, whatever the composition of the Glasgow gathering, it was very much open to radical anti-aristocratic statements of the kind that tended to deter more moderate or Tory support. Anderson went on to draw a parallel between Scotland in the thirteenth century and Hungary in the mid-nineteenth, principally by comparing Wallace with Kossuth.[70] At this meeting, even James Dodds was moved to the assertion that, through the achievements of Wallace, providence should have brought England and

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[67] Finlay, RJ: 'Heroes, Myths and Anniversaries in Modern Scotland,' *Scottish Affairs*, 18, Winter, 1997, pp114-116

[68] *Scotsman*, 29th November, 1856

[69] *NBDM*, 24th April, 1857

[70] 'National Monument to Sir William Wallace,' *GH*, 24th April, 1857; Drummond, A L, Bulloch, J: *The Church in Victorian Scotland, 1843-1874*, (Edinburgh, 1975), p188

Scotland together, 'on an equal footing… Such, however, was not the case.'[71] This statement may seem somewhat surprising for, as we have seen, Dodds was one of the principal proponents of the view that the monument should not be viewed in any way as being offensive to England, yet Dodds's references to the imbalance of the Union are a significant example of the middle ground of Scottish nationality accepting that the Union is not perfect. That is to say, there was nothing inherently contradictory in expressing robust defence of the Union, rejecting accusations of anti-Englishness, yet at the same time recognising the cultural and political imbalances within Great Britain. This was the very definition of tempered Scoto-British nationality, as expressed by Rogers, Archibald Alison and others – we should not forget that Rogers and Alison had been a members of the NAVSR until its radical element caused them to abandon it. It was when national objections were taken too far, or when the commemoration of the Scottish past was given too radical a spin, that such moderate patriots turned away from any association with radical nationality. Importantly, Dodds's fleeting criticism of the Union reminds us that typologies of 'moderate' and 'radical' – though applied at the time, and a useful analytical tool – over simplify the complexities of nineteenth-century Scottish nationality, and the very heterogeneity of perspectives that undermined those prominent public expressions of Scottish national sentiment such as the NAVSR and the Wallace Monument movement.

The Design Controversy

If the public rhetoric of the movement at this time covered a broad spectrum of perspectives on Wallace's legacy and its relationship to Scottish nationality, such nuances became polarised when decisions had to be made regarding the monument itself. It was one thing to stand up and speak in aid of the monument movement, but quite another to be involved in the process of getting the thing built. It is clear that certain questions regarding the monument's significance had to be answered: that is, what purpose should the National Wallace Monument serve? For William Burns and those radicals on the committee of like mind, the monument was a rallying point for reform of the Union, dissolution not being ruled

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[71] *GH*, 24th April, 1857. It must be noted that this statement only appears in the *Glasgow Herald's* report of the meeting, not in the more detailed coverage printed by the *North British Daily Mail.*

out if deemed necessary. Ranged against these radical, proto-nationalists, were the more moderate, Tory proponents of Wallace's memory, such as Archibald Alison and the Rev Dr Rogers, whose concerns were undoubtedly unionist, more focused upon the necessity of marking Scotland's debt to Wallace than in trying to resurrect the patriot-hero as a means of carrying on the national struggle. There was little difference between both groups' conceptions of what Wallace had achieved – the discord stemmed from how the Scots had put that legacy to use. For the moderates, the past was just that: over and done with, all relevant lessons learned; for the proto-nationalists, the past was replete with unfinished business – Wallace's legacy, rather than having been invested in a union of equals, had been squandered. The stage was set for a quarrel concerning what would undoubtedly be one of the monument's most enduring methods of signification: the design. Though the local meetings may have been capable of accommodating a variety of different interpretations of the hero's legacy, the selection of the design acted as a polarising influence within the committee. The importance of this issue can be gauged from the frequency with which speakers made suggestions as to what the design ought to be. From the earliest stages of the movement a variety of forms were proposed: an 'immense cairn;' a 'pyramid;' 'some huge and unhewn block of granite;' 'an enormous Scottish lion, of portentous dimensions,' looking, 'wisely and craftily' towards England.' The antiquary, David Laing, proposed, 'the union of architecture with sculpted bas-relief, in the style, but without any slavish imitation, of some of the famous monuments of Grecian art,' while, in a proposal radically different from any made hitherto, the Rev William Anderson said that he would prefer the monument to show, 'the hydra of English oppression, and he would put in Wallace's hands a few fine mastiff dogs… defending [Wallace] from the hydra, and a number of serpents stinging his heels – the aristocracy of Scotland.'[72]

The call for submission of designs had been made in March of 1858, with a closing date of the end of January 1859, the received designs going on public display in the Golden Lion Hotel, Stirling, during that month.[73] The designs submitted

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[72] *NBDM*, 24th April, 1857; Laing, 'Portraits of Sir William Wallace,' p309; 'Monument to Sir William Wallace,' *Ayrshire Observer*, 23rd December, 1855; Yule, *Traditions etc, Respecting Sir William Wallace*, p31; *Times*, 4th December, 1856; *Scotsman*, 29th November, 1856; 'Bruce versus Wallace,' Letter from John Steill, *SJ*, 2nd July, 1867

[73] 'Models for the Wallace Monument,' *SJ*, 2nd January, 1859

were in a wide variety of forms, from towers to domed 'basements,' from 'Eleanor Crosses' to equestrian statues, though none of these appears to have been viewed as worthy of the site or the subject. The overall press reaction to the competition was somewhat muted: an editorial in the *Scotsman* complained that 'the Gothic canopies, spires, and towers exhibited, with their "gingerbread" concomitants, are quite unsuitable;' the *Stirling Journal* was impressed by only one of the submissions, 'a huge square tower of masonry, beautifully proportioned… being in the old embattled style.'[74] In a letter to the *Stirling Journal*, William Stirling of Keir, Tory MP for Perthshire – later William Stirling-Maxwell – bemoaned the lack of any inspirational designs on display, and instead proposed that, in order not to be dwarfed by the massiveness of the Abbey Craig, the monument should be, 'a tall and stately tower of our early national architecture.' In detailing how this tower might look, Stirling suggested that 'a statue of the hero might be introduced in a niche in the south-east front,' and that 'a spacious screw staircase would form a fine architectural feature.'[75]

Despite the disapproval of the designs on display, a meeting of the Central Committee took place on the 1st February with only seven members present, the intention being merely to view the submitted designs.[76] William Burns and Charles Rogers had quite different opinions on what occurred at this point, though contemporary evidence bears out Burns's claim that, as so few members of the Committee were present, he had moved that the selection of the design should be deferred until more of the Committee were there to vote.[77] Burns's suggestion was rejected by one vote, and the meeting then moved on to make its adjudication. George Harvey, one of Scotland's foremost historical painters, who had joined the committee with the aim of influencing the design of the monument, moved that the

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74 'The Designs for the Wallace Monument,' *Scotsman*, 31st January, 1859; *SJ*, 2nd January, 1859

75 'The Designs for the Wallace Monument,' Letter from William Stirling, *SJ*, 28th January, 1859

76 *Scotsman*, 31st January, 1859; 'The Designs for the Wallace Monument – Decision of the Committee,' *Scotsman*, 3rd February, 1859; 'Stirling,' *NBDM*, 4th February, 1859

77 'Wallace Monument,' Letter from William Burns to Charles Rogers, *SJ*, 18th February, 1859; 'The Wallace Monument,' Letter from William Burns to the Lord Advocate, *SJ*, 25th February, 1859

committee adopt an allegorical, sculptural design by J Noël Paton of a 'Lion and Typhon,' a motion seconded by William Burns.[78]

Paton's sculpture was of a lion standing triumphantly upon a crowned, human figure whose body was half-man, half-serpent, holding in its hand a broken chain, the other half of which hung loose from the lion's neck, implying that the lion had broken free from the bondage of the serpentine monarch. (Figure 2) Other members of the committee favoured a colossal figure over this allegory, whilst Rogers argued that an architectural monument would be more suitable, reflecting, he claimed, the general opinion of those members of the public who had viewed the submitted designs.[79]

Figure 2: J Noël Paton's 'Lion and Typhon'

A vote was held and Paton's design won out over a tower and colossal figure, by J T Rochead, by four votes to three, Burns voting for the allegory, Rogers for the tower. Paton's 'admirable model,' embodying, in Harvey's words,

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78 'The Designs for the Wallace Monument: Decision of the Committee,' *Scotsman*, 3rd February, 1859; 11th February, 1859

79 *Scotsman*, 3rd February, 1859; 'The Wallace Monument,' letter from George Harvey, *Scotsman*, 4th February, 1859

'thoughtful, pure and national ideas,' was described by the catalogue of the Royal Scottish Academy's annual exhibition as being, 'The Triumph of Freedom and Bravery over Powerful but Unholy Ambition.'[80] Paton's intentions were, then, to create a monument that would signify his conception of the defining 'idea' of Wallace's struggle, the mastery of the brave and free over the powerful but ambitious, of independence over tyranny. This allegorical representation of Wallace's achievements does, when expressed in these terms, appear to reflect one of the defining discourses of the Wallace legacy to the Scots of the nineteenth century, yet it is with the selection of the 'Lion and Typhon' that the movement to erect a National Monument to Wallace enters one of its most decisive phases: despite being designed by one of Scotland's foremost artists – and supported by a second – it would appear that Charles Rogers was correct when he wrote that, 'Dissatisfaction was universal.' This dissatisfaction, and the manner in which the issue was dealt with by the Central Committee – or, more accurately, by Rogers and Burns – would go on to do more to affect public opinion of the monument movement than any lingering association with the Scottish Rights Movement.[81]

Charles Rogers proudly numbered himself amongst those deeply opposed to the adoption of the 'Lion and Typhon,' seeing the allegory as a clear attempt to recruit the National Wallace Monument movement for Burns's anti-English purposes. According to an accusation made by William Burns, it was Charles Rogers who arranged a public meeting in Stirling with the stated intent of openly declaring the town's opposition to Paton's statue.[82] The meeting was conspicuously well attended, and a resolution was made in order to record 'extreme regret' that such an 'unsuitable' monument should be proposed for both subject and location.[83] In moving this proposition, a Colonel MacPherson indicated that the monument would be highly offensive to any English visitor, and that the sculpture would be too inconspicuous – what was needed was a baronial tower that could be seen for miles

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[80] quoted in Burns to Lord Advocate, *SJ*, 25th February, 1859

[81] Rogers, *Autobiography*, p150

[82] Burns to Lord Advocate, *SJ*, 25th February, 1859

[83] 'Wallace Monument – Public Meeting,' *SJ*, 11th February, 1859; 'Wallace Monument – Public Meeting at Stirling,' *Scotsman*, 10th February, 1859

around.[84] Despite the fact that, as a member of the committee, he ought not to have been making public statements on the issue, Charles Rogers addressed the meeting 'at great length,' contesting the circumstances under which Paton's design had been selected by claiming that the committee's decision was void, their intention having always been to build an 'architectural monument, and not a piece of sculpture.'[85] In support of his contention, Rogers read a letter from Charles Baillie, 'regretting the haste at which the decisions had been arrived at,' and also a letter from Colin Rae-Brown articulating his disapproval of the design. It would appear from the evidence of other letters received by Rogers, and printed in the *Stirling Observer*, that the Reverend Doctor wrote out to a number of the movement's committee members and other supporters, seeking support for his efforts to have the 'Lion and Typhon' rejected.[86] Rogers's letter-writing, his alleged organisation of the Stirling meeting, and, indeed, the very fact that the meeting had been held at all, created a small pocket of controversy in the pages of the *Scotsman*, with an argument running between Rogers, George Harvey and J Noël Paton over the public reception of the 'Lion and Typhon,' and the issue of whether or not the committee's judgement should stand.[87] As if this judgement was not proving controversial enough, the circumstances of its selection were casting further bad light upon the committee's methods, it being made public that, whereas the designs were supposed to have been submitted anonymously, the deadline for submissions had been extended in order that Harvey's friend, Paton, could submit his proposal.[88]

Rogers's letter-writing, carried out without the sanction of the Acting Committee, was the first step in a series of actions that would make Rogers increasingly unpopular with the other committee members: Rogers, looking upon himself as the originator of the movement, appears to have felt justified in participating in the public debate, heedless of the fact that it clashed with his role as the monument committee's secretary – George Harvey and William Burns taking particular exception to Rogers's interference. Regardless of Rogers's role, the

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[84] 'Wallace Monument Designs: Public Meeting of the Inhabitants of Stirling,' *NBDM*, 10th February, 1859

[85] *Scotsman*, 10th February, 1859; *NBDM*, 10th February, 1859

[86] *SJ*, 11th February, 1859; *SO*, 15th February, 1859

[87] A series of letters on the subject appeared in *The Scotsman* between 4th and 14th February, 1859

[88] Letter from 'A Competitor,' *NBDM*, 8th February, 1859; Letter from 'Scrutator,' *NBDM*, 14th February, 1859

Stirling meeting's disapproval does seem to have been genuine: in a rare moment of agreement, the conservative *Stirling Journal* referred to the selection of the 'Lion and Typhon' as being 'simply absurd,' whilst its liberal-radical counterpart, the *Stirling Observer*, believed that the four committee members who voted for Paton's model should be 'utterly ashamed.' Letters printed in one edition of the *Observer* alone described the design as 'monstrous,' a 'hideous unearthly monster,' and 'in almost every respect quite unsuitable.'[89] Arguments made against the 'Lion and Typhon' were neatly summed up in a second letter to the *Stirling Journal* from Stirling of Keir, who complained that the meaning of the sculpture was too confusing, insufficiently representing 'the great career and touching story of Wallace,' as well as rendering the monument, 'a peg whereon to hang endless gibes,' from *The Times* and 'the more waspish of our English friends, the summer tourist.'[90] Concerned that the chosen design would be dwarfed by the Abbey Craig and so remain entirely unseen, defeating the purpose of erecting a monument in such a conspicuous location, Keir wrote that, 'By way of producing an effect on the landscape this lion might just as well be consigned to the Lion's Den in Stirling Castle.'[91]

Disgust with the 'Lion and Typhon' was not restricted to Stirling; an editorial in the *Bulletin* described the design as 'neither suited for the subject nor for the locality;' the *Glasgow Examiner* stated that the monument would be, 'an insult to the English, towards whom, in these days, we have no reason to be uncivil or ungracious;' the *Edinburgh Evening Post* referred to the design as 'unintelligible… utterly opposed to the common feeling, and even to common sense.'[92] Of the larger circulation newspapers, the *Glasgow Herald* cited the three main objections to the design – that its meaning was obscure, that it was offensive to the English, and that it could not be seen from a distance – describing Paton's design as being, 'without meaning and foolish… it would look like a rampant tom cat glorying over a

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[89] *SJ*, 4th February, 1859; 'The Wallace Monument', 'Letters to the Editor: The Wallace Monument,' *SO*, 10th February, 1859

[90] 'The Wallace Designs,' Letter from William Stirling of Keir, *SJ*, 11th February, 1859; 'The Prize Design for the Wallace Monument', *Scotsman*, 12th February, 1859

[91] Letter from 'A Lover of His Country,' *NBDM*, 4th February, 1859; *NBDM*, 10th February, 1859; Letters from 'A Subscriber to the Wallace Monument' and 'Scrutator,' *NBDM*, 14th February, 1859

[92] 'National Wallace Monument: Opinions of the Press Respecting Mr Noël Paton's Design,' *SO*, 24th February, 1859

mouse.'[93] The *North British Daily Mail* called the design 'ridiculous' and 'grotesque,' yet it was the *Scotsman* that led the way in decrying the suitability of the 'Lion and Typhon.'[94] As one of Scotland's most vocal opponents of the monument, the *Scotsman* voiced the hope that the monument movement might yet be brought to an end, though, doomed to accept that this would not be the case, poured scorn on the selection of the Abbey Craig, described Paton's design as 'a contradiction in terms,' and then suggested that the Committee be reformed. In the midst of the controversy, the 'Lion and Typhon' was to be displayed at that year's Royal Scottish Academy exhibition, yet it seems that the model was removed prior to or during the exhibition opening, to be replaced with another monumental design by Paton, this one based upon a runic cross, with a statue of Bruce seated on its base, pointing to an inscription to Wallace's memory.[95] Writing of this new design – one that Paton was to propose be erected in Edinburgh – the *Scotsman* said that, 'Had this been the competition design, we doubt not it would have secured much more general approbation,' though the *Stirling Journal* thought the *Scotsman* naïve in saying so.[96] It is evident that the tide of Scottish national sentiment was decidedly against the adoption of the 'Lion and Typhon,' yet, as if such widespread censure was not bad enough, *The Times* took the proposed adoption of the Lion and Typhon as an opportunity to print a highly facetious and disapproving editorial, in which it not only referred to Wallace as 'the merest myth,' but went on to state that,

> the monument which [the Scots] think of raising, so far from being an honour either to Wallace or to themselves will but awaken sneers in those who think and scorn in those who feel. It will be regarded as the glorifying of a literary cant, the memory of a nullity, and the perpetuation, under the name of nationality, of a silly provincialism.[97]

Such statements appear to bear out the concerns of those who accused the 'Lion and Typhon' of promoting anti-Englishness, or the ire of the Scots' partners in

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[93] *GH*, 14th February, 1859

[94] *NBDM*, 4th March, 1859

[95] 'Royal Scottish Academy Exhibition,' *Scotsman*, 17th February, 1859

[96] *Scotsman*, 17th February, 1859; 'The Wallace Designs,' *SJ*, 18th February, 1859. For an account of the later life of Paton's runic cross design, including a reproduction of the design itself, see Morton, *Unionist-Nationalism*, pp181-184.

[97] 'The Wallace Monument,' *Times*, 14th February, 1859

Union: *The Times* used the adoption of Paton's design as yet another stick with which to beat Scotland's pretensions to 'nationality.'

The supporters of Paton's design did not meekly accept such a barrage of criticism: as noted above, George Harvey engaged in a bitter correspondence with the equally belligerent Charles Rogers, while William Burns's responses were, arguably, more considered. [98] It is, however, in a letter from Burns to Charles Baillie, Chair of the Central Committee and newly appointed Lord Advocate, that Burns's promotion of the 'Lion and Typhon', and his intentions for the monument are made clear. For Burns, one of the 'leading purposes' of the monument was for it to act as,

> [a] material remembrancer of Scotland's independence and individuality; a silent, but ever speaking protest to which the most careless must listen, against those who are constantly attempting to ignore her history, and to degrade her into the rank of a province – in the shape of an appeal to that period of her history which, once and for ever, vindicated her position as a nation.[99]

As an example of this attempt to 'ignore' Scotland's history, Burns referred to the recent article in *The Times*, that had itself caused so much controversy. In this statement, Burns outlined the purpose of the monument from a radical perspective – that it should actively signify and defend Scottish nationality against undermining anglicisation. Just as the radical Wallace was a hero still on hand to fight Scotland's battles, so the monument would act as a weapon in the battle against the demotion of Scottish nationality. In countering the objections that had been levelled at the design, Burns identified the contradiction between those who rejected the monument owing to its apparent obscurity, whilst at the same time accusing it of being offensive to the English by virtue of its meaning being all too clear. For this reason, Burns rejected both an architectural monument and a statue of the hero: a tower would be 'dumb,' not in and of itself signifying any aspect of Wallace's struggle, achieving its significance purely by virtue of its location; a statue of the hero would be unsuitable as, not only was there no definitive likeness of Wallace upon which a statue could be modelled, but that the monument was intended to commemorate both the individual, 'and the *cause* for which through life he

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[98] *SJ*, 18th February, 1859

[99] Burns to Lord Advocate, *SJ*, 25th February, 1859

contended... the liberty of his native country.'[100] For Burns, the erection of a monument that unambiguously signified Wallace's legacy of national independence for Scotland was the entire point of the enterprise, and to build anything less potent would undermine this. The monument was to be a material symbol of resistance to tyranny, nationally and internationally, whether that tyranny was the unlawful invasion of the tyrannical Edward, the despotic ambitions of domineering nineteenth-century nations, or the slings and arrows fired at the Scots by *The Times* and other metropolitan newspapers – the purpose of the National Wallace Monument was to *prove* Scottish nationality, not simply reflect it.

Nevertheless, the tide of objection became too much, and on the 1st of March, 1859, a meeting of the Acting Committee was held in Glasgow to reconsider. In contrast to the Stirling meeting of a month earlier, the attendance was high, the chair being taken by Sir Archibald Alison.[101] After a variety of accusations had been volleyed back and forth, Sheriff Tait of Clackmannan proposed that the conclusions reached by the last meeting should be rejected.[102] Tait argued that no notice had been given that the previous meeting was being called in order to decide upon a design, going on to express his dislike of the 'Lion and Typhon', stating that, '99 out of 100 persons' would not be able to understand what the allegory was intended to represent. Further lively debate ensued before a vote was taken, in which Tait's motion to reconsider was carried by ten votes to five. Upon the announcement of the result, George Harvey, 'resigned his connection with the committee.'[103] With the motion carried, it was resolved that the period for receiving designs should be extended until the first week of June, that the designs submitted should be put on public display in Stirling, Edinburgh and Glasgow, and that – crucially – at least twelve members of the committee should be present before any decision could be made. With the 'Lion and Typhon' rejected, Paton, who had

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[100] *ibid.* original emphasis

[101] 'The Wallace Monument: Meeting of the Central Committee at Glasgow,' *SJ*, 4th March, 1859; 'Wallace Monument,' *GH*, 2nd March 1859; 'The Wallace Monument Movement,' *Scotsman*, 2nd March, 1859

[102] *ibid.*

[103] 'The Wallace Monument,' *NBDM*, 2nd March, 1859

become 'sick of the whole matter,' withdrew his design from any further competition.[104]

The controversy generated by Paton's design is symptomatic of the tensions between opposed readings of the Wallace myth, yet also of the hegemony of the moderates. Though the 'idea' that the sculpture was intended to convey was wholly consistent with the moderate view of Wallace, such an unambiguous representation of that 'idea' was an allegory too far, a truth too radically expressed. The quality of the artistry was not the issue: indeed, many of those who objected to the design publicly acknowledged that Paton's model was indeed an example of great art, but this was part of the problem. As we have seen, one of the principal arguments over the rejection of Paton's design was its alleged obscurity, that the viewing public would find it confusing, and that it did not effectively transmit Wallace's achievements. The paradox, as identified by William Burns, was also a widely expressed view concerning not the artistic or aesthetic qualities of the piece, but of the potential for offence that such a monument might cause. The 'Lion and Typhon', by inviting comparisons between the lion and Wallace, and the Typhon and Edward, could all to easily be construed as anti-English, a signifier of offensive, rather than moderate, Scottish nationality. What was required was a design that would offend no one, that would articulate Wallace's legacy in terms of peace and of strength, and that would dove-tail neatly with the Scots' perception of themselves as equal partners in union with England.

Further to the meeting on the 1st of February, a new competition for designs was announced, with the new proposals exhibited in Edinburgh, Glasgow and Stirling in July.[105] As disapproving as ever, the *Stirling Journal* counted no less than seventy-nine submissions, describing each design in ironic detail, though the *Stirling Observer* came to the monument's defence, attacking the *Journal* for its cynicism, and reasserting its faith that the Committee would do right by the monument.[106] The *Glasgow Herald* thought the new designs of, 'an inferior description, suitable neither to the subject nor the site;' the *Scotsman*, too, was no happier with this set of

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104 Story, A T: *The Life and Work of Sir Joseph Noël Paton, RSA, LLD, Her Majesty's Limner for Scotland*, (London, 1895), p15,

105 'The Designs for the Wallace Monument,' *Scotsman*, 14th July, 1859

106 'The Wallace Designs,' *SJ*, 24th June, 1859

submissions than it had been with the previous competition, describing them as, 'for the most part, not only without taste and character, but in some instance positively ridiculous.'[107] That the designs were displayed in Stirling, Edinburgh and Glasgow, and that the public was given an opportunity to record its preference, appears to have been part of an attempt by the Central Committee to avoid the backlash caused by the adoption of the 'Lion and Typhon.' According to the *Stirling Observer*, the two designs favoured by the viewing public were number seventy-four, described by the *Stirling Journal* as 'a direct copy from St Giles Church… [looking] on the Craig more like a ruin than anything else,' and number fourteen, which the *Journal* described as 'appropriating the wing of an old castle… ornamenting the entrance thereto with a couple of lions reclining, and a couple of unicorns rampant.'[108] The public response was slightly in favour of the former, receiving 174 votes to the latter's 164.[109]

On the 1st of September, the Acting Committee met to adjudicate on the submissions, with at least sixteen committee members present – a 'record number' and more than enough to legitimise the selected design.[110] Prior to the decision being made, any designs deemed to have contravened the rules were removed, all submissions having been made anonymously, so as not unduly to affect the committee's judgement. Henry Glassford Bell, seconded by Colin Rae-Brown, proposed that design number seventy-four, a Scotch-Baronial tower, bearing the title 'Nothing on Earth remains but Fame,' should be adopted, whilst Charles Rogers proposed number fourteen – entitled 'Liberty, B' – in which he was seconded by J M Mitchell, curiously, according to Rogers, an ally of William Burns. On a vote, Bell's proposal was carried by a majority of fourteen, the chosen design being by the Glaswegian architect, John Thomas Rochead, with the Edinburgh firm of Peddie and Kinnear as the runner-up. The selection of Rochead's tower – a design remarkably similar to the 'tall and stately tower of our early national architecture,' with its 'statue of the hero,' and 'spacious screw staircase,' proposed by William Stirling of Keir – met with widespread approval. Referring to Rochead as, 'a

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107 quoted in *ibid.*; 'The Designs for the Wallace Monument,' *Scotsman*, 14th July, 1859

108 'The Wallace Monument,' *SO*, 8th September, 1859; *SJ*, 24th June, 1859

109 *SO*, 8th September, 1859

110 *SO*, 8th September, 1859; 'The Wallace Monument Designs,' *Scotsman*, 2nd September, 1859; 'Wallace Monument Designs: Award of Premiums,' *GH*, 2nd September, 1859

gentleman not less eminent as a most ingenious architect, than widely esteemed for his intelligent zeal in everything which concerns the best interests of Scottish nationality,' the *Stirling Observer* trumpeted the design as 'imposing and magnificent… There will be no other such Monument, on a site so commanding, in any country in the world.' The *Glasgow Herald*, whose responses to the Wallace Monument movement had hitherto been lukewarm, claimed that the tower would 'unquestionably be very imposing, and we are not sure whether the Committee by any amount of effort could have succeeded in procuring a design more suitable for the site,' a sentiment with which the *Caledonian Mercury* also concurred.[111]

After meetings with the architect, and having determined what the cost of the building would be, Rochead's design was officially chosen, though both William Burns and J M Mitchell objected on the grounds that Rochead's submission had broken the rules of the competition laid down by the committee. [112] This issue was taken up in a vigorous correspondence between the second-placed architects, Peddie and Kinnear, and Charles Rogers in the pages of the *Scotsman.*[113] In their arguments against Rochead's success, and their criticisms of the committee and Rogers, Peddie and Kinnear received support from William Burns. On the 8th of December, Burns wrote to Peddie and Kinnear, stating that, though he had been 'opposed to the majority of the committee,' with regard to those matters being argued over, it had been necessary for him either to 'acquiesce' or to 'withdraw entirely,' from the committee.[114] Burns's letter, and the fact that he allowed Peddie and Kinnear to include it with one of their letters to the *Scotsman*, is indicative of the divisions within the Acting Committee.[115] It is difficult to determine whether Burns had any justification for his actions, but there can be very little doubt that, by the end of 1859, the committee was barely able to maintain a public display of unity, with the resultant perception of the movement as deeply divided having a detrimental effect upon their attempts to raise subscriptions.

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111 'National Wallace Monument: the Prize Designs, Opinions of the Press,' *SO*, 8th September, 1859.

112 'The Wallace Monument Movement,' *Scotsman*, 19th November, 1859

113 Letter from Peddie & Kinnear, 'Wallace Monument,' *Scotsman*, 2nd December, 1859, *et seq.*

114 Letter from Peddie & Kinnear, 'The Wallace Monument Designs,' *Scotsman*, 15th December, 1859

115 Rogers, *Autobiography*, pp156-167

Perceptions of the committee's internal disputes and incompetence were not the only obstacles that faced the Wallace Monument movement, as revealed in the press and in those defences put forward by members of the committee. As noted above, one of the *Scotsman's* earliest reactions to the monument was that of the utilitarian – ie. that any monument was completely unnecessary. The *Dundee Advertiser*, a newspaper whose politics were very similar to the *Scotsman's*, and that, like its Edinburgh counterpart, had 'not been adverse' to the aims of the NAVSR, reported the *failure* of the Wallace Monument movement in December of 1856, stating with no little satisfaction the utilitarian argument that, 'If ever any man, Wallace has his monument in the hearts of his countrymen and of patriots in every land.'[116] Prior to the laying of the monument's foundation stone in June of 1861, a letter from 'Randolph' appeared in the *Scotsman*, declaring that, 'It is of course simply absurd at this time of day to set about immortalising Wallace,' going on to bemoan the 'ruin' of the Abbey Craig.[117] Despite such protests, funds continued to come in: by June 1861, £5,500 had been collected or subscribed towards the estimated budget of £6,500, with the movement's weekly income averaging at £60, and by the beginning of April that year, the committee felt confident enough to start organising the laying of the monument's foundation stone, partly because Rogers had managed to procure a bond from William Drummond of Stirling to cover the outstanding funds.[118] On the 9th of May, 1861, the 'Building Committee,' who had been given responsibility for carrying the movement forward in practical terms, met with Colin Rae-Brown in the chair. At this meeting, a letter was read from William Burns, tendering his resignation.[119] Burns had already submitted a printed 'objection' in December of 1860, claiming that this 'pretended' committee 'had no powers' of authority over the project.[120] The basis of these claims is not made clear in the

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116 quoted in 'The Wallace and Hume Monuments,' *The Times*, 5th December, 1856; Cowan, *The Newspaper in Scotland*, pp294, 328

117 Letter from 'Randolph', *Scotsman*, 12th June, 1861

118 'The Wallace Monument,' *Scotsman*, 25th September, 1860; 'The Wallace Monument: Ceremony of Laying the Foundation Stone,' *Scotsman*, 25th June 1861

119 'Rogers' Monument,' *SJ*, 10th May, 1861; *Scotsman*, 9th May, 1861

120 'Protest by William Burns, presented to the sub-committee at a meeting in Glasgow, 14th December, 1860,' *Records of the National Wallace Monument Movement, Originated and Carried out from Glasgow, 1856-1869, and the Scroll*

'objection,' but a comment in the *Stirling Journal* suggests what may have motivated Burns to resign: that is, his complete mistrust of Rogers as secretary, and his thwarted attempts to 'exclude' Rogers from the committee.[121] It is clear from William Burns's role in the design controversy that he had become increasingly disillusioned with the manner in which the Committee operated, continuing to maintain that they were conducting their business in a highly unprofessional manner, with Rogers as the worst offender. Burns was not to remain separate from the movement for long, however: according to Rogers, William Burns had returned to the committee shortly after the foundation stone ceremonial, still insisting that Rogers be removed from his post.[122]

The controversy over the selection of the monument's design brought to the surface the tensions implicit in a heterogeneous body of men attempting to fix upon a single, enduring symbol of Wallace's legacy for Scotland and Britain. The early meetings held to promote the monument had been strewn with sentiments very much at odds with the moderate framing strategy deemed most likely to achieve success, but rhetoric of that nature could at least be put down to the idiosyncrasies of the individual speaker and ignored. The material shape of the monument, destined to be significantly more durable, exacerbated the divisions within the Central Committee, not least between those who believed the monument should represent a more radical reading of the nationality of Wallace's struggle and those that thought it more apt to represent Wallace's legacy as being a happy union of equals. That Rochead's Scotch-Baronial tower was selected, is indicative of the necessity to render the monument as inoffensive as possible, both to potential supporters, or those who hurled objections. Just as it was necessary for William Burns to moderate his public statements as a member of the Central Committee, so too the design had to be sufficiently empty of any controversial interpretation. In following the development of the Wallace Monument movement, the next chapter will attempt to track whether this resolute moderation remained the defining feature of the movement's rhetorical character.

Minute Book (together with Letter-Book) of the Executive Sub-Committee. Presented to the Mitchell Library on the 594th Anniversary of the decisive Battle of Stirling Bridge (11th September, 1891), by Colin Rae-Brown; MLB, #B114585

[121] *SJ*, 10th May, 1861

[122] Rogers, *Autobiography*, pp178-179

4. National Wallace Monument: from Foundation Stone to 1897

Introduction

The process of raising public subscriptions for the National Wallace Monument, and particularly the selection of a design for the memorial, highlight the heterogeneity of Scottish nationality in the mid-nineteenth century. Whereas differing views of Wallace's legacy could inhabit the same public space without too much difficulty, when it came to attempt a distillation of these opposed readings of Wallace into a single monumental design, the tensions implicit in Scottish nationality erupted into the full glare of public scrutiny. Furthermore, though the Wallace Monument Movement had just about managed to accommodate the two combustible elements that were the radical William Burns and the moderate Charles Rogers, ultimately their proximity became increasingly hazardous. If the first period of the National Wallace Monument Movement had been defined by tensions between those who tended to a more radical deployment of the past and those who preferred to keep its lessons locked firmly in history, the second half of the monument movement's progress, and the subsequent life of the monument itself, appear to be much more closely connected to – or to resonate with – the politics of the period. That is to say, with the exception of the anti-centralisation rhetoric that had been inherited from the NAVSR, the events covered in the last chapter had remained relatively separate from the politics of mid-nineteenth century Scotland and Britain. In considering the latter half of the monument movement, and the completed monument's subsequent role as an expression of Scottish nationality, we find it more closely bound with contemporary political discourses, as, by the 1880s, the issue of Home Rule had entered the political agenda with a profile and legitimacy that it did not possess thirty years before, further politicising Scottish nationality.

1861: The Foundation Stone Ceremony

In June of 1861, future debates on Scotland's political place within the British state must have seemed far off indeed. The day of the foundation stone ceremonial saw Stirling packed with locals and incomers alike, trains from

Edinburgh and Glasgow arriving filled with attendees. Members of the Volunteer Corps acted as part of the procession, alongside members of voluntary and friendly societies, many of them with bands. Nineteen separate 'municipal bodies' sent representation, coming from as far afield as Ayr, Aberdeen, Inverness and Elgin, all of whom were treated to a reception in Stirling's Guild Hall. One newspaper account estimated the attendance at somewhere between 60,000 and 80,000 people; another claimed between 80,000 and 100,000; in his autobiography, Archibald Alison wrote that the throng was 'not short of 200,000.'[1] The participants having gathered in the King's Park, at one o'clock a gun was fired from Stirling Castle to indicate that the procession should commence its march to the Abbey Craig, marshalled by Lieutenant-General Sir James Maxwell Wallace, KCB, 'lineal descendant of the Hero in the male line.' Amid the procession, the Master-Gunner of Dumbarton Castle, carried the 'Sword of Sir William Wallace,' the Earl of Elgin wielded the 'Sword of King Robert Bruce,' and the Duke of Montrose bore 'the sword of John de Graeme.' Arriving at the Abbey Craig, those deemed worthy of the honour took their seats in a wooden pavilion, resplendent with a tartan banner, a lion rampant banner being displayed on the front of the Abbey Craig itself. Around three o'clock, the foundation stone ceremonial was begun, the stone was laid with appropriate masonic ritual, and a variety of documents were deposited in a cavity inside the stone, including no less than three of the Rev Dr Rogers's publications. Upon the completion of the ceremonial, the 'Queen's anthem' was played, and, as a flag was raised above the Abbey Craig, an artillery salute was fired from Stirling Castle. Speeches were delivered by Sir Archibald Alison, Sheriff Henry Glassford Bell, Charles Rogers, the Rev Dr Gillan of the Church of Scotland, James Dodds, and Sheriff Tait of Clackmannan.

As we might infer from this *dramatis personae*, the foundation-stone ceremony at the Abbey Craig was a decidedly moderate affair: Sheriff Tait, for instance had been one of the principal objectors to the Lyon and Typhon, and was a supporter of Charles Rogers on the acting committee. Each vote of thanks was defined by gratitude to Wallace combined with praise for the truly national character of the

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[1] *Scotsman*, 25th June 1861; 'Laying the Foundation-Stone of The Wallace Monument at the Abbey Craig, Stirling,' *GH*, 25th June, 1861; 'The Wallace Monument: Laying of the Foundation Stone, on the Abbey Craig, Stirling,' *NBDM*, 25th June, 1861; Alison, A; *Some Account of My Life and Writings: An Autobiography*, (Edinburgh, 1883) vol II, p315. Unless otherwise noted, all details of this event are drawn from these sources.

movement. Henry Glassford Bell's vote of thanks to the subscribers emphasised that they had come from every class, locality and corner of the Empire: 'To them no country is so dear as Scotland – no virtue more inherent than patriotism – no patriot through all ages more worthy of regard than Wallace.' The 'patriotism' of Bell's speech was distinctly Scoto-British, affirming that, though Scotland 'reaped great gain' from the 'Holy Alliance' of Union, it was still vital to retain one's national character. The commemoration of shared memories, Bell said, was fundamental to this retention and, in an attempt to counter the utilitarians, he underlined the necessity of erecting monuments and encouraged further subscription. In making these statements, and in common with all the other speakers at the foundation-stone ceremony, Sheriff Bell avoided any implication that Scotland's nationality might be threatened, and made no reference to inequality or threatened assimilation, stating merely that national character was essential and that the erection of such marks of gratitude was part of this process. Sharing this approach with Bell, Charles Rogers opened his vote of congratulations to the Wallace family with the definitive statement of unionist-nationalism quoted in Chapter 2, concerning Wallace's role in uniting Scotland and England, 'on equal terms, and with equal rights.[2] Rogers did precisely what we would expect of a moderate Scottish patriot, placing the monument firmly within a context of British monarchical and constitutional history. As with Henry Glassford Bell, Rogers responded to the utilitarians by contending that the monument's 'useful purpose' was to act as 'a grand monumental home,' a focal point for Scottish nationality, reared by all classes of society. In a speech that was clearly intended to convey this spirit of national unity, as nurtured by both the ceremony and the monument, the Rev Dr Gillan deemed the love of one's country 'a right and a righteous sentiment, when untinctured by prejudice,' and called upon every class within the nation to pay their 'debt of admiration,' naming each of those 'social conditions' present and giving the reasons for their attendance: three examples might suffice:

> Our nobles should come – for, pardon me, ye honourable ones, if I say, that your coronets were not worth the wearing till Wallace rescued them from the tarnish of servility and servitude... Our commoners should be here, and they are so in their thousands, for, by that same man's gigantic effort, their lives and their properties were secured... Our agriculturists

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[2] See also Morton, *Unionist-Nationalism*, pp79-80

should be here, for it was by our rural populations mainly that Wallace fought and conquered.

Each of these speeches was resolutely moderate in its tone and content, their intention being to bind the nation together through the deployment of inoffensive and inclusive sentiments, whilst pointing out that the monument was necessary in combining the memories of Scots at home and abroad into a single, potent symbol of historic Scottish nationality – a nationality that was as alive and as coherent as it had ever been. This historic Scottish nationality was the legacy of Wallace, not only as one of the foundations of Great Britain and its Empire, but an inheritance that continued to contribute to the Union.

The closest this event got to making radical statements came in the last speech of any length, delivered by James Dodds, who spoke of the 'fraternal union' between Scotland and England as being a result of the battle of Stirling Bridge, when Wallace, 'secured the liberties of his country.' In closing, Dodds deployed another rhetorical refrain – one used more often with reference to Ireland – when he claimed, as he had done at Ayr in 1856, that had it not been for Wallace's victory, and the resultant establishment of Scottish liberties, the Scots 'would have been engaged in the same awful and terrible contest in which Poland, Italy and Hungary are engaged at this time.' Whether compared to Ireland or to continental nationalities, such favourable comparisons were commonplace, contrasting the Scottish nation – possessing an historic independence thanks to Wallace's victory – against those less fortunate nationalities that suffered under an alien yoke, and must needs struggle to be free. Expressions of sympathy for 'all oppressed nationalities,' were a sign of Dodds's Britishness – his statement illustrating that it was possible to have sympathy for European nationalism, and yet remain committed to the tenets of Scoto-British constitutionalism. Indeed, it was this faith in the benefits of Britishness that produced sympathy for those who did not enjoy these advantages; rather than seeing a resonance between continental nationalism and Scotland's exploitation under the Union, moderate Scottish nationality permitted both the celebration of Britishness, and sympathy with those oppressed nationalities lacking a history of national independence with its concomitant advantages to the present order. This was about as near to radical nationality as the foundation stone ceremonial would get: with men such as Alison, Bell and Rogers in charge, there was

little chance of any firebrand taking the opportunity to politicise the occasion, nor to suggest that Scotland did not enjoy full and equal union with its English partners.

In the evening, a banquet was held in the Stirling Corn Exchange Hall, with 'upwards of 250 gentlemen' present, and a gallery at the south-end of the building 'well-filled' with about 100 ladies. Archibald Alison took the chair, accompanied on the platform by the day's speakers, as well as John Stuart Blackie and a handful of others. Amongst toasts to Wallace, to Robert Bruce, to the success of the monument, and to the 'Gudewives and Maidens of Scotland,' the Rev Dr Gillan offered thanks to the 'Wallace Monument Committee, and paid a special compliment to the secretary, Dr Rogers.' As with the assembly at the pavilion on the Abbey Craig earlier in the day, it was Rogers who was called upon to represent the committee: William Burns had once again resigned, and both Lord Jerviswoode and Colin Rae-Brown were named as having sent their apologies. Rogers responded to the Rev Dr Gillan's vote of thanks by speaking in general terms of the 'Wallace Committee,' though it must be stated that, apart from praising Jerviswoode for his 'liberality, energy and kindliness,' Rogers failed to name any other members of the committee. Instead, he gave the names of some of the monument's more generous benefactors, all of whom, no doubt coincidentally, had given to the project as a result of Rogers's endeavours.

Despite such self-congratulation, the threat of radical sentiments cracking the carefully prepared veneer of moderation was more conspicuous at the evening banquet. That the National Wallace Monument movement still had an air of controversy about it is apparent from the account of the banquet that appears in the autobiography of Sir Archibald Alison, an account that also helps to shed light upon the moderate nature of the day's rhetoric. Having been offered the chairmanship of the meeting, Alison originally declined, believing that someone of higher rank might be more suitable. Upon discovering that no other had accepted, Alison agreed, claiming that he had been 'desirous to prevent the thing falling into the wrong hands in which it might excite obloquy and sustain damage.'[3] The reason for the lack of interest from the nobility and 'neighbouring gentry,' was owed, Alison wrote, to the fact that 'the management had got into Radical hands, so far as the local committee

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[3] Alison, *Autobiography*, vol II, p314

was concerned, and the Tory landed proprietors in consequence stood aloof,' claiming also that many were 'afraid of the thunders of the "Times."'[4] With the gentry and nobility holding back, the day belonged to the 'middle and lower orders,' a belief supported by the number of voluntary societies, sporting clubs and volunteer militias keen to participate. Writing of the moment when he had to propose a toast to the immortal memory of Wallace, Alison said,

> It would have been easy to have wound the audience up to the highest pitch of enthusiasm by praise of the Scotch and abuse of the English, for they were to a man intensely national, and highly excited, and would have received any amount of either with applause.[5]

Instead, Alison was careful to depict Wallace's legacy in a manner that would not only 'do justice to the memory of that illustrious patriot,' but would also 'clearly exhibit the immense advantages which Scotland, in common with every other part of the empire, derived from the union with England.'[6] At the banquet he claimed that the victory at Stirling Bridge had,

> given union, strength, and happiness to the whole British empire; for, by preventing subjugation by force, it has left room for the union by inclination. It is thus and thus alone, that the pacification of Great Britain could have been rendered complete, and the empire raised to the exalted destinies designed for it by Providence.[7]

The majority of Alison's address was composed of this celebration of Scotland's imperial partnership with England, basing his argument upon the fact that Wallace and Robert the Bruce were responsible for the Scottish character and Scottish independence. Though he never uses the term 'nationality,' Sheriff Alison proclaimed that, 'if the sword of Wallace and Bruce had not saved [Scotland] from subjugation – she would have been to England what Poland is to Russia, what Hungary is to Austria, what Ireland, till within these few years, has been to England.' This assertion was reiterated in the toast to the 'Immortal Memory of King Robert Bruce,' made by Henry Glassford Bell, who also emphasised the importance of commemorating the past in recognising the magnificence of the present, 'for the

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[4] *ibid.*, p315. The 'local committee' in question is almost certainly the Glaswegian committee, rather than the Building Committee.

[5] *ibid.*, p317

[6] *ibid.*

[7] *Scotsman*, 25th June 1861

purpose of extracting the spirit of good from what might seem evil… doing honour to the energetic virtues which adorned those times – courage, fidelity, patriotism.' There was no hint of dissent, no question that the union might be anything other than the glorious consummation of centuries of heroic, national history. Yet, while Alison, Bell and Rogers might have been keen to avoid abusing the English, another speaker at the banquet had no such qualms about appealing directly to the intense nationality of the crowd, in a speech replete with 'praise of the Scotch and abuse of the English.' Given the task of proposing a toast to 'Scottish Literature,' John Stuart Blackie gleefully entered territory deemed beyond the pale, launching a direct attack upon the 'cockney prejudice' of *The Times*, and describing the sermons of English ministers as 'like some lady's dog in a drawing-room, so exceedingly well bred that it can neither bark nor bite.' In particular, Blackie returned to an issue that was evidently close to his heart: the threat of English assimilation. Blackie accused the English of attempting to 'swindle' the Scots out of their 'national soul,' by

> insulting our national feelings, by slandering our national character, by trampling on our national institutions, by making a profane jest of our most sacred traditions, and by doing all they can to annihilate our national characteristics, and erase our name and superscription from the medalled history of the British island.

This is the voice of radical Scottish nationality, emphasising at every turn the threat posed to Scottish character and independence by a union that failed to give the Scots sufficient credit for their distinctiveness. Indeed, whereas in 1856, Blackie had given *The Times* some credit for their coverage of Scottish affairs – even if he had criticised the newspaper for its attitude to Scottish nationality – by this date his bearing had hardened: 'it is enough for me to know that *The Times* is more than commonly insolent on the one side, that I may be more than commonly zealous on the other… What *The Times* wishes not to be, in respect of Scotland, ought by all means to be.' As his task was to toast 'Scottish Literature,' Blackie did not miss this opportunity to promote Scottish letters to the highest echelons of world literature, lauding Robert Burns and Walter Scott, and stating that the best way to remember Burns was to 'speak his language.'

With such radicalism being given an airing, at an event where the other speakers so clearly saw the need for moderation, it should come as no surprise that Charles Rogers was again careful to elide Blackie's radicalism from his version of the foundation stone ceremony and banquet in both the *Book of Wallace* and his

Autobiography. Such careful editing of the monument's discourse is understandable from one who so clearly represented the moderate face of commemorative practice at this time. It must be acknowledged, however, that Archibald Alison felt it necessary to phrase his toast in unambiguously unionist terms; that is to say, the fact that banquet attendees were 'intensely national' was deemed to be problematic, a difficulty to be overcome – we are reminded of the 'loud cheers intermingled with hisses,' that greeted the Rev Dr William Anderon's anti-aristocratic statements at Glasgow in 1857. Alison's concerns about his audience may indicate that their nationality contained radical tendencies, the more questioning discourse of Blackie was greeted with loud applause and general approbation. Indeed, both Alison and Blackie's speeches received this response even though, from an analytical perspective, they represent opposed expressions of nationality.

In writing of the outcome of the foundation stone ceremony, Sir Archibald Alison maintained that his spin on the achievements of Wallace was clearly the one that had been viewed as definitive, as 'no unpleasant feelings were expressed, and in many of the southern journals the subject was mentioned in terms of generous enthusiasm.'[8] A good deal of the editorial comment in the Scottish press did look upon the event as representing assertive yet inoffensive Scottish nationality, though scepticism was reserved regarding the likelihood of the monument's completion. The conservative *Glasgow Herald*, for instance, referred to the ceremonial as being of 'a brilliant and elevating character,' saying that Scotsmen should be proud of such a memorial to mark the independence of Scotland, '...when so many circumstances are daily occurring around us, the tendency of which is to smooth away or obliterate those distinctions which remain to us.'[9] Broadly approving of the monument movement, yet bemoaning its lack of progress, the editorial closed with the hope that the monument would indeed be completed, in order that Scotland could not be laid open to accusations of 'pride and poverty.' Opinions expressed either in favour of or against the monument movement do not appear to have been determined by the political or social perspective of particular papers. For instance, faith in the ultimate success of the monument movement was shared by the *Herald's* liberal opposite number, the *North British Daily Mail*: in an editorial that described the

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[8] Alison, *Autobiography*, vol II, p317

[9] *GH*, 25th June, 1861

benefits of preserved nationality, and attempted to counter English accusations of Scottish provincialism, the *Mail* approvingly quoted Sheriff Bell's assertion of pride in the name of Britain, arguing that the 'humble memorial on the Abbey Craig does nothing more than give expression to the feelings of the people.'[10] The *Mail* also argued that, 'The past is a source of power for the present and future, and true greatness we know to be at once reproductive and creative.' The liberal *Hamilton Advertiser*, one of Scotland's best-selling provincial newspapers, shared the *Mail's* position, proclaiming that the monument movement, 'proceeded from no feeling of exultation over the defeat or discomfiture of former enemies, and was entirely free from all spirit of animosity,' and felt assured enough to state that, '...should a deficiency in the fund exist, an appeal to the patriotism of the country will, we feel confident, be responded to in a manner which will remove all fears on that score.'[11]

The *Edinburgh Courant*, organ of the Conservative party in Scotland, took a much dimmer view of the event and of the movement as a whole, asking what the monument was intended to represent, and lambasting what it saw as the radical spin that monument's promoters seemed intent upon:

> 'Such men remake Wallace a mere peg for hanging modern prejudices on, and his Monument will be to them a good cover from which to shoot at the nobility; that nobility whose ancestors, led by Bruce, were the real founders, on a solid basis, of the country's autonomy.'[12]

That the *Courant* appears to have laboured under the misapprehension that radical sentiments, principally those of John Stuart Blackie, were somehow representative of the movement as a whole, is apparent in its offering the suggestion that the monument ought to commemorate Wallace as, 'a warrior who helped to prepare the way for the independence of our nation, during ages when the kindred races... of England and Scotland were not ripe to unite.' That this was precisely the image of Wallace that Alison, Rogers, Bell and the other moderates were intent on projecting seems to have passed the *Courant* by.[13] The objections of the radical –

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[10] quoted in 'Opinions of the Press: the Wallace Business,' *SJ*, 5th July, 1861

[11] *Hamilton Advertiser*, 29th June, 1861

[12] Cowan, *The Newspaper in Scotland*, p280; 'Thoughts About Scottish Nationality and the Wallace Monument (from the Edinburgh Courant),' *GH*, 27th June, 1861

[13] *GH*, 27th June, 1861

and short-lived – *Ayrshire Express* were somewhat more grounded, albeit in the perception of the Central Committee as being arrogant, misguided and unrepresentative of the national sentiment. Attacking both the presumption of the ceremony's speakers, and their tendency to attract ridicule, the *Express* concluded its editorial with a direct attack upon 'the officiousness of the busy-body notoriety hunters, who organised the agitation,' singling out the 'book-making chaplain,' Charles Rogers.[14] Along similar lines, the 'vigorously liberal' *Morning Journal*, pointed out that whilst an orator might be able to indulge in 'unbounded panegyric,' it fell to the journalist to question the 'present realities' underpinning such events: 'Was there ever such a pathos as this descent from the heroics of yesterday, to the plain indispensable matters of business to-day?'[15] Acknowledging that Wallace was worthy of all praise, the *Morning Journal* cast doubt upon the success of a movement, 'conducted on principles of humbug and imposture from the beginning.' The Stirling press continued to adopt contrasting positions: the *Observer* remained positive, looking upon the event as 'a great national gathering,' and viewing the monument as a testament to, 'future generations that the Scotchmen of 1861 appreciated the great value of the stand made by Wallace.'[16] The *Stirling Journal's* report of the foundation-stone ceremony was, on the other hand, replete with remarks intended to undermine the nationality of the event; its focus was firmly on the day's deficiencies: for instance, whereas the *Observer* looked upon the event as having possessed 'attended with *eclat* and success,' the *Journal* described the Stirling preparations as 'of rather a meagre character,' and despite grudgingly admitting that, 'the events of Monday constituted in many respects, though not in all, a great success,' the most praiseworthy aspect identified by the *Journal* was that the day passed off with a minimum of violence.[17]

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[14] quoted in 'Opinions of the Press: the Wallace Business,' *SJ*, 5th July, 1861

[15] *ibid.*

[16] *SO*, 27th June, 1861

[17] 'The Wallace Monument: Ceremony of Laying the Foundaton-Stone,' *SJ*, 28th June, 1861

1861 – 1869: A RADICAL ASCENDANCY?

The need to frame Wallace's legacy in avowedly unionist terms at the foundation stone ceremony is somewhat ironic, considering that it was to be Rogers's last hurrah as secretary to the Acting Committee of the National Wallace Monument movement. Within a few weeks of the ceremony taking place, Rogers had resigned from the committee, blaming the persecution of William Burns for his action.[18] However, though Rogers had separated himself from the committee, he did not separate himself from the monument: in early July, and without the approval of the Acting Committee, Rogers formed an 'Auxiliary or Supplementary Committee' with the published aim of assisting the monument movement.[19] The appearance of the Supplementary Committee created a new set of tensions which, when made public, further emphasised the perception of the movement as shambolic. In August of 1861, the Acting Committee under Lord Jerviswoode, published the resolutions of a meeting held that month, in order that 'intending subscribers may be under no misapprehension as to the quarter to which their Subscriptions for the Monument should be forwarded.'[20] Rogers, not to be deterred, travelled across Scotland, holding public meetings and raising funds, controversy dogging his every step.[21] Though the Supplementary Committee did manage to raise some money, the controversy surroundings its existence and operation, rather than supplementing the work of the Acting Committee, appears to have undermined both. A rapprochement of sorts took place in November, a newspaper notice stating that both committees should work towards the common goal of raising the money necessary to complete the monument, and that the Supplementary Committee would forward all subscriptions to the Acting Committee.[22] Despite this agreement, the Supplementary Committee was wound up the following June, owing no doubt to Rogers being assailed from all sides with regard to his role as chaplain to Stirling Castle Garrison, a member of Stirling Town

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18 Rogers, *Autobiography*, pp180-181

19 'The Wallace Monument,' *Scotsman*, 9th July, 1861; Rogers, *Autobiography*, pp181-182

20 'National Wallace Monument,' *Scotsman*, 8th August, 1861

21 'Church Officers and the Wallace Monument,' *Scotsman*, 4th October, 1861, *et seq.*

22 'National Wallace Monument,' *Scotsman*, 22nd November, 1861

Council, as well as the promoter of a variety of different historical and literary projects.[23]

After Rogers's resignation from the Acting Committee, and both during and after the life of his abortive Supplementary Committee, the official committee continued to attempt to raise funds. By the summer of 1863, the misfortunes of the Acting and Building Committees reached another moment of crisis, brought about as a result of the actions of their former secretary, yet also, it would appear, stemming from William Burns's inability to countenance Charles Rogers being connected with the movement in any way – though the two committees had agreed to work 'harmoniously,' this was not a marriage bound to prosper. The conflict over the actions of Rogers's Supplementary Committee was subsequently blamed for the loss of momentum suffered by the movement after the foundation stone ceremonial of 1861, yet the source of the difficulty in 1863 was of a different kind – the builder nominated to erect the monument had underestimated the cost, and there were insufficient funds available to the Building Committee to continue the works.[24] This problem was exacerbated by the discovery that the stone originally quarried from the east side of the Abbey Craig was unsuitable for the structure, and another source had to be found.[25] Though the monument had reached a height of only seventy or eighty feet, the builder was dismissed, and the Building Committee was 'remodelled,' with William Burns taking the role of convener, the committee assuming direct responsibility for the construction. It is from this point in the life of the Wallace Monument movement that William Burns appears to have taken a leading role, not merely in the Glaswegian committee, but in the enterprise as a whole. There was, however, a marked lack of progress: in April of 1864, the Building Committee issued a circular, stating that, though the monument was now 110 feet tall – half the planned height – the committee's funds were 'all but

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23 For Rogers's side of the story see, Rogers, *Autobiography*, pp188-205; for a more balanced view, see *Scotsman*, 21st July, 1863, 9th October, 1869.

24 'The Wallace Monument at Stirling,' *GH*, 13th September, 1869

25 'Wallace Monument,' *Scotsman*, 13th March, 1862; 'The National Wallace Monument at Stirling,' *Scotsman*, 15th April, 1864.

exhausted,' and a further £5000 was required to ensure its completion.[26] At a public meeting held in Stirling that month, Lord Jerviswoode outlined the various problems that the monument movement had experienced, and exhorted the committee members, 'to go back to the people of Scotland and say that, though there might have been mistakes, errors, and omissions, connected with the undertaking, still everything had been done for the best'.[27] Jerviswoode concluded his speech with 'a strong and earnest appeal to the country to come forward in support of so great and national an undertaking,' but support was still not forthcoming. In December of that year, the *Stirling Observer*, printed an editorial on the monument's progress: still supportive of the movement, the paper called upon Scots to make further contributions to the monument fund, whether those Scots had initially favoured the monument enterprise or not. If the monument were to remain half-built, 'strangers – and especially our English neighbours – will point to the "sticket tower on Abbey Craig," as a proof that the national spirit of Scotland was either dead of dying.'[28] Such accusations, the *Observer* noted, would point to the 'wild talk of such men as Professor Blackie and Mr Burns,' as representing the last, radical utterances of a perishing nationality.

William Burns continued to exert himself to this end: at a meeting of the Glasgow St Andrew's Society – a society founded by Burns shortly after the NAVSR had faltered – Burns moved that ten guineas should be 'appropriated' from the Society's funds towards the completion of the monument, and that the members of the Society 'individually be recommended to subscribe a sum of five guineas towards the same object.'[29] A meeting of the Acting Committee later that month, minuted that, though the monument had now reached 135 feet in height, and that visitors could 'now walk safely and comfortably around the summit,' there were once again insufficient funds to carry on with the construction, and that, should no further income be created, it would be necessary to sell off some of the 'plant and

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[26] 'The Wallace Monument,' *Scotsman*, 12th April, 1864. This report states – erroneously – that the completed monument was to be 170 feet tall.

[27] *Scotsman*, 15th April, 1864

[28] 'The Wallace Monument,' *SO*, 8th December, 1864

[29] Extract from Minute Book of Glasgow St. Andrew's Society, *MLB*, #B115063

materials' to assist in liquidating the outstanding debts.[30] After the meeting, some of the committee members resolved that a further appeal should be made, yet at a meeting called in Glasgow the following week, and despite over three hundred circulars having been issued to subscribers and other committee members, only fourteen people attended.[31] Nevertheless, this new committee undertook to raise the outstanding amount necessary for the completion of the monument, which by this date was some £3000.[32] The majority of the money raised by this newly constituted committee was mainly gathered in 'small sums' from the working classes of Glasgow and surrounding area, though amounts did come in from other parts of Scotland and the Empire, as well as from New York.[33]

Burns was still burning with the righteous fire that had made him one of the NAVSR's most vocal critics of the Union, and he continued to mount skirmishes against English neglect of Scotland's distinctive nationality and the associated threat of anglicisation. His favourite target was the habit of English and Scottish journals – and some public figures such as Archibald Alison – of referring to Scotland as 'England,' or using the name of England when it would have been more accurate to say 'Great Britain.'[34] For Burns, this issue was key to, 'Scotland's place in the Union, or as to the conservation of Scottish memories, sentiments, and feelings.'[35] The defence of Scottish nationality against threats of assimilation or submersion were forever at the forefront of Burns's rhetoric, and, unlike Rogers or Alison – though very much in common with J S Blackie – Burns was not averse at pointing the finger southwards: in November of 1869, two months after the National Wallace

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30 'National Wallace Monument,' *Scotsman*, 12th June, 1865

31 Fyfe, J (ed): *Autobiography of John McAdam, 1806-1883*, (Edinburgh, 1980), pp79-81; 'Glasgow – National Wallace Monument,' *Scotsman*, 22nd June, 1865

32 *Scotsman*, 22nd June, 1865

33 Fyfe, *John McAdam*, p81

34 For examples of William Burns's belligerence see, Burns, W: *Scotland and her calumniators: her past, her present, and her future; remarks suggested by the strictures of the London press, by the author of the history of John, Alexander, and Patrick*, (Glasgow, 1858); *What's In a Name? being an inquiry, how far the practice of substituting the name England for Great Britain, as that of the United Kingdom, is legitimate in itself, or injurious to Scotland*, (Glasgow, 1860); see also, Hanham, H J; 'Mid-Century Scottish Nationalism,' pp161-162

35 Burns, W: *Address to the Glasgow St Andrew's Society: subject: a review of the correspondence between the North Briton, Lord Palmerston… and others, as to the misuse of the terms England, and English, for the United Kingdom*, (Glasgow, 1869), p6

Monument had finally been inaugurated, Burns delivered an address to the St Andrew's Society of Glasgow, in which he reviewed the voluminous correspondence he had with a variety of public figures, concerning the inaccurate use of 'England' over 'Great Britain' or 'Scotland,' asserting that this 'practice' was not mere negligence, but, 'a deliberate attempt to defraud my country and countrymen of their historical position.'[36] One of the letters referred to was sent to Queen Victoria, in order to bring the issue to her notice, and was signed by, amongst others, James Grant, one of the founders of the NAVSR, and John Stuart Blackie. William Burns addressed the Glasgow St Andrew's Society as its founder: he had started up the society just as the NAVSR had begun to falter in 1854, and the rhetoric of the society itself mirrors Burns's belligerent approach to the preservation of Scottish nationality.[37] Indeed, the society was to produce its own monument to Wallace by funding the addition of a Wallace window to Paisley Abbey.

For Burns, the past retained a political dimension that the more moderate nationality of Rogers and his ilk had been intent on eliding from the public discourse of the monument movement, yet it was this conception of Wallace, and of Scottish national memory, that the Building Committee under Burns's leadership, broadcast in order to raise the money necessary to complete the monument. John McAdam, who had taken on the role of convener in the new committee, was a committed political reformer and an 'enthusiastic propagandist' for the nationalist movements in Poland, Hungary and Italy, described by T C Smout as having possessed, 'a radical thirst for liberty, a republicanism, an anti-clericalism and even a nationalism that the ruling powers in Britain might well feel happy was directed to affairs outside of Scotland.'[38] With leading lights such as Burns and McAdam, the newly constituted Building Committee drew deep from the radical tradition, and its association with nationalist agitation in Europe. In terms of their fund-raising, the committee appears to have turned their backs upon the possibility of garnering any further support from the nobility and gentry of Scotland, focusing instead upon the collection of large quantities of small donations. In his autobiography, John McAdam proudly listed two of these: the first from the 'Boilermakers of the Callas

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[36] Burns, *op cit.*

[37] Hanham, 'Mid-Century Scottish Nationalism,' p170

[38] Fyfe, *John McAdam,* pp iv-x, xviii-xxi; Smout, *Century of the Scottish People,* pp244-245

Dock Company, English, Irish and Scots workmen,' who gave twenty pounds; the second being fifty pounds received from the 'crews of vessels belonging to the Panama company.'[39] Combining their appeals to working men at home and abroad with their sympathies towards the nationalist movements on the continent, McAdam wrote to his friends Kossuth, Garibaldi, Louis Blanc, Karl Blind and Guiseppe Mazzini, in 1868, asking them to send him 'a few lines' on the subject of Wallace and the monument that might then be framed and placed on display, with the expectation that 'thousands would travel far to see the handwriting of men so admired and loved.'[40] The frame itself was to be made from fragments of the 'Wallace Oak of Elderslie' – a literal 'framing strategy' – placing the words of modern nationalists within a frame constructed of wood associated with Scotland's historic national hero, combining past and present, memory and modernity, in one relic of the 'testimony borne by a free people,' in aid of the liberty of nations.[41]

This is not to suggest that support for the European nationalists had become synonymous with radical nationality – the statements made by the British constitutionalist James Dodds prove otherwise, and it was Charles Rogers who lauded Lajos Kossuth and his wife during their visit to Stirling shortly in 1856 meeting. In common with the legacy of Wallace, the aims of these continental nationalists were accepted across broad swathes of Scottish civil society, whether middle- or working-class. The distinction is not between those who supported the Italians, Hungarians and Poles and those who did not, but in the nature of that support, and the manner in which the nationalist struggle in Europe found its correlative in both the Scottish wars of independence, and in whichever contemporary Scottish or British endeavour one was engaged with.[42] Though all Scots could find gratification in the fact that they had been delivered from oppression by Wallace and Bruce, it was the comparison between the struggles of the past and of the present – whether on the continent or at home in Scotland – that determined at what point on the scale of Scottish nationality one stood. The legacy of Wallace was not the point at issue. The cause of any politico-cultural divisions in

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[39] Fyfe, *John McAdam,* p80

[40] Fyfe, *John McAdam,* p174

[41] Fyfe, *John McAdam,* p175; Smout, *Century*, pp244-245

[42] Smout, *Century*, pp240-245

the Wallace Monument movement, and any accusation of radicalism, was based upon the individual protagonist's representation of the relationship between that legacy and the demands of the present. For those of a moderate mind, the Scottish model of an independent nationality safely nested within the union of Great Britain acted as a beacon for oppressed nationalities, something to which the persecuted could aspire. Undoubtedly the same must be said for those whose Scottish nationality tended towards radicalism, yet for the radicals there was also present an element of identification, rather than mere sympathy. William Burns and John McAdam represent this radical reading of Scottish-national memory.

By March of 1866, the new Building Committee had managed to raise a further £1000, and felt confident that building work could recommence, with the aim of completing the monument before the end of the year.[43] In June, it was reported that 'an eminent Scottish Baronet' had promised a further £500 to the monument fund, raising further the expectation of a speedy completion. This was not to be: in March, 1867, the tower, though having reached a height of 175 feet, was still incomplete, with only a portion of the crown having been built.[44] The committee estimated that another £1400 was necessary to complete the tower and the keeper's house, with sufficient funds for only 'about two months' operations' in the bank. By February of 1869, the monument itself was complete, though the adjoining keeper's house was still under construction, and in March of that year it was still necessary to carry out fund-raising activities. [45] William Burns travelled to London to 'plead the cause of the Wallace Monument in the galleries of the Scottish Corporation,' where he addressed 'a respectable assembly,' in the presence of Charles Rogers and Colin Rae-Brown, both of whom were now resident in London.[46] Following Burns's visit, a committee was formed which included Rogers – though Rogers claims that Burns had attempted to have both the Reverend

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[43] 'The Wallace Monument near Stirling,' *The Times*, 22nd March, 1866

[44] 'National Wallace Monument,' *Scotsman*, 21st March, 1867

[45] Fyfe, *John McAdam,* p173

[46] Rogers, *Autobiography*, pp205-206

Doctor and Colin Rae-Brown 'extruded' – going on to raise, according to Rogers, £300 for the monument fund.[47]

1869: The Inauguration Ceremony

It was not until August, 1869, that the monument was deemed complete, the eleventh of September – the anniversary of the battle of Stirling Bridge – being set as the date for the formal hand-over from the Acting and Building Committees to the Town Council of Stirling.[48]

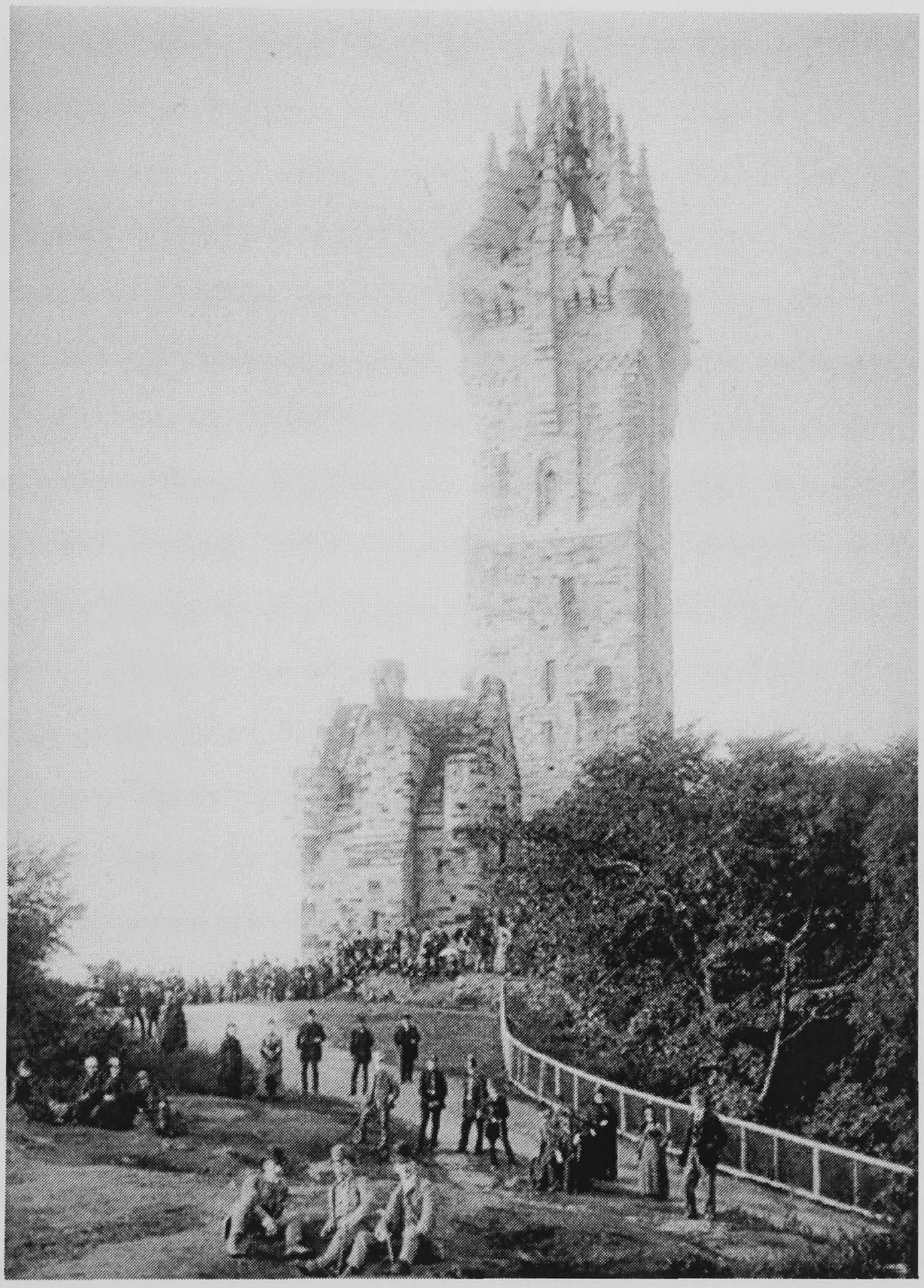

Figure 3: National Wallace Monument (pictured in the 1880s)

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[47] *ibid.*.

[48] 'The National Wallace Monument,' *Scotsman*, 21st August, 1869

Despite a great deal of interest as to what form the inauguration might take, the paucity of funds available to the committee – they were still liable for £600 – meant that it was impossible to close the movement with a public display on the same scale as 1856 or 1861.[49] This caused some disappointment in Stirling, the *Stirling Observer* suggesting that the ceremony should be put off until sufficient money became available to fund a suitably massive event.[50] This was not to be: instead of massed bands and Masonic Lodges, the Town Council, with 'a few friends,' walked to the Abbey Craig where they were met by some of the members of the Acting Committee, including Lord Jerviswoode, William Burns and John McAdam.[51] Later, Charles Rogers and Colin Rae-Brown were to put in an appearance, with, Rogers alleges, forewarning of dire consequences should either of them attempt to speak.[52] At the monument, a minute of the last meeting of the Building Committee was read, followed by a report presenting 'a brief *resumé*' of the Building Committee's efforts since the beginnings of the movement.[53] As well as detailing the most significant dates in the movement's history, the report devoted significant attention to the difficulties caused by Rogers's Supplementary Committee, blaming Rogers for having at that time 'destroyed the confidence of the public,' as a result of which 'interest in the movement had disappeared.'[54] Considering that the report was a product of the committee largely controlled by William Burns, it comes as no surprise that its tone should be highly critical of Rogers.[55] Part of the report, however, provides an alternative, if somewhat ambiguous view of the two principal stages of the Wallace Monument movement; that is, the period before the 1861 Foundation Stone ceremony when Rogers was secretary, and the period after his resignation, when William Burns was the

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[49] 'National Wallace Monument: Ceremony of Inauguration,' *SO*, 2nd September, 1869; 'National Wallace Monument,' *Scotsman*, 6th September, 1869

[50] 'National Wallace Monument – Ceremony of Inauguration,' *SO*, 2nd September, 1869

[51] 'National Wallace Monument,' *SO*, 16th September, 1869; 'The Wallace Monument at Stirling,' *GH*, 13th September, 1869

[52] *SO*, 16th September, 1869; *GH*, 13th September, 1869; Rogers, *Autobiography*, pp209-211

[53] *SO*, 16th September, 1869

[54] *ibid.*

[55] Rogers, *Autobiography*, *op cit.*

movement's principal proponent. The report stated that the 'amount subscribed up to laying foundation-stone [*sic*] on June 24, 1861,' was £6,766; the 'amount subscribed since,' being £6,136.[56] In other words, the five years under Rogers's secretary-ship brought in more than half of the total raised; the remaining funds being gathered over a period of eight years. There are a variety of factors to be considered when attempting to explain this ratio: for instance, the committee during Rogers's involvement was able to take advantage of the initial enthusiasm for the monument, created by the demonstration of 1856 – by November of 1856, £2250 had been raised – nor were they labouring under the clouds that gathered around the monument caused by the design controversy of 1859 and the Supplementary Committee of 1861. Furthermore, the subscriptions received under Burns's leadership were mainly of small quantities, the bulk of the fund-raising being aimed at working-men. That so much money was raised after 1861, albeit somewhat slowly, was no doubt owed to the perseverance of William Burns and the other members of the committee who stuck by the movement.

Other than these quarrels over the sluggish progress of the monument movement, the inauguration ceremony at the monument was characterised by a distinct lack of any celebratory commemoration of the Wallace legacy. If the national meeting in 1856 had represented the baptism of the monument movement, and the laying of the foundation stone had marked its 'coming-of-age,' the inauguration had a decidedly funereal quality, being almost wholly concerned with a consideration of the movement's eventful life, and with expressions of gratitude for those who had aided the troubled infant throughout.[57] At the dinner held in the Stirling Royal Hotel that evening, in offering the toast to the memory of Wallace, Provost Rankin declined to attempt a lengthy portrait of the hero, the toast being 'drunk in solemn silence.'[58] The tone of the proceedings took a more assertive turn when William Burns sought to prove that the monument removed the 'stigma'

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[56] *SO*, 16th September, 1869; *GH*, 13th September, 1869; 'Inauguration of the National Wallace Monument,' *Scotsman*, 13th September, 1869.

[57] Despite his conciliatory role within the National Wallace Monument Movement, Jerviswoode appears to have fitted quite neatly into Michael Fry's definition of most Lord Advocates as being 'politically unambitious dullards.' (Fry, *Patronage and Principle*, p71)

[58] *SO*, 16th September, 1869

caused by the absence of any enduring, national symbol of Scotland's gratitude to Wallace. The monument would counter those who had argued that Wallace's victory at Stirling Bridge had retarded, 'the wise and far-seeing policy of the greatest of the Plantagenets.' It was to stand as a defiant symbol of Scottish nationality:

> [N]ow there had been reared on the summit of the Abbey Craig an unmistakable and perpetual protest against anything of the kind, so that in future their sons and sons' sons would say to future generations – "This is what Scotchmen thought upon the subject in the nineteenth century, and Scotchmen will continue to think so still." (Applause.)[59]

Following Burns's speech, Sheriff Monro of Clackmannanshire, proposed a vote of thanks to the Committee, comparing their travails with those of Wallace, before entering into a lengthened expatiation on the character of the hero. Of the toasts that followed, perhaps the most conspicuous was that made by John McAdam, recorded in the *Stirling Observer* as, 'The Good Time Coming – Success of Nationalities,' though other newspapers reported it as, 'The Cause of National Independence.'

The inauguration of the monument did not mark the end of hostilities between those concerned with its construction: a lengthy correspondence ensued in the *North British Daily Mail*, primarily concerned with splitting hairs over who had come up with the idea in the first place, combined with continuing arguments over the irregularities associated with Rogers's Supplementary Committee.[60] Taking part in this 'squabble' were Rogers, Colin Rae-Brown, the movement's secretary, Ebenezer Morrison, and John Steill, who laid his own humble claim to having originated the movement, as well as a host of other pseudonymous individuals who felt it necessary to contribute. Noticeably, however, none of those participating in this correspondence engaged in criticisms based upon attitudes to Wallace's legacy; the issue is simply one of individual claim and counter-claim upon the history of the monument itself – the politics of commemoration are significantly absent.

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[59] *ibid.*

[60] *NBDM*, 11th September, 1869, et seq. The editors of the *NBDM* officially closed the correspondence on the 24th September, Rogers getting the last, but by no means conclusive word.

1869 – 1907: The Hall of Heroes

As the National Wallace Monument movement came to an end, so the life of the monument itself began. Though the public were admitted to the monument from the date of its inauguration – indeed, the monument had attracted a steady stream of visitors during the period of its construction – it would appear that very little work was carried out on the building itself, or on its surroundings.[61] The monument's so-called 'custodiers' had given themselves the task of laying out the grounds around the monument, yet the job of furnishing the monument's interior had to be left to 'outside help,' principally in donating objects of historical interest to the monument's museum, and of supplying busts of 'eminent Scotsman.'[62] According to John McAdam's autobiography, the testimonials from Kossuth, Mazzini, *et al*, framed in the fragment of the Wallace Oak, were intended to initiate a collection of historical objects, but, McAdam claims, in what appears to be a reference to Rogers, when 'some objectionable parties in London took it up, and issued circulars for that purpose,' the committee, wary of yet further controversy, allowed their intention to be 'thwarted,' and the monument remained empty.[63]

Seventeen years elapsed between the monument's inauguration and the first bust being placed in the room designated for that purpose: a bust of Robert Burns, donated by Andrew Carnegie, was unveiled in September of 1886, with a second bust, that of Robert the Bruce, donated by the Marquis of Bute, following shortly thereafter. The short demonstration held to inaugurate the Robert Burns bust is significant, in that an address was delivered on 'The Patriotism of Burns,' by none other than the Rev Dr Charles Rogers. William Burns had been dead since 1876, but it is unlikely that his absence was a factor in Rogers's adoption as one of the speakers at that time. Probably more significant is the fact that Stirling Town Council, who were the 'custodiers' of the monument, did not share the former Building Committee's low opinion of Rogers, and looked upon him as an authority on historical matters, and as having a privileged position in the history of the monument itself. Evidence for Rogers's rehabilitation is to be found in the number

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61 Morton, 'Efficacious Patriot,' pp246-247; 'Wallace Monument at Stirling: Inauguration of Bust of Burns,' *Scotsman*, 6th September, 1886.

62 *Scotsman*, 6th September, 1886

63 Fyfe, *John McAdam*, pp80-81

of appearances he was to make at significant events held at the Monument in the years between 1886 and his death in September 1890. At many of these events, Rogers delivered an address of some kind, and, on a number of occasions, received thanks from a prominent attendee. At the unveiling of the busts of Walter Scott, John Knox and George Buchanan in what was now known as 'The Hall of Heroes,' on the 12th of September, 1887, Andrew Carnegie himself was present, saying that, 'he thought a niche should be reserved for the Doctor, because to him more than to any other man they were indebted for the Walhalla of Scotland.'[64] Such gratitude was almost certainly as much the product of Rogers's ceaseless self-promotion as it was the recognition of his hard work and continued commitment. After the busts of Burns, Bruce, Knox, Scott and Buchanan, a further ten busts were placed in the monument's Hall of Heroes, between the years 1888 and 1907.[65]

On the 17th of November, 1888, a ceremony was held to mark the transfer of the so-called Wallace Sword from Dumbarton Castle to the Wallace Monument. According to the report in the *Glasgow Herald*, the relocation of the sword had been the result of petitions to the War Office from Charles Rogers.[66] At the ceremony, Colonel Nightingale, 'the Commanding Officer of the District,' handed the sword over to Charles Rogers, as the representative of the monument's custodiers. Later in the day, the Provost of Stirling presided at a public reception in Stirling, attended by local civic and military worthies, though not by any representatives from Dumbarton, who appear to have been somewhat disgruntled by the manner in which the transfer had taken place.[67] After a glowing introduction from Provost Yellowlees, in which he gave Charles Rogers credit for the sword's relocation, Rogers gave an account of the sword's life, in an attempt to prove that the object on

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[64] 'Unveiling of Busts in the National Wallace Monument,' *GH*, 13th September, 1887

[65] These were James Watt and Hugh Miller (August, 1888); David Livingstone, (March, 1889); Thomas Chalmers (August, 1889); Adam Smith and Robert Tannahill (August, 1889); Thomas Carlyle (July, 1891); William Murdoch, (July, 1892); Allan Ramsay, (July, 1900); David Brewster, (November, 1907). *Scotsman*, 6th September, 1886; *GH*, 13th September, 1887; 'National Wallace Monument: Unveiling of Bust of Livingstone,' *Scotsman*, 8th March, 1889; 'The Carlyle Monument at Stirling: Speech by Professor Masson,' *Scotsman*, 27th July, 1891; 'Unveiling of the Murdoch Bust in the National Wallace Monument,' *Scotsman*, 30th July, 1892; 'Allan Ramsay in the Hall of Heroes,' *Scotsman*, 26th October, 1900.

[66] 'The Wallace Sword: Transference from Dumbarton to Stirling,' *GH*, 19th November, 1888

[67] 'The Wallace Sword: Dumbarton Town Council and its Removal,' *GH*, 22nd November, 1888

display really was the sword that Wallace had carried at Stirling Bridge.[68] Whereas Rogers assumed the role of historian, it was left to Provost Yellowlees to justify the veneration of such a potent symbol within the context of union and empire:

> The sword would not lie in the monument as a symbol of strife and hate and bloodshed, but as a reminder of the weary and long-continued struggle for liberty and national independence. It would be a symbol of that struggle which culminated in the consummation of the Union between Scotland, not as a servile and conquered race, but as a free and independent nationality, on the one hand, and its richer and more populous neighbour on the south, a union entered into on equally free and independent terms, and which had been fraught with untold blessings to both nationalities. (Applause.)[69]

If Yellowlees's sentiments are to be taken as representative of the intended significance of the sword, there can be little doubt that it was the monument's custodiers were intent on projecting both sword and memorial as symbols of deeply moderate Scottish nationality. Just as Rogers had delivered one of the definitive statements of unionist-nationalism at the foundation stone ceremony in 1861 – declaring that Wallace had been, 'the means of uniting these kingdoms together on equal terms, and with equal rights,' – so this Yellowlees's sentiments were no less succinct.

The role played by the monument's two most infamous promoters was not to go un-commemorated: in addition to the Wallace Sword and those busts added to the Hall of Heroes, two further busts were placed in the monument's entrance hall: that of Charles Rogers in 1892, donated by some of Rogers's admirers in Bridge of Allan and Stirling, followed by a bust of William Burns, gifted by the Glasgow St Andrew's Society, and added to the monument in July 1900, on the same day as their bust of Ramsay.[70] When news got out that the bust of Rogers was to be placed in the monument, Colin Rae-Brown was not slow to object, citing the controversy over the Supplemental committee, and referring to the plan to add Rogers's bust as a 'monstrous perversion of the purpose which the original promoters of our national walhalla had in view,' and – once again – re-opening the old argument over who was genuinely responsible for the monument by describing himself as the 'founder of the

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68 *ibid.*

69 *ibid.*

70 'The National Wallace Monument,' *Scotsman*, 8th August, 1892; *Scotsman*, 26th October, 1900

monument enterprise.'[71] At the unveiling of Rogers's bust, Provost Kinross of Stirling was anxious to emphasise that the entrance court was not part of the monument, and that there had never been any suggestion that Rogers's bust should be placed amidst the company of 'eminent Scotsmen' in the Hall of Heroes, going on to say that he hoped Rogers would be the first of many of the members of the monument committee to be recognised, naming Lord Jerviswoode, William Burns and Colin Rae-Brown.[72] Unveiling the bust, Sir John Stirling-Maxwell – who had never met Rogers – was equally keen to separate the commemoration of Rogers from that of the Hall of Heroes, as well as stating that, 'he was not concerned to discuss how far Dr Rogers was intimately connected with the original idea of building the monument,' referring to this as 'not a matter of very great importance.'[73] Instead, Maxwell opted to celebrate the role Rogers had played in promoting Scottish nationality, 'as one who nursed it, guarded it, and fed it for many years,' – the tablet on the bust reads, '...a tribute to his great public services, his efforts to erect this national monument, and devotion to Scottish nationality.'[74]

Unlike Rogers, William Burns's bust was unveiled by 'a personal friend,' and, rather than attempting to avoid or play down the subject of the monument's conception and construction, Mr Alexander Watt of the Glasgow St Andrew's Society said that,

> the erection of this noble building was not accomplished without long years of anxiety and labour, and in that work William Burns took a leading part, his energy and perseverance being largely responsible for the successful completion of the monument.[75]

In contrast to the moderate rhetoric commemorating Rogers, Watt praised Burns as 'one who fought with such sturdy vigour for the vindication of Scottish rights, and who was filled with enthusiasm and love for his native land.' Present was the MP Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman who referred to William Burns – with splendid diplomacy – as one who sought to 'perpetuate some memorial of the

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71 'The National Wallace Monument,' *Scotsman*, 2nd August, 1892

72 The National Wallace Monument: Unveiling of a Bust of Dr Rogers,' *GH*, 10th August, 1892

73 *ibid.*

74 *ibid.*

75 'Unveiling of Busts in the Wallace Monument,' *GH*, 26th October, 1900

feelings which he entertained perhaps in a greater degree than other people, but which were certainly not of a different kind from those which pervaded all true Scotsmen.'[76] Just as the bust of Rogers had attracted criticism from Colin Rae-Brown – who may well have been looking forward to his own visage appearing in the monument's entrance hall – so, too, the unveiling of William Burns brought a response from one of Rogers's vindicators in the *Scotsman*.[77]

The Wallace Statue and the Sexcentenary of Stirling Bridge

These smaller gatherings were by no means the most significant events held at the monument after its inauguration in 1869. In June of 1887, a statue of Wallace, placed in a niche on the outside of the tower, was unveiled by the Marquis of Bute, and in 1897, the six-hundredth anniversary of the battle of Stirling Bridge was celebrated at the monument, followed by an address in Stirling from Lord Rosebery.

We have seen how Provost Yellowlees celebrated Rogers's role in the monument at the transference of the Wallace Sword in 1888, but it was the unveiling of the Wallace Statue in 1887 that most clearly marked Charles Rogers's return to a prominent position in the public life of the monument. The day's events bore all the hallmarks of those held during Rogers's time as secretary to the Acting Committee: there was a large procession from Stirling to the monument, bands played 'Scots What Hae,' and there was an aristocratic speaker – the Marquis of Bute – to unveil the statue and address the crowd. This also provided Rogers with an opportunity to instruct the crowd on the background to the monument.[78] Importantly, the political context for the commemoration of the Scottish past had evolved since 1869: though there was now a Scottish Office in London, headed by a Secretary for Scotland, the issue of the governance of the country was a matter of vigorous public debate. Gladstone's Irish Home Rule Bill was splitting the Liberals in two, a split that cut across the fairly well established lines of Liberalism at this

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[76] *Scotsman*, 26th October, 1900

[77] 'The Hall of Heroes and Wallace Monument Busts,' *Scotsman*, 29th October, 1900

[78] 'The Wallace Statue: the Unveiling Ceremony,' *NBDM*, 25th June, 1887; 'Wallace Monument at Stirling: Unveiling of the Statue of Wallace,' *GH*, 25th June, 1887

time. Radicals joined with Whigs in voting against Gladstone's plans for the government of Ireland, just as Conservatives and Liberal Unionists increasingly found common cause in their support of the *status quo.*[79] Nor was the debate simply between those who stood for and those against Home Rule: over the next four decades, numerous different solutions to the problem were offered, ranging from 'home-rule-all-round,' through some form of administrative devolution, to all-out federalism.[80] The differences within the Liberal Party were, however, not necessarily destructive in the short term, as Unionists and Home Rulers did set aside their differences for the greater security of the party: at the 1886 election in Stirling, Liberal Unionists supported the Gladstonian Henry Campbell-Bannerman, feeling it would be 'fratricidal' for one faction to fight the other.[81]

The significance of these debates for expressions of Scottish nationality was that, whereas prior to the mid-1880s, Home Rule had been deemed strictly *infra dig*, Gladstone's conversion to the issue had, in Hanham's words, 'transformed the situation,' leading to, 'an immediate upsurge of nationalist sentiment among Scottish liberals.'[82] If this is, perhaps, over-stating the case, it is clear that the handling of Scottish issues was increasingly becoming a matter for public debate.[83] For a time at least, even those occupying the most moderate centre-ground in Scotland – whether culturally or politically – engaged with the concept of Home Rule, though they harboured fears that its adoption would cause the Scots to lose influence in the Imperial parliament. For others, with full-blown Home Rule being proposed for Ireland, the establishment of the Scottish Office was seen as more of a concession than a solution, with the pacific, reasonable Scots considering themselves as more worthy of a degree of self-government than the belligerent Irish.[84] These elements

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[79] Fry, *Patronage and Principle*, pp106-107, 114; Hutchison, I G C: *A Political History of Scotland, 1832-1914: Parties, Elections and Issues*, (Edinburgh, 1986), pp162-165

[80] Kendle, J: *Ireland and the Federal Solution: The Debate Over the United Kingdom Constitution, 1870-1921*, (Kingston, 1989), pp61-63

[81] *Hutchison*, p166

[82] Hanham, *Scottish Nationalism*, p119

[83] Fry, *Patronage and Principle*, p208

[84] Hanham, *Scottish Nationalism*, pp60-61; Finlay R J: *A Partnership for Good? Scottish Politics and the Union Since 1880*, (Edinburgh, 1997), p44

coalesced with the foundation of the Scottish Home Rule Association in Edinburgh in 1886, its aim to promote a Scottish legislature, 'with full control over all purely Scottish questions,' and to 'secure that the voice of Scotland shall be heard in the Imperial Parliament.'[85] Many members of the SHRA made direct connection with the rhetoric of the NAVSR, even going so far as to make occasional explicit connections between their cause and that of the early 1850s.[86] That the 'custodiers' of the National Wallace Monument were not disapproving of Home Rule, is illustrated by the presence of John Romans, chairman of the SHRA, as a named witness to the proceedings. Furthermore, by inviting Lord Bute to speak, it was no doubt deemed acceptable that connections might be inferred between the now respectable cause of Home Rule and the monument.[87]

Bute's role as principal speaker at this event is surely expressive of the character of the monument at this time: as well as being a prominent proponent of Home Rule, Bute was a highly-respected public figure, a noted antiquarian and philanthropist, Conservative peer, and convert to Roman Catholicism.[88] His nationalism, like that of William Burns, was motivated by a perceived neglect of Scottish issues and Scottish nationality within the British state, and he shared with Burns an evident dislike of the Union of 1707. Since 1886, Bute had been editor of the *Scottish Review*, a journal which acted as a public forum for ideas on the Home Rule question, vigorously promoting administrative decentralisation as a means of dealing more efficiently with Scottish legislation.[89] In a letter to Lord Rosebery from 1881, Bute wrote

> ...I think there are many Tories like myself who would hail a more autonomous arrangement with deep pleasure. We would prefer the rule of our own countrymen, even if it were Radical, to the existing state of things.[90]

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[85] quoted in Finlay, *Partnership for Good*, p45; Hanham, *Scottish Nationalism*, pp119-120

[86] Hanham, *Scottish Nationalism*, pp82-83; Finlay, *Partnership for Good*, pp42-43

[87] *NBDM*, 25th June, 1887; *GH*, 25th June, 1887

[88] 'Stuart, John Patrick Crichton-, third Marquis of Bute, 1847-1900,' *DNB*

[89] Kendle, J: *Ireland and the Federal Solution*, p62

[90] Marquess of Bute to the Earl of Rosebery, 3rd November, 1881, quoted in Hanham, *Scottish Nationalism*, p84

As with the NAVSR in the 1850s, it was not unusual for romantically-inclined, conservative proto-nationalists to discover that they had much in common with their radical opposites, emphasising once more that neat classifications of party and national sympathy sit uneasily on this period. Bute's combination of political conservatism and national radicalism, motivated by an obsession with the Scottish past, rendered him an ideal candidate for fronting an event which some saw as the long delayed inauguration of the National Wallace Monument as a whole. Despite the broader acceptance of the Home Rule movement as a legitimate expression of Scottish nationality, in his address, Bute avoided any direct mention of the issue, preferring to concentrate upon the historic details of Wallace's life and the distinctiveness of Scottish nationality within the Union. In a speech that was resolutely 'national' rather than political, he emphasised that the retention of Scottish nationality was an historical phenomenon and avoided any explicit contention that this nationality may be under threat.[91]

What distinguished Bute's speech, was the distinction he made between Scottish and English traditions, proposing that, as well as being the product of Scotland's separate history, the 'abiding truth' of Wallace's legacy, 'was a recognition and an expression of a fact which is scientifically, even physiologically, true, that we neither are nor can be Englishmen… [they] cannot be we, nor can we be they.'[92] This distinction – 'made by nature' – was clearly identifiable in the different national characters and histories of England and Scotland, Bute exemplifying this distinction by drawing on the topical subject of constitutional monarchy – this was, after all, 1887, the year of Victoria's Golden Jubilee. 'We have our own history,' Lord Bute said, 'and from this it comes that the sentiment of patriotism with us is profoundly associated with regard for the civil order which is based upon our history, and with the constitutional monarch that has been its offspring.'[93] This loyalty to the monarch, was not derived from William the Conqueror, but from 'Fergus and Aidan and Kenneth and Robert.' Bute connected this attachment to the monarch with both Scottish patriotism and the achievements of Wallace, who, 'as an expression of such principles,' retained his place within the

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91 *NBDM*, 25th June, 1887; *GH*, 25th June, 1887

92 *ibid.*

93 *ibid.*

Scottish national soul. Though he made no direct reference to any threat of anglicisation nor to the urge for Home Rule, Bute closed his speech by stating that those who shared Wallace's 'race', 'as we have a past and a present so we must look to have a future. (Hear, hear.) If it is to be healthy development, the development must be a natural, that is a national one.'[94] The term 'nationality' is never used, yet the intention of this speech is clearly to emphasise the need for the Scots to retain their distinct national character, and to be worthy of Wallace by maintaining those Scottish principles, inculcated by both history and racial inheritance. Though there were aspects of Bute's address that were to be deemed not entirely welcome, the content of the address was notable for its moderation. As with William Burns before him, Bute held back somewhat, was more considered in his discourse than might be expected. That is to say, the speech is as notable for the subjects it shied away from, as it is for those that it did cover: there is no mention of Home Rule, and hardly any hint that the Union might be anything other than wholly satisfactory.

Press reaction concentrated almost wholly upon Bute's speech, which met with widespread, if qualified, approval. The *Scotsman* described the Marquis as having 'performed very gracefully, and with discriminating judgement,' applauding his emphasis on 'the value of nationality and the sacred duty of preserving it.' Some his statements were, however, called into question, namely his assertion's regarding the 'physiological' differences between the English and the Scots.[95] This, the *Scotsman* argued, was 'untenable ground,' going on to state that race and nationality were 'distinct and independent.'[96] The *Glasgow Herald* was also critical of Bute's racial argument, going further than the *Scotsman* by calling into question the appropriateness of bringing up and emphasising the subject of nationality, 'a principle which has lately been so distorted in application to the Sister Isle, that one would rather not bring it into prominence again.'[97] The *Herald* extended its scepticism over 'nationality' when it diplomatically stated that, 'Considering the confusion which exists in current conceptions with regard to "nationalities" and "nations," one may reasonably shrink from an exhaustive examination,' of Lord

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[94] *ibid.*

[95] *Scotsman*, 27th June, 1887

[96] *ibid.*

[97] *GH*, 27th June, 1887

Bute's propositions regarding the 'scientific and physiological' differences between the two nations.[98] Falling back on the transcendent qualities of Wallace, the *Herald* argued that national distinctions were unnecessary, and that, 'Britons, of whatever "nationality," should unite in admiring the unswerving purity of intention, the constancy of execution, the devotion to country, and the sacrifice of self,' embodied by Wallace.[99] In a deeply moderate editorial, the *Glasgow Evening Citizen* contrasted with the polite criticisms of the *Scotsman* and of its Glaswegian counterpart, the *Herald*, by representing the Marquis's references to the Scots never having been English as merely an expression of a distinct nationality, stopping short of engaging with Bute's 'scientific' arguments. Indeed, though the *Citizen* may have been acknowledging Bute's idiosyncratic approach to Wallace when it described the Marquis's patriotism as being 'nothing if not enthusiastic,' is somewhat missed the point when it argued that, 'our stern and tempestuous apprenticeship as a nationality has impressed upon our race a strongly marked individualism,' leaving the impression that the *Citizen*, self-consciously or not, opted to elide the more problematic aspects of Bute's speech in favour of the common equation of race as a synonym for nationality.[100]

At the inauguration, the only open political reference to be heard came from Charles Rogers. Asked to provide a eulogy for the architect, J T Rochhead, Rogers grabbed this opportunity to promote his own version of the Wallace Monument movement, casting himself as its progenitor and leading-light, as well as Rochhead's close personal friend.[101] In a speech that, whether through diplomacy or egotism, elided the controversy over the Supplementary Committee, and failed to mention either William Burns or the low-key inauguration ceremony of September, 1869, Rogers referred to the monument's 'Imperial Crown' as 'the watch tower of Dover House,' claiming that, 'it celebrates the restoration of a Scottish department in the Government,' whilst at the same tame avoiding the reawakening of 'ancient animosities.'[102] This speech must represent the height of Rogers's conservatism, a

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98 *ibid.*

99 *ibid.*

100 *Glasgow Evening Citizen*, 27th June, 1887

101 'Unveiling of the Wallace Statue,' *SJ*, 1st July, 1887

102 *ibid.*

celebration of the *status-quo* and an explicit attempt to represent the monument as a product of the moderate, securely unionist view of Scottish national memory.

By far the most significant event to be held at the monument during the latter end of the nineteenth century was the celebration of the six-hundredth anniversary of the battle of Stirling Bridge, which took place at the monument on the morning of 13th of September, 1897, with a speech delivered by Lord Rosebery at a public banquet in Stirling in the afternoon. No doubt owing to Rosebery's involvement, the occasion attracted a great deal of interest in the press, with both Scottish and English newspapers covering the event in some detail. Rosebery represents a public figure of a very different persuasion from the Marquis of Bute, and his presence at the event clearly indicates a shift in the political context within which the commemoration of Wallace could take place. Only ten years on from the unveiling of the Wallace Statue, the tide of Home Rule had now ebbed. The leadership of the Liberal Party – including, significantly, Lord Rosebery – had viewed the Scottish Home Rule Association with some alarm, looking upon it as a divisive force within the party at a time when unity was required.[103] This mistrust from the upper echelons of the party, along with the diverse nature of the Home Rule movement in Scotland, and the effects of the Liberal defeat in the general election of 1895, had shunted Home Rule once more to the margins of political debate.[104] If the views of John Romans had been sufficiently compatible with the politico-cultural *zeitgeist* of Scottish commemoration in 1887 to allow him to be present at the main event, by 1897 the Scottish Home Rule Association had – almost literally – become a sideshow. Two days prior to the anniversary celebrations at the Wallace Monument, the chairman, secretary and 'a few members' of the SHRA visited the scene of Stirling Bridge to carry out their own commemoration. At a dinner held in Stirling after the demonstration, John Romans and other members of the Association poured scorn on every corner of Scottish society that did not support Home Rule. Romans claimed that, 'the spirit of Edward still dominates the English mind;' Charles Waddie, the Association's secretary, berated those who would celebrate the anniversaries of Stirling Bridge and Bannockburn as unworthy of such commemoration, if they were not prepared to 'maintain their

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103 Hanham, *Scottish Nationalism*, p92; Finlay, *Partnership for Good*, p49

104 *ibid.*

independence' in the same spirit as Wallace.'[105] In a clear break from the moderate tradition, the 'slothful' Liberals were compared to 'the vacillating Bruce who fought at times against his country;' the Unionists described as being 'descended of those unworthy nobles who fought on the English side.'[106]

If the monument's custodian's choice of the Marquis of Bute in 1887 represented the acceptability of the Home Rule debate at that time, the presence of Lord Rosebery as the principal speaker in 1897 indicates another change in the monument's place within the public expression of Scottish nationality. Rosebery, one of the architect's of Gladstone's Midlothian Campaign, former leader of the Liberal party and – briefly – Prime Minister, was a committed Liberal-Imperialist, who had been instrumental in the creation of the post of Scottish Secretary back in the 1880s. His commitment to Scottish history, culture and politics, combined with his famously eloquent oratory, had rendered him a very popular public figure in Scotland, representing a decidedly moderate interpretation of Scottish nationality.[107] As a result, Rosebery was no doubt viewed as the ideal speaker for such an important occasion, one that could be relied upon to deliver an address upon a potentially sensitive subject without causing undue offence to any but the most radical nationalists or the most blinkered unionists. Where the custodiers appear to have been more unfortunate was in their choice of day: the demonstration was held on a Monday, drastically reducing the turnout at the Abbey Craig.

On the morning of the 13th of September, a demonstration was held at the Wallace Monument, with speeches being made by a number of invited guests – only those attending the banquet in the afternoon would be privileged to hear the Earl of Rosebery's address. As was now customary, the Provost of Stirling presided at the monument – Provost Kinross – referring in his opening speech to the long process that had led to the monument's completion, singling out William Burns's 'pluck and perseverance' for special notice.[108] The Provost was followed by Mr W C Maughan of Roseneath, William Burns's son-in-law, who further elaborated on Burns's role in

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[105] 'Scottish Home Rulers and Wallace,' *NBDM*, 13th September, 1897; 'Scottish Home Rule Association at Stirling,' *Scotsman*, 12th September, 1897

[106] *GH*, 13th September, 1897

[107] 'Primrose, Archibald Philip, fifth Earl of Rosebery, 1847-1929,' *DNB*; Finlay, *Partnership for Good*, p50

[108] 'Wallace Celebration: Anniversary of Battle of Stirling Bridge,' *GH*, 14th September, 1897

The Lochmaben statue shares certain characteristics with its opposite number at Stirling, in that it too shows Bruce victorious: according to the *Glasgow Herald*, it was intended that the statue should represent, 'the king as a sturdy warrior, who has accomplished his task, but is ready, if need be, to strike yet another blow for the cause he has made his own.'[14] Unlike the Stirling statue, the Bruce at Lochmaben was intended to show the king after independence had been achieved: with his right hand, Bruce, 'grasps that famous appeal to the Pope... and which availed to procure the desired recognition of Scotland as an independent kingdom.'[15] This is a Bruce who is now intent upon winning the propaganda war – the sword has been sheathed. Both, then, were statues intended to emphasise that Bruce's battles had been successfully won, with the Lochmaben statue representing Bruce as the statesman, rather than the warrior.[16]

For the day of the inauguration, 'thousands' of people from the surrounding countryside, as well as from Dumfries and other parts of the region, came flocking to the town.[17] As was customary, the unveiling ceremony was preceded by a service in the parish church – with William Graham presiding – followed by a procession through Lochmaben; 'travelling artistes' provided entertainment, and 'a temperate repast at a moderate price,' was provided by Mr Hart of Dumfries. Upon arriving at the statue, the Rev. Graham offered a prayer, and the daughter of the local MP unveiled the statue. Several short speeches followed, each characterised by inoffensive moderation, most of the speakers confining their discourse to portraits of the heroic patriotism of Robert Bruce and its Victorian complement. A Dr McCulloch of Dumfries described Scotland before Bruce as having been in 'the

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[14] *ibid.*

[15] *ibid.*

[16] It is worth noting at this point that the Lochmaben Bruce contains one of the few references to the 'Declaration of Arbroath' made in the commemorative practices or rhetoric of this period – indeed, of the whole of the nineteenth century. One of the first Scottish historians to attach considerable significance to the document was William Burns. Burns wrote that he would like to see the declaration 'photographed on the memory of every Scottish schoolboy. (Cowan E J: *'For Freedom Alone': the Declaration of Arbroath, 1320*, (East Linton, 2003), p5; Burns, W: *The Scottish War of Independence: its Antecedents and Effects*, (Glasgow, 1874), vol I, pp297-303.)

[17] 'The Bruce Statue at Lochmaben,' *Dumfries and Galloway Standard*, 17th September, 1870. Unless otherwise noted, all details of the Lochmaben Bruce Statue unveiling are drawn from this source.

the monument movement, yet, in marked contrast to what might have been expected of Burns, Maughan's speech appears to have been resolutely conservative in its praise of the 'indissoluble bond' of the Union.[109] After a poem had been read in honour of the day, Mr Hugh Wallace of Cloncaid, 'representative of the male line of the family,' who had been present at the handing-over of the Wallace Sword in 1888, gave the longest address of the morning, making sure to redress the imbalance of the earlier speeches by promoting the efforts of Charles Rogers in the erection of 'the great monument in which he was so deeply interested.'[110] The afternoon's banquet was attended by somewhere in the region of 400 gentlemen, the galleries, again, being set apart for the ladies, with representation from numerous Scottish towns and cities, as well as a host of MPs and the Right Hon. Lord Balfour of Burleigh, the Conservative Scottish Secretary.[111] Perhaps owing to the small, dissenting precedent set on the preceding Saturday by the members of the SHRA, the tone of the toasts given after the banquet were very much in keeping with that of the morning's speeches, there being no suggestion of the need for political or constitutional reform. In his toast to 'The Houses of Parliament," Provost Kinross emphasised that, 'They might congratulate themselves as Scotsmen on the fact that they were ably represented; that in the British Parliament our fellow-countrymen came to the front and took a leading place in successive governments.'[112] In his speech on Wallace, Rosebery drew a distinction between himself and the 'two classes of his fellow-countrymen who would gladly' give such a speech, the first being the 'minute archaeological historian,' and the second, 'that class of passionate and indiscriminate patriots,' whose enthusiasm would carry them too high for the Earl's taste:

> in their soaring they are not always doing a wise or patriotic task, because, I firmly believe this, that the stronger, the broader, and the safer our enthusiasm the better it is for that

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109 *ibid.*

110 *ibid.*

111 *ibid.*

112 *ibid.*

enthusiasm, and that exaggeration, even in matters of patriotism, is apt to lead to ridicule and reaction.[113]

In approaching the 'perilous task' of delivering an address on Wallace, Rosebery excelled by ensuring that any enthusiasm he might betray was, indeed, played resolutely safe. He concentrated primarily on Wallace as the epitome of the great man:

> He was one of those men who appear with a single stamp of their foot to leave their impress upon history... There is in them, beside their talents, their spirit, their character and magnetic fluid as it were, which enables them to influence vast bodies of their fellow-men...[114]

It was this magnetism that had raised Wallace to the highest echelon of Scottish society, and that brought the Scottish people to rally around his banner. The recognition of this greatness was the cause of Wallace's fame and potent memory. In a sense, Rosebery ticked all of the correct boxes: he depicted Wallace as the man of the people; he cited the commonly stated affirmation that Wallace sowed what Bruce reaped at Bannockburn, summarising Wallace as the champion, 'who asserted Scotland as an independent country, who made or remade the Scots as a nation. (Cheers.)'[115] In so doing, Rosebery invoked the defining features of the Wallace myth, yet he also ensured that this Wallace's achievements were seen as having laid the foundations for a peaceful and prosperous union – there was no question that the union was anything other than healthy and fair, and no sense that Scottish nationality might have been under threat:

> [The] memory of this victory, and of the man by whom it was gained, does not represent the defeat of an English army, but the dawn of our national existence – (cheers) – and the assertion of our national independence. (Cheers.) Let us all, then, Englishmen and Scotchmen together, rejoice in this anniversary, and in the memory of this hero; for he at Stirling made Scotland great, and if Scotland were not great the Empire of all the Britons would not stand where it does. (Loud and prolonged cheering.)[116]

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[113] *Scotsman*, 14th September, 1897. The *Glasgow Herald's* transcription of the speech quotes Rosebery as saying 'realism' rather than 'reaction:' *GH*, 14th September, 1897

[114] *GH*, 14th September, 1897

[115] *ibid.*

[116] *ibid.*

The moderate conservatism of Rosebery's Scottish nationality was emphasised when he proclaimed that the great man, 'is the same though you find it under different names and different forms in different ages. It is the same whether you call it Caesar or Luther or Washington or Mirabeau or Cavour.'[117] These last two names appear particularly significant: the Comte de Mirabeau, the moderate French revolutionary who pressed for a form of constitutional monarchy; and the Conte di Cavour, Piedmontese political fixer of Italian unification, and moderate counterpart to the more dramatic Guiseppe Garibaldi. Rosebery placed Wallace in a pantheon of statesmen and politicians, not of warriors, avoiding excessive enthusiasm, a moderate patriotism that avoided the risk of 'ridicule and reaction.' The tenor of the commemoration was deeply conservative, placing Wallace firmly within a realm of moderate, unionist-nationalism – the events of the 13th of September, 1897, appear to mark a victory for this reading of Scotland's national hero.

Rosebery's diplomatic representation of Wallace was received with widespread approbation. The *Glasgow Herald*, drawing a derogatory contrast with the SHRA, praised the Earl's address as a 'great personal achievement,' in avoiding the perils associated with commemorating the battle, particularly for his emphasis upon the result of Wallace's struggle in the equal union of Scotland and England. The *Herald* also called into question the comparison between Wallace and Cavour – 'some will contend that among Italian patriots Garibaldi recalls Wallace more readily than Cavour.'[118] The *Scotsman* shared the *Herald's* relief, declaring that, 'Thanks to Rosebery… the occasion has been redeemed from the burlesque, and has had imparted to it a sober dignity and a national significance not unworthy of Scottish history or enlightened patriotism,' feeling confident enough to proclaim, 'The battle of Stirling Bridge was the birth of the Scottish nation.'[119] The *Stirling Journal* described Rosebery as, 'A perfect master of all the shades and shadows of calm meditation, passionate feeling and incisive thought,' arguing that Rosebery had carried out a 'national service.' The conservative *Dundee Courier* praised the speech as 'necessary to the preservation of that independence and self-reliance which are

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[117] *ibid.*

[118] *GH*, 14th September, 1897

[119] *Scotsman*, 14th September, 1897

the boasts of all true Scotsman,' while the equally conservative *Aberdeen Journal* applauded Rosbery's speech for its moderation, stressing that the 'admiration and enthusiasm' created by memories of Wallace ought to be kept 'within proper bounds.'[120]

Perhaps more crucially for an event so intent on invoking a memory of Wallace that would not prove injurious to the Union, the English papers were also largely positive. The *Telegraph* extolled the virtues of Scottish independence and affirmed that the English nation welcomed the Scottish victories at Stirling and Bannockburn. In contrast, the *Daily Chronicle* was not quite so ecstatic, accusing Englishmen of getting, 'caught by the glamour of the romance' of the Scottish past – 'In reading their history,' the *Chronicle* fumed, 'we become traitors to the English cause.'[121] Most importantly of all, and in enlightening contrast to its opinions of the 1850s, *The Times* was remarkably upbeat. Though it still maintained that Wallace belonged more to the world of myth than of strict history, its opinion of such expressions of Scottish nationality, had executed a *volte face*:

> No apology, surely, is necessary for doing honour to the memory of a man whose real work and whose legendary fame have contributed to such an achievement as the making of Scotland and of the Scottish character… The conflict which WALLACE began, and which was continued through generations, was the seed-time of qualities and tendencies that the Empire could ill spare. We can all heartily unite in commemorating the work that, in the slow ripening of centuries, has produced a noble harvest of intellectual force, high moral aims, and steadiness of character and purpose.[122]

In terms of press attention, the commemoration of Stirling Bridge in 1897 must rank as one of the most widely covered events to be held at Stirling and the Wallace Monument since the monument's inception, no doubt resulting from the perceived importance of the date itself, combined with the popularity of the Earl of Rosebery. The image of Wallace projected at this event was accepted as definitive by the press, in marked contrast to the more radical reading of the past deployed by the members of the SHRA. The tone of the 1897 commemoration is as moderate a

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[120] quoted in 'Press Opinions on Rosebery's Speech at the 600th Anniversary of Stirling Bridge, *SJ*, 17th September, 1897

[121] quoted in 'To-day's Press Opinions on Lord Rosebery's Speech,' *Glasgow Evening Citizen*, 14th September, 1897

[122] *The Times*, 14th September, 1897

representation of Wallace and his achievements as anything that might have been said by Charles Rogers, and it is perhaps for this reason that Rosebery's speech was so broadly welcomed. In short, the Earl's speech was so conservative that there was nothing in it worth objecting to – unless, as in the case of the Scottish Home Rule Association, one objected to that very moderation.

However, it is necessary to point out that Rosebery's address was not delivered at the monument itself, but at the evening banquet held after the celebration on the Abbey Craig. We cannot read press reaction to Rosebery's representation of Wallace as a reflection on the broader acceptance of the National Wallace Monument. None of the editorials considered appear to have included any comment on the monument itself, and there is no sense of whether attitudes to the monument had softened over time, of whether or not memories of the shambolic and often farcical disagreements within the Central Committee were still vivid in the minds of those quick to commend Rosebery. The lauding of Rosebery's speech emphasises further the distinction between rhetorical and monumental commemoration – there had never been a problem with the commemoration of Wallace or of Stirling Bridge, at least in Scotland. The difficulty arose not in the practice of commemoration but in the method and character of the commemorative act, or in the rhetorical representation of the Great Deliverer himself. Within Scotland, Wallace was not the problem; those who sought to remember him, and to project their conception of his significance on to the Scottish-national screen, were the ones found to be at fault.

CONCLUSION

The National Wallace Monument movement was defined by two sets of tensions: firstly, those intent on erecting the monument had to contend with influences outwith the monument committees who believed that no monument could be worthy of Wallace's place in Scottish national memory, or that to erect a monument upon the Abbey Craig would be to deface the landscape and attract accusations of provincial anti-Englishness. Secondly, there were tensions within the Central and Building committees, between those who saw the monument as a symbol of Scotland's secure and equal place within the union, and those who sought to render the monument a more assertive sign of Scottish nationality, defending Scottish national rights. These internal tensions should not be read as having

resulted in an exchange of fire between two clearly identifiable camps, moderate and radical, but rather as the product of a committee having to cope with the heterogeneous composition of the monument movement, with individual members each intent on promoting their version of the monument's appropriate significance. Such a wide spectrum of interpretations of the present position of Scottish nationality could co-exist at public meetings, where the listeners and the press were in a position to accept or reject individual speakers for having gone too far – or not far enough. When the time came to resolve upon the design of the monument, these shades of grey had necessarily to resolve themselves more fully into specific camps, selecting a design that would most effectively convey their intentions for the monument. Such disagreements were explosive enough without the added element of some committee members believing that they inhabited privileged positions within the movement and were, as a result, justified in projecting their own concerns into the public realm without sanction from the Central Committee. For Charles Rogers, embodying moderate Scottish nationality, the form of the monument would be too enduring, too fixed to run the risk of the monument signifying anything other than safely moderate nationality, celebrating Wallace's role in having secured a union of equals. For William Burns, as reflected in his letter to the Lord Advocate, the monument ought to be expressive of a defining national idea: resistance to an alien tyranny, a discourse much more closely aligned to the radicalism of other Glaswegian participants such as John McAdam. Burns, however, appears to have recognised the need to restrain his usually radically national rhetoric in order that the movement might end in success, though the association between Burns and the lingering association with the NAVSR certainly caused the monument movement some difficulty in its early stages. That the monument was ultimately completed, however, must be largely thanks to the efforts of William Burns, after he had successfully manoeuvred the unpopular Rogers out of the committee. Both men are responsible for the monument's erection – yet it was Charles Rogers who managed to promote himself as its principal proponent.

Rhetorically, however, from its very inception the monument was characterised by the moderation of its nationality. As noted above, such moderation was deemed necessary if the monument movement was to survive the onslaught from those who looked upon it as an inappropriate symbol of Scottish nationality in a period of Great Britishness, and to succeed in its aims. It is ironic that the

controversies surrounding the whole enterprise and the protracted period of fund-raising and construction were in the most part the responsibility of one of the monument's most moderate promoters: the Rev Charles Rogers. As the cultural and political context within which the commemoration of Wallace altered, so too did the rhetorical character of those speeches made in and around the monument. Even when flirting with Home Rule associations, however, it was still evident that moderation was necessary: the Marquis of Bute's speech in 1887 was remarkable as much for what he did not mention, as it was for those controversial aspects that did receive an airing. In a sense, the rhetorical character of the National Wallace Monument movement is book-ended by the concerns of Archibald Alison in 1861, and of Rosebery in 1897: that to commemorate Wallace was a 'perilous task' that should be approached with considerable care. The acceptability of the portraits of Wallace painted by Alison, Bute, Rosebery, or any one of the numerous speakers that contributed to the rhetorical construction of Wallace and his National Monument cannot, however, be used to measure the acceptability of the monument itself. The idea of erecting a national monument to Wallace was one that caused divisions across Scottish society, with support and criticism in equal measure, and neither completion of the monument nor the addition of the Wallace sword, the Wallace statue, or numerous busts of worthy Scots, appears to have converted many of the monument's critics.

5. Wallace and Bruce after the National Wallace Monument

Introduction

Having followed the progress of the National Wallace Monument, we have seen how the representation and commemoration of Wallace as centred around the Abbey Craig monument tended towards a projection of the hero consistent with the demands of moderate Scottish nationality. Even though the committee responsible for the monument's completion after the laying of the foundation stone in 1861 was composed largely of Scots whose nationality was expressed in more radical terms, once the monument had been completed, it acted as the relatively empty vessel into which an almost wholly conservative reading of Scottish memory was poured. In other words, the monument was not to act as the focal point for the cult of enthusiastic, libertarian nationality, except in the most conventional terms. The sidelining of the Scottish Home Rule Association, and the adoption of Lord Rosebery as the keynote speaker for the celebration of the sexcentenary of the battle of Stirling Bridge, are symbolic of the monument's place as a highly visible symbol of the Scottish national *status-quo*.

Once the National Wallace Monument had been inaugurated, a number of commemorative events followed closely on its heels, remembering both Wallace and Bruce. The purpose of this chapter is to consider these later commemorative events and, as with chapter 2, to attempt to analyse the rhetoric deployed in the name of the 'Great Deliverer' and the 'Patriot King.' In so doing, we will attempt to ascertain whether or not the discourses surrounding the National Wallace Monument can be seen to be representative of the broader commemoration of both Wallace and Bruce. Although ultimately shunted to the sidelines by the late 1890s, the commemoration of Wallace at the Wallace Monument had at least briefly associated itself with the cause of Home Rule, and can be seen to have reacted to the shift in attitudes towards the Union that the Home Rule movement brought with it. Certainly by the mid-to-late 1880s, the commemoration of the Scottish past was becoming increasingly politicised at a national level and, though those events held at the National Wallace Monument generally tended to avoid any direct connection with this issue, it was a question that any projection of national memory

must engage with, whether or not that engagement was openly acknowledged. The period after the inauguration of the National Wallace Monument, therefore, sees the question of Scottish nationality becoming the thorny problem that it had been during the all too brief heyday of the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights.

THE STIRLING AND LOCHMABEN BRUCE STATUES

In the late 1870s, two commemorative statues to Robert Bruce were erected in Scotland: the first on the Esplanade at Stirling Castle in November, 1877, and the second in Lochmaben in September, 1879. The movements to erect both statues date from the period immediately after the inauguration of the National Wallace Monument – indeed, a meeting was held in Stirling the day after the Wallace Monument inauguration to discuss a memorial to Bruce at Bannockburn – yet a variety of circumstances appear to have conspired to delay the progress of both statues until almost a decade later.[1] There are also similarities in the design of the two statues, in that, though both represent Bruce as the warrior King, neither statue has its hero in an aggressive pose. A description of the Stirling statue from the *Stirling Journal* indicated that,

> The King is represented as looking towards Bannockburn, and in the act of sheathing his sword, much as he might have been supposed to have done on the evening after the battle. The expression of the countenance is emphatically peaceful, while the careworn [look of] the brow and temple betray the anxiety and [b..?] that have been undergone in the long and arduous struggle for liberty.[2]

The statue represents Bruce as having won the battle, his weapons safely put away, reflecting the dignity of victory – Bruce's point has been made. The movement to erect this statue was properly begun in London in 1870, where a committee was formed, that included Charles Rogers, in the expectation that subscriptions could be easily raised towards this 'patriotic project.'[3] Such, however, was not the case, and within two years the movement was taken up by a second

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[1] 'Inauguration of the Bruce Monument,' *SO*, 29th November, 1877; *SJ*, 13th September, 1869; 'Proposed Monument to King Robert Bruce,' *Scotsman*, 20th January, 1869

[2] 'The Statue of King Robert the Bruce', *SJ*, 30th November, 1877

[3] *SO*, 29th November, 1877

committee based in Stirling under the chairmanship of General Sir James E Alexander, with the secretary being William Christie, later Provost of Stirling.[4] The original intention had been to cast the statue in bronze, but, even with the Stirling committee having achieved some success, insufficient funds were available and the statue was ultimately sculpted in stone.[5] On the morning of the ceremony, a lengthy procession composed of members of the town guilds, council, voluntary societies, and other burgh worthies, accompanied by both the London and Stirling committees, marched through Stirling to the Esplanade, and, in common with the processions that had taken place at the 1856 and 1861 demonstrations at the National Wallace Monument, a relic of the hero – Bruce's sword – was carried by a servant of its donor, the Earl of Elgin. Upon arriving at the Esplanade, a prayer was offered, the statue was unveiled and numerous speeches were made. The ceremony concluded, no less than three separate banquets were across the burgh.

The rhetoric of the event, and of the later banquets, was resolutely moderate, celebrating Bruce's place in the establishment of the civil and religious liberties of Scotland, his importance in providing Great Britain with its constitutional monarchy, as well as honouring his virtues as a warrior and statesman. Above all, there was repeated emphasis on Bruce as the embodiment of patriotism. The Rev G Mure Smith's opening prayer thanked God for Bruce's 'valour and endurance,' adding that, 'by Thy favour he secured our national independence, and laid the broad foundations of our liberties and laws, whereon so many great and venerable institutions have been built.' In handing the statue over to the care of the Corporation of Stirling, Sir James Alexander defended the statue against the accusations of the utilitarians by stating that the purpose of the statue would be, 'to afford to our youth… an example of manly perseverance and courage in a noble cause,' having already made the necessary reference to the English as, 'our fast friends, and we glory in and benefit by our connection with them. (Hear, hear.).' Charles Rogers – who, despite being attacked in both the *Stirling Observer* and the *Stirling Journal*, was the recipient of considerable praise from many of the day's speakers – placed Bruce firmly in the narrative of British constitutionalism: 'Though vigorously asserting the independence of his country, Bruce perceived that a union

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[4] *ibid.*

[5] Letter from Cruikshank, *The Times*, 6th December, 1877; *SO*, 29th November, 1877; *SJ*, 30th November, 1877

with the sister kingdom, on a basis of solid friendship, was much to be desired,' – this, Rogers asserted, was the beginning of the constitutional monarchy of which Victoria was the current, magnanimous example. At the same time, Rogers made the recurring comparison between Scotland, with its historic independence, and Ireland – 'ready at the call of the demagogue to burst into anarchy,' – and also Wales, whose 'civilisation was retarded for a course of centuries.' Harking back to the narrative that Rogers had composed in his *Stirling: Battleground of Civil and Religious Liberty*, the Reverend Doctor cited Knox and the Covenanters as being beneficiaries of the 'undying spirit of independence,' created by Bruce and Wallace. The only potentially divisive note heard at the inauguration came from Dr Mackay of the London Committee, who complained at the absence of 'the proud Scottish nobles,' arguing that, as 'the telegraph wires will throb the news of this event to every part of the world,' the aristocracy had 'lost a great opportunity.' By far the most exalted praise for Bruce was provided by William Christie, the Provost of Stirling. Having listed the manifold realms of achievement in which the Scots had excelled, Christie went on to state that,

> there are no more gratifying pages in the history of Scotland than those which relate to the sacrifice which she has made for, and the contests she has waged – and successfully waged – on behalf of civil, political, and religious liberty and independence. In giving a king to England she became an integral part of Great Britain, and has increased and stimulated the influence and power of the nation, and shed additional lustre upon the British name and fame.

For Provost Christie, Bannockburn was one of the greatest battles ever fought in the name of national independence, fit to be named alongside the battle of Marathon, Christie concluding his oration by citing patriotism as 'natural religion, a principle which animates and actuates every human heart.'

The week prior to the inauguration of the Stirling Bruce statue, the Reverend William Graham, established church minister at Newhaven, had given a lecture entitled 'The Bruce,' in the Union Hall, Stirling, in which he depicted Bruce in the by now customary moderate terms, directly linking the blood of Bruce with that of Victoria.[6] The idea of erecting a monument to Bruce at Lochmaben appears to have

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[6] *SO*, 29th November, 1877; *SJ*, 30th November, 1877. Unless otherwise specified, all subsequent details of the inauguration ceremony are drawn from either of these sources.

come from the Rev Graham: encouraged by the near completion of the National Wallace Monument, the movement had begun in January of 1869, when, at a meeting held in Lochmaben town hall, Graham proposed that such an enterprise, 'would not be a local but a national object,' stating that, 'the name of Bruce was more illustrious than that of Wallace.'[7] Graham appears to have become connected with public declarations to Bruce's memory: at the inauguration of the Wallace Monument, he would propose a toast to 'The Memory of King Robert the Bruce,' arguing that what was now required was a monument at the Borestone on the field of Bannockburn. When, in June 1870, the Oddfellows of Dumbarton raised a flagstaff at the Borestone site, it was the Rev. Graham who conducted the necessary devotions.[8] Instead of attempting to get a monument raised at Bannockburn, however, the Rev. Graham promoted the Lochmaben enterprise, Lochmaben being, Graham claimed, the true birth-place of the Patriot-king.[9] The movement began with lofty ambitions, advocating a corinthian column with a statue of Bruce on the top.[10] However, as with the Stirling statue, the committee appointed to raise subscriptions found that, 'lots of people who would talk for hours over the achievements of Bruce, preferred parting with their sentiments rather than with their cash.' As the the majority of the money for the monument was raised in the Dumfries area, any pretensions of its possessing national significance were dropped.[11] Money was provided for the foundation stone yet it would take a further three years for the completed statue to be unveiled.[12] By the date of the inauguration on the 13th of September, 1879 – over ten years after the Rev. Graham had first proposed a monument to Bruce – only £120 of the required £300 had been raised, with the necessary balance having been 'advanced by a female teacher.'[13]

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[7] *Scotsman*, 20th January, 1869

[8] 'National Wallace Monument,' *SO*, 16th September, 1869; 'The Field of Bannockburn: Erection of a Flagstaff by the Oddfellows of Scotland,' *GH*, 27th June, 1870

[9] 'The Bruce Statue at Lochmaben,' *Dumfries and Galloway Standard*, 17th September, 1870; *Scotsman*, 20th January, 1869

[10] 'Unveiling of the Bruce Statue at Lochmaben', *GH*, 15th September, 1879

[11] *Dumfries and Galloway Standard*, 17th September, 1870

[12] *ibid.*

[13] *GH*, 15th September, 1879

deepest depression, trampled upon by what was then a foreign foe,' before going on to recount Bruce's virtues of bravery, perseverance and humanity. Dr McCulloch concluded his speech by schooling the crowd in the fundamentals of morally respectable nationality:

> Meet what you must expect to suffer with the courage of that great king. Meet it with his indomitable perseverance. Be industrious, be saving, be patient, and each and all of you, individually and collectively, trust in God and your country, and shew that righteousness which exalteth a nation. (Cheers.)

The meeting included a numerous references to Wallace and Bruce as the heroes of nationality, yet few comparisons were drawn with the present: only one speaker compared the Scottish wars of independence with the nationalist struggle of Hungary, for instance, whilst another declared that, 'The name of Bruce is a watchword of freedom all over the world to struggling nationalities; and great is the debt that we owe to him and others of his heroic mould: Wallace, Bruce, and Tell (Cheers.)' One speaker, a Colonel Walker, suggested that, 'the love of country, the bright fire of patriotism that burned in the breast of Bruce and his comrades is not dead, is still a living power,' citing not only the presence of so many at the unveiling, but also drawing on the recent killing of the British Resident in Kabul, Sir Louis Cavagnari. Despite his Italian parentage, it was owing to Cavagnari's 'British blood, his British birth and British nurture,' that he was able, 'in his last moments to teach anew that grand lesson, that British soldiers count not their lives dear when death confronts them in the cause of duty. (Loud cheers.)' This was one of only a few statements of assertive Britishness, with the sole reference to Bruce's role in forging the Union appearing in the Rev Dr Graham's address. One of the event's longer speeches was delivered by proxy, as the invited speaker was unable to attend: the proxy was a Mr M'Dowall; the 'speaker' was the Rev Dr Charles Rogers of London. Rogers's address was highly representative of his favoured approach to the commemoration of the Scottish past, placing Bruce and his predecessor Wallace in a developing narrative of Scottish civil liberty, to which was added the religious independence of Knox. Rogers also felt free to add to this pantheon Fingal, Saint Columba and Saint Margaret, before adding that Robert Burns and Walter Scott could never have written their great works had they not enjoyed the civil and religious liberty hard-won by Bruce and his fellow national heroes. What marks this

address out from others made by Rogers, is its emphasis on the role of the middle classes, a feature perhaps inspired by the public rhetoric of his friend, James Dodds:

> Wallace rendered possible the existence of a middle class which, repressing villanage on the one hand, checked feudal arrogance on the other, and thus opened up a path for Knox and his successors… The Scottish middle class, which Wallace set up, which in adverse times followed Bruce and in prosperity shared his triumph, are in their descendants represented in the wilds of Africa, amidst the prairies of South America, and especially in that illustrious republic which, claiming Britain as its source, acknowledges Scotland as its school.

The middle classes 'which Wallace set up,' were the keepers of the flame of Scotland's civil and religious liberty; it was the middle classes – rather than the nobility or the labouring classes – who had maintained that defining characteristic of Scottish nationality. Such a statement is entirely in keeping with both the Lochmaben unveiling event and with the arch-moderatism of Charles Rogers.

The rhetorical commemoration of Bruce at Lochmaben was, then, considerably less strident than that of the avowedly British demonstration at Stirling, the statements made being of a markedly more neutral character. Though undoubtedly a celebration of Bruce's memory and of Scottish nationality, the very term 'nationality' was largely absent, as were references to Scotland's imperial greatness within serene Union. The only sour note sounded came from the letter of apology sent by Lord Bute, who did not waste the opportunity to make a point concerning the commemoration of the Scottish past: before going on to compare Bruce unfavourably with Wallace – he referred to Bruce as 'a man who served us well, when it served his own purpose to do so,' – Bute wrote that he was sorry not to have attended an event intended to 'foster in the South of Scotland that spirit of nationalism in which I fear that too many of us are deficient, and in which I dare to say that we might well take example, in many ways, from Ireland.' We have already encountered Bute's particular brand of Scottish nationality prior to the unveiling of the Wallace statue at the Abbey Craig monument, and the sentiments expressed in his letter to the Lochmaben committee seem to be in accordance with that approach. It is worthwhile noting that despite the contrast between the rhetorical character of the Lochmaben unveiling and the sentiments expressed by Bute, the Rev Graham still felt able to read the letter to the crowd. Bute's references to Bruce, Wallace and the 'example' of Ireland were indicative of a more radical nationality, but the fact that Graham read the extract to the crowd points to the recognition that the overall practice of commemoration in Scotland was able to find

room for a wide range of opinions. That is to say, though Bute's rank and reputation no doubt had a bearing on his letter being read, there appears to have been a degree of toleration extended to voices that might otherwise have been elided from the commemoration of the Scottish past. As long as that voice was either on the fringes of the dominant discourse, or was suitably restrained in expressing what might have been much more radical opinions, such voices were heard. The toleration of radical discourse is, however, but one facet of a commemorative discourse in this period, by no means present at all commemorative events. The rhetoric of the Stirling inauguration was decidedly more assertive than Lochmaben, yet both were self-consciously conservative and respectable.

THE ABERDEEN WALLACE STATUE

Unlike the Stirling and Lochmaben statues, the statue of William Wallace in Aberdeen was raised not through public subscription, but through the munificence of a single benefactor: that this benefactor was John Steill, one of the original promoters of a National Wallace Monument, and one of the most radical voices in Scottish nationality in the nineteenth century, renders this memorial particularly worthy of our attention. Steill is described by H J Hanham as having been a member of the Scottish-national 'lunatic fringe:' a supporter of Young Ireland and repeal of the Union of 1800, according to Hanham, Steill looked upon the worship of Wallace as a focus not only for anti-Englishness but also as a Scottish alternative to the worship of 'men of "English birth and English ideas."'[18] In 1846, Steill had called upon Professor John Wilson of Edinburgh to begin a movement to erect a monument to Wallace in the capital, but, according to Charles Rogers, the movement fell through as a result of Wilson's lack of 'business qualities.'[19] During the 'squabble' over who could lay claim to having originally had the idea for a National Wallace Monument, Steill claimed that it was he that had first proposed a national monument, in a letter to the *Glasgow Daily Bulletin* in March of 1856, responding to allegations concerning Wallace's original motives made in the *North*

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[18] Hanham, 'Mid-Century Scottish Nationalism', pp172-173. For examples of Steill's 'nationalism,' see Steill, J: *Scotland for the Scotch; or reasons for Irish repeal; by a Scot of the old school*, (Edinburgh, 1848)

[19] Rogers, *Book of Wallace*, vol II, p258

British Review.[20] Though he asserted his position as originator of the idea, Steill does not appear to have played any role in the movement itself; indeed, sentiments expressed in his bequest for the Wallace statue would appear to signify his disgust with the manner in which the National monument committee had gone about their business. In those details of the bequest reported in the *Aberdeen Journal's* account of the statue's inauguration, it is noted that 'there was to be no squandering of the funds in idle show and foolish parade, no offensive boasting, no self-glorification…'[21] Steill had bequeathed almost the whole of his estate to the construction of a statue to Wallace in Aberdeen, a sum of over £3,000 at the time of his death.[22] The legacy was replete with stipulations: the monument was to be a statue, representing Wallace's encounter with some English ambassadors prior to the battle of Stirling Bridge, when Wallace had rejected the offer of a pardon on condition that he surrender; the statue was not to connect Wallace in any way with royalty or the aristocracy; furthermore, Steill's trustees were 'not to do aught that might afford a handle to any man to mix the name of Wallace up – "as, alas! that name has been but too much of late by false Scotsmen and hostile Englishmen, with unworthy acts."'[23] The trustees of the bequest opened the design to competition and, having received advice on their adjudication from J. Noël Paton and Rowand Anderson, a statue by W Grant Stevenson was chosen. When contrasted to the Stirling and Lochmaben Bruce statues, Stevenson's Wallace represents a markedly belligerent figure, clutching his massive sword in his right hand, and extending his left 'in defiant action.' Carved into the monument's base are quotations from Wallace's exploits.

Steill's intentions for the statue may have been complicated by the political context of the later 1800s, for, as noted in the last chapter, the mid-to-late 1880s were a period when debates over Home Rule loomed above the commemoration of the Scottish past. With this in mind, we might be tempted to look upon the Aberdeen statue as an opportunity for a more assertive or radically national reading

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[20] 'The Wallace Monument Squabble,' Letter from John Steill, *NBDM*, 21st September, 1869

[21] 'The Marquis of Lorne in Aberdeen, The Wallace Statue,' *Aberdeen Journal*, 30th June, 1888. Unless otherwise stated, all details of the inauguration of the Aberdeen Wallace statue are drawn from this source.

[22] Rogers, *Book of Wallace*, vol II, p258

[23] *Aberdeen Journal*, 30th June, 1888

of the Wallace legacy; however, the inauguration ceremony, conducted on the 29th of June, 1888, was about as far from radical as one could imagine. Indeed, if the Provost, Magistrates and Town Council of Aberdeen had sought to invite a speaker calculated to raise the ire of the deceased John Steill by emphasising the Britishness of their event, they could not have chosen a more suitable figure than the Marquess of Lorne, former Governor General of Canada and husband of Princess Louise, Queen Victoria's fourth daughter.[24] Though a life-long Liberal, having been MP for Argyll from 1868 to 1878, the Marquess had become 'estranged' from the Gladstonians, his attitude towards Home Rule apparent in his having stood as a Liberal Unionist candidate in Bradford in 1892, and again in Manchester in 1895.[25] Lorne was an advocate of imperial reform, having written a pamphlet advocating imperial federation in 1885, but he was evidently viewed as a safe pair of hands into which the inauguration of the Wallace statue could be entrusted.

Much of the Marquess's long and somewhat detailed speech was taken up with an account of Wallace's life and abilities as a statesman, as well as with justification of Aberdeen's connection with the hero, yet its most significant characteristic was the approach Lorne took to the development of Scottish and British nationality. The Marquess's emphasis throughout was firmly on the direct connection between government and nationality: 'A nation is formed only by those peoples who constitute for themselves a Government,' he began, 'They only form a nation who possess territory and strength sufficient to have their state acknowledged by other governments.' It was this axis of government and nation that Wallace had restored to the Scots, Lorne argued. The wars of independence were a 'curious story,' illustrating, 'an antipathy which was not a natural dislike,' and the result of the English kings' desire to 'feed their ranks and purses from a wider area.' The Scots, he claimed, had always been, 'self-contained in national organisation, and well knit in their commercial polity as well as in their fighting power,' creating the kind of national unity that no outside force could overcome. Lorne emphasised this national unity by pointing out that the Scottish nation had been forged from, 'a coalition between the Celts and the Saxons, for the purpose of resisting a common

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[24] Waite, P B, 'Campbell, John George Edward Henry Douglas Sutherland, marquess of Lorne and ninth duke of Argyll (1845-1914), *ODNB*

[25] *ibid.*

enemy,' a unity of Scottish peoples that signified one of the other great truths of nationality: 'that a nationality must advance and expand and complete its military and political cohesion if it is to keep its name and fame.' Scottish nationality was one of the finest examples of this expansionist tendency, as the Scots had always 'expanded,' across Scotland, and then into Britain and beyond. 'Our past history,' Lorne said, 'makes us proud of our ancient name. Our modern history makes us proud of the ampler range, of the fuller stream of our greater and blended nationality.' Having made a subtle reference to the benefits of federation, Lorne closed his address by stating,

> If Scotland could achieve so much under Wallace, what may she not now claim, when all of kindred blood are under one crown and one supreme government; when the old and unnatural separation has been changed to honoured brotherhood.

The Marquess's address was avowedly British in its celebration of the legacy bequeathed to Scotland by Wallace, yet his conception of Scottish nationality is fairly unique in this context. Certainly the rhetoric of imperial partnership was a familiar component, yet the Marquess's speech contained no appeals to the necessity of preserving Scottish nationality, nor, it must be noted, was he quite as assertive in proclaiming Wallace's place in the grand narratives of Scoto-Britishness as other, equally moderate speakers had done in the past. Instead, he persistently stressed the evolution of the Scottish state. Such an emphasis was warmly welcomed by the conservative *Aberdeen Journal* which described the speech as having been, 'instinct with the truest spirit of patriotism,' having wisely avoided any 'party considerations,' by offering 'no encouragement to Radicals and Separatists.'[26] Indeed, as far as the *Journal* was concerned, Lorne's speech represented the very soul of respectable, moderate nationality:

> So far as could be done without giving offence to men of opposite views, the Marquis of Lorne lifted up his voice in the cause of the Union… It is possible that Radicals may not have been entirely pleased; but the speech was a masterclass of moderation, sound sense, and good taste.[27]

Despite the distinct character of his speech, the tone of Lorne's rhetoric fitted in comfortably with that of the inaugurations of the Stirling and Lochmaben

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[26] *Aberdeen Journal*, 30th June, 1888

[27] *ibid.*

Bruce statues: the Aberdeen Wallace may have been gifted to the city by one of Scotland's most enthusiastic nationalists, yet the character of its unveiling inhabited the avowedly moderate middle ground of Scottish nationality, far from what we may safely assume were the intentions of John Steill.

BRUCE, BANNOCKBURN AND THE BORESTONE, 1870-1889

Whereas the Stirling and Lochmaben Bruce statues, and the Aberdeen Wallace, conformed closely to the commemorative rhetoric characteristic of moderate Scottish nationality, events at the field of Bannockburn present an increasingly contrasting picture. Not long after the inauguration of the Wallace Monument, the 'Loyal Dixon Lodge' of Oddfellows, Dumbarton, erected a flagstaff at the Borestone on the field of Bannockburn. In the spring of 1869, the Dumbarton Oddfellows had decided to mark the following year's summer excursion to Stirling with some 'fitting memorial,' and, having arranged with their counterparts in the 'Rock of Hope Lodge,' Stirling, to pay for and prepare the foundation, the completed memorial was inaugurated on the 25th of June, 1870, the day after the battle's 556th anniversary.[28] The Oddfellows were a voluntary organisation, 'based on the principles of a sick-benefit society,' based in Manchester but with lodges across Britain and the Empire. According to the *Glasgow Herald*, the Oddfellows' roll of members numbered some 469,000, with 6,000 of those belonging to Scottish lodges. On the day of the inauguration, the procession from Stirling included several of the Scottish Oddfellows Lodges, that of Dumbarton taking the lead, with their brass band and a Master-gunner from Dumbarton Castle bearing the Wallace Sword. With the addition of the magistrates and councillors, the procession stretched for half a mile, passing, *en route*, beneath three triumphal arches erected by the people of St Ninians. After the procession had arrived at the site, and the worthies had taken their places, the Rev. Graham offered up his prayer, and the flagstaff was inaugurated by the raising of a flag bearing the lion rampant.

There then followed a considerable number of speeches, replete with the archetypal declarations of moderate Scottish nationality. A great deal of the

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[28] *GH*, 27th June, 1870; 'Inauguration of the Flagstaff at the Field of Bannockburn,' *NBDM*, 27th June, 1870. Unless otherwise specified, all subsequent details on the Borestone flagstaff are drawn from these sources; direct quotations have been drawn from the *North British Daily Mail* report..

sentiment expressed at the ceremony was concerned with emphasising, perhaps even more than was customary, that the flagstaff was not intended to be 'another thorn in the side of England.' This was almost certainly as a result of *The Times* having headed its short notice of the meeting as 'A Snub to England,' as, of the five addresses delivered at the inauguration, four made explicit statements concerning this accusation. In the first speech of the day, Robert Fraser, of the Stirling Oddfellows, said he believed, 'they had the heart of every intelligent Englishman with them on that present occasion,' as the battle, 'was fraught with precious blessings, not only to Scotland, but to England as well. (Cheers.).' George Bell of Dumbarton, who was credited as the driving force behind the flagstaff movement, pointed out that the Oddfellows were an order with English origins and had been 'actuated by no desire to keep up the remembrance of ancient feuds. (Hear, hear.)'[29] The characterisation of Bruce and his legacy for Scotland was also drawn in terms familiar from previous and contemporary commemorations of Wallace and Bruce, and it must be noted that, whereas the name of Wallace was largely absent from the inauguration of the Stirling and Lochmaben statues, his presence at the Borestone event is more significant. In handing the flagstaff over to the custody of Colonel Murray of Polmaise, Brother Colonel Giels of the Dumbarton Lodge described the battle as 'one of the greatest battles in the history of the world,' comparable only to the Battle of Marathon, before going on to say that they had gathered on that site to honour both Wallace and Bruce. Wallace was one of history's 'most beautiful, simple, unselfish and brave' men, Geils adding that, 'Perhaps William Tell was the nearest approach to him, but some said that William Tell was a myth.' In common with Bute's letter to the Lochmaben committee, Geils stated that Bruce was 'a little behind Wallace.' For Thomas Knox of Edinburgh, representing the capital's Oddfellows, Bannockburn was 'the sublimest feat of patriotism ever exhibited in this or any other country,' a place 'sacred to patriotism, to virtue and to liberty.' Knox grounded all the later achievements of the Scots in the legacy of Bannockburn, and made the necessary reference to the blood of Robert Bruce, flowing in the veins of Queen Victoria.

The response of the press was as much to berate *The Times* for its small-mindedness as it was to praise the Oddfellows for the appropriate tone of their

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29 'A Snub to England,' *The Times*, 15th June, 1870; *NBDM*, 27th June, 1870

commemoration: the *North British Daily Mail* accused *The Times* of having done 'rather a small thing,' in referring to the Oddfellows efforts as a 'snub,' arguing that 'our English friends can never quite forgive us for having been mean enough to beat them in the face of overwhelming odds.' The *North British Daily Mail* proposed that, if they were unable to hide 'their petty annoyance under an affectation of philosophical indifference,' they should erect a 'rival memorial on the field of Flodden.'[30] The *Paisley and Renfrewshire Standard* stated that the erection of the flagstaff would 'forever be a red letter day in our calendar,' particularly as the Scots had proven 'too tardy to recognise the glorious deeds done by our ancestors,' before going on to point out that it had been the English who had accused the Scots of being lax in commemorating their past, only then to 'set down the proceeding as an arrogant display of pride and toadyism.' The *Scotsman* printed an editorial of considerable length, accusing *The Times* of going too far: though the English press may have been justified in attacking the National Wallace Monument for its 'questionable elegance and unquestionable pettiness,' *The Times* was being excessive in its description of a flagstaff erected in a 'quiet, sensible and effective manner, not to glorify the battle, but merely 'of the nature of an ornament, or even of a guide post.'[31] The editorial went on to state that, if ever a battle was deemed worthy of commemoration, that battle was Bannockburn: 'If Englishmen have anything to be ashamed of in the matter, it is not that their forefathers lost the battle, but that they fought it in a bad cause.'[32] The *Scotsman's* editorial indicates the acknowledged importance of commemoration of the past when carried out in the correct way. Despite the fact that the rhetorical arguments deployed towards the National Wallace Monument were, on the whole, almost identical to those heard at Bannockburn in 1870, it appears to have been the form of the event that drew either approbation or criticism from the *Scotsman*. The fault with the National Wallace Monument movement had been, according to the *Scotsman*, that it had presumed to act on behalf of the nation, and had gone about its business in an immoderate yet also shambolic way. The Oddfellows, on the other hand, had erected 'a new and tall, in place of an old and short flagstaff,' without excessive display or by appealing

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[30] *NBDM*, 27th June, 1870

[31] *Scotsman*, 28th June, 1870

[32] *ibid.*

to a nation that deemed such an act unnecessary. This sentiment resonates with the acceptance of Lord Rosebery's speech at the commemoration of the six-hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Stirling Bridge, where the approbation expressed was entirely owing to Rosebery's carefully poised rhetoric, rather than any acceptance of the National Wallace Monument.

This was not to be the last occasion that the Oddfellows of Dumbarton would visit the Borestone *en masse*. In July, 1887, on the morning of the day that Lord Bute was to unveil the statue of Wallace at the Abbey Craig, the Oddfellows, along with members of other voluntary societies and many of Stirling's council and guildry, attended a demonstration at the Bannockburn flagstaff to inaugurate some 'improvements' to the site.[33] These additions had been brought about by the concerted efforts of both a Stirling committee and those members of the Dumbarton Oddfellows who had watched the deterioration of their 1870 flagstaff with some dismay.[34] There is remarkably little difference between the rhetorical character of this 1887 event and that of the 1870 inauguration, the most significant difference being the greater emphasis on the monarchy, as one might expect in the year of Queen Victoria's Jubilee. For example, in the first address of the day, Bailie Bell of Stirling connected the improvements that had been carried out with the celebration of the Jubilee. Having made reference to the battle as the moment when 'Scotchmen of old' displayed 'their love of country and their love of freedom and manly independence,' Bell went on to say that, 'This feeling still finds a home in the heart of true Scotchmen, they are loyal to their Queen, and we, therefore, are not here to perform an irksome task, but we come as volunteers to perform a duty, to honour our beloved Sovereign Lady.' Another theme more apparent at this meeting than at its predecessor, is the strident promotion of Scotland to the first rank of all nations. For William Donaldson, a local solicitor representing the Stirling Committee, the occasion was one for using the inspiration of the past as a buttress against squandering its legacy in the future, and for being thankful that the memories of Wallace and Bruce were more than recollections of a lost golden age, but were

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[33] 'Demonstration at the Borestone,' *SJ*, 1st July, 1887; *The Borestone and the Field of Bannockburn, with Speeches by Professor Blackie and Rev. David Macrae*, 3rd edition (Stirling, 1889), pp7-8

[34] *SJ*, 1st July, 1887. Unless otherwise specified, all details of the 1887 Borestone demonstration are drawn from this source.

instead the sure foundation of 'the ever increasing progress of our beloved land.' Donaldson illustrated his point by comparing the Scots and their 'history of emphatic progress,' with the Greeks who could only look back, 'to the greatness of a past, which is only a memory… Its present has no glory except the glory it borrows from the fading splendour of its past.' This was a theme picked up and developed in the longest speech of the day, delivered by Charles Rogers, who must have had rather a busy day. Referring to the battle as a seal of blood on 'the charter not only of Scottish, but of British freedom,' Rogers proved his point by engaging in the familiar comparison of Scotland with Wales and Ireland, following this up by showing that the British monarchy had always possessed a sound Scottish basis: 'In truth it is because we are now under the Government of a representative of him who conquered at Bannockburn, that we are privileged to live under a free, a liberal, and a constitutional government.'

Much of the rhetoric of this event stressed the relative places of Wallace and Bruce, re-iterating the model that, 'Wallace was the pioneer to open the national campaign... completed by Robert the Bruce.' Neither hero was deemed superior. William Donaldson stated that

> They were both nature's nobles; they were both lovers of liberty; they were both dauntless and valiant in fight, and put to flight the armies of the aliens. And they have both secured that enviable immortality which on the high-souled and the patriotic could secure. (Cheers.)

At the same time, and in keeping with the assertive tone of the speeches being delivered, the two final speakers stressed the importance of commemorative practice. James Jenkins of Bannockburn bemoaned the fact that the annual commemoration of the battle of Bannockburn had 'fallen into desuetude,' and encouraged the crowd to engage once more in the observance of that anniversary. This was, after all, 'the age of commemorations… the age of monuments; the age of anniversaries.' Jenkins' argument was taken up by the next speaker, Robert Towers, a member of the Borestone Committee, who developed the point by appealing to the didactic qualities of monuments and commemorative practices, assuring the demonstration that monuments,

> serve an important and obvious end in the administration of the country. They foster a national spirit, a feeling of brotherhood and mutual reliance… they excite successive generations to emulate the deeds and heroic achievements of their forefathers.

Such rhetoric represents the naïve belief that commemorative monuments will continue to project a pure and unmediated signification of the hero and the event commemorated as a means of inculcating patriotic loyalty to the nation and to its historic virtues. Aside from the slight note of warning in Jenkins's speech, when he warns of the necessity of commemoration of the Scottish past, the tone of this demonstration was never less than assertively celebratory. In Victoria's Jubilee year, the focus was determinedly set upon the glories of Scotland, Britain and Empire, brought about as a result of Wallace's and Bruce's heroic and selfless endeavours in the name of the nation.

At a time when the issue of Home Rule in Scotland was never far from the discourse of political debate, the speeches delivered at the 1887 event were resolutely apolitical, something that could not be said of the next major event to take place on the site: the raising of two new flags, gifts of Andrew Carnegie, on the improved flagstaff in 1889. The larger of the flags bore a lion rampant – 'the Scottish Standard' – measuring 26ft by 18ft, with the second a 'British Ensign,' measuring a mere 21 feet by 16 feet, the former allegedly the largest flag in the world at that time.[35] This event was described as 'the largest gathering of recent times in connection with the celebration of the anniversary of the Battle of Bannockburn,' with an estimated 10,000 people present.[36] Attendees arrived from as far afield as Liverpool, and the procession from Stirling to the Borestone, headed by forty-two mounted members of the *Omnuim Gatherum*, was considerably larger than that of the two preceding events, the route being once again lined with triumphal arches and somewhere between 20,000 and 30,000 spectators.[37] Amongst the invited guests were William Burns's daughter and John Romans of the Scottish Home Rule Association, as well as two local men who had been present at the 1814 commemoration of the battle.

The 1889 Bannockburn demonstration took place only two months after the MP, Gavin Brown Clark, one of the leaders of the SHRA, had moved a resolution in the Commons that, 'it is desirable that arrangements be made for giving to the

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[35] *Borestone and the Field of Bannockburn,* p8; 'At Bannockburn,' *NBDM*, 27th June, 1889

[36] *ibid.*; 'Demonstration at the Borestone,' *SJ*, 26th June, 1889

[37] *SJ*, 26th June, 1889

people of Scotland, by their representatives in a National Parliament, the management and control of Scottish affairs.'[38] Speaking for his resolution, Clark had emphasised the separate nationality of the Scots, as well as the enthusiasm for Home Rule as a means of strengthening the Empire, rather than undermining it. The motion was 'resoundingly defeated,' by two-hundred votes to seventy-nine, with only nineteen of the seventy-two Scottish members voting in favour.[39] Despite this defeat – or, perhaps, as a result of it – the Home Rule issue remained a focus for Scottish-national sentiment, and it is for their strident advocacy of Home Rule that the speeches delivered at the Borestone in 1889 were rendered particularly memorable. The two principal speakers were Professor John Stuart Blackie, and the Reverend David Macrae. Blackie, who had preceded Romans as chairman of the SHRA, we have already encountered as one of the more radically outspoken critics of the anglicising effects of the Union.[40] Though highly respected, Blackie was viewed as something of an eccentric, popular for his extempore oratory on Scottish national subjects, yet at the same time deemed too quaint or outlandish to be taken entirely seriously. For Blackie, nationality was both natural and essential: 'one of the grand results of time, and as such worthy of all respect and reverence and of all kindly consecration.'[41] Thirty years on from his harangues at meetings in aid of the Wallace Monument movement, Blackie was still preaching of the dangers of Scotland losing its nationality, and of the necessity for keeping the relevance of the past ever-present: 'the traditions of the past,' he said in 1887, 'form the staple of all national culture.' While Blackie may have been looked upon as a harmful eccentric, the Reverend David Macrae was a radical nationalist very much on the model of William Burns. Described as 'the chief and leader of Scottish Nationalists,' Macrae, a former United Presbyterian minister who had been 'removed' for his heretical views on the afterlife of sinners, had been active in Scottish national pursuits since

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[38] Kendle, *Ireland and the Federal Solution*, p66

[39] *ibid.*, p69

[40] Hanham, *Scottish Nationalism*, , pp40,119;

[41] 'Nationality in Culture and Education,' [Lecture by J S Blackie to the Scottish Society of Literature and Art], *GH*, 12th February, 1887

the 1880s.[42] In 1889, however, the majority of Macrae's public activism in the name of Scottish nationality was still ahead of him: he would go on to become president of the Scottish Patriotic Association in 1901, an organisation that, between 1901 and 1914, staged an annual demonstration at the Borestone on the anniversary of Bannockburn.[43] In a sense, Macrae is emblematic of the next step in the transition of the political and cultural expression of Scottish nationality, no longer as assertively moderate as the mid-century Scoto-British patriots, with a concomitant attitude of scepticism as to the benefits of the union.

The attitude of these two men is more than evident at the 1889 Bannockburn demonstration. Blackie's relatively short speech was as idiosyncratic as might be expected:

> Had it not been for Robert Bruce and Douglas and Randolph, and for the Covenanters and John Knox, and my dearly-beloved friend Jenny Geddes – (laughter) – we should all have been slaves and puppets of English masters.[44]

Elaborating upon this theme, Blackie argued that it was for the good of the Empire that the Scots should not be 'juggled out of their nationality,' warning of the dangers of 'officialism, of centralisation, of monopoly, of measuring things by red tape from London.' Going as far as to say that he was, 'not sure if the Union of 1707 was such an immense benefit to Scotland,' Blackie advocated a form of legislative devolution, proposing that Scottish business should be transacted in Edinburgh by Scottish MPs, though stopping short of a Scottish Parliament, and failing to mention the Home Rule movement by name. The speech closed with an exhortation to Scots to 'stand upon your moral grandeur. (Cheers.) Cherish the memory of Bannockburn, of Bruce, Wallace, John Knox, and all our great Scotchmen, and you will do a lasting service to your country.' Blackie's speech was, as we might expect, a manifesto of radical Scottish nationality: defiant, aggressive, ever watchful for the encroachment of sublimating, anglicising habits and sentiments. It was notable also for the absence of any considered summary or

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[42] Hanham: *Scottish Nationalism*, pp126-128; Scorgie, G G: 'David MacRae,' *DSCHT*, p536; See also 'Death of Rev. David Macrae,' *GH*, 16th May, 1907

[43] Hanham: *Scottish Nationalism*, pp127

[44] *Borestone and the Field of Bannockburn,* p25. Unless otherwise stated, all citations of the speeches made at the 1889 Borestone demonstration are drawn from this source.

interpretation of the battle or of its hero, Robert Bruce: aside from dropping Bruce's name into his warnings concerning the dire threat of 'being anglified,' Blackie did little to retell the story of the battle – his intent is resolutely polemical and political, not historiographical or commemorative. For Blackie, memory was a weapon to be used in the battle against the dilution of one's nationality, not an end in itself.

If Blackie's speech was relatively short and to the point, Macrae's was significantly longer, more detailed and more stridently political. The first half of the speech was a high-spirited celebration of Scottish national virtue, and of the inspirational qualities of such commemorative events, proclaiming that 'Scottish manhood is invigorated by the glorious memories that bring us here to-day.' In Macrae's eyes Wallace occupied the highest position in the nation's esteem, describing him as 'Scotland's noblest patriot, – for Wallace was the man of the people. More than any other single man that can be named, he was the creator of Scotland's nationality. If there had been no Wallace, there would have been no Bruce.' Reiterating Blackie's assertions about memories of national greatness, Macrae decreed that by keeping the memory of Wallace, Bruce and Bannockburn alive, Scottish patriotism and the British Empire were strengthened. It was in the second part of Macrae's address, however, that his promotion of Scottish nationality changed tone. He began by accusing England of insufficiently acknowledging 'the value of other strong and loyal nationalities growing up side by side with herself,' and of attempting to 'extinguish the smaller nationalities and force them into her own,' citing Ireland as the most resonant example. Drawing upon a discourse that we have seen manifested throughout the commemoration of Wallace and Bruce, Macrae stated that it was thanks to Wallace, Bruce, Stirling Bridge and Bannockburn that the Scots had not had to suffer similar ignominy. Still, however, there were 'forces against which Scotsmen require to be on their guard:' namely centralisation and anglicisation. Macrae proposed the response to centralisation in no uncertain terms: 'We want, therefore, Home Rule for Scotland. (Great cheers.)' The preservation of nationality was a necessary prerequisite for international fraternity, 'an extension of the brotherhood of nations.' Drawing upon some of the complaints made by William Burns in the 1850s and 1860s, Macrae's second concern was that of anglicisation, principally the carelessness of the English in deploying the term 'England' or 'English,' over 'Britain' and 'British.' Acknowledging the unionist-nationalist point that, 'it was one of the crowning

glories of our struggle for independence that at last we were able to enter the Union with England as a free and independent nation,' Macrae drew upon some examples of this neglect of the correct terminology, such as histories of England that ran into the nineteenth century, 'whereas the history of England as a state terminated with the State history of Scotland.' Macrae also warned of the 'falsification' of history in school textbooks, this last point being the most concerning: 'If we allow our history to be falsified, we shall have our nationality undermined,' he said. It was necessary, 'to guard our nationality, and purify it from everything that tends to corrupt and debase. Nourish its strength and its vigour, not only for our own sakes, but for the sake of all other parts of the Empire.' More than ever, the representation of the ideal of Scottish nationality emphasised the historic validity of that nationality, and upon the necessity of preserving its coherence in order that Scotland could continue to punch at the appropriate national weight. The preservation of Scottish nationality was necessary for the continued fraternity of all nations, upon which might be built a more peaceful world: the maintenance, commemoration and preservation of nationality represented the cure for the world's ills. In this way, the 1889 commemoration of Bannockburn connected with the image of Wallace – and, to a lesser extent, of Bruce – as representing heroic, transcendent, patriotic liberty, a conception of the hero that persisted, throughout the century, drawn upon by all shades of Scottish national expression. What is notable on this occasion, however, is that such a conception of the idealised virtue of patriotic libertarianism is not applied to the oppressed nationalities of late nineteenth-century Europe, but is instead bound directly to Scotland.

Despite the dominance of Blackie and Macrae's radicalised rhetoric, there were more moderate voices to be heard amongst the proto-nationalist harangues: the opening speech by Provost Yellowlees of Stirling was fairly conservative, his references to the Scottish and British flags containing no political element other than promoting the union as the historic consummation of Scotland's historic independence. Letters of apology were read from Lord Elgin, Henry Campbell-Bannerman, and – unable to attend owing to ill-health – the Rev Charles Rogers, who wrote, '...it is well that we should personally cherish those principles which shone so conspicuous in our nation's worthies. And in so doing let us avoid a blind submissiveness on the one hand, and a bustling discontent upon the other.' We might expect nothing less of Rogers, the moderate's moderate, still intent that the

commemoration of the Scottish past should never go so far as to rock the British boat.

Unlike the demonstrations of 1870 and 1887, there seems to have been considerable editorial comment on the 1889 demonstration, with the majority view being markedly positive. The *North British Daily Mail's* editorial described the event as having, 'testified to the abiding depth of that patriotic sentiment which reaches its high water-mark at the name of Bannockburn,' going on to declare that, 'even the most enlightened of our English neighbours, in the light of the ultimate good achieved for both nations, are equally ready with ourselves to admire the struggle for independence that was completed by Bruce.' The *Scotsman*, having said that even Professor Blackie was incapable of putting into words the patriotic sentiments associated with a memory as glorious as that of Bannockburn, presented the battle in terms very similar to the *North British Daily Mail*:

> Scotsmen are convinced, and most Englishmen are convinced also, that the victory gained in 1314 was the best day's work ever done for the two countries. It ensured that there should be two nations instead of one on the island, each following its own development; but it also ensured that there should be respect by the stronger toward the weaker of the two, and there should ultimately be Union between them in all that matters…[45]

Neither paper, it must be noted, expressed any objection to the content of speeches that, had they been delivered to promote the Wallace Monument, for instance, would almost certainly have drawn considerable censure. To a certain extent, the absence of any direct criticism reflects the prevailing opinion of the Home Rule issue: though it was far from the most crucial political issue, Home Rule still inhabited a space closer to the centre ground of political debate than it had in the past, and was one to be taken seriously.[46] Editorials in the *Glasgow Evening Citizen* and in the *Daily Telegraph*, said little of the nature of the commemoration, but instead opted to comment on the issue of Home Rule as manifested at the Borestone demonstration. The *Evening Citizen*, having noted that 'the ceremony passed off successfully and without any declaration of hostilities against England,' compared Blackie's call for a 'national council' for Scotland with the Scottish Home

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[45] 'Opinions of the Press,' *SJ*, 26th June, 1889

[46] Kendle, *Ireland and the Federal Solution*, pp84-85

Rule Association's more 'extreme' programme of calling for a Scottish Parliament.[47] The *Telegraph* was less critical, arguing that if any part of the British nation was worthy of Home Rule it was Scotland: while Ireland had 'never been a separate nation, or even a distinct nationality,' rendering it unworthy of its own parliament, to grant one to Scotland would be to restore a parliament that had once existed. Furthermore, in what might be inferred as an indirect reference to the battle being commemorated, the *Telegraph* stated that the Scots 'were never conquered.'

The 1889 Bannockburn demonstration was inextricably bound up with the cause of Scottish Home Rule, more so than any other commemorative event held at the site hitherto. When inviting speakers such as John Stuart Blackie and the Rev. Macrae to deliver addresses at the event, the Borestone committee would have known well what to expect, and, from the reactions recorded in contemporary accounts, were most pleased with these 'stirring national speeches.' The 1889 event is, therefore, indicative of the increasing politicisation of the commemoration of the Scottish past: as issues of Scottish nationality shifted towards the centre of Scottish and British political debate, the meaning of the past shifts with them, there to be re-created and deployed in support of present demands. Though their entreaties differed in degree and intensity, the contrast between the Home Rule rhetoric of Blackie and Macrae and the significantly more moderate speech delivered by Lord Rosebery at the six-hundredth anniversary of Stirling Bridge in 1897, indicates how the commemoration of the Scottish past responded to such demands. That is to say, the radicalism of Blackie and Macrae, and the moderation of Rosebery were responses to what they deemed the demands of the current political and cultural climate to be. The speakers at both events adopted framing-strategies for the purpose of defining the meaning of Wallace and Bruce's legacy of Scottish national independence. Whether the political component was overtly stated (Blackie and Macrae) or whether the speaker fell back upon appeals to history and its outcome (Rosebery) the requirements of the present were persistently projected on to the screen of the past.

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[47] *Glasgow Evening Citizen*, 24th June, 1889

The Wallace Window, Paisley, and the Robroyston Memorial

Besides the statue to Wallace in Aberdeen, there were two other monuments erected to Wallace before the beginning of the twentieth century: a stained-glass window in Paisley Abbey, and a Celtic cross memorial erected at Robroyston, Glasgow. Though separated by some seventeen years – the Paisley window was inaugurated in 1873; the Robroyston memorial in 1900 – these two monuments are being considered together owing to their association with organisations whose aims were avowedly patriotic. The Paisley window was a gift of the Glasgow St Andrew Society, a body that has already been encountered in connection with William Burns, whilst the Robroyston statue had connections with the Scottish Patriotic Association.[48] What is most notable about the inauguration ceremonies of these two memorials is not, however, the radicalism of their rhetoric, but what would appear to be their self-conscious moderation. Whereas other occasions were deemed suitable for the expression of national grievances, at Paisley in 1873 and Robroyston in 1900 the broader politico-cultural objectives of each monument's promoters were not given an airing.

The Paisley Wallace window was unveiled on the 11th of September, 1873, the anniversary of the battle of Stirling Bridge. Present at the ceremony were numerous members of Paisley civil society, as well as members of the St Andrew Society. Originally the idea of Rev. James Lees, the funds for the window had been raised by 'limited' subscription and, according to one of the speakers at the inauguration, money 'flowed in so freely that they found no difficulty in providing that noble monument to the hero Wallace.' Designed by the Edinburgh artist, James Ballantine, the window depicted 'Samson after his destruction of the Philistines, the enemies of his country, with the jawbone of an ass,' bearing an inscription beneath of Samson's words to the 'God of Battle: "Thou hast given this great deliverance into the hand of Thy servant."' The upper section of the window was intended to be 'emblematical of Freedom,' showing 'an ascending angel, rendering asunder the chain and shackles of Bondage.' The imagery of the Paisley

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[48] *Glasgow St Andrew Society: Memorial Window to Sir William Wallace, Knight of Elderslie*, (Paisley, 1873); 'The Wallace Memorial at Robroyston: Unveiling Ceremony,' *GH*, 6th August, 1900. Unless otherwise stated, details on both events are drawn from these sources.

window, combined with recognition of the body that erected it, is inevitably reminiscent of the rejected 'Lion and Typhon,' with its symbols of tyranny overcome, the chains of oppression broken. Despite the potential for some libertarian rhetoric, the character of the inauguration of the Paisley window was markedly moderate. Just as William Burns recognised the necessity of tempering his rhetoric in order to promote the raising of the National Wallace Monument, so too the President of the Glasgow St Andrew Society, Mr Franc Gibb Dougall, did not engage in any criticism or dally with potential offence. Having given William Burns's forthcoming history of the wars of independence a quick plug, Gibb Dougall made certain to state that he did not intend to 'stir up the miry waters of ancient feuds,' but praised instead the fact that Scotland and England shared, 'the same sovereign, are governed by the same Imperial legislature, and are now a great and united people – The British. (Hear, hear.)' Quoting Gladstone in support of the necessity of commemorating past glories – "I believe that the more disposition you show to commemorate your own national traditions, the better subject you will be of Her Majesty Queen Victoria," – Gibb Dougall did, however, stress that such memorials were necessary for 'upholding our own nationality,' and that, 'we have the unchallengable right to meet as we do now to further honour him whom we consider as the brave defender of our liberties.'

The Robroyston memorial to Wallace was unveiled on the 6th of August, 1900, the ceremony being chaired by David Macrae, president of the Memorial Committee, amidst 'a great display of flags and banners,' and in the presence of a replica of the Wallace sword 'in moss and heather, the property of Mr Theodore Napier.' Marking the scene of Wallace's betrayal, the Robroyston memorial arguably represented the penultimate chapter in the monumental commemoration of the most resonant locations and moments of the Wallace myth in Scotland. The National Monument overlooked the scene of his victory at Stirling Bridge, whilst the Ayr and Barnweill monuments could be said to commemorate the exploits of his early life, with the story completed at his reputed birthplace, Elderslie, in 1912. Moreover, the Robroyston monument was indicative of a shift in the form of memorials in Scotland. In the mid-nineteenth century, small-scale monuments tended to be obelisks or, if the funds were available, statues; the Robroyston monument was in the shape of a Celtic cross.

In front of a crowd of about one thousand people, and in the presence of a large number of worthies, the monument was unveiled by Miss Emmeline M'Kerlie, 'a lineal descendant of Wallace's faithful companion,' with short speeches from Macrae, Dr Douglas, MP, and Dr Murison, Professor of Roman Law at University College, London. In distinct contrast to his resolutely political speech at Bannockburn in 1889, Macrae's remarks prior to the unveiling were more traditionally historiographical in character: he referred to Wallace as 'Scotland's noblest patriot,' with a name 'written in imperishable characters on the hearts of the Scottish people.' The memorial, Macrae contended, would stand as a reminder that Wallace had not died in vain, but that his betrayal 'only roused Scotland in a fiercer determination to be free'; in addition, the monument was intended to 'help to foster the patriotic spirit amongst all who lived in the district and others who came to view it.' Accepting the memorial on behalf of Cadder Parish Council, the Rev. Davidson said that the monument was testament to the 'self-denial and self-sacrifice of him who laid for them the foundation of that national independence of which they were so proud.' Dr Douglas, cited the archetypal argument that the English had as much to thank Wallace for as the Scots:

> Wallace delivered them from what, he believed, would have been an almost insoluble problem, and a source of great weakness and difficulty in many crises and troubles for centuries. The result of Wallace's great services was that they were able to live in the relationship of mutual respect and goodwill in a free and prosperous union with their English neighbours.

In referring to this advantage as one of the 'greatest fruits of the services which Wallace did to his country,' Douglas prefaced his statement with a rare cautionary note, in asserting that Wallace's benefit to England 'was not sometimes sufficiently regarded,' – though whether he referred to the regard of the English or the Scots, he does not seem to have made clear. The only potentially radical statement uttered at the unveiling of the Robroyston memorial, came form the final speaker, Dr Murison of London, who said that,

> the price of liberty was constant vigilance. Although Wallace won freedom for Scotland, it had to be maintained from day to day, and, even now, if they only thought of it, they had still the same battle to fight in every department of life, social and political.

The tone of these final few sentences sounds a distinctly vindicatory bell amid the self-conscious rhetorical moderation of the rest of the event's speeches, though Macrae's sentiments do carry an assertive ring. In a sense, Murison's fairly

radical statements are just as typical of moderate commemorative rhetoric as the more avowedly 'unionist-nationalist' sentiments from speakers such as Dr Douglas. In arguing that most of the commemoration of Wallace or Bruce was defined by moderation, we might also add the necessary qualifier that a constituent part of that moderation was often a token radical statement or speaker here or there – a role admirably played in the National Wallace Monument movement by John Stuart Blackie, for instance.

CONCLUSION

The commemoration of Wallace and Bruce after the close of the National Wallace Monument movement indicates a number of elements in the framing of these national heroes and their legacy for Scottish nationality. In terms of the relationship between the two subjects, it is evident that Wallace was less prone to criticism than Bruce, with the latter often relegated to second place. At the same time, the commemoration of Bruce tended to emphasise that he had reaped what Wallace sowed: Bannockburn completed the work begun at Stirling Bridge. Bruce was not above suspicion – he was, after all, no 'man of the people,' – yet the moderate hegemony in commemorative discourse would never go so far as to represent him as anything less than a true patriot. Wallace, on the other hand, continued to be promoted as Scotland's greatest hero, embodying and forging all of the virtues of Scottish nationality.

The moderate character of commemorative rhetoric that had defined the National Wallace Monument movement, endured after 1869, as the majority of large-scale commemorations sought to promote an unproblematic Britishness. Wallace and Bruce were deployed as proto-Britons, making the Scottish nation's contribution to the founding of the Union and Empire, of civil and religious liberty. Radical nationality, as portrayed through promotion of Home Rule, enjoyed a brief moment in the spotlight, and would go on to represent a thickening strand in the weave of commemorative rhetoric. Yet the cause of Home Rule, or any form of administrative reform, was more often than not elided from the discourse of commemoration in favour of a less critical, more laudatory representation of the Scottish nation. Moderate Scottish nationality was intent on promoting the past as a means of celebrating the present, whereas radical nationality looked to the past as a source of precedents for change – a return to the manly independence of old.

Following this model, the commemoration of William Wallace and Robert the Bruce was fundamentally moderate. A radical reading of the wars of independence was communicated, and had been – briefly – acceptable, but was not nearly as widespread as the safely framed portraits of Scotland's national heroes more commonly encountered.

6. John Knox and the Second Reformation: 1822 – 1846.

Introduction

Religion was a core component of Scottish nationality in the nineteenth century, with the representation of Scottish Presbyterian memory being as fundamental to nationality as any memories of the Wars of Independence. Just as Wallace and Bruce were framed by the political and cultural demands of this period, so, too, Scotland's religious past was re-invented in order to legitimise competing discourses within Scottish Presbyterianism. In addition, the memories of Wallace, Bruce, Knox and the Covenanters could be woven into a relatively seamless narrative of Scottish civil and religious liberty.[1] This chapter is concerned with commemorative acts carried out between 1822 and 1846, relating to collective memories of the John Knox and the so-called 'Second Reformation,' at the Glasgow General Assembly of 1638 and the Westminster Assembly of 1643. The reason for connecting the commemoration of Knox and the second Reformation in this analysis is derived from the demands being made upon these anniversaries at this time. The commemoration of these events was motivated not simply by the occurrence of their anniversaries, but was driven by the need to prove a direct connection between the objectives of the present and conflicts fought in the past. In the same way as the commemoration of Wallace and Bruce involved legitimising projected conceptions of the meaning and significance of Scottish nationality, the celebration of Scotland's Presbyterian legacy involved taking the events of that past and re-inventing them. As a result, the marking of the legacy of Knox or the anniversaries of 1638 and 1643 cannot be separated from those debates that dominated the ecclesiastical scene of this period.

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[1] This chapter intentionally uses the term 'Presbyterianism' over 'Protestantism' to describe the ecclesiastical character of nineteenth-century Scotland. As Presbyterianism was the dominant form of church government, the tensions associated with it define the ecclesiastical history of the period which, in turn, defines the commemoration of Scotland's religious past at that time. Where Episcopalian or other non-Presbyterian denominations are considered, the terminology is adjusted appropriately.

The most decisive influence upon the representation of Scotland's religious memory was the rise to power of the Evangelical party in the Established Church of Scotland, and the broader context of tension both between and within the different Protestant denominations in Scotland. Overarching these tensions was a further determinant in the characterisation of a Presbyterian past: the identification of a common enemy. In the same manner as proponents of a more radical Scottish nationality viewed the twinned threats of anglicisation and increased centralisation as the focus of their activism, one of the causes most commonly espoused at events commemorating Scotland's Presbyterian past was the constant threat posed by Roman Catholicism. In the first half of the century, however – specifically during the Ten Years' Conflict – the enemy was not simply Popery, but a state that did not sufficiently recognise the spiritual independence of the Church, nor its demands for increased endowment. The extent to which the state could interfere or adjudicate in disputes within the Church had been one of the defining features of Scottish Presbyterianism since the 1630s, and, during the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, this issue was driven by the Evangelical party in the Established Church. Fired by a missionary ardour, deeply opposed to the perceived injustices of patronage and state interference, and committed to a renewed dogmatic Calvinism at odds with the hitherto dominant Moderatism, the Evangelicals were out to restore Scotland to the glory years of the Second Reformation.

The fact that the significance of Scotland's Protestant past had been fairly comprehensively undermined only served to render it all the more potent when applied to the complexities of ecclesiastical conflict in the 1830s and 1840s. The emergence of a dominant Whig historiography, which emphasised the importance of 'the post-Union Anglicisation of Scottish life and institutions… locating a superior tradition of liberty within a different confessional state,' shifted the contributions made by the likes of Knox and the Westminster Assembly to the margins of Scottish – and British – history.[2] Moderates such as William Robertson, argued that Scotland's civil freedoms were a result of the civilising influence of union, both political and cultural, with a superior historical tradition. Robertson re-contextualised the Scottish Reformation, undermining its centrality to the narrative of Scottish civil and religious liberty, reducing the 'totemic authority' of founding

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[2] Kidd, *Subverting Scotland's Past*, p193

reformers such as John Knox and George Buchanan.[3] When this reading was challenged, it was left to outspoken Secession figures, such as Archibald Bruce, Antiburgher Professor of Divinity, to raise the banner for 'full-blown Whig-Presbyterian historiography.' Rejecting Robertson's history, Bruce promoted the Scottish-national past as being not merely fundamental to modern Britishness, but as having raised the foundations of British liberties long before the English – had it not been for the Scottish Reformers, there would have been no 'Glorious Revolution.'[4] We find in an extract from Bruce's *Reflections on the Freedom of Writing*, a motif widely deployed in the commemoration of Wallace and Bruce: the struggle for civil and religious liberty –

> Civil and religious liberty are but two great branches of the same expanded tree. They have ever been found most intimately allied. They have both had the same common enemies; and nearly the same pretexts and methods have been employed to undermine and destroy both…[5]

After Bruce's death, the gauntlet was picked up by his colleague in the Constitutional Associate Presbytery, Thomas McCrie, who persisted in casting Knox and the Covenanters as 'genuine and enlightened friends of civil liberty.'[6] For later generations of Evangelical Presbyterians, it was McCrie that provided the reference point for their rehabilitation of Knox and the Reformation. McCrie dove-tailed the constitutionalism of the Enlightenment with 'an existing Presbyterian narrative of Scottish history since the Reformation,' appealing to a reading public raised on the rather heavy victual of such Covenanting texts as the *Scots Worthies* and *Cloud of Witnesses.*[7] McCrie's biographies of Knox and Melville swiftly became the two pillars

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[3] *ibid.*, p195

[4] Brims, J: 'The Covenanting Tradition and Scottish Radicalism in the 1790s, in Brotherstone, T (ed.): *Covenant, Charter and Party: Traditions of Revolt and Protest in Modern Scottish History*, (Aberdeen, 1990),' pp52-57; Kidd, *Subverting Scotland's Past*, p200; Forsyth, N: 'Presbyterian historians and the Scottish invention of British liberty,' *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*, vol XXXIV, 2004, pp92-93; Kidd, *Subverting Scotland's Past*, p201

[5] Bruce, A: *Reflections on the Freedom of Writing, and the Impropriety of Attempting to Suppresss it by Penal Laws. Occasioned by a Late Proclamation against Seditious Publications, and the Measures Consequent Upon it; Viewed Chiefly in the Aspect they Bear to Religious Liberty and Ecclesiastical Reform* (n.p., 1794), p88, quoted in Brims, 'Covenanting Tradition,' p56. See also Kidd, *Subverting Scotland's Past*, p201

[6] McCrie, T: *Works*, VII.12, (Edinburgh and London, 1855-6), p113, quoted in Kidd, *Subverting Scotland's Past*, p203

[7] Forsyth, 'Presbyterian historians,' p94

of nineteenth-century Presbyterian historiography, providing the defining discourse for the representation of Scotland's ecclesiastical past and bringing to a much wider audience the contention that the Scots-Presbyterian historical narrative was a component part of British constitutionalism, even before the English had woken up to the principles of civil and religious liberty. Furthermore, McCrie railed against those accusations of intolerance, bigotry and violence that had been directed at the heroes of Scottish Presbyterianism by Moderate historians, and this need to vindicate Presbyterian heroism was carried over into the commemorative discourse. It was McCrie's representation of the Scottish past that was drawn upon by the Evangelical Party in the 1830s and by the Free Church in the 1840s, as well as members of the Secession churches. Just as Wallace and Bruce could be deployed to represent the historic independence of the Scottish nation, so Knox and the Covenanters – whether pre- or post-Restoration – could be summoned to signify the equally historic independence of the Scottish Kirk. The precise nature of this independence was a matter of debate, yet the nationality of Knox and the Covenanters was a fundamental component in the rise of Evangelical Presbyterianism at this time.[8] Renewed Calvinist enthusiasm was, in part, an expression of historic Scottish nationality.

Commemoration of the Presbyterian past suffered from an association that was largely absent from the commemoration of secular memory, as one of the most conspicuous characteristics of commemoration as an act of memory transfer is that it involves the observance of ritual – the commemoration of a national hero could be looked upon as the worship of a secular saint. At the inauguration of the Stirling Bruce statue, for instance, there was a procession to the idol, songs were sung, relics were carried, and lessons were preached, all intended to inspire emulation in the ritual participant and attendees.[9] This correspondence between commemorative and sacred ritual was not lost on contemporary observers: following an impassioned sermon from the Free Church's Rev Dr James Begg during the national commemoration of the Covenanting martyrs in 1880, an editorial in the *Scotsman* accused Begg of engaging in 'an imitation of the practices of that Popery which Dr Begg denounces.' A correspondent under the title of 'Original Seceder,' drew direct

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[8] Brown, S J: *Thomas Chalmers and the Godly Commonwealth in Scotland*, (Oxford, 1982), p211

[9] 'Inauguration of the Bruce Monument,' *Stirling Observer*, 29th November, 1877

comparison between the commemorations of 1880 and the rituals of the Roman Catholic Church:

> [P]ilgrimages, worshipping at the martyrs' tombs, observance of "days and months," and the gathering or relics for exhibition in churches… so far from being an exhibition of the principles of the Covenanters, the commemoration too plainly savours of that anti-Christian system which they covenanted against.[10]

In a nation where the vast majority of its commemorative practices were carried out by members of denominations that viewed ritual as being highly suspect at best, one of the questions that must be asked is, to what extent was there any recognition of the contradiction implicit in the practice of commemorative rituals? Was not the commemoration of the past simply another example of Popish ritual creeping into Scottish religious practices under a friendly guise, and what strategies were adopted to evade such unwelcome associations?

THE GLASGOW MONUMENT

The movement to erect a monument to John Knox in Glasgow began at a time when the Evangelical party in the Established Church was beginning to assert itself after a period of relative calm.[11] The controversies of the Ten Years' Conflict were still to come, yet the essential character of the Evangelical party was already well-defined, devoted as it was to a reassertion of the authority of the parish over education, poor-relief and discipline, with much of the emphasis on the burgeoning industrial centres.[12] If the parish was to become the seed-bed of the Godly Commonwealth, then the urban challenge had to be faced through home missions and a church building programme.[13] The Evangelical party became somewhat synonymous with the name of Thomas Chalmers, yet in the 1820s an earlier generation were in the process of making their mark, amongst them the Rev Dr Stevenson MacGill, Professor of Theology at the University of Glasgow, a Tory, and

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[10] *Scotsman*, 21st June, 1880; 'The Covenanting Commemoration,' letter from 'Original Seceder,' *Scotsman*, 24th June, 1880

[11] Drummond & Bulloch, *Scottish Church*, pp180-192; Brown, *Thomas Chalmers*, pp71, 212-220

[12] Brown, S J: 'The Ten Years' Conflict and the Disruption of 1843,' in Brown, S J & Fry, M (eds): *Scotland in the Age of the Disruption*, (Edinburgh, 1993), p5*n*, p5

[13] Brown, *Thomas Chalmers*, pp212-213

a committed anti-Pluralist, and Chalmers's predecessor at the Tron parish.[14] The problems faced by the Glasgow parish that had partly inspired Chalmers's vision of the new Scotland were also instrumental in motivating Glasgow's statue of the Great Reformer – the Knox monument was one of the solutions being offered to the worrying problems of intense urbanisation in 1820s Glasgow, with Stevenson MacGill as its main promoter. Inspired in part by Thomas McCrie's identification of the University of Glasgow as Knox's place of education, MacGill was primarily responsible for the erection of the Knox pillar, though he received a great deal of assistance from William McGavin, author of *The Protestant*, as his secretary. [15] Raised in the seceding Anti-Burgher church, McGavin was by this time a Congregationalist, and *The Protestant* was his weekly broadside against the ever-increasing numbers of Roman Catholic immigrants, one of the first such shots fired in what would go on to represent the more belligerent aspect of Evangelicalism.[16] MacGill outlined his reasons for erecting the monument in a letter to the Trades House of Glasgow,:

> To pay honour to the illustrious dead, is not only a tribute due to their memories, but keeps in remembrance the great principles by which they were actuated, inspires an admiration of their virtues, and leads to a high and grateful sense of those blessings, which they were the means of securing to their country.[17]

MacGill placed the emphasis firmly on the inspirational qualities of the proposed monument as a means of keeping the principles of the Reformation alive. By stressing these principles, as much as focusing on Knox himself, MacGill's letter represents an early example of the strategy employed to evade any association with Popish ritual commemoration. The monument would mark not only Knox's contribution as an individual reformer, but also provide a memorial of the Reformation, 'which by its principles, spirit, and institutions, has so long blessed and distinguished our native land.'[18] This emphasis on the virtues of the Reformation

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[14] Brown, *Thomas Chalmers*, pp91; 124-125

[15] Burns, R: *Memoir of the Rev. Stevenson MacGill, D.D.*, (Edinburgh, 1842), pp40-57

[16] Drummond & Bulloch, *Scottish Church*, p214; See also, Reid, W: *The Merchant Evangelist, being a Memoir of William McGavin, author of 'The Protestant'*, (Edinburgh: 1884), pp56-57, 119-121; Ritchie, L A, 'M'Gavin [*sic*], William (1773-1832),' *ODNB.*

[17] Burns, *Stevenson MacGill,* p292

[18] *ibid.*

and the Reformers corresponded to the patriotism of Wallace and Bruce, and allowed the commemoration of John Knox to avoid accusations ritual or idolatry. In short, it was not the man being commemorated so much as the high-minded virtues he represented, virtues that the present generation were encouraged to emulate. Furthermore, from its beginnings, the monument was intended to appeal to all denominations and parties, 'who revered the great principles of the Reformation,'[19] and it is clear that representatives from across the ecclesiastical landscape of 1820s Scotland participated in the monument movement or its inauguration: in addition to the Established Church there were also members of the United Secession, the Relief Church and the Reformed Presbyterians. Combined with the effects of increased political and industrial radicalism, the Glasgow Knox monument was intended to act as a focus for unity in the face of increased ecclesiastical and social division, a fixed point around which all parties could unite in commemoration of the legacy of Knox and the Reformation.

The design selected for the monument was an eighteen-metre high fluted Doric column designed by Thomas Hamilton, topped with a colossal statue of Knox, designed by William Warren and sculpted by Robert Forrest, with the foundation stone being laid on the 22nd of September, 1825, amid almost overwhelming public interest.[20] (Figure 3)

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[19] *Account of Ceremonial &c. at Laying of the Foundation Stone of Knox's Monument on the Merchants' Park*, (Glasgow, 1825), p7

[20] Scott, R: *Death by Design: The True Story of the Glasgow Necropolis*, (Edinburgh, 2005), p82

Figure 4: The John Knox Memorial, Glasgow

A procession, including the monument committee, along with more than 300 of the subscribers, walked from to the Merchants' Park for the ceremonial: along their route, 'every window was filled with spectators and house tops were in full requisition.' No less than 10,000 people gathered in the grounds of the

cathedral to watch. At the ceremony, speeches were made by the Rev Dr Macgill, the Lord Provost of Glasgow, as well as the minister of the Barony Parish, the Rev John Burns and Patrick MacFarlan, Chalmers's successor at St John's. The ceremonial having been completed, the members of the procession proceeded to a banquet.

The inscription on the monument's base remains as the most enduring testament to its intended significance, and provides a succinct summary of the reasons given for the monument's erection:

> To testify Gratitude for inestimable Services
> In the Cause of Religion, Education, and Civil Liberty.
> To awaken Admiration
> Of that Integrity, Disinterestedness, and Courage,
> Which stood unshaken in the midst of trials,
> And in the Maintenance of the highest objects.
>
> FINALLY,
>
> To Cherish unceasing Reverence for the Principles and
> Blessings of that Great Reformation,
> By the influence of which our Country, through the
> Midst of Difficulties,
> Has risen to Honour, Prosperity and Happiness.[21]

The intention was not to sanctify Knox but rather to encourage the retention of those qualities that Knox and the Reformation had imbued in Scotland. In the prayer offered at the opening of the ceremony, Dr Burns asked that those present should, 'be duly sensible of our inestimable privileges, both civil and sacred, and carefully improve them… may we be as eminent for the holiness of our lives, as we are distinguished by our national blessings.'[22] In his speech at the evening banquet, the Rev Dr MacGill reiterated this sentiment in saying that it was, 'to foster this spirit with all that piety and noble integrity of character which has distinguished our country, that the foundation stone of a monument to Knox has been laid.'[23] At the foundation stone ceremony, James Ewing of Strathleven – who would go on to be

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[21] *Laying of the Foundation Stone of Knox's Monument*, p11

[22] *ibid.*, p10. It was the Rev. Burns who would write MacGill's memoir in 1842.

[23] *ibid.*, p23

both the MP for Glasgow and Lord Provost from 1832 to 1833 – stated that, though the character of Knox needed no monument, it was still necessary to provide some mark of respect in order that, 'the moral influence of such a monument in such a scene, and in such a community as this, may be felt by generations yet unborn.'[24] Moreover, religious heroism was as worthy of commemoration as military achievement:

> Shall we wreath the laurel, and raise the trophy to the military hero, and shall we neglect him who fought against the powers of darkness? Shall we forget him who despised every fear, braved every danger, stormed the strong-hold of Papal tyranny, and levelled its bulwarks in the dust?[25]

Not only was the monument intended to be didactic and inspirational, it was also raised as a symbol of resistance to tyranny, albeit 'papal' rather than Plantagenet. These references are not the only similarities with the rhetorical commemoration of Wallace and Bruce. In his opening prayer, Dr Burns thanked God for 'the happy Constitution of Civil Government;' in his evening speech, the Rev Dr MacGill referred to constitutional monarchy as 'one of the great safeguards of liberty, protecting us most effectually from the dominion of foreign foes, while it guards us from the disorders of the ambitious, the excesses of the violent, and the oppressions of the powerful. (Loud cheering.).'[26]

The achievements of Knox and the Reformation were, then, grounded in the same narrative model as that of Wallace and Bruce, yet there are further comparisons to be drawn. Even more so than William Wallace, there was a palpable sense that Knox needed defending from accusations of intolerance and extremism. MacGill made certain to contextualise Knox's behaviour:

> I am sensible that expressions and sentiments have occasionally been uttered by great and good men, in times of violence and oppression, which ought to be received with modification, and considered in connection with the circumstances to which they were applied.[27]

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[24] *ibid.*, p18. See biography of James Ewing at http://www.theglasgowstory.com/image.php?inum=TGSA05220.

[25] *ibid.*

[26] *ibid.*, p9, p14

[27] *ibid.*, p14

MacGill went on to ask the question: 'Who will say that extraordinary times and circumstances did not *require* and *justify extraordinary means*?' [original emphasis] In other words, context was required: Knox's intemperance was justified by citing the harshness of the environment in which he had to operate. In common with another historically-derived component of the myth of Wallace, Knox was portrayed as both a 'man of the people,' yet also as chosen for greatness: MacGill claimed that Knox, 'possessed a rank of a higher order – that which arises from worth and talents, and benefits rendered to his country. By his personal excellence he had risen to influence among men of every order.'[28] For MacGill, Knox represented the very qualities that most suited the mindset of nineteenth-century Scoto-Britishness: hard work, perseverance, self reliance. In promoting the benefits of the Reformation in Scotland, Ewing claimed that it was the Scottish Reformation that had, 'unlocked the boundless stores of science and philosophy,' and that Scotland was indebted to the Reformation for not only its education system, but also for its commercial prosperity. Comparing Scotland before and after the Reformation, he said,

> In place of convents, we now behold manufactories; in place of dissolute and ignorant monks, we behold virtuous and enlightened clergy; in place of idle mendicants, dependant on monasteries, we behold industrious artisans, who would scorn subsistence but from their own labour.[29]

Claims were also made for the superiority of the Scottish Reformation over those of other nations. In Dr MacGill's speech at the foundation-stone ceremony he claimed that the changes brought about by the Reformation in Scotland were, 'more thorough, scriptural, and perfect than in most other nations,' before going on to say that he would not have been doing his job properly if he did no assert that the Scottish Reformation, 'introduced a system superior to that of most other nations; fitted in a higher degree to promote the interests of practical religion, and the general welfare of men.'[30] This statement underlines the didactic nature of the Glasgow Knox monument: that one of the principal benefits of the Scottish Reformation was an increase in 'the general welfare of men,' something that MacGill felt was under threat from a lack of education and worsening social conditions.

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[28] *ibid.*, p17

[29] *ibid.*

[30] *ibid.*, p13

Furthermore, just as the commemoration of Wallace and Bruce thanked those national heroes for having prevented Scotland from becoming a subject nation, and of saving Scotland from the fate of other oppressed nationalities, so, too, we encounter this promotion of the Scottish Reformation into the forefront of the Reformation as a European phenomenon.

A feature of the commemoration of Knox that would come to represent one of the principal motivations for remembering both Reformation and Reformer, was, however, conspicuous by its relative absence: that is, strident anti-Catholicism. There can be little doubt, considering the views of the monument's two main promoters – MacGill and William McGavin – that the threat of Popish invasion was keenly felt, yet the articulation of this fear appears to have been largely absent from the addresses delivered at this event. This is despite the fact that McGavin's *Protestant* periodical was, to use the diplomatic words of Charles Rogers, 'devoted to the exposure of Papal error,' whilst, though MacGill tolerated the existence of Catholics in Scotland, he viewed the possibility of their appointment to government positions, to the universities and colleges, and to the judiciary as a cause for considerable concern. In this sense, the overall tone of this event was highly moderate, the speakers choosing to dwell upon the achievements of Knox and the Reformation, rather than to identify threats to that legacy or to make calls for vigilance.[31] As already argued, it is the perception of threat that helps to define the discourse of radical nationality: at this event, there is little sense of an impending Catholic tyranny.

Whereas in the preceding chapters we have been able to examine the relative ranking of Wallace and Bruce within the national memory, we are now in a position to establish the extent to which these heroes were placed in comparison to Knox and the Reformation. The events at Glasgow in September, 1825, contain two illuminating examples: the first comes from the speech made by a Mr John May at the evening banquet, in which he stated his hope that 'our gratitude will not rest satisfied with a Monument to only one benefactor of our Country, but extend itself to those immortal Heroes – Wallace and Bruce (hear, hear, hear.),'[32] implying also

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[31] Rogers, *Monuments and Monumental Inscriptions*, vol I, p474; Burns, *Stevenson MacGill*, pp286-287

[32] *Laying of the Foundation Stone of Knox's Monument*, p39

that all three heroes had played their part in the same, definitive narrative. Though referring to the same historic theme, William McGavin went further than May, by arguing that Knox occupied a higher echelon than Wallace and Bruce: he said that memories of Knox, 'make us think of a Wallace and a Bruce, who fought for their country, and ultimately achieved its deliverance... But Knox suffered more and achieved more than they.' Whereas the wounds received by Wallace and Bruce were merely of the flesh, Knox's wounds, McGavin claimed, 'entered his soul.'[33] Knox's struggle was more worthy of commemoration, having operated on more levels than that of Wallace and of Bruce. Nevertheless, whether promoting Knox above those other 'immortal heroes' or simply placing him in the same narrative of civil and religious liberty, at Glasgow we can clearly see the identification of Wallace and Bruce as having fought to the same end as Knox: the conception of each hero, of each national milestone was reciprocal.

Examination of the laying of the Glasgow Knox monument foundation stone introduces us to certain key aspects of the commemoration of Knox and the Reformation, many of which are familiar from the commemoration of Wallace and Bruce, principally that Knox had his place in the grand narrative of Scoto-British civil and religious liberty, defined in part by the creation of a constitutional monarchy, an 'enlightened clergy,' and the concomitant development of economic prosperity. At the same time, the rhetoric of this event mirrors the commemoration of Wallace in its identification of Knox as not only a self-made man, but also as having imbued these qualities into the Scottish character as one who led a struggle that raised Scotland to the first rank of all nations. Knox was not only a champion of civil and religious liberty, but had played his part in effecting a glorious union of equal nations.

THE BICENTENARY OF THE 1638 GENERAL ASSEMBLY

If the Glaswegian Knox monument had been raised in the midst of a relatively pacific period in the history of the Scottish Church, the commemorations which were to follow were defined by the increasingly heated ecclesiastical contests of the 1830s and 1840s. These tensions were never more acutely expressed than at

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[33] *ibid.*, p46

the 1838 commemoration of the Glasgow General Assembly, occurring at a time when the Established Church was being splintered by disputes between the Evangelical and Moderate parties.[34] From 1832, the rumblings of discontent against patronage began to grow in volume, accompanied by other issues fundamental to the Evangelical cause, such as church missions, protest against the emancipation of Roman Catholics, defence of the Sabbath and the rejection of Voluntaryism.[35] With the Veto Act in 1834 giving congregations the right to reject any 'intruded' nominee, the Evangelicals had set out the battle-plan in their struggle for spiritual independence. Despite the success of Chalmers's Committee on Church Extension in 1836, the Evangelicals lobbied for more money from the state, but the state was not prepared to foot the bill for the Godly Commonwealth, a conclusion warmly greeted by the Voluntaryist Secession denominations.[36] The tensions that had been deepening since the adoption of the Veto Act were then exacerbated by the Court of Session's decision against the Veto in May of 1838 – as regarded patronage, the Established Church of Scotland was still answerable to the state.[37] In response to this judgement, the General Assembly printed a 'Declaration of Spiritual Independence,' which, in asserting the Church's freedom from such interference, appealed to the Westminster Confession and the precedent of the Covenanting Martyrs.[38] In the midst of this conflict came the celebration of the bicentenary of the 1638 General Assembly, with large-scale demonstrations taking place in both Edinburgh and Glasgow.

Of all of the events held to commemorate the 1638 Assembly, the gathering of Evangelical members of the Church of Scotland in Edinburgh on the 20th of December, was by far the most prominent and controversial. The meeting, held in the Assembly Rooms, George Street, was described by the *Scotsman* as having been 'not merely crowded, but literally crammed,' with people eager to participate.[39] The

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[34] Drummond & Bulloch, *Scottish Church,* pp236, 232; Brown, *Thomas Chalmers*, pp287-289; 296-301

[35] *ibid.,* pp226-235

[36] *ibid.*, pp231-234

[37] *ibid.*

[38] *ibid.*, pp226, 235-236; Cowan, *The Newspaper in Scotland*, p230

[39] 'Commemoration of the Assembly 1638,' *Scotsman*, 22nd December, 1838

chair was taken by the Tory MP, Sir George Sinclair, who, in 1842, would go on to take part in an abortive attempt at compromise over non-intrusion. Sinclair presided over a meeting that included representatives drawn from across the sweep of Evangelicalism. Men from the old Whig-Evangelical party such as the advocates Alexander Dunlop and Alexander Earle Monteith sat alongside members of the so-called 'Wild Party,' the rising stars who would eventually eclipse the Whiggish old guard; William Cunnningham, who would become the Free Church's leading theologian; Thomas Guthrie, advocate of social reform and one of Scotland's most popular preachers; James Begg, whose combination of 'social radicalism and ecclesiastical conservatism,' would render him one of the most strident voices in the Free Church; and Robert Smith Candlish, another uncompromising Calvinist, and the man who would go on to succeed Thomas Chalmers as the leader of the Free Church.[40] The prominence of the 'Wild Party' indicates the intent of the meeting. Its stated aim was to 'commemorate the restoration of civil and religious liberty, and of Presbyterian Church government, as secured by the Glasgow Assembly of 1638,' a title that clearly places the commemoration of the Assembly within the defining paradigm of Scotland's religious past as defined by Bruce and McCrie.[41] The intention was to use the bicentenary as a means of legitimising the Evangelical manifesto, drawing on the evident parallels with, 'the position at present occupied by the Church of Scotland in relation to the civil power, which strikingly coincides in some respects with that in which she stood exactly this time 200 years ago.'[42] The meeting proposed five resolutions, each reflecting one or more aspect of the Evangelical party's anxieties. The first resolution dealt with, 'Christ's sole headship over his Church and for the intrinsic power of the Church derived from him;' the second resolution supported the 1638 General Assembly's abolition of Episcopacy, and the restoration of Presbyterianism as the only truly scriptural form of ecclesiastical government; the third resolution emphasised the 'sound scriptural views' of the Second Reformation regarding, 'the proper relation of the Civil and

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[40] Brown, *Thomas Chalmers*, pp259, 303; Brown, 'Ten Years' Conflict,' p13; Drummond & Bulloch, *Scottish Church*, p240. See also *DSCHT*, pp68,134, 229, 381

[41] *Report of the Great Public Meeting held in the Assembly Rooms, Edinburgh, on Thursday evening, Dec 20, 1838: to commemorate the restoration of civil and religious liberty, and of Presbyterian Church government, as secured by the Glasgow Assembly of 1638*, (Edinburgh, 1839)

[42] *Report of the Great Public Meeting, Edinburgh, 1838*, p2

Ecclesiastical authorities;' the fourth resolution, 'rejoiced' in the establishment of 'universal Christian instruction of the people of Scotland, and more particularly in its efforts to secure unblemished and efficient parish ministers;' finally, the fifth resolution called upon the Church to 'more fully and faithfully' apply the principles of the Second Reformation.[43] The context for the addresses delivered in support of these resolutions was set by George Sinclair, who felt confident enough to express his feeling that the Second Reformation had been, 'greater than that of the former (*cheers*),' having more completely defined the church's rights, developed its principles, secured its liberties and purged its defects.[44] Sinclair proclaimed that 1638 represented a definitive moment in the relationship between the church and the state, a momentous period when the ecclesiastical ancestors of the present generation, 'evinced as much loyalty to their earthly sovereign as was consistent with their allegiance to the King of Kings.'[45] The balance of this relationship had represented the character of the Church of Scotland, 'throughout all ages and generations, unless when goaded into justifiable resistance by regal despotism, and priestly usurpation.' 1638, he said, was to religious freedom, 'what 1688 was to our civil liberties. (*Cheers*)'[46]

After the first resolution had been proposed by the Rev C J Brown – an ardent non-intrusionist – Thomas McCrie, jnr, – son of the biographer of Knox and Melville, and the Original Secession Professor of Theology – made the second: that the 1638 General Assembly had been justified in abolishing Episcopacy. McCrie contended both that Presbyterianism was the only form of church government 'countenanced by scripture,' and also that Scotland had always been a Presbyterian nation. Scotland, he claimed, had 'reverted to the primitive simplicity of her discipline and government' at the First Reformation.[47] Scotland's inherent Presbyterianism was also invoked by R S Candlish. Candlish began by reminding those present that Episcopalianism was nothing more than the seed of Papal tyranny, whilst Presbyterianism had always been synonymous with liberty and

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[43] *ibid.*, pp18, 33, 44, 59, 66; see also *Scotsman*, 22nd December, 1838

[44] *ibid.*, *1838*, p8

[45] *ibid.*, p16

[46] *ibid.*, p8

[47] *ibid.*, pp30-31

nationality: 'in the heart of a leal and true Scotsman, Patriotism and Presbyterianism are synonymous and identical. (*Loud applause.*)'[48] This patriotic liberty defined the constitutional nature of the Scottish Church: unlike the Church of England, Scottish Presbyterians, 'were not compelled to suit their system to the times, but they made the times bend to their system. (*Loud cheers.*)' Presbyterianism had defined Scottishness – not the other way around – laying the foundation of the Scottish Church's superiority over the Church of England.[49] Candlish was followed by William Cunningham, whose proposal was intended to counter the accusations of the Voluntaryists. The deployment of history and theology was Cunningham's preferred *modus operandi*, bringing the weight of his intellect and learning to bear upon the controversies that defined the Ten Years' Conflict.[50] Presbyterianism, he argued, had always been the form of church government most conducive to the good of the community, the Church's independence allowing it to act as a balance against any tyrannical tendencies in the state. For evidence of this, one needed look no further than the texts of 1638 and 1643, wherein one would discover, 'the fullest and clearest explanation of the doctrine of the Church's independence.' It was to this period that was owed the Church's, 'triumph over the British Isles, and it is to these men we are to look as the most learned and devoted champions of this great and important principle.'[51] That those represented at the 1838 meeting were the heirs of 1638 was proved, Cunningham argued, by the declaration of spiritual independence.[52] This direct connection between the Glasgow Assembly and the Evangelicals was reiterated in the addresses supporting both the fourth and fifth resolutions, delivered by James Begg and Thomas Guthrie. Begg's proposal was concerned largely with his favourite topics: education and the necessity for effective parochial and missionary effort. Having asserted that the ministers sat upon the platform at the meeting in progress were the heirs to the mantle of Knox and Henderson, Begg concluded his address by stating that 'should it be ever necessary that we should unfurl the banners of the covenant,' it would be necessary to imitate

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[48] *ibid.*, p39

[49] *ibid.*, p38

[50] Macleod, D: 'William Cunningham,' *DSCHT*, pp229-231

[51] *ibid.*, p53

[52] *ibid.*, p55

the deeds of their forebears.[53] Speaking to the final resolution, Thomas Guthrie followed the main tendency of the meeting by arguing that non-intrusion had been one of the tenets of the 1638 Assembly, though the majority of his address celebrated the health and extent of the Church of Scotland in the 1830s. Having proclaimed that, 'If the patron can get a prison big enough to hold us all, I hold him to be an unworthy minister of the Church that would not rejoice to go there for the cause of Christ,' Guthrie argued that such a fate would not be daunting 'to men in whose veins flows the blood of the Covenanters – (*cheering*).'[54]

Clearly, the Edinburgh commemoration of the 1638 Glasgow Assembly represents one of the most resonant examples of commemorative practice as a means of legitimising present requirements. Every speech delivered at the Assembly Rooms on the 20th of December 1838 made direct connections between 1638 and 1838, projecting the political issues dominating the Ten Years' Conflict back on to the Glasgow Assembly and then, in turn, pointing to this projected image as evidence of the historic and national validity of those same causes. Present action was justified by past precedent, even though the qualities of that precedent were devised in the present. This was a relationship between past and present that could work against the Evangelicals as well as for them. Some of the most vocal attacks upon the content of the commemoration acknowledged a connection between 1638 and 1838, but looked upon both moments as representing, not resistance to a tyrannical monarch or state, but unconstitutional rebellion against civil power and the rule of law. The *Scotsman*, which was a staunch proponent of Voluntaryism, was willing to offer that, 'In so far as it was a struggle against despotic authority and interference, we honour the efforts of the members of the Church of Scotland at that juncture.'[55] This was as far as it was prepared to go, however, portraying both the 1638 Assembly and its commemoration as having been packed with aggressive zealots, highlighting that the 1638 Assembly had 'assumed legislative powers… commanded all persons to sign the Covenant,' as well as, 'prohibiting any one from publishing works tending in any way to impugn its acts or the opinions of its

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[53] *ibid.*, pp59, 64

[54] *ibid.*, p66

[55] Cowan, *The Newspaper in Scotland*, p231; 'Meeting to Commemorate the Breaking out of "The Great Rebellion,' *Scotsman*, 22nd December, 1838

members.' The editorial concluded with the irony that characterised the *Scotsman's* commentary on Church matters:

> "Oh, that we had these glorious days back again!" is no doubt the wish of the Sinclairs, Beggs, and Chalmerses. And because these things were done, and done by an Established Church – which cannot err, those who are ready to put down every murmur of freedom – every complaint against oligarchical power – go to a meeting to commemorate the breaking out of the great civil war![56]

Such sentiments were as nothing in comparison with the counter-attack launched by some Episcopalians in early 1839. The first was written under the pseudonym of 'An Observer' by John Alexander, Esq., an advocate and later Episcopalian minister at St Paul's Chapel in Edinburgh; the second, which took the form of a letter to Sir George Sinclair, was by the Rev. John Marshall, of St Peter's Episcopal Chapel, Kirkcaldy, with a third, more conciliatory response to the Edinburgh commemoration, authored by the Rev Bishop Charles Hugh Terrot of Edinburgh. All three of these reactions to the Evangelical rhetoric of the commemoration made certain to portray the seventeenth-century precedent as unlawful and rebellious. Alexander referred to the 1638 Assembly as 'unconstitutional' and 'a national tragedy which ended in the overthrow of all the constituted authorities in the country,' while Marshall's text argued that the 1638 Assembly had been held 'in utter contempt both of legal authority and of ecclesiastical rule,' accusing it of being, 'the immediate precursor of that Great Rebellion which deluged Scotland, England and Ireland with blood.'[57] Nor had the leaders of the 1638 Assembly been working for 'civil and religious liberty:' both authors pointed to the fact that the those men dubbed heroes by the Edinburgh commemoration had attempted to 'put down the liberty of the press.' Furthermore, the Presbyterian divines of both 1638 and 1838 were sworn enemies of liberty of conscience, Marshall quoting one source as having referred to toleration as '"the hydra of schisms and heresies, and the floodgate to all manner of iniquity and danger."'[58] 'And this,' wrote John Alexander, 'is what the Presbyterians of the

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[56] *ibid.*

[57] Marshall, J: *Letter to Sir George Sinclair, Bart., M.P., in reference to certain speeches delivered in the Assembly Rooms, Edinburgh, on Thursday evening, December 20, 1838, in commemoration of the Glasgow Assembly of 1638*, (Edinburgh, 1839), p34

[58] Alexander, *Review*, p11; Marshall, *Letter*, p39

present day call the Restoration of Civil and Religious Liberty.'[59] Responding to some of Begg's more explosive rhetoric, Marshall wrote that, the inevitable consequence of the revival of the principles avowed at the 1638 Assembly would be,

> either the establishment of an absolute despotism, vested in the ministers and elders of the Kirk of Scotland, or the disruption of all social bonds, and the retrogression of society, among us, to a state of entire anarchy.[60]

The irony is that, from the Evangelical point of view, such a descent into anarchy was precisely the danger threatened by the increased influence of *Prelacy* as the vanguard of Papal insurgency. While Evangelical Presbyterians argued that properly constituted Presbyterianism was necessary to act as a moral and spiritual control on the potential excesses of the state, these Episcopalian critics of the 1838 commemoration argued precisely the opposite: that a Church loosed from the reins of a moderating state would inevitably tend towards extremism. Alexander expressed his fear that,

> the persecuting and excommunicating spirit which descended from Knox and Melville, – which burned so brilliantly in 1638 and after the Revolution, – would again rage as fearfully as ever, were it not repressed by the civil law and unsupported by public opinion.[61]

John Alexander cautioned Queen Victoria and her government 'to look to themselves against the raving of this faction,' who, planning to follow in the footsteps of their forebears, would pressurise the monarch to 'put her hand to the Covenant, and to discharge the Bishops.'[62] Fortunately, even if the Evangelicals were to mount such a revolutionary attempt, they would find support lacking: not only were two-thirds of the 'gentry' and one-third of the 'middle classes' were Episcopalians, Marshall claimed, but the artisan and tradesmen class had all but abandoned the Establishment in favour of the Secession. Indeed, the Solemn League and Covenant, Marshall argued, was, 'no mere work of fanatical ministers,' but had instead been, 'the work of a powerful, though an ambitious and unprincipled body of Scottish Barons; whose counsels directed and savage genius

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[59] *ibid.*, p11

[60] Marshall, *Letter*, p21

[61] Alexander, *Review*, p12

[62] *ibid.*, p19

guided in battle, a host of trained followers.'[63] Any attempt to enlist the support of this class for the radical religion of 1838 would be doomed to fail: 'Alas! alas! They are, almost to a man, Episcopalians.'[64]

The connection that the Evangelicals were making between 1638 and 1838 was not lost on the more conciliatory Terrot: '[In 1638], Episcopacy occupied the post that Patronage now holds; and as the object now is to destroy Patronage by the authority of the precedent, it is natural that hard things should by association be said of Episcopacy.'[65] As far as Terrot was concerned, Episcopacy was 'suffering' in the nineteenth century simply through its association with 'the civil power,' just as it had suffered the same in the seventeenth century. It was incumbent upon the present generation of Episcopalians not to wade into battle against the jeers of their self-appointed enemies, but rather to further attempts at reconciliation.[66] Both camps ought to, 'deplore in private… such unholy and unchristian proceedings,' and consign their divisions to history, the book closed, and lessons learned. [67] Reflecting Terrot's moderation, though with less positivity, the judge and diarist Henry Cockburn – who was no fan of the 'wild party' – lamented in his *Journal* that the commemoration had been, 'a striking occasion, but thrown away.' The anniversary might have provided an opportunity for a display of Presbyterian amity, but had been, instead, 'made a scene for the display of everything in which they differ.'[68] Cockburn was struck by the similarities between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries: though admiring the Covenanters's 'courage and endurance,' and acknowledging the significance of religious faith, he bemoaned the narrow-minded

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[63] Marshall, *Letter*, p20

[64] *ibid.*

[65] Terrot, *Reasons for Avoiding Controversy respecting Statements and Opinions advanced at a meeting held in the Assembly Rooms in Edinburgh on 20th December, 1838, in a letter to a Friend from a presbyter of the Episopal Church in Edinburgh*, (Edinburgh, 1839), p4

[66] *ibid.*, pp12-13

[67] *ibid.*, p11

[68] Cockburn, H: *Journal of Henry Cockburn, being a continuation of the Memorials of His Time, 1831-1854, vol I*, (Edinburgh, 1874), p214; Miller, K: "Cockburn, Henry, Lord Cockburn (1779–1854)," in Matthew, H. C. G. and Harrison, B (eds.): *ODNB*

sectarianism of the past and present orders in the Church of Scotland. Where Cockburn erred was in connecting the Edinburgh commemoration with its Glaswegian counterpart. Though the Glasgow commemoration took place on the same day, its character and apparent intent were decidedly more conservative.

At least five commemorative sermons were preached across Glasgow on the 20th of December, including one from the Rev. Dr Brown of St John's in the Barony Church in the afternoon, followed in the evening by further commemorative sermons delivered in parishes across the city, including both the Renfield Street and Campbell Street Original Secession Churches.[69] However, the principal commemorative event in the city took the form of a procession composed of civic and religious dignitaries walking from Hutchesons' Hospital, through the streets of the city to the Cathedral, 'in presence of a great assemblage of the inhabitants,' where a sermon was preached by the Rev Dr Muir of St Stephen's, Edinburgh, the current Moderator of the General Assembly. [70] In the afternoon, after the Moderator has preached his sermon, five hundred of the participants from the morning procession sat down for dinner in the Trades' Hall; amongst those recorded as having been present were Thomas Chalmers, Robert Buchanan – a member of the 'wild party,' – Stevenson MacGill and Alexander Campbell of Monzie as well as William Symington of the Reformed Presbyterians, and the Rev. Professor Willis of the Original Secession. The Chair was taken by Henry Dunlop, the Lord Provost, who proposed the first toast, to the Church of Scotland.[71] This was followed by over twenty further toasts, including the Rev Dr Muir proposing 'The Memory of the Assembly of 1638,' the Rev Dr Paterson giving, 'May the enlightened opposition to the Popery of the Assembly of 1638 distinguish the Protestantism of the Present Eventful Times,' as well as Chalmers proposing a toast on 'Union with Seceders adhering to the Constitution and Standards of the Church of Scotland.' According to the report in the *Glasgow Herald*, however, of all the toasts made the one drunk with 'the most enthusiastic devotion,' had been offered to 'The British Constitution.'[72] Contrasts between the Edinburgh and Glasgow

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[69] *ibid.*

[70] 'Commemoration of the General Assembly of 1638,' *GH*, 21st December, 1838

[71] *ibid.*

[72] 'Great General Assembly of 1638,' *GH*, 24th December, 1838

commemorations are already apparent: whereas the commemoration in Edinburgh was intended as an expression of the Evangelical manifesto, the Glasgow commemoration was a much more traditionally civic affair, with its procession, sermon in the Cathedral and dinner; in contrast to Edinburgh's clearly-defined set of politically charged resolutions, the Glasgow dinner offered toast after toast to a wide variety of subjects. Rhetorically, the two commemorations were very different, with the Glaswegian being significantly more moderate.

The tone was set by William Muir's sermon at the High Church, which contained few direct references to the spiritual independence of the church, and, instead, dwelt upon the achievements of the Established Church and its recent revival, as well as asserting the fundamental principles of established Presbyterianism. Muir was an Evangelical, but a decidedly moderate one: in 1842, he would join Matthew Leishman's 'middle party' immediately prior to the Disruption, a party that, in contrast to Candlish's 'wild men,' rejected the militancy of the Evangelicals but recognised the need for reform within the Established Church.[73] Arguing that the Church's particular form of government was 'fitted to promote the great design of a Christian church,' Muir contended that:

> These principles, adhered to as our forefathers understood and followed them, separate us alike from the tyrannising of despotical ecclesiastics, from the confusion of a wild democracy, and from the unsocial and irregular procedure of an isolated and proud independency.[74]

In other words, Presbyterianism was both more scriptural and more legitimate ecclesiastical principle than either Episcopacy, Congregationalism or Voluntaryism, a principle 'adhered to' by the Reformers. Muir's depiction of Presbyterianism is markedly more considered than the explosive rendering projected at Edinburgh:

> what between the power of self-regulation in spiritual concerns; and the dutiful submission to the civil ruler in what is temporal, we cannot form the thought of a system more evidently "founded on and agreeable to the word of God."[75]

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[73] Brown, *Thomas Chalmers*, p326

[74] Muir, W: *The Whole Service as conducted in the High Church of Glasgow on Thursday, 20th December, 1838, at the commemoration of the General Assembly of 1638*, (Glasgow, 1838), p15

[75] *ibid.*

Of those elements of Muir's sermon that dealt directly with the First and Second Reformations, a familiar tactic was adopted: that of defending both generations of Reformers from the accusations of contemporary 'liberal and high pretence.' As others had at the inauguration of the Knox statue, Muir justified the commemoration of men whose, 'zeal might occasionally glow out with something of an overvehement heat,' by stressing the importance of the 'sentiments corresponding to their designs,' as well as 'the grand results of their exertions and sufferings.'[76] As part of this justification, and to counter 'our witty poets and infidel historians,' Muir argued against the accusation that 'the patriarchs of 1638' had been rebels, reminding his listeners that the Assembly had 'humbly and earnestly implored the countenance and sanction of their lawful prince,' before holding their Assembly. Nor had these early Covenanters been intolerant bigots: quoting Henderon, Muir argued that his forebears had tolerated any religion they perceived to have maintained 'the pure doctrines of Protestantism.'[77] In terms of the designs and results of 1638, Muir portrayed the Reformers as being 'at once religious and patriotic,' claiming that, 'They first aimed at rescuing the Church of Christ from popish corruptions,' before going on to, 'labour afterwards to purify it from worldly bias and elements, and to fix it at last secure against the movements of equally despotism and anarchy.'[78]

Muir characterised the 1638 Assembly not as an expression of resistance to the civil power's interference in the activities of the Church, but rather that Episcopacy represented the vanguard of Popery; it was this reading of the bicentenary that the Glasgow commemoration focused upon. Whereas the Edinburgh Public Meeting had set out to assert its position in the contests of the Ten Years' Conflict, the Glasgow commemoration appears to have involved an attempt to transcend the demands of the immediate present, and to place both the Assembly and its commemoration within the context of a more enduring struggle: that of the Church of Scotland against Papal insurgency. Speaking in support of the toast, 'May the Enlightened opposition to Popery of the Assembly of 1638 distinguish the Protestantism of the present eventful times,' Dr Paterson of St

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[76] *ibid.*, p21

[77] *ibid.*, p22

[78] *ibid.*, p18

Andrews argued that it was not Episcopacy that had been banished from Scotland in 1638: 'it was Popery, which sought a readier disguise amidst the drapery and formularies of that Church, than it could find in the naked simplicity of the Presbyterian form. (*Loud cheering.*)'[79] As had Muir earlier in the day, Paterson stressed that, though they had gathered to commemorate the work of God, it was still vital 'to infuse… into the minds of our children' the principles of the Covenanters, 'and at least to tell the apostates of a degenerate age, that fawning on Rome and cursing our Zion, they are a disgrace to their noble sires.'[80] At the afternoon dinner, Lord Provost Dunlop, as befitted a representative of the civil power, commemorated the achievements of the 1638 Assembly in more secular terms, deploying 'civil and religious liberty' as fundamental to the legacy of that period:

> It is to the noble stand made by our forefathers to resist the restoration of Popery 200 years ago, that we are mainly indebted for the civil and religious liberty which we still enjoy, and under which our country has advanced to so high a state of order and civilisation. (*Loud applause.*)[81]

The 'temporal' benefits of the Covenanting period were as much to be commemorated as the spiritual, a point supported by Thomas Chalmers as part of his later toast, in congratulating the west of Scotland, and Glasgow in particular, for having maintained its godliness: the dramatic changes that had occurred over the past two-hundred years, had 'not displaced from the soil the indestructible seed which has weathered all.'[82] He went on to claim that, 'if one of the Patriarchs of that Assembly we are met to commemorate were to rise from his grave, he would find that your Glasgow is now what he found it then – the seat and the stronghold of Presbytery.' The necessity for a properly Established Church as a vital safeguard in maintaining this devotion – and as a defence against Papal tyranny – was a recurring theme in the discourse of the Glaswegian commemoration, yet, unlike the Edinburgh meeting, statements in support of Establishment were more conservatively made. Provost Dunlop, for instance, expressed the hope that 'we

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[79] 'Great General Assembly of 1638,' *GH*, 24th December, 1838

[80] *ibid.*

[81] *GH*, 24th December, 1838

[82] *ibid.*

may long continue to enjoy our civil and religious privileges, for the protection of which our National Church affords the surest and best defence.'[83] As with Thomas McCrie, jnr, at the Edinburgh meeting, the Glasgow commemoration also benefited from the contribution of a representative from one of the Secession churches, albeit a denomination that was currently in the process of working out union with the Established Church. The Rev Professor Willis of the Original Burgher Synod, who had begun the complex procedure of rejoining the Established Church in 1835, is quoted as having, 'expressed his most anxious wish, along with Dr. Chalmers, for their speedy union, in order that they might be able to fight with effect against the real enemies of Protestantism.'[84]

The approximate classification of moderate set against radical that we have hitherto applied to the commemoration of Wallace and Bruce, and to nationality more generally, might also be usefully applied to these commemorative events. The Edinburgh commemoration – militant, intent on change – maps to the radical end of commemorative rhetoric, while the Glaswegian event – which was more celebratory of the current state of the Church – was markedly moderate. Both meetings, however, identified a threat to the legacy of 1638: whether state interference or the more malevolent influence of the Roman Catholic Church, the commemoration of the 1638 Assembly was defined by the deployment of memory as a means to counteract such dangers. Furthermore, there are a number of features shared between 1825 and 1838 that are worth highlighting at this stage, some of which were also present in other commemorative sermons preached at this time. Firstly, there was the necessity for those engaged in the commemoration of Scotland's Presbyterian past to emphasise that these national heroes were instruments of God; that is to say, in order to avoid the dangerously Papal taint of hagiography, it was necessary to underline that God was the focus of these commemorations, and that the individual subjects had acted as exemplars of God's will. In a commemorative sermon preached later in the year, the Rev Abercrombie L Gordon stressed the centrality of God's purpose when looking to the lessons of the past. Commemoration, he argued, was not carried out, 'for mere historical reflections with a view to mere political improvement,' but instead its purpose was,

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[83] *ibid.*

[84] 'Commemoration of the General Assembly of 1638,' *GH*, Friday, 21st December, 1838

'to trace the progress and mark the consummation of God's merciful purpose in the Redeemer, as displayed in the history of His Church.'[85] The Covenanters, then, were to be commemorated for their steadfastness in carrying out the will of God, rather than for any attributes derived from more mundane sources. Secondly, a persistent refrain in commemorative discourse involved defending Knox and the Covenanters against accusations of extremism, violence or rebellion, following the trail blazed by the elder Thomas McCrie. According to the Rev John Brown of the Irish Presbyterian Church, who preached in Hope Street Gaelic Church in late November, the second duty incumbent upon Presbyterians – following from 'consideration of the advantages' secured in the seventeenth century – was reverence of the memory of the Covenanters, one that had hitherto been somewhat assailed. [86] Aspersions had been cast upon the Covenanters, Brown claimed, from those who sought to 'caricature' them as 'weak-minded', 'fanatical,' and 'no more worthy of respect than the crusaders of a former era.'[87] The virtues that Brown deployed as an argument against such heinous accusations conform, as we might expect, to a list of those characteristics definitive of nineteenth-century Evangelical Presbyterianism – though Brown also contended that the Covenanters had left behind romantic tales of heroism to rival all others. Thirdly, the legacy of 1638 and the Covenanters was not only a spiritual one; the civil results of their struggle could not be neglected. The Rev Gordon said in his sermon that the Covenanters' resistance to tyranny was, 'the source of whatever truly valuable we have hitherto possessed, and still continue to enjoy.'

Distinct patterns of commemorative discourse are, then, beginning to emerge from the rhetoric of these events, but what undoubtedly distinguished the commemorations of 1838 was the manifest intensity of their political element. The bicentenary in 1838 occurred at a time when the divisions within the Established Church, and the arguments between opposed denominations within Scottish

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[85] Gordon, A L: *A sermon occasioned by the second centenary of the second Reformation: wherein with a brief statement of the proceedings the principles of the General Assembly in 1638 are applied to the position of the Church of Scotland in 1838*, (Aberdeen, 1839), p8, also pp9, 22-23

[86] Brown, J: *1638; or The Covenanters; a sermon, preached in Hope Street Gaelic Church, Glasgow, on the 21st of November, 1838*, (Glasgow, 1839), p15

[87] Brown, *1638*, p16

Presbyterianism were at their most grudging and spiteful. For this reason, these gatherings are axiomatic of commemorative practice – the Edinburgh event in particular demonstrating that commemoration of the past occurs primarily to the serve the needs of the present. It is more than evident that the meetings and speeches of 1838 were symptomatic of this difficult and divisive period in the history of Scottish Presbyterianism – nor was 1838 the last significant anniversary to serve the needs of the Evangelicals. Whether inevitable or not, the tensions of the Ten Years' Conflict resulted in the Disruption of May, 1843, and the formation of the Free Church: in July of that year, another commemorative meeting was held in Edinburgh, this time to celebrate the bicentenary of the Westminster Assembly.

THE 1843 BICENTENARY OF THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY

If 1838 had been one of the high (or low) points of the Ten Years' Conflict, the cracks riven through the Established Church and its relationship with the state would continue to widen. The outcome of the Auchterarder, Marnoch and Lethendy cases, combined with the Court of Session's resolution against the Chapels Act, brought the issue to crisis point.[88] Increasingly dissatisfied with the perceived neglect of the state in funding or legislating for the construction of the Godly Commonwealth, and assailed by the Voluntaryists – who saw the Establishment principle as promoting inequality and 'oppression' – the Evangelical party within the Church of Scotland began to realise that a choice had to be made between 'the commands of the Church and those of the Law.'[89] If the spiritual independence of the Church was more vital than its Establishment, then independence must prevail, even if this rendered those coming out of the Church *de facto* voluntaries. Despite attempts at compromise, the inability to reach an agreed settlement failed and, with the publishing of the Church's 'Claim of Right' in 1842, the course towards Disruption had been set. On the 18th of May, 1843, almost 40 per cent of the ministers of the Church of Scotland went out, along with somewhere in the region

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[88] Drummond & Bulloch, *Scottish Church, 1688-1843*, p239; Brown, S J: 'The end of the Established Church ideal in Scotland, 1780-1859,' in Kirk, J (ed.): *The Scottish Churches and the Union Parliament, 1707-1999,* (Edinburgh, 2001), pp98-99

[89] Drummond & Bulloch, *Scottish Church, 1688-1843*, *op cit.*

of half the lay membership.[90] In leaving the Church of Scotland, however, it must be remembered that the Evangelicals who formed the Free Church were not rejecting the Establishment principle; all were keen to stress that Establishment remained the ideal – the difficulty was that the principle was not desirable if unaccompanied by spiritual independence. Just as the bicentenary of the 1638 Glasgow Assembly had made itself available to the Evangelicals as a means of proving the historical and scriptural legitimacy of their objectives, so, too, the bicentenary of the 1643 Westminster Assembly came along with equally impeccable timing. In contrast to the earlier Edinburgh commemoration, which had been distinguished by ill will and resentment, the commemoration of 1843 stressed unity and harmony. Furthermore, rather than being an exclusively sectarian gathering, this event was planned from the outset to act as a display of unity between those Presbyterian churches outwith the Establishment.

The idea for a combined commemoration seems to have originated concurrently at the General Assemblies and Synods of the various Presbyterian bodies, including not only the first General Assembly of the Free Church, but also the Synods of the United Secession, the Relief, Original Secession and Reformed Presbyterians, as well as the Synod of English Presbyterians.[91] At a meeting held on the 9th of June to make arrangements for the commemoration, it was determined that the gathering, 'should be Presbyterian in its character,' to the exclusion of the Congregationalists.[92] The commemoration, held in the Canonmills Hall, Edinburgh, took place over the 12th and 13th of July, 1843, with its inter-denominational character being made evident in the selection of chairman for each meeting: the first session was chaired by the Rev Mr Elliot of Ford, Moderator of the United Secession, with the evening session chaired by Dr William Symington of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, who had also opened the commemoration with a sermon, on the evening of the 11th. On the following day, the morning meeting was chaired by Thomas Chalmers, with the Rev Mr Muir of Leith from the Relief

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[90] Brown, S,J, 'End of the Established Church ideal,' p101; Brown, C, *Religion and Society*, pp26-27

[91] *Bicentenary of the Assembly of Divines at Westminster, held at Edinburgh, July 12th and 13th, 1843. Containing a full and authentic report of the Addresses and Conversations, with an introductory sermon by Rev. Dr. Symington*, (Edinburgh, 1843), p15

[92] *ibid.*, p16

Church chairing the meeting in the afternoon.[93] Speeches were delivered by representatives from across the ecclesiastical spectrum of Scotland: from the Relief, United Secession, and the Original Secession – including Thomas McCrie, jnr, – as well as the Free Church, represented by William Maxwell Hetherington, William Cunningham, C J Brown and Robert Candlish. In addition, during the section of each sederunt devoted to 'Conversation,' addresses and declarations were made by representatives from English Presbyterian churches, as well as one Congregationalist who had attended of his own volition, apparently unaware that his denomination had been excluded.

Now that the complexion of Scottish Evangelical Presbyterianism had changed, so, too, the pattern of the commemoration had to alter to fit the demands of the time. The 1638 General Assembly had been made to reflect demands for spiritual independence in 1838, yet now the commemoration of the Westminster Assembly concentrated on what it saw as the defining feature of 1643: co-operation between different denominations. The rhetoric of this commemoration was defined by appeals to unity between formerly opposed Presbyterian denominations – the watchword was clearly, 'co-operation not incorporation.'[94] Turning their backs on the issues that had formerly divided them, the aim now was to focus on common ground, specifically the shared foundation of the Westminster Confession and other ecclesiastical standards derived from that period. The text for William Symington's sermon at the opening of the commemoration – 'A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another,' – was intended to encourage greater understanding and co-operation between denominations.[95] During the 'Conversation' on the second day, the Rev Robert Shaw of the Original Secession alluded to the fact that the Westminster Standards were 'intended as a basis of *union* on a most extensive scale.'[96] As these Standards were still recognised as, 'explanatory standards by all the Presbyterian Churches,' they could yet act as, 'a rallying point, around which all the scattered sections of the Church in these lands will meet.' Following the Rev Shaw, the Rev Peter Macindoe, Reformed Presbyterian minister at Kilmarnock, reiterated

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[93] *ibid.*, pi

[94] *ibid.*, p89

[95] *ibid.*, p1

[96] *ibid.*, p117, original emphasis.

the same point, referring to the union of all the churches of 'the three kingdoms' as the 'great object' of the Westminster Assembly; union in the nineteenth century would be 'the delightful consummation which we are encouraged to expect, and which the present meetings seem well calculated to hasten.'[97] Robert Candlish, given the task of delivering the commemoration's closing address on the subject of 'The Importance of Adhering to Sound Scriptural Standards, and Aiming at Union on That Basis,' said that the ideal way to commemorate the Westminster Assembly was to follow in its footsteps:

> ...by practically taking up the work which they began and left unfinished. For we have served ourselves heirs, as it were, to the memorable men who met on that occasion; and it happens remarkably and ominously enough, that in the course of God's providence, and in the cycle of events, we are bought back again, as it were, to the very same position of affairs in which they conducted their deliberations.[98]

Here, Candlish focused on one of the fundamentals of commemorative rhetoric: to show that the challenges faced in the past resonate with similar challenges in the present, and that it is necessary to carry on the work which one's forebears left unfinished. Thomas Chalmers, in an address delivered on the second day, spoke at length on the subject of those differences that ought not to stand in the way of co-operation, going so far as to suggest that the 'aphorism' of 'co-operation not incorporation,' should be amended to 'co-operation now, and this with a view, as soon as may be, to incorporation afterwards,' a proposal which met with 'loud and continued cheering.'[99] Whereas most of his fellow representatives had self-consciously avoided the issue of Voluntaryism, Chalmers keenly waded into these potentially dangerous waters, celebrating the success of the practice, and proposing that discussion of the principle itself would be somewhat pointless when the state was so unlikely to ever countenance the possibility of increased endowment. Of far greater significance was the notion of increased co-operation as a pragmatic response to the current challenges facing Presbyterianism in Scotland, and fundamental to these calls for union was the identification of a resurgent threat; differences should be set aside in the name of unity against the common foe.

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[97] *ibid.*, p121

[98] *ibid.*, p124

[99] *ibid.*, p89

Representatives from all denominations highlighted the continuing danger of Prelacy and Popery. William Hetherington, speaking in his capacity as 'historian of the Westminster Assembly,' claimed that the time had come when 'a great Evangelical union is not only necessary but also more practicable than in any former age or period.'[100] 'Popery,' he said, 'was everywhere reviving,' combined with 'the old Laudian Prelacy under a new name,' as well as, 'infidelity spreading its dark venom through the neglected and oppressed masses of the population.' Picking up on a point made by Hetherington, the Rev Mr Gorrie of the Relief Church, claimed that the fundamental principles of the Westminster Assembly had been the separation of civil and spiritual jurisdiction, and to maintain this distinction was vital to civil and religious liberty. [101] In an address entitled, 'The Opposition of the Westminster Assembly to Popery, Prelacy, and Erastianism,' William Cunningham, the Free Church theologian, emphasised this need for unity in the face of his unholy trinity, promising that, 'I shall not easily be led again into any controversy, unless it be against Popery, against Prelacy, or against Erastianism. (Loud applause.)'[102] A similar point was made by the Rev. Shaw of the Original Secession:

> When Popery, Laudean Prelacy, and Erastianism, are mustering their forces, and threatening to crush both the civil and religious liberties of men, how desirable and necessary that Presbyterians should be united in one noble phalanx, and prepared with concentrated energy to meet their common foes.[103]

As Candlish asserted, the most ideal way of commemorating the Westminster Assembly, was to build upon the foundations laid at that time, to complete the business left unfinished by two centuries of schism and argument. The act of commemoration was itself unproblematic, the approach necessary for legitimising the remembrance of past glories being, by this stage, well rehearsed. Representing the direct ecclesiastical descendants of the Cameronian Covenanters, William Symington opened his sermon with a short justification of the commemorative act, arguing that commemoration was not, 'lending countenance to the pernicious principle that "the church hath power to decree rites and

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[100] *ibid.*, p47

[101] *ibid.*, p51

[102] *ibid.*, p63

[103] *ibid.*, p117

ceremonies,'" but that they were instead, 'acting under the authority of the divine command: "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations; ask thy father and he will show thee, they elders and they will tell thee."'[104] This was something of a theme for the Reformed Presbyterians: the Rev. Macindoe said that, instead of venerating the Westminster divines, 'on account of their eminent worth and invaluable services,' it was better to, 'adore and thank that good and gracious Being who made them what they were, and who accomplished by their instrumentality what they did.'[105] Macindoe placed his subjects in a British as much as a Scottish context, saying that it was a task for others to, 'celebrate the victories that have been achieved by British valour, and that have shed the brightest lustre over British arms.' Again we see the necessity of identifying the commemorative subject as being the instrument of the divine will. Though he praised Thomas McCrie and William Hetherington's speeches for having drawn such an illuminating depiction of the Assembly and those involved, Professor Symington said that it was still necessary to, 'look up to him with whom is the residue of the Spirit, that men of similar mould may be raised up in our own times.'[106]

The most notable example of the need to defend the Assembly from accusations of rebelliousness, came from William Maxwell Hetherington, in an address entitled, 'The Real Character and Bearing of the Westminster Assembly, and Refuation of Calumnies.'[107] The Assembly had been accused, Hetherington pointed out, of being both rebellious and motivated by 'intolerance and bigotry.' On the first point, Hetherington argued that the Assembly had been called by a Parliament of England, stressing that the purpose of this had been to stand, 'against a lawless attempt to invade and destroy the imperscriptable and God-given rights of the nation, both civil and religious.' 'Let any man who applauds the British Constitution,' he continued, 'weigh well its import before he ventures to accuse a Parliament, which, by resisting regal despotism, laid the foundation of that noble fabric.'[108] Hetherington refuted the accusation of intolerance and bigotry by

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[104] *ibid.*, p1

[105] *ibid.*, p118

[106] *ibid.*, p49

[107] *ibid.*, p39

[108] *ibid.*, pp47-48

emphasising the Presbyterians' role in promoting Protestant union: any taint of bigotry would surely vanish when placed, 'beside the vast and glorious idea of Christian union on Scripture principles.' There was, however, an element of concession involved in this defence, one that we have already encountered in the defence of Knox from the indictment of extremism: that intolerant times demanded an equally intolerant response:

> Let is be remembered that they lived in what may be termed an intolerant age; and let us avoid the intolerance of censuring harshly the conduct of men who were placed in circumstances do trying, and in many respects so different from this in which it has been our happiness hitherto to live.[109]

The acknowledgement of these potential weaknesses – though rapidly justified – represented a prominent element in the commemoration of Scottish religious heroism: in order to prove that the subjects were not being deified, certain defects had to be admitted, though these usually formed the preamble to further exhaltation. In his address on 'The Leading Incidents and Characters of the Westminster Assembly,' Thomas McCrie conceded that the Assembly did indeed have 'faults and imperfections, which, with such an amount of excellence, it were no use to disguise and no harm to admit,' before going to declare that, 'it is questionable whether such an Assembly, so rich in men of deep-toned piety, sterling worth, and erudition, was ever convened in Britain before or since.'[110]

Just as in 1838, the Edinburgh meeting was not the only commemoration of the Westminster Assembly to occur at this time, for it had been preceded by a gathering in Glasgow consisting solely of representatives from the Reformed Presbyterian Church, who were commemorating not only the bicentenary of the Westminster Assembly, but also the centenary of the constitution of the Reformed Presbytery, on the 1st of August, 1743. Though the sectarian nature of the Reformed Presbyterian commemoration renders it less representative of public feeling towards the past than at the Glaswegian commemoration of the 1638 Assembly, the rhetorical content of this gathering – held the week before the Edinburgh event – is still worthy of our attention, particularly as a prologue to the commemoration of the later Covenanters. The Reformed Presbyterian church had

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[109] *ibid.*

[110] *ibid.*, pp38-39

evolved out of the Praying Societies or 'United Societies,' – a.k.a. the 'Corresponding Societies,' or the 'Hill-Men.' These societies, formed in 1689, stuck to the spirit of the Queensferry Paper and Sanquhar Declaration after the Revolution Settlement of 1690, rejecting the un-covenanted Hanoverian state and remaining separate from the established Church of Scotland. As the state did not correctly recognise Christ's suzerainty over all nations, the Societies believed that it was not owed any loyalty by the inheritors of the Cameronian legacy.[111] Even after 1743, members of the newly formed Reformed Presbyterian Church, consistently refused to recognise any authority that was not properly 'covenanted':

> [The Reformed Presbyterian church] has endeavoured consistently to maintain essentially the same testimony against every Church that is unfaithful to Christ's honour and its own rights, and against the State that disregards Christ's claims, and intrudes within the spiritual sphere, that was given forth in 1680 by the representatives of the poor persecuted remnant of the "true Presbyterian Church and covenanted nation of Scotland."[112]

The Reformed Presbyterians proscribed any action implying approval of the state, including enlisting in the armed forces, legal actions and, after 1832, voting in elections, not to mention their inevitable opposition to erastianism in all its forms.[113] The Church suffered in the eighteenth century as a result of their hard-line Covenanting dogma, as many of its members, unable or unwilling to resist the benefits offered by participation in civil society, chose to embrace the more tolerant practices of the Secession churches – the Reformed Presbyterian Church lost nearly half of its congregation in 1753, with yet more losses to come in the 1830s. However, the stated principles of the Reformed Presbyterians, as with the conception of the Covenanters drawn from the Anti-Burgher Secessionist Bruce, resonate with the terms in which the Covenanters would go on to be represented in the nineteenth century. An address written by the Reformed Presbyterians in commemoration of the tercentenary of the Reformation in Scotland in 1860, declared that the three 'features peculiar to the Scottish Reformation were:

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[111] Brown, C G: *Religion and Society*, pp28-29

[112] Hutchison, M: *The Reformed Presbyterian Church in Scotland: its Origin and History, 1680-1876* (Paisley, 1893), pp46-47, 55-59, 73-80. Hutchison's book lists Donald Cargill, Richard Cameron and James Renwick as the Reformed Presbyterian Church's original ministers.

[113] Brown, *Religion and Society*, pp28-29

> The full recognition of Christ's sole Headship over the Church, the subsistence of a cordial alliance with the cause of civil liberty, and the strenuous assertion of the right and duty of the nations to serve Christ.[114]

This variety of rhetoric is familiar enough, and the character of the Reformed Presbyterians' commemoration of 1843 – specifically with reference to the remembrance of the Westminster Assembly – did not deviate too significantly from the discourses set out at the commemoration held in Edinburgh the following week. We have already seen the extent to which the Reformed Presbyterian representatives at the Edinburgh meeting made a full and direct contribution to the proceedings, and the sentiments expressed at Edinburgh were mirrored at Glasgow. As well as a good deal of positive comment regarding the newly formed Free Church, there were also instances of a broader positivity concerning ecclesiastical co-operation.[115] In his 'Historical Sketch of the Westminster Assembly of Divines,' William Symington expressed the hope that increased unity, being one of, 'the great, the bright, the glorious conceptions of the Solemn League and of the Westminster Assembly,' would become more of an achievable reality. Nevertheless, references to other Presbyterian denominations were by no means uniformly positive. Though he approved of the statements being made by the Free Church, the Rev Wilson of Dundee was highly critical of the United Secession, in which he saw, 'the errors of Arminius reviving.'[116] This accusation was as nothing in comparison with the speech delivered by the Rev Stewart Bates of Glasgow on the subject of the Solemn League and Covenant. Bates, lauded by the Reformed Presbyterian Synod for, amongst other qualities, his, 'eminent ability, his excellent character, his zeal for truth,' was originally of the Reformed Presbytery of Ireland, and appears to represent the hard-line voice of Reformed Presbyterianism.[117] For instance, though the concept was laudable, in its current state the British constitution was saturated with sin: 'Thus,' Bates fumed,

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[114] quoted in Hutchison: *Reformed Presbyterian Church*, p313

[115] Symington, W: 'Historical Sketch of the Westminster Assembly of Divines,' in *Commemoration of the Bicentenary of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, and of the Centenary of the Reformed Presbytery, at Glasgow, July 4, 5, 6, 1843, by the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Scotland*, (Glasgow, 1843), p232; for comments on the Free Church, see pp74, 120

[116] 'Rev. Joseph Wilson's address', *BWARP*, p232

[117] Couper, *Reformed Presbyterian Church*, p103

> the constitution becomes loaded with all the inconsistencies, and the heresy, and the Popery, of the established churches, as well as with the impiety of certain civil statutes, inasmuch as they are all established by law, and made essential parts of this constitution.[118]

It was expected of anyone who might, 'speak honourably of the British reformers, and who profess[es] to have taken up the testimony of the Covenanters and martyrs, to make a determined stand against these great national sins.'[119] There were some, Bates declared, who, though they professed to follow the Covenanters, and condemned 'Erastianism, and Puseyism, and Popery, and the unchristian exclusiveness of Prelacy,' were at one and the same time, 'indiscriminate admirers of the British constitution, that is full of these things to the brim.' Nevertheless, it is worth noting that Bates consistently referred to the Covenanters as 'British' martyrs, who died for a 'British' cause.

Such distinctions apart, the Reformed Presbyterians' representation of the Westminster Assembly, and its resonance with the present, followed an established pattern, not least the identification of the Assembly as having sown the seeds of civil and religious liberty. James Ferguson, in contending that Protestant worship, a Protestant monarch and Protestant national institutions, 'had common friends, and common enemies,' said that 'True religion is the foundation, parent, and guardian of true liberty, and the security of life and property.' It was for the good of all that the Covenanters had resisted the tyranny of the Stuarts; had they failed, 'the cause of civil and religious liberty had not only suffered in Britain, but, probably, throughout Europe and the world.'[120] The Rev William Goold, who seems to have been a committed if not particularly outstanding cleric, reminded the gathering that Cargill, Renwick ,*et al*, had suffered for 'Christ and his cause and the best interests of mankind,' yet, though 1688 had, 'confirmed many of the great principles for which those men nobly suffered and died,' it had still not delivered complete freedom while certain fundamental scriptural principles remained 'consigned to oblivion.'[121] It was the Reformed Presbyterians alone, said Goold, who had maintained these

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[118] Bates, S, 'History and Exposition of the Solemn League and Covenant,' *BWARP*, pp149-151

[119] *ibid.*, p152

[120] Ferguson, 'National Covenant,' pp117, 119

[121] 'Rev. Willliam Goold's address', *BWARP*, p235; Couper, *Reformed Presbyterian Church*, p94; see also 'Rev. John MacLeod's address', *BWARP*, p235

principles, and it was to the Reformed Presbyterians that the obligation fell for their commemoration.

The speech closest in tone to the discourses of the Edinburgh meeting was made by William Symington. Symington was, 'perhaps the best-known of his denomination,' in the nineteenth century, as attested by his being chosen to deliver the opening sermon of the Edinburgh commemoration, as well as his appearance at the commemoration of the 1638 General Assembly in Glasgow. Popular as both a preacher and writer, as well as an advocate of social reform, Symington was raised to the Reformed Presbyterian Chair of Systematic Theology in 1853 upon the death of his brother, and would be an active participant in the commemoration of the later Covenanting martyrs.[122] Symington clearly recognised the value of commemorations, and many of his printed sermons contain justifications of the commemorative act: at Glasgow in 1843, he claimed that to commemorate events stemmed 'from a law of our nature,' and, though this was a law that could be, 'grossly abused for purposes of a superstitious character,' when used properly it could be 'turned to valuable account.'[123] Furthermore, commemoration of the contribution made to present liberties by the heroic endeavours of the past was, as we would expect, depicted as exemplifying the hand of God: 'men,' Symington said, 'are only what God makes them, and that to Him all the glory of the good they perform is to be ascribed.'[124] At the same time, it was instructive for the present generation to be reminded of the labours of their Covenanting ancestors and of the debt owed to their suffering, as well as to pick up the mantle laid down at the Westminster Assembly. Unlike the hard-liner Bates, Symington was not afraid to encourage inter-denominational co-operation – a fact further underlined by his keen participation in the Edinburgh commemoration – nor was he afraid to speak in highly positive terms of the constitution and of the genuine attainment of civil and religious liberties.[125] In an example of the need to defend the Westminster Divines from accusations of rebellion, Symington referred to the, 'legal tyrannies of Charles

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[122] Couper, *Reformed Presbyterian Church*, p100

[123] Symington, 'Westminster Assembly,' in *BWARP*, p31

[124] *ibid.*, p69

[125] *ibid.*, p73

and the prelatic oppressions of Laud,' before going on to argue that no 'true lover of his country,' would deny the necessity of resistance to this tyranny:

> [Every] competent witness must testify that, if Charles and Laud had succeeded in the course on which they had entered, and which they were determined at all hazards to pursue, the civil and religious interests of Britain must have perished utterly and forever.[126]

The Reformed Presbyterian commemoration of the Westminster Assembly, then, conforms to the discursive model of Scotland's religious past: that it involved, at all times, a struggle for civil and religious liberty, each being two branches of the same tree – the former could not be achieved without the latter. The precise nature of that liberty depended upon the body engaging in the commemorative act, yet a shared view of the significance of the past was evidently deemed necessary for greater unity within Scottish Protestantism. The Protestanism of Scotland, or more specifically, the Presbyterianism of Scotland, was fundamental to civil and religious liberty. To maintain those liberties against Prelatic or Popish incursion, greater unity was required, drawing upon the well-springs of a common religious memory.

Though the anniversary of the Westminster Assembly was celebrated shortly after an event that had clearly marked one of the key divisions within Scottish Presbyterianism, the commemorative events that occurred at this time also contained within them the seed of ecclesiastical union. That mere months after the Disruption, Thomas Chalmers and the other representatives at the Edinburgh commemoration were already talking of how union might be effected is symptomatic of the widely-held hope that the differences between denominations might not prove enduring, and that a solution could, in time, be found.[127] One of the results of this commemoration was the formation of the Evangelical Alliance in 1845, with its official launch taking place the following year. The Alliance was intended to bring together the various schisms within Presbyterianism, drawing not only from Scotland but across Great Britain, Europe and North America. That the Alliance, rather than representing official dialogue between church courts, was never more than an coalition of individuals, should not undermine the role it played in keeping alive dreams of union and increased co-operation, not least in the face of

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126 *ibid.*, p40

127 Drummond & Bulloch, *Church in Victorian Scotland*, p312

'Papal Aggression.'[128] Despite the emphasis that is placed upon the rancorous conflicts between different religious denominations within Scottish Presbyterianism, the will evidently existed for closer co-operation We will return to the consideration of this move towards greater co-operation between the Free Church and the other non-Established churches, in the next chapter.

THE EDINBURGH 1846 MONUMENT MOVEMENT AND 'JOHN KNOX'S HOUSE'

Acknowledging the fact that the only monument able to do justice to the divines of 1643 were the standards they had bequeathed to Scottish Protestantism did not stop Presbyterians from wanting to raise commemorative structures. Whereas Glasgow had erected its pillar to the Great Reformer back in the more settled days of 1825, it would not be until over two decades later that a movement to erect a monument to John Knox would begin in Edinburgh. Shortly after the Disruption, some members of the new Free Church expressed the intention of building a vast memorial to Knox, linked to the so-called 'John Knox's House' on the High Street. The reasons for the Free Church wanting to erect a monument to the reformer are simple enough to gauge: the Free Church was laying claim to its past. Though the vast majority of the Evangelical party had walked out of the General Assembly of the Established Church on the 18th May 1843, in so doing they did not see themselves as creating a new denomination so much as asserting their rights as the genuine and true Church of Scotland.[129] When almost thirty-eight percent of the ministers in the Established Church walked out at the Disruption, they took the moral and ecclesiastical high-ground with them, leaving behind their manses, churches and livings.[130] As a result, the fledgling church needed cash for building, and within ten months the 'Sustenation Fund' had raised £418,719, with more than half of this amount being used to finance new buildings. Considerable benefit was derived from the fact that the church's membership was dominated by the middle and artisan class, who saw in the Free Church an alternative to the social

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[128] *ibid.*, p314; Wolffe, J: *The Protestant Crusade in Great Britain, 1829-1860*, (Oxford, 1991), p248

[129] Drummond & Bulloch: *Church in Victorian Scotland*, pp11-15

[130] Brown, C: *Religion and Society in Scotland*, p26

and political conservatism of the Established Church, one in which their Liberal sympathies could find expression.[131] Dove-tailing with the social ideology of this class of Victorian society, the Free Church aimed to be significantly more assertive in its role as social reformer and religious missionary, vigorously promoting Sabbatarianism, temperance and education as cures for Scotland's social ills. The ideology of the Free Church, in the pulpit and beyond, was one of social improvement bearing 'the mark of middle class censoriousness on working class vices.'[132] In short, the Free Church was Evangelical, both in terms of its religion and its social programme.[133]

Money was not the Free Church's only necessity: there was also the matter of its legitimacy. The 1846 movement to erect a national John Knox memorial in Edinburgh is but one example of the Free Church's requirement for claiming its place as the true church of John Knox. As Neil Forsyth writes, the Free Church 'always had a powerful historical bias,' as evinced by the creation of a publications department within a year of the Disruption, and the inclusion of Scottish historical studies in its school curriculum, much of it drawing on the precedent set by Thomas McCrie the elder.[134] The Knox monument movement was not the first commemorative effort engaged in by the Free Church, but in contrast to the commemoration of the Westminster Assembly, the monument was, on the whole, a Free Church enterprise. In a sense it killed two birds with one memorial stone: not only would the two new church buildings contribute to housing the Free Church congregations of Edinburgh, but combined with the colossal tower and the restoration of John Knox's House, the monument would become a highly-visible symbol of the Free Church's direct historic connection with the Great Reformer. Indeed, by physically connecting its new church buildings with the traditional home of Knox, the promoters of the monument could not have contrived a more powerful representation of the Free Church's claim to being the genuine church of Knox and the Reformation.

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[131] *ibid.*, pp26-27; Drummond & Bulloch, *Church in Victorian Scotland*, pp29-30; Smout, *Century of the Scottish People*, p188

[132] *ibid.*

[133] Drummond & Bulloch, *Church in Victorian Scotland*, pp16-29

[134] Forsyth, 'Presbyterian Historians,' pp99-100

After what appears to have been considerable drama, the Free Church managed to procure 'John Knox's House', even going so far as to move into the property in order that it might not fall into other hands.[135] As a result of damage suffered in 1843, a board of trustees was set up in 1846 to purchase the house and adjoining ground, with the intention of preserving the building and combining it with the new church.[136] A public meeting was held at the end of April, attended by any 'ladies of Edinburgh' interested in the monument, at which addresses were delivered by some of the Free Church's heavyweights, including James Begg and Robert Candlish. A design had been selected and a date set – perhaps somewhat prematurely – for the laying of the foundation stone: the 18th of May, being the third anniversary of the Disruption. On the day, Candlish led a meeting for public worship at Canonmills Hall, and preached a sermon on Knox, followed by Thomas Chalmers speaking on the character of the Great Reformer.[137] A procession, intended to retrace in reverse the route taken in 1843, was planned but did not take place. Instead, the committee of management and other Free Church members gathered in the Merchants' Hall, Hunter Square, before making the short walk down the High Street to John Knox's House and the site of the monument, arriving amid 'a large concourse of people.'[138] Psalms were sung, and a speech made by Alexander Campbell of Monzie, who also laid the foundation stone. An evening meeting was held in the Edinburgh Music Hall in front of a 'respectable audience,' numerous and often lengthy addresses being made on a variety of relevant subjects by many of the church's leaders, including Thomas McCrie the younger, William Maxwell Hetherington, Robert Candlish, William Cunningham, James Begg, and the missionary John Jaffray, with Alexander Thomson of Banchory, 'a lineal descendant' of Knox,' as chairman. In closing, short addresses were made by the Rev Dr

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135 *Monument to John Knox*, (Edinburgh, 1846), pp8-9; Guthrie, C J: *John Knox and John Knox's House*, (Edinburgh, 1905), p92

136 *Monument to John Knox*, p10; Guthrie, *John Knox and John Knox's House*, p93

137 'Monument to John Knox,' *Scotsman*, 20th May, 1846

138 *ibid.*

Buchanan of Glasgow, Sir James Forrest, the former Lord Provost of Edinburgh, and Campbell of Monzie.[139] (Figure 4)

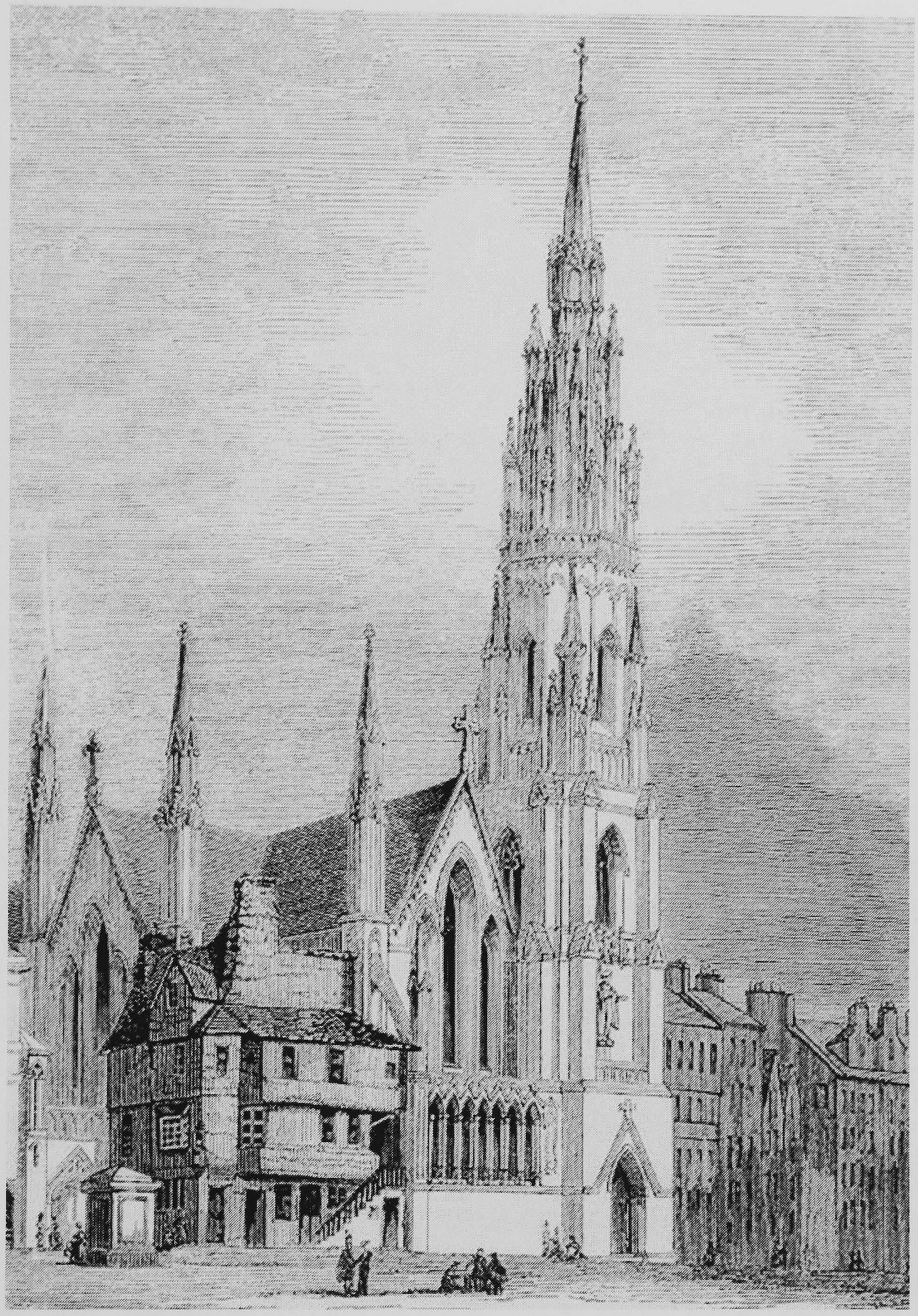

Figure 5: Proposed design for Edinburgh John Knox Monument at the Netherbow

As noted above, the date set for laying the foundation stone of the monument was the third anniversary of the Disruption: in his sermon on Knox delivered at the Canonmills Hall, Robert Candlish declared that there, 'on that

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[139] *Report of Speeches delivered at a Meeting Held in the Music Hall, Edinburgh, on Monday, May 18th, 1846, being the day on which the foundation-stone of John Knox's Monument was laid*, (Edinburgh, 1846), p2 *et seq.*

memorable 18th of May 1843, was the real foundation of Knox's monument laid.'[140] Despite public statements being made by the monument committee to the effect that nothing would be done 'that shall seem to be at all sectarian or exclusive in reference to other Protestants,' the selection of date and the planned procession route emphasised the connection being made between the formation of the Church of Scotland at the Reformation, and of the Free Church at the Disruption. Appeals to other Protestant denominations were still necessary in order to raise sufficient funds for the new building, with a circular issued for that purpose even calling upon, 'many who are not themselves Presbyterians, to testify their grateful remembrance of the services rendered by JOHN KNOX to the common Christianity of the whole Protestant world.'[141] To prove the point, the circular cited Knox's friendship with 'not a few Bishops and Ministers of the Episcopal Church of England.' Donations had indeed been received from other denominations and religions: the first significant sum received came from 'an English Episcopalian in Nottingham'; another donation had come in from a member of the Quakers.[142] Despite considerable early success, however, income was deemed a problem. At the meeting held in the Music Hall on the evening of the foundation-stone ceremony, the Rev Mr Jaffray announced that, though the list of subscribers was some 3,788 names long, with the total subscribed standing at £2,282, the target for the monument fund was £15,000; £4,000 alone was required simply to complete the purchase of the site.[143] In common with the commemoration of the Westminster Assembly in 1843, however, the John Knox monument movement is notable for the – understandable – absence of any input from the Established Church. Indeed, the rhetoric of this monument movement is, as we might expect, replete with anti-patronage statements: at the Music Hall meeting, Thomson of Banchory – who had been an active supporter of the Non-intrusionists during the Ten Years' Conflict – said that, though honour was due to 'civil governors', there was also, 'a holier trust is given to

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[140] Candlish, R S: *John Knox, His Time, and His Work: a Discourse, delivered in the Assembly Hall of the Free Church of Scotland on 18th May, 1846*, (Edinburgh, 1846), p26

[141] Quoted in Duff, A: *Proposal for the Erection of a Monument to John Knox, on the spot where he resided in Edinburgh – to consist of a massive tower, with churches annexed.*, (Calcutta, 1846), p7

[142] *Monument to John Knox*, pp13-14

[143] *Report of Speeches*, p18

us to maintain, and, come weal, come woe, we must defend the Lord Jesus as the Head of the Church. (Great applause.)'[144] This point was reiterated by Hetherington, who said that, while the State should protect, defend and propagate the work of God, it, 'should not pass beyond those sacred boundaries, but remain within its own province.'[145] The inevitable result of the union of civil and ecclesiastical jurisdictions would be tyranny, claimed Hetherington: 'whether I be pope, and possess civil power, or whether I be king, and possess ecclesiastical power, I will make you all my slaves.' The separation of these was fundamental to Knox's achievement at the Reformation, and to proclaim any form of 'misnamed liberality,' Hetherington said, would be to betray 'the sacred ground which Knox had marked out.'[146]

One of the distinctions between the rhetorical character of the event at Glasgow in 1825, and the Edinburgh inaugurations of 1846, was the increased energy with which Popery was represented as the arch-enemy of civil and religious freedom, and of the liberties that Knox and his fellows reformers had struggled for. In an address on the educational legacy of the Reformation, James Begg warned of dire consequences should the responsibility for education continue to be left in the hands of a 'magistracy' constantly threatened by prelacy or Popery: if not controlled, the machinery of education could all too easily be turned, 'to a deadly purpose.'[147] It is worth noting at this stage that, of all those engaged in the commemoration of Knox, the Reformation, and the Covenanters, James Begg appears to have been by far the most pragmatic: the commemoration of the past was, for Begg, not a matter of remembering, but something that should only be carried out for the purposes of effecting positive change in the present – commemoration for its own sake was mere indulgence. The danger of renewed prelatic or Popish oppression was ever-present, constant vigilance was necessary to prevent such tyranny reasserting itself, and so any monument to the Great Reformer must have a practical purpose: a tower would be all very well, he said, but more vitally,

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[144] *ibid.*, p4

[145] *ibid.*, p14

[146] *ibid.*, p15

[147] *ibid.*, p30

> they should have that simple school, and that simple scriptural Church, which had been, under God, the powerful instrumentality which had raised their country from barbarism, to the highest position in the civilised world.[148]

James Begg was a constant presence at events commemorating Scotland's Presbyterian past, yet his sermons and speeches were defined by pragmatic calls for the maintenance of Presbyterian civilisation within Scotland, whether through education, missionary work, or even a form of Home Rule.[149] This not to say that Begg's was the only voice contending the necessity of a practical monument: Thomson of Banchory said that anything 'merely ornamental' would be 'unfit' as a memorial to Knox.[150] Furthermore, the tower itself would act as a 'public index' of Knox's true monument – the people and the nation of Scotland. The monument would connect with 'the name of Knox, all that is most precious in Scotland's national privileges, national prosperity and national renown.'[151] In common with the rhetorical character of the 1825 inauguration, it was clearly felt necessary to point out that the monument was not being erected in order to sanctify Knox; the Great Reformer, it was said, would never have sought such a monument. Instead the aim was, in Begg's words, to 'exalt the grace of God in him.'[152] In other words, as well as having a pragmatic component in the churches and schools, the intention behind the monument was to erect a highly visible sign of those qualities Knox and the Reformation had brought to Scotland through the grace of God. This was to be a towering, material symbol of the great principles of the Scottish Reformation: education, and ecclesiastical liberty both from an interfering state and from the threat of Popish or prelatic tyranny.

More broadly, the monument would commemorate the Reformation's vital contribution to the nationality of Scotland. At the Music Hall meeting, William Cunningham argued that Scotland's distinctiveness as a nation could be traced directly to the principles of the Reformation and of Knox: 'It is these principles, and

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[148] *Monument to John Knox*, p4

[149] Smith, T: *Memoirs of James Begg, DD*, vol II (Edinburgh, 1888), pp148-150; see also Hanham, *Scottish Nationalism*, pp74-76

[150] *Report of Speeches*, pp3,18

[151] Duff, *Proposal for the Erection of a Monument to John Knox*, p5

[152] *Monument to John Knox*, p3

the influences they have brought into operation, more than any other causes, that have made Scotland what she now is.'[153] Thomson of Banchory emphasised the role of the Reformation in science and literature, before going on to state his belief that without the Reformation 'there never would have been true and enlightened loyalty to any sovereign in the world.' In one of the more stirring passages in the *Proposal* written by Alexander Duff to promote the monument, Duff painted a picture of the Scotland that existed prior to the Reformation:

> To look at Scotland in those early days of anarchy and bloody strife, seems like casting the eyes, now, over the sterile wilds of Tartary, with its savage Khans and boisterous marauding populace – Tartary, with its barbarous ignorance and fanatical superstition – Tartary, with its never ending brawls and broils and treacheries and massacres.[154]

Having summoned up such a daunting illustration of Scotland under Papal tyranny, Duff's *Proposal* went on to list the changes wrought by the Reformation, 'like passing from the scowling tempests and bleak barrenness of an arctic winter to the calm serenity and glowing luxuriance of a tropical summer.' Nor was Scotland the only beneficiary: Great Britain owed much to these qualities as it had been the influence of the Scottish Reformation that had awoken 'the long dormant energies of England,' leading to the 'glorious Revolution of 1688,' which had 'at once placed Great Britain in the van of civilised nations.' Abroad, the Reformation had, 'led to the peopling of the new world with the pilgrim fathers, who there laid the foundations of a new and mighty empire.'[155] This turning point in Scotland's past was connected directly with the development of Great Britain and Empire, not only as part of the discourse of Scoto-British patriotism, but also in an attempt to advance this reading of the British past as a means of raising subscriptions towards a material sign of that legacy.[156]

The Reformation was not, however, a moment of origin, but was instead a turning point, the restoration of a Scottish nationality that had existed since the nation's earliest times –Scotland had always been an essentially Protestant nation. Prior even to the advent of Luther, Calvin, Knox and Melville, the Culdees of the

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153 *Report of Speeches*, p20

154 Duff, *Proposal for the Erection of a Monument to John Knox*, p2.

155 *ibid.*

156 Candlish, *Discourse*, p11; Duff, *Proposal for the Erection of a Monument to John Knox*, p3

fifth century acted as a proto-Presbyterian paradigm for those generations that followed.[157] In his sketch of the historical background to the Scottish Reformation, the Rev McCrie asserted that,

> the Church was governed without the prelacy or ceremonies of the Church of Rome, by her primitive pastors the Culdees, men distinguished from those whom they governed only by the superior sanctity of their lives and simplicity of their manners, chosen by the suffrage of the people, and holding no jurisdiction over each other.[158]

So not only were the Culdees proto-Presbyterians, they were also proto-Evangelicals – the ancestors of the Free Church. The achievements of the Reformation represented the return to a native or national tradition, the rejection of an alien tyranny that had suppressed the Scotland's true character as a Presbyterian nation enjoying the benefits of civil and religious liberty.[159] It was thanks to the nationality of the Reformation, and the greatness of Knox as God's instrument, that the Scottish Reformation compared favourably with the Reformation in England, which had seen, according to McCrie, the power of the Pope 'transferred to the sovereign,' and the majority of the church hierarchy retained. William Cunningham argued that England had suffered for want of a man, 'possessing the sincerity, the vigour, the energy and the courage of Knox,' the result being, 'that the Church of England, in its true and proper character, has never at any one period been an important general instrument of Christ for affecting beneficially the mass of the population,' accusing the English Church of possessing 'semi-Popish elements.'[160] For Robert Candlish, the Reformation in England had been carried out on 'the principle of the very least being done that Christ could possibly be supposed to regard as sufficient,' whereas Scotland had enjoyed, 'a Reformation on the plan of an entire remodelling, according to Christ's will.'[161] In addition, just as Victorian Scots expressed a debt of gratitude to Wallace and Bruce for having prevented their nation from being subjected to an alien tyranny that, had it succeeded, would have doomed

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[157] *Monument to John Knox*, p4; Duff, *Proposal for the Erection of a Monument to John Knox*, p2; Kidd, C: 'The canon of patriotic landmarks in Scottish history,' *Scotlands*, 1994, pp4-5

[158] *Report of Speeches,* p5

[159] Smith, 'National Identity and Myths of Ethnic Descent,' pp65-68

[160] *Report of Speeches,* pp12, 25

[161] Candlish, *Discourse*, p22

Scotland to become another Poland, Hungary, or – at worst – Ireland, the discourse of Scottish Reformation commemoration raised Scotland above other nations in piety and patriotism. A direct comparison might be made between the portrayal of Ireland in the commemorative discourse of Wallace and Bruce and its portrayal in the commemoration of the Reformation: William Cunningham depicted Ireland as suffering from the absence of any 'Reformer or Reformation of her own at all; and the consequence is, that the great majority of her population are still sunk in Popish ignorance and darkness.'[162] In comparison to the 'Ecclesiastical Establishment of Ireland,' the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, cultivated from the Scottish root, had not only, 'been the instrument of conferring important benefits on Ireland,' but had also, 'been honoured to succeed in making Ulster a striking contrast, in every respect, temporal and spiritual, to other parts of that unhappy land.'[163]

The Scottish Reformation was evidently deemed to have been more thorough, more pious, and more beneficial. When combined with the identification of the Popish threat, a good deal of the sentiment expressed at this time appears to correspond to the radical nationality of men such as William Burns and John Stuart Blackie. That is to say, much more so than at Glasgow in 1825, and despite the confidence with which the Scottish Reformation was portrayed as being far in advance of the Reformation elsewhere, there were persistent references to the Reformation as unfinished business. William Maxwell Hetherington said, at the evening meeting in the Music Hall, that, though Knox had left a powerful legacy, it was not yet complete:

> I trust Scotland will yet come to recognise the value of this great heritage, and will speedily set herself to the task of accomplishing thoroughly and throughout, the entire of what he commenced, but, worn out with his many toils, left to others the glory to conclude.[164]

The need to complete Knox's work was recognised also by, amongst others, Robert Candlish, who entered more deeply into the causes of this situation, blaming 'civil convulsions' and the prevalence of 'English views of the subjection of the Church,' amongst the Scottish nobility, before going on to proclaim that the true monument to Knox, and the only monument Knox would have desired, was a

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[162] *Report of Speeches*, p25

[163] *ibid.*, p26

[164] *ibid.*, p16

nation built upon sound Reformation principles.[165] It was the duty of the Free Church, and, by extension, of the other dissenting denominations, to continue the great work begun by Knox *et al* in the mid-sixteenth century. This goal had been lost sight of by an Established Church too closely aligned with ecclesiastical principles defined as insufficiently compatible with historic Scottish Presbyterianism and nationality. Those decisive characteristics that made Scotland Scotland were perceived as being threatened by alien influences, creating the need for vigilance and, crucially, some form of infrastructural change which would reflect the true nature of essential Scottish nationality. The Knox monument intended for the Netherbow was not to be erected merely as an index of national gratitude, but as a didactic symbol of the continuing struggle against foreign oppression that was inherent in Scottish nationality and Presbyterianism. The distinction between the moderate centre-ground and radical fringe of Scottish nationality are equally applicable here as they were to the commemoration of Wallace and Bruce: moderate Scottish nationality went no further than commemorating milestones in the Scottish past as having contributed to the present glories of the Scottish and British nations; the more radical end of the Scottish national spectrum, acknowledged that the present was, indeed, founded upon the rich legacy of the past, but this legacy was one that was being embezzled by those paying insufficient attention to tyrannical threats.

Despite the quantity and quality of the rhetoric broadcast in favour of the Edinburgh Knox monument, the movement failed to reach a successful conclusion, and instead a church was erected on the site at the Netherbow, given the name of 'Knox's Free Church.' For a time, it seemed as if John Knox's House would not survive, as the building was increasingly threatened by improvements to the High Street and its own dilapidation. To preserve the house, which was now the property of the Free Church, a variety of movements were instituted throughout the century.[166] Strictly speaking, John Knox's House falls outwith the realm of this thesis, yet there is one feature of the debate over its preservation that deserves brief notice: that is, the reasons given for its preservation were entirely bound up with the

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165 *ibid.*, p27; Candlish, *Discourse*, p27

166 See 'John Knox's House,' *Scotsman*, 2nd February, 1850; 'John Knox's House,' *Scotsman*, 9th April, 1853; Guthrie, *John Knox and John Knox's House*, p93

house's reputed association with the Great Reformer, even though the connection between Knox and the house was tenuous at best. It is likely that the popular perception of the house as having been Knox's was mainly derived from Thomas McCrie's *Life of Knox*, in which McCrie – possibly drawing on Stark's *Picture of Edinburgh* from 1806 – identified the building in the Netherbow as having been Knox's last home.[167] This 'fact' endured into the 1884 edition of McCrie's biography, though, certainly by the 1890s, there was considerable doubt that Knox had ever lived there.[168] By this time, however, it mattered not; what counted was the traditional association. At a meeting held in early July, 1849, two principal reasons were given for preserving the building: firstly, that the house was a valuable antiquity of the city of Edinburgh and ought to be preserved as an historic artefact, and secondly, that it was also as a symbol of Reformation principles. One promoter argued that, 'He could conceive no object of greater importance than to hand down to prosperity the memory of men who had taken so prominent a part in that struggle, the advantages of which, in a civil and religious point of view, they now all enjoyed.'[169] A letter to the Dean of Guild from the Royal Academy of Arts referred to the house as 'the most valuable monument now existing in Edinburgh of that great man by whom our spiritual liberty was realised… and which constitutes an object no less remarkable for picturesque beauty than venerable from antique association.'[170] A circular issued by a body originating with the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland – signed by, amongst others, George Harvey, William Allan, James Young Simpson and David Laing – argued that while Germany had preserved the houses of Schiller and Goethe, Italy venerated Dante's house, and the English had 'rescued from destruction the dwelling of Shakespeare,' it was felt that 'Scotland regards as no less sacred the memorials of genius, and the debt of gratitude she owes

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[167] Guthrie, C J: 'Is "John Knox's House" Entitled to the Name?', *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 8th March, 1891, pp346-347

[168] McCrie, T: *Life of John Knox, Containing Illustrations of the History of the Reformation in Scotland*, (Edinburgh, 1884 edition), pp473-474. For a detailed survey of the history of the house see Miller, R: *John Knox and the Town Council of Edinburgh, with a chapter on the so-called 'John Knox's House'*, (Edinburgh, 1898)

[169] 'John Knox's House,' *Scotsman*, 4th July, 1849

[170] 'John Knox's House,' *Scotsman*, 7th July, 1849

to her great Reformer.'[171] In a sense, then there was no need to erect a new monument to Knox: the house by the Netherbow was Edinburgh's monument to the Great Reformer, all the more worthy as its significance had grown with the memory of Knox himself; it was a humble dwelling, not an arrogant tower, part of the fabric of the city.

CONCLUSION

The commemoration of Scotland's religious past that occurred between the two Knox monument movements covers one of the most momentous periods in the history of Scottish Presbyterianism, not simply the increasing power of the Evangelicals, but concerning more generally the Church's role in a rapidly changing society. The demands that Scottish Presbyterianism made of itself in this period are very clearly reflected in the commemoration of its past, from the raising of a didactic statue to Knox overlooking Glasgow, reminding the city's inhabitants of whom they must thank for their present advantages, to the same – unsuccessful – attempt being made by the Free Church two decades later. That is to say, the invocation of Scottish Presbyterian memory in this period exemplifies the way in which the present determines the meaning and significance of the past, projecting its requirements onto that past and then reading them off as proof of their legitimacy. Furthermore, we have seen, particularly in the examples of 1838 and 1843, how a generation of Presbyterians enlisted framing-strategies as a means of ensuring that the past met their demands. The fact that these demands changed over time, is tellingly reflected in the remarkable difference between the belligerence of the commemoration of the Glasgow General Assembly in 1838 and the co-operative spirit of the Westminster Assembly bicentenary in 1843. Despite these distinctions, however, common elements in the characterisation of the Scottish past are evident throughout, specifically the identification of the struggle for and achievement of civil and religious liberty as being the essence of Scottish national memory.

Whether adopting a more radical reading of this narrative – that these liberties had yet to be fully realised – or tending towards the moderate – where one was commemorating the attainment and retention of such freedoms – civil and

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[171] 'John Knox's House,' *Scotsman*, 11th August, 1849; quoted in Guthrie, *John Knox and John Knox's House*, p95; see also Guthrie, 'Is "John Knox's House" Entitled to the Name?', pp334-335.

religious liberty achieved an almost mantric role within the discourse of commemoration. Furthermore, this refrain was in harmony with the commemorative representation of William Wallace and Robert Bruce. The rhetoric of nineteenth-century commemoration, both implicitly and explicitly, connected the Wars of Independence with the Scottish Reformations as part of Scotland's historic struggle, a conflict that, when its time came, made a vital contribution to British constitutional freedoms; it was not only Wallace and Bruce that could be synthesised with the grand-narratives of Britishness. Even more so than the Union of 1707, the Williamite Revolution of 1688/89 was deemed to be the point at which the Scottish tradition of civil and religious liberty joined with its sister narrative in England to create a British-national memory. Moreover, whereas at the beginning of the nineteenth century the Presbyterian reading of British constitutionalism was, in Kidd's words, as yet unable to convey 'a comprehensive vision of nationhood', the burgeoning influence of the Free Church and the Secession, promoted the nationality of Presbyterianism as fundamental to Scoto-British identity. It was by no means the only reading of Scottish nationality available at this time, yet without doubt, this framing of national memory was becoming increasingly influential.[172]

We have also seen the emergence of the defining model of religious commemoration, in that its discourse involved a defence of the subject against both former and contemporary accusations of extremism, violence or rebelliousness, combining this with a celebration of the subject's inherent virtues. Furthermore, as a means of avoiding accusations of idolatry, there were repeated references to the acts of the commemorative subject as being the manifestation of God's will in the narrative of Scottish religion. Whether John Knox or Alexander Henderson, to focus upon the individuals concerned was to commemorate the achievements of these men as instruments of God's greater plan. The virtues that were being held up for emulation had come from God; commemoration was not a Presbyterian rendering of superstitious Popish practices, but the teaching of lessons based upon the informing precedents of the past.

One might say that the politicisation of the commemorative act in nineteenth-century Scotland was never more acute than at this time and with regard

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172 Kidd, *Subverting Scotland's Past*, p201

to these subjects. The following chapter will examine the commemoration of the Scottish past in a period when it was necessary to work out the effects of the Ten Years' Conflict and the creation of the radical United Presbyterian Church. It could be said that the half-century from 1850 to 1900 saw the Scottish churches more intent on dealing with the problems posed by the social and political shifts in the Scottish and British nations. At the same time, the relationship between church and state remained crucial to commemorative discourse. In the mind of Scottish Presbyterianism's more unyielding element, however, conflicts within Scottish Presbyterianism were minor skirmishes in comparison with the great battle that was forever looming on the horizon: the Papal threat was perceived to be growing more and more profound.

7. Commemorating Knox and the Reformation: 1860-1903

Introduction

The second half of the nineteenth century saw major changes in the complexion of Scottish Presbyterianism. In general terms, the hard-line Calvinism that had led to the formation of the Free Church was increasingly giving way to a more open and moderate view of the different churches' role in Scottish society. Within the Established Church, under the influence of men such as John Tulloch and Robert Lee, the Westminster Confession was being challenged as the definitive statement of Scots Presbyterianism, while lay members of both the Establishment and the Free Church questioned the centrality of the Confession to their ecclesiastical commitment.[1] The incompatibility between the doctrine of election and the aims of active Evangelicalism saw the former eased and the latter fired with new energy. At the same time, the abatement of conservative dogmatism created a more relaxed attitude to ecclesiastical differences, with the result that denominations began to move closer together, rendering the prospect of unity ever more of a possibility. From the early 1860s, efforts had been made to effect a union between the Free Church and the United Presbyterians: to this end, talks began in 1863, with the latter insisting that any united church be Voluntaryist, an assertion that was agreed to by some of the most powerful members of the Free Church, including the up-and-coming Robert Rainy.[2] That the union negotiations failed was owing to the agitation of the conservatives within the Free Church, led by the increasingly bullish James Begg, who remained intent on the preservation of the establishment principle.[3] Begg was also piling up the Free Church's barricades against the onslaught of anti-Sabbatarianism from Established clergymen such as Tulloch, Lee and Norman MacLeod.[4] Furthermore, Biblical criticism was sowing the seeds of a

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[1] Drummond & Bulloch, *Church in Victorian Scotland*, pp302-304

[2] Fry, *Patronage and Principle*, p64

[3] Machin, I: 'Voluntaryism and Reunion, 1874-1929,' in MacDougall, N (ed.): *Church, Politics and Society: Scotland, 1408-1929*, (Edinburgh, 1983), p222

[4] Drummond & Bulloch, *Church in Victorian Scotland*, pp306-310

more open approach to the literal truth of the Scriptures, though the heresy trials of William Robertson Smith (1880), Marcus Dods and A B Bruce (1890) signify that attitudes could be tempered only so far. Such debates only served to widen the gap between moderate evangelicals and dogmatic, Calvinist conservatives, regardless of their denominational affiliation, a division never more acute than with regard to the establishment question. In 1874, shortly after the expectation of union between the Free and United Presbyterians had been stifled by Begg's 'constitutionalists,' Disraeli's Conservative government abolished patronage in the Established Church, and within a year, Rainy had convinced the Free Church to accept the principle of Voluntaryism as part of a sustained campaign for disestablishment. The church-state axis was still the cause of Scottish Presbyterian animosity, but some light was beginning to dawn, and by 1900 the Free Church and the United Presbyterians would have overcome their differences to form the United Free Church.[5]

From an ecclesiastically conservative point of view, this changing era combined new threats with old, all of which were manifestations of the tyrannical, the Prelatic, and the Popish. The ideals of civil and religious liberty represented by the Scottish-national past were under threat from the rapid increase of Roman Catholicism, with anti-Catholic movements springing up, their roots in the Evangelical parties of both Scotland and England.[6] There were numerous aspects to the 'anti-Catholic frame of mind.' The supremacy of scripture and justification through faith alone provided the theological basis for Protestant accusations of un-Godliness; the perversion of British Protestantism through the Tractarian and Oxford Movements was viewed as Popery 'subverting the Church from within;' and the problems of Ireland were deemed to be the result of its historic Catholicism.[7] Such comparisons with Ireland reflected the social and political arguments of the anti-Catholics: Catholicism retarded economic and social progress, subverted personal morality, and was the antithesis of liberty.[8] This discourse defined the commemoration of Knox and the Reformation, being representative of the larger paradigm of resistance to tyranny. The Pope was to the commemoration of Knox

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[5] Drummond & Bulloch, *Church in Victorian Scotland*, pp333-340

[6] Wolffe, *Protestant Crusade*, p108

[7] *ibid.*, pp109-110; 116-121

[8] *ibid.*, pp121-131

and the Reformation what Edward the First was to the commemoration of Wallace and Bruce, and in each case the tyrants of the past found their equivalent in those struggles against oppression taking place in the present.

The commemoration of the Reformation in Scotland was carried out with a much greater emphasis upon its practical results, seeking to inculcate a deeper sense of piety in the Scottish people – piety was the sacred correlative to patriotism. Despite this, few of the commemorative events of the mid-to-late-nineteenth century resulted in material memorials of Knox's legacy, though there were three major national commemorations carried out in the name of John Knox and the Scottish Reformation. In August of 1860 a gathering of Protestant clergy from across the globe took place in Edinburgh, to mark the tri-centenary of the Reformation; later that same year, the 20th of December was set aside as the date for commemorative sermons to be preached in parish churches and halls across Scotland; and on Sunday, the 24th of November, 1872, the 'tercentenary' of John Knox's death was commemorated in similar fashion, with sermons and public speeches being delivered in the principal towns and cities.[9] In 1872, shortly after the celebration of Knox's tercentenary, a second movement was begun to erect a monument to the reformer in Edinburgh, one that attracted a good deal of press and public attention, some subscriptions, but little tangible success. This was followed by two smaller scale but much more significant memorials: the statue to Knox at New College, erected in 1896, and an Established Church counterpart in St Giles Cathedral ten years later. With the exception of the unsuccessful attempt to raise a national monument to Knox in 1872, none of these commemorations attracted any significant degree of controversy. Indeed, the commemoration of Knox and the Reformation took place amid widespread approbation from press and public. Though those carrying out the commemoration did feel the need to stress the utilitarian nature of their actions, the character of these events was such that they did not attract those criticisms directed at, most notably, the movement to erect the National Wallace Monument. The utilitarianism of the commemoration of Knox and the Reformation also underlines the difference between commemorating the

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[9] The use of the term 'tri-centenary' for the 1860 Reformation Commemoration, and of 'tercentenary' for the 1872 Knox commemoration, reflect contemporary usage, except in the case of the August 1860 convocation which used 'tercentenary.'

past through the celebration of anniversaries and the raising of commemorative monuments. The first was, generally speaking, wholly acceptable if carried out in a suitably moderate manner; the second was fraught with dangers too many to enumerate.

1860: Tercentenary of the Reformation – May

The events of 1860 stand out as the most wide-ranging commemoration of the Scottish Reformation to take place at any time in the nineteenth century. There were denominational commemorations at the General Assemblies of the Free and Established Churches and at the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church in May; an international gathering of Protestants was held at Edinburgh in August; and the 20th of December was set aside by all of the principal denominations for a national commemoration to be observed in churches across Scotland. In contrast to the events of 1846, which were almost entirely led by Free Churchmen, the 1860 commemorations were self-consciously national in that they were intended to bind Scottish Protestanism together. As with previous attempts to commemorate Knox, this was by no means the commemoration of the past for its own sake – the tri-centenary of the Scottish Reformation was to be deployed as a weapon in the ongoing battle against the insidious threat of Papal oppression. Indeed, the tri-centenary involved a significant increase in references to the Reformation as having been not simply 'the Scottish Reformation,' but 'the Reformation from Popery.' The international meeting in Edinburgh in August was organised by a society established for the purposes of turning back the tide of Roman Catholicism, the Scottish Reformation Society, one of whose founders was James Begg.[10]

Though there was broad agreement regarding the nature and content of the forthcoming commemoration, each church expressed the belief that it possessed the most legitimate connection with the Reformation itself, with all three of the principal Presbyterian Scottish churches forming committees to report on the most ideal method of commemorating the Reformation. Each committee reached a similar conclusion: that time should be set aside at the annual General Assemblies or Synod of their church for the purposes of commemorating the Reformation, and,

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10 Wylie, J A (ed.): *Ter-Centenary of the Scottish Reformation as commemorated at Edinburgh, August, 1860*, (Edinburgh, 1860), ppviii-xii; Smith, *James Begg*, p193

secondly, that the 20th of December should be appointed as the date for commemorative sermons to be preached at parishes across Scotland. The Free Church was one of the first of the three main denominations to commission a report on the subject of the commemoration, with Begg as the committee's convener. The committee's conclusions followed the general model given above, yet one of its recommendations was unambiguous in promoting the Free Church as the denomination occupying the most central position in the religious genealogy of the Reformation. A featured topic at the Free Church General Assembly's commemoration was 'The doctrinal principles of the Reformation, and the attainments of Scotland in connection with these struggles, with special reference to the principles and position of the Free Church.'[11] During the Free Church Assembly's commemoration of the Reformation, William Cunningham related the history of the sufferings of the Scottish church since the Reformation, and when summarising the 'principles evolved' from these struggles, expressively placed the Free Church in the role of the genuine church of the Reformation.[12] Such an assertion, however, should not be interpreted as evidence of exclusiveness or sectarianism, as the members of the Free Church were evidently keen that some form of inter-denominational commemoration should take place. Under the auspices of the Scottish Reformation Society, it was Free Churchmen who were largely responsible for the international commemoration that took place in August, 1860, to which were invited representatives not merely from across the spectrum of Presbyterianism, but from all corners of the Protestant world, whether it was Presbyterian or Episcopalian – the only condition, it seems, was that participants define themselves as 'Evangelical.'[13]

Neither this ecumenical spirit nor claims to the legacy of the Reformation were confined to the Free Church. The committee appointed by the United Presbyterian Synod to consider the tri-centenary had approached their counterparts in the other Scottish churches in order to negotiate a 'united celebration by all the

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[11] 'Report of the Committee on Popery, 1860,' *PGAFCS, 1860*, Appendix XIII

[12] 'The Tricentenary of the Reformation,' *PGAFCS, 1860*, pp157-158

[13] *TSR*, px

Evangelical Protestants, or at least by all the Presbyterian Churches of Scotland.'[14] The commemoration proposed by the United Presbyterians differed from that of the meeting planned by the Scottish Reformation Society, in that the United Presbyterians were proposing not 'a promiscuous assemblage of private individuals,' but rather 'official or authorised representation of the Scottish Churches.'[15] Though the United Presbyterian overtures were unsuccessful, the committee continued to hope that some 'official' commemoration might still be able to take place. At the same time, the United Presbyterian committee had identified the necessity of a purely denominational commemoration of the Reformation: it was doubly incumbent upon their church to mark the anniversary as it was, 'that which, in its principles, and in the rights and influence of its members, is the freest of all the Presbyterians.'[16] Despite its overtures to the other churches for the need to hold an 'official' commemoration of the Reformation, the United Presbyterian Synod was not above promoting itself as the church with the most legitimate claim to the necessity of commemorating the Reformation as being the precedent for its particular brand of Scottish Presbyterianism.

Much the same point was made by Principal Tulloch of the Established Church. At the meeting of the General Assembly on the 22nd May, 1860, a report was read from the committee appointed to make arrangements for the tri-centenary, in which it was stated that not only should the General Assembly set aside the 'Sabbath evenings' for 'devotional exercises commemorative of the Reformation,' but that the 20th December ought to be observed as 'a day of solemn thanksgiving to God and grateful commemoration of the benefits of the Reformation.'[17] These recommendations noted that the 20th of December was the date 'most likely to be approved of by other Presbyterian Churches,' yet the resolutions proposed by Tulloch promoted the Established Church as having a particular claim to the Reformation. Though acknowledging that it was 'highly becoming that the Tri-centenary of the Reformation should be celebrated by the members of the various

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[14] 'Proceedings of the United Presbyterian Synod: Tricentenary of the Reformation,' *UPM*, June, 1860, pp259-260

[15] *ibid.*, p260

[16] *ibid.*

[17] 'The General Assemblies: Church of Scotland,' Supplement to the *Scotsman*, 23rd May, 1860

Protestant Churches of this land, met together in unity,' Tulloch emphasised the, 'duty specially incumbent on this Church to commemorate the blessed era of the Reformation,' referring to the Established Church as, 'that Church which was founded upon the Reformation – that Church which they all believed remained the embodiment of the glorious principles for which the Reformation contended.'[18] Nevertheless, the existence of other commemorations was noted, and it was agreed that the 20th of December was the most suitable date for the marking of the anniversary in each parish, though there was no mention of the forthcoming national meeting in August. The Established Church did acknowledge that, 'there should be a spirit of union in the celebration' of the tri-centenary, though the implication appears to have been that other churches should be, 'disposed to join along with the Church of Scotland,' rather than vice-versa.[19]

A good deal of the rhetorical character of the May commemorations is familiar from events already considered. There was little doubt, for instance, that the Reformation was the single most significant moment in the story of Scotland. Principal Tulloch looked upon the Reformation as one of,

> the grandest and proudest days of patriotism of which our country can boast – an event which has given our country, more than any other event, a name among the nations, and a fame second to none in heroic and romantic story.[20]

The Synod of the United Presbyterian Church had referred to the Reformation as, 'the most important event in the past history of Scotland.' Just as the Scots had commemorated the centenary of the birth of Burns, and, 'the states of the American Union' annually marked the 4th of July, it was even more imperative that the anniversary of the Reformation must be celebrated, standing as it did,

> beyond the battle of Bannockburn, or the union of the Scotch and English crowns, or the union of the two kingdoms, or the sway of the Commonwealth, or the triumph of the Revolution, or the great political and fiscal reforms of our own day.[21]

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[18] *ibid.*

[19] 'Established Church Assembly: Tuesday, May 22nd,' *GH*, 23rd May, 1860

[20] *ibid.*

[21] *Proceedings of the United Presbyterian Synod*, May, 1858, p139; 'Proceedings of the United Presbyterian Synod, 1860,' p260

Indeed, as the Rev Henry Renton proposed, in an address to the United Presbyterian Synod entitled simply, 'The Scottish Reformation,' John Knox stood head and shoulders above Scotland's other great heroes. Wallace, Bruce, James Watt and Adam Smith were, 'names whose united lustre yet pales before his, who has left his impression upon the mental and moral character, the religious and social regeneration of a whole people.'[22] In an address on the influences of the Reformation, the Rev James Harper claimed that it was Scotland's vocation,

> to be a witness to the nations on behalf of Evangelical truth, and to give an example of the close affinity of genuine Protestantism, with the rights of conscience and the interests of civil and well as religious liberty.[23]

That year's Moderator of the Free Church General Assembly, Robert Buchanan, argued that, owing to its independent spirit, no other nation had subsequently suffered under Rome as much as Scotland. When the time came, however, no nation's Reformation had been as complete, or as free from the control of 'forces outside of the Church itself.'[24] There were some differences of emphasis: whereas Renton of the United Presbyterian Church declared that the Reformation was 'effected by the will of the people,' Buchanan saw the 'popular constitution' of the reformed church as having been derived from the centrality of the Bible. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that the rhetorical content of these addresses was constructed upon a shared memory of the Reformation, its nature and significance. Whether carried forward by the people, the Bible, or both, the roots of the Reformation, and the nature of its achievements, were promoted as having been principally religious rather than political or social. Certainly, the Reformation brought with it civil liberty and progress, but these were deemed by-products of religious freedom. The stress throughout Buchanan's address was that some accounts of the causes of the Reformation made, 'too much of man, and too little of God.' Secular benefits were mere side-effects:

> the Reformers, by following out this grand principal of man's right and duty to judge for himself in matters of faith and conscience, were setting forces in motion which, while their direct and immediate tendency was to promote the spiritual and eternal interests of man,

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22 'Proceedings of the United Presbyterian Synod, 1860,' p268

23 *ibid.*, p272

24 *PGAFCS, 1860*, pp120-124

were destined to carry countless other benefit of a secular and temporal nature in their train.[25]

Renton made a similar point in asserting that, though the 'native character' of the Scots had provided 'a favourable soil,' from which the Reformation could grow, it was owing entirely to 'Divine truths, accompanied by Divine influence,' that the Reformation had sprung into life, when other revolutions had failed by merely appealing to the people's secular or patriotic interests.[26] Principal Tulloch stated that the revival of the Gospel was the main product of the Reformation's demands upon their gratitude. The disclosure of a 'spiritual truth' which had been 'an unspeakable blessing to every soul and to the nation at large.'

However, as we might expect from both the United Presbyterians and the Free Church, spiritual independence loomed large as one of the defining features of the Reformation's legacy. Buchanan claimed that Providence had set Scotland the task of solving the problem of the relation between Church and State – the Scots had found a solution in Scotland, yet other nations were still grappling with this thorny problem, to their detriment. This argument was reiterated by Principal Cunninghan, Hetherington and Begg, the latter citing ecclesiastical independence as being the only certain defence against Popish incursions into the magistracy.[27] Begg argued against those who would highlighted the connection between the 'civil magistrate' and the church as one of the faults of the Reformation, an argument that had been made at the United Presbyterian Synod by William Anderson, the church's 'brash if able controversialist.' At the United Presbyterian commemoration, Anderson had been given the subject of 'the defects of the Reformation' by the commemoration's organising committee and, though his address was replete with qualifications, he entered into the spirit of his thesis with considerable energy. The one defect of the Reformation of which Anderson had no doubt, was that of the 'unscriptural' doctrine of the Reformation concerning 'the civil magistrate's power in religion.'[28] The relationship between the church and the state had long been, Anderson argued, the source of the reformed church's sufferings; even in the

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[25] *ibid.*, p119

[26] 'Proceedings of the United Presbyterian Synod, 1860,' p267

[27] *PGAFCS, 1860*, pp126, 162-163

[28] 'Proceedings of the United Presbyterian Synod, 1860,' p274

present day, the concept of establishment was 'pagan and popish… infidel and inhuman,' the United Presbyterians being the only church in the land who could 'afford to give a testimony against the grand defect of the Reformation.'[29]

Not only had the Reformation intended the maintenance of spiritual independence – whether established or Voluntary – it had also ensured the coherence of nations and nationality. Popery ground these distinctions down: at the United Presbyterian Synod, Dr M'Michael claimed that whereas Presbyterianism 'sanctified' nationality, Popery attempted to destroy nationalities in order that 'upon the ruins of national freedom she might set her throne.'[30] Again we see the recurrence of this defining theme: if Reformation was largely synonymous with spiritual and civil freedom, then Popery was equated with oppression and ignorance. Addressing the United Presbyterian Synod on the subject of, 'Our Present Duties in Relation to the Cause of the Reformation,' William Lindsay contended that, 'all the great interests of society, liberty, commerce, literature, arts and sciences have flourished,' in those nations where Reformation principles prevailed. In a sense, both the blessing and curse of the Reformation had been the very liberty it had brought into being, freedoms which entailed toleration for all religions, whether enlightened Presbyterianism or tyrannical Popery:

> It is the glory of Britain, and of all countries where British blood predominates, that shackles upon conscience are abhorred. But this very freedom only renders it the more imperative that error should be openly and vigorously assailed by argument, and particularly Popish errors, because they endanger the existence of this very freedom.[31]

Reflecting the incendiary rhetoric of William Anderson, the solution, Lindsay proposed, was the abolition of all state endowment, combined with a greater emphasis upon denominational unity, the very unity that the United Presbyterians had hoped for in the commemoration of the Reformation. For William Hetherington, in his speech at the Free Church commemoration, whether given the name of episcopacy, prelacy or moderatism, such elements were 'foreign and injurious,' to the essentially Evangelical nature of the Reformation; the identification of prelacy as 'foreign' reflecting the idea that the true nature of the church – or of

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[29] *ibid.*

[30] *ibid.*, p261

[31] *ibid.*, p277

the nation – is subverted by the invasion of alien elements. The rhetoric of the Free Church, in particular, is riven with this concern: that the threat of a prelatic or papistical offensive is ever-present and should not be thought of lightly: James Begg, ever the pragmatist, more concerned with the needs of the present and future than with the glorification of the past, warned of the increased influence of such tyrannical elements in the Church of England, deploying a metaphor that implies some of his other concerns regarding the governmental deficiencies of the British state:

> ...we must not forget that we are now linked inseparably with England, as much as ever two individuals were associated in the same ship. No doubt we are at the further end of the vessel, and have comparatively little to do with her steering and manning; but here we are on board; and if the Jesuits seize the ship in England, and influence the Church of England, it is not difficult to see the ultimate result to Scotland.[32]

Only by keeping the example of the Reformation at the forefront of the national life could this ecclesiastical Cold War be fought. With Begg as its convener, the committee appointed by the Free Church to report upon the commemoration of the tri-centenary was entitled 'the committee on Popery;' three of the five recommendations made by the United Presbyterian committee on the tri-centenary contained warnings about Roman Catholicism, the second recommendation stating that, 'At no time in this country, [since the Reformation] has the assertion of Popish errors and assumptions been so bold, nor the profession of Popish doctrines so extensive.' Of the three resolutions made by the General Assembly of the Established Church, two were concerned, in whole or part, with 'Popish error,' though their tone was not as militant as either the Free or United Presbyterian churches.

Simply commemorating the Reformation was, however, not enough to construct sufficient defences against the corruption of Rome: something more enduring was required. It was to this end that the Scottish Reformation Society planned the forthcoming August commemoration, both as an international meeting of like-minded Protestants, yet also as the precursor to the foundation of an enduring monument to the Reformation that would provide 'training for students

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[32] *PGAFCS, 1860*, p162

in the distinctive principles of Popery and Protestantism': the Protestant Institute.[33] It was hoped that, as part of the sermons due to be preached in December, calls would be made for more funds to support this necessary object. Just as James Begg had been promoting the 1846 Knox monument as a practical memorial to the Great Reformer, so now the Protestant Institute was to be built as a material sign of Scotland's debt to the Reformation, not simply as an empty monument, but as a school for the inculcation of Reformation principles and for the training of foot-soldiers in the war against Popery.[34]

1860: Tri-centenary of the Reformation – August

The August commemoration of the tri-centenary of the Scottish Reformation was truly international. Delegates arrived not only from across Scotland, England and Ireland, but from the United States and Canada, Holland and Gibralatar, representing a cross-section of Evangelical Protestantism which included some episcopalians.[35] Despite this, the selection of speakers was heavily weighted in favour of members of the Free Church, either ministers or laymen. More than a quarter of the fifty or so addresses delivered came from Free Church ministers, with a significant proportion of the lay participants also being members of the Free Church. Moreover, the meetings were to be held in the new Free Church Assembly Hall, locating the commemoration firmly on their turf. In terms of the other principal Presbyterian denominations, there appears to have been only one speaker from both the United Presbyterians and the Reformed Presbyterians, with, as we might expect, no representation at all from the Establishment. Indeed, there were more speakers from the Irish and English Presbyterian churches than from either the United Presbyterians or Reformed Presbyterians. This must be balanced against the fact that at the close of the convocation, at the laying of the foundation stone of the Edinburgh Protestant Institute, the sermon was preached by the Rev William Symington, Professor of Systematic Theology to the Reformed Presbyterian Synod, with addresses coming not only from James Begg, but from William Lindsay of the

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[33] *PGAFCS*, 1859, p158

[34] 'Report of the Committee on Popery, 1860,' *PGAFCS, 1860*, Appendix XIII

[35] *TSR*, pxii. All statistics regarding the August tri-centenary commemoration are drawn from this source.

United Presbyterian Church, the Rev S. M. Dill, Moderator of the Irish Presbyterian Assembly, and the Rev Dallas of London.

As noted above, the August commemoration had been arranged by the Scottish Reformation Society, an anti-Catholic organisation instituted in 1850, in the wake of the planned restoration of a diocesan hierarchy in the Catholic church in England. Its intention was to,

> resist the aggressions of Popery, to watch the designs and movements of its promoters and abettors, and to diffuse sound and scriptural information on the distinctive tenets of Protestantism and Popery.[36]

Officially consisting of members drawn from 'all Evangelical Protestant denominations,' though in reality dominated by members of the Free Church, the Scottish Reformation Society's main activities concerned putting pressure on politicians not to grant concessions to Roman Catholicism, to campaign for the repeal of the state endowment to the Catholic seminary at Maynooth, and to educate the masses in both the virtues of Protestantism and the evils of Popery.[37] The society's journal, *The Bulwark*, which was largely controlled by James Begg, kept a close watch on the state, and regularly printed details of government endowments to Catholic schools and colleges.[38] Those who participated in the Society were not necessarily representative of the mainstream of Scottish Protestantism; indeed, there were many who objected to the Society's belligerence. Many believed that the Scottish Reformation Society, and its counterparts such as the Protestant Association, would bring about a 'Catholic backlash,' whereas the routine methods employed by each denomination would be more effective in bringing about conversions.[39] It would appear, however, that the Society had achieved sufficient appeal by 1859 to attract a favourable response when it began to organise an international Protestant convocation to mark the three-hundredth anniversary of the Scottish Parliament's adoption of the Confession of Faith.[40] From the outset, it was

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[36] *Synopsis of Operations of the Scottish Reformation Society (1863)*, (Edinbugh, 1864); Drummond & Bulloch, *The Church in Victorian Scotland*, p76

[37] Wolffe, *Protestant Crusade*, pp160-162

[38] *ibid.*

[39] Drummond & Bulloch, *Church in Victorian Scotland*, p76; Wolffe, *Protestant Crusade*, pp165-166

[40] *TSR*, pix

the intention of this meeting not only to celebrate the glories of the Reformation, and to confirm or debate its principles, but to use the commemoration as a forum for the devising of strategies against Roman Catholicism: the commemoration of the Reformation was as much about Popery as Presbyterianism.

The Established Church does not appear to have taken any role at all in the August commemoration, no doubt owing to its adopting a rather more *laissez-faire* attitude to the increase in Roman Catholicism, added to the fact that it had little involvement in the Scottish Reformation Society.[41] Indeed, the contrast between denominational – one might also say intra-denominational – responses to the intrigues of Rome are reminiscent of the differences that existed within the Wallace Monument movement, between those who would deploy the past as a weapon to counter the threats of the present, and those who adopted a more moderate position. The variety of anti-Catholic societies operating in Britain at this time experienced difficulties remarkably similar to those that undermined the NAVSR; though united by a common goal – be it resistance to anglicisation and centralisation on the one hand, or Popish perversion on the other – these movements suffered from internal tensions regarding the extent and nature of their activism, the content of their polemic, the degree of resistance required, and – decisively – their members' loyalties to other movements.[42]

The United Presbyterians appear to have been of a similar mind to the more radical anti-Romanists in the Free Church: the *United Presbyterian Magazine* welcomed the August meeting as vital, 'when the Church of Christ is divided into so many sections, and Rome is plying her machinations so successfully in various directions.'[43] Though keen on the August commemoration for this reason, the United Presbyterian Church – or, at the very least, Henry Renton, editor of the *United Presbyterian Magazine*, and leading member of the church's Tri-centenary committee – was equally intent on promoting the December commemoration over the August event. In a letter to the *Glasgow Herald*, Renton, though approving of the Scottish Reformation Society's meeting, disassociated the August commemoration

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[41] Wolffe, *Protestant Crusade*, pp249-250

[42] *ibid.*, pp251-257

[43] 'General Commemoration of the Tri-Centenary of the Reformation, in August,' *UPM*, May, 1860, p238

from the United Presbyterian Synod, and emphasised that the December commemorations ought to be viewed as the national event.[44] As we have seen from the proceedings of their Synod, the United Presbyterians were particularly keen on promoting church unity as a fundamental aspect of the Reformation commemoration, arguably more so than the defence against Popery. Renton's letter expressed the hope that, in December, there would not only be services in every congregation, but also that there might be 'united services by the different denominations, together with the interchange of pulpits on the Sabbaths preceding and following.'[45] G R Badenoch, the secretary of the Scottish Reformation Society, responded by arguing that the August meeting was the truly national commemoration, whereas the day set aside in December was, in common with the commemorations in May, purely denominational.[46] Whether misinterpreting the inter-denominational intentions of the United Presbyterians, or simply intent on promoting their own commemoration over any others, Badenoch's letter did not publicly consider the United Presbyterian Church's's hope that the December commemoration would provide an opportunity for a public display of Presbyterian unity, a more localised national commemoration rather than the relatively centralised, if undoubtedly international, commemoration planned for August. The Scottish Reformation Society, no doubt motivated by its radical anti-Popery, was selling this commemoration of the Reformation as being the definitive commemorative act, the event that most legitimately reflected the principles of the Reformation. In this respect, they were somewhat justified: attendance at the meetings was significant, both from ministers, lay-members and the general public, the hall being 'crowded to excess.'[47]

Even a comprehensive survey of the speeches and sermons delivered at this event would require more space than is available in this thesis, so a detailed summary will be necessary. To a greater extent than the General Assemblies and

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[44] 'Tri-Centenary of the Scottish Reformation,' Letter from Henry Renton, *GH*, 13th August, 1860

[45] *ibid.*

[46] 'Tri-Centenary Commemoration of the Reformation in Scotland,' Letter from G R Badenoch, Secretary of the Scottish Reformation Society, *GH*, 14th August, 1860

[47] 'Home Intelligence: Tricentenary of the Reformation in Scotland,' *UPM*, September, 1860; 'Tri-Centenary of the Reformation in Scotland,' *Scotsman*, 15th August, 1860

Synod in May, the rhetoric of the August commemoration stressed the contrasts between the tyranny of Rome and the liberty of Protestantism. Amidst the wide variety of subjects covered, these contrasts reveal a central component in the representation of the Reformation and its legacy which were by this stage well established: the distinction between Papal tyranny and Protestant liberty, between poverty and prosperity, enforced ignorance and enlightened education, and the nationality of Protestantism set against the alien nature of Roman Catholicism.

The opening sermon of the 'Ter-Centenary,' preached by Thomas Guthrie on the subject of 'God's Truth and Man's Freedom,' set the context for what was to follow. Guthrie argued that the truth contained in the word of God was the basis of all man's freedoms, spiritual or secular. In describing the secular freedoms, he highlighted three distinct aspects: mental freedom, social freedom, and political freedom, all of which were a result of the 'education of the masses' in the 'grand truths' of the word of God. All of these:

> the diffusion of knowledge, the progress of science, the advances of art, the greater blessings of peace, and the diminished horrors of war, to what are these due, but to the activity and liberty of thought which came into the world with the Word of God.[48]

Guthrie railed against the suggestion that Britain's greatness was owing to its mineral wealth:

> Coal and iron! what [*sic*] had they done to make Britain *Great* Britain – a mother of nations and the mistress of the seas – the home of freedom, and an asylum for the oppressed… It is our freedom, our mental, social, political, and religious freedom – which has made us great; and these, with God's blessing, we owe to his word.[49]

Guthrie's sermon was fairly moderate in that it contained no major harangues concerning the Papal threat. Indeed, his discourse is notable for its emphasis upon Britain, as much as Scotland, as having been the beneficiary of a broad-based Reformation, and for stressing that the commemoration was taking place to honour the Reformers, rather than as a bulwark against Papal invasion. With this in mind, it is worthwhile noting that the report of Guthrie's speech in the *Scotsman* reproduced this section of the sermon in slightly different terms, perhaps with greater fidelity to the words spoken on the occasion than appeared in the

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[48] Guthrie, T: 'God's Truth and Man's Freedom,' in *TSR*, pp5-9

[49] *ibid.*, p9

version of the sermon prepared and edited for publication. In the *Scotsman* transcription, Guthrie also makes reference to Britain as being the place where 'the Sovereign had the hearts of her subjects.'[50] The theme of Britain's constitutional liberties as having their roots in the Reformation appears time and again. James Wylie – who had been a minister in the Original Secession, joined the Free Church in 1852, and went on to become a lecturer at the Edinburgh Protestant Institute – in his paper on 'John Knox', depicted the Reformer's encounters with Queen Mary as an argument over the constitutional nature of the monarch's rule. He declared that the sentiments expressed by Knox on those occasions, 'received a signal triumph when the British nation adopted them at the revolution of 1688; and they form at this day the basis of that glorious constitution under which it is our lot to live.'[51] Knox, and by extension the Scots, had been the first to propound such constitutionalism 'in the British Isles.' Knox's struggle was greater even than that of Wallace or Bruce, sowing the seeds of a religious and constitutional liberty that had spread throughout the world, filling the earth, 'with pure churches and free nations.'[52]

Wylie's promotion of the centrality of the Scottish Reformation to British greatness was recapitulated by the Rev. Peter Lorimer, Professor of Theology at the English Presbyterian College in London. Lorimer's account was somewhat more historically grounded than Wylie's, crediting George Buchanan as much as Knox, but his conclusions were no less authoritative, claiming that Buchanan's 'famous treatise, *De Jure Regni apud Scotos*,' represented the,

> fundamental principles of the British Constitution… the principles which the Long Parliament maintained against the tyranny of Charles, and which were exalted to permanent power at the Revolution of 1688.[53]

As part of their attempts to counteract the Papal influence, many speakers emphasised not just that the British constitution had its roots in the Reformation, but that the constitution was itself inherently Protestant. To countenance any

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[50] *Scotsman*, 15th August, 1860

[51] Wyle, J A: 'John Knox,' *TSR*, pp71-72; Wolffe, *Protestant Crusade*, p160

[52] *ibid.*, pp73-74

[53] Lorimer, P: 'The Precursors of Knox,' *TSR*, pp154-155

degree of Popery was to be a traitor to those principles. G R Badenoch of the Scottish Reformation Society delivered a paper entitled, 'The Protestantism of the British Constitution.' Having 'established that the British Constitution is essentially Protestant,' Badenoch concluded by declaring that,

> it is incumbent upon every British subject, much more on our legislators, to strain every nerve to abolish the present Romish policy. If not, let the constitution be at once remodelled, and let us no longer play the game of traitors.[54]

The same point was made, with equal dogmatism, by the Rev J T Bannister of Berwick, in a paper titled, 'The Sanction and support of Popery by the British Government unconstitutional, impolitic and dangerous.' Bannister maintained that whereas the British constitution 'guaranteed civil and religious liberty to all the subjects of the realm,' the Church of Rome's principles were predicated upon 'the entire subjugation of both princes and peoples to the rule of a foreign despot.'[55] Whilst Protestantism, 'recognises as the source of all human authority and power the popular will, guarantees the liberty of the subject, prescribes limitations to the sovereign's prerogative,' Popery was nothing less than 'a huge conspiracy against the rights and liberties of mankind; it would make every king a tyrant, every subject a slave.' To tolerate Popery was to allow the virus of oppression to infect the nation's civil and religious well-being. William Hetherington, speaking on the subject of religious toleration, argued that those who held religious beliefs which ran counter to the patriotic rights of the citizen, should not be permitted to hold public office. Hetherington claimed that 'the very nature of Popery renders it impossible for the law of toleration to include it, since Popery *cannot tolerate toleration.*'[56] [original emphasis] To tolerate Popery, to accept such an un-Scottish and anti-British influence into the state or civil society was to risk the ruination of the 'great and sacred law of protection to religious liberty.'[57]

There could be no more profound declarations of the centrality of the Scottish Reformation to the constitutional freedoms of Victorian Britain than those

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[54] Badenoch, G R: 'The Protestantism of the British Constitution,' *TSR*, pp192-193

[55] 'Proceedings at the Commemoration, Friday, 17th August, 1860,' *TSR*, p283

[56] Hetherington, W M: 'Toleration, or the Law of Religious Liberty,' *TSR*, p181

[57] *ibid.*, p187

made at this event. It was at the Scottish Reformation that the principles of constitutional monarchy that made Britain great had first been articulated, principles that were now victorious and universal, and whose essence must be maintained if the British nation was to remain true to its constitutional history. Such arguments were supported by the assertion that Protestantism had always been a component of the Scottish nation, prior, even, to the advent of the Reformation. One Free Church speaker, addressing the meeting on the subject of 'The alleged services of the Church of Rome to the cause of Freedom,' drew upon the example of Robert Bruce as having been a Protestant in principle. The very first paper read at the convocation was on the subject of the Culdees, with the Rev W L Alexander, an Edinburgh Congregationalist, arguing that, as Protestantism was, in essence, a protest against Popery, the Culdees had undoubtedly been Protestant. Another paper, from the Rev. Duncan M'Callum, was entitled, 'The Church of Scotland as old as the Church of Rome,' in which the Rev. M'Callum claimed that Columba had founded the Presbyterian system in Scotland.[58]

As if the testimony of Protestant ministers was not sufficient, the same session that witnessed the Rev. Bannister's paper, also heard from none other than James Dodds, leading proponent of the constitutional thread in the Scoto-British past, running from Wallace, through Knox, to the Covenanters. Dodds spoke on the secular benefits derived from the Reformation, portraying the contrast between a benighted, enslaved Scotland prior to the Reformation and the free, enlightened nation that it brought into life. In much the same way as Wallace was viewed as having created the Scottish nation, or, at the very least, having renewed it, Dodds placed his emphasis upon the 'national' nature of this transformation:

> A nation was born in a day. Only a few years before, there was no people, no national life to be seen; but no sooner did Knox blow the trumpet, with his noble compeers, than up sprung a nation – a people making themselves felt throughout all the regions of national life. (Loud applause.)[59]

In other words the secular benefits of the Reformation were resolutely 'national' in character, inculcating a sense of nationality in the people that had been

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[58] 'Proceedings at the Commemoration, Wednesday, 15th August, 1860,' *TSR*, pp210, 20-21; 'Tri-Centenary of the Reformation in Scotland,' *GH*, 16th August, 1860

[59] 'Proceedings at the Commemoration, Friday, 17th August, 1860,' *TSR*, p278

worn away or subverted by the influences of an alien church. Energetic portrayals of the dramatic transformation effected by the Reformation were a common feature. J C Colquhoun, Esq., of Killermont – a Tory MP who had made himself somewhat unpopular in his party by virtue of his enthusiasm for Non-Intrusion in the 1830s – drew a plenitude of contrasts between the 'rude and barbarous' Scots prior to the Reformation, 'with a language hardly intelligible, no time or taste for books or thought,' and that of the post-Reformation period with 'the state of her soil, the outpouring of her mines, the industry of her manufactures, the size of her cities, the progress of her arts.'[60] The advocate A E MacKnight adopted a decidedly pan-British approach in his paper on 'The Influence of the Reformation on Literature and Education.' It was, 'freedom from the shackles of priestly despotism,' that had allowed Shakespeare, Bacon, Spenser, Napier, Milton, and numerous others, 'to exert their talents in the pursuit of truth.'[61] All of these grand results were in marked contrast to those nations that did not enjoy benefits derived from the influence of such a Reformation – principally, of course, Ireland. In answering the question, 'Why has not Ireland become peaceful?' Colquhoun contended that Scotland had benefited from the Reformed faith and its 'bold, strong argument,' without which Ireland had continued to act as a thorn in the side of Great Britain.[62]

Since the inception of the August commemoration, the erection of the Protestant Institute had been its desired result; with Free Churchmen such as James Begg setting the agenda, a commemoration without a tangible, material outcome intended to further the principles of the Reformation was never going to be likely. 'Rome would pardon them for all their previous meetings,' Begg said prior to the procession to the Institute site, 'if they should break up without doing something practical which might promote the extension of Protestant truth in the land.'[63] The participants in the inauguration ceremony were primarily of the Free Church, yet there were notable contributions from both United and Reformed Presbyterians, as well as some of the visitors from England and Ireland, with the emphasis upon the furtherance of the principles being celebrated, through educating Scots about the

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[60] Paterson, *Political History of Scotland*, pp21, 24, 25

[61] Macknight, A W: 'The Influence of the Reformation on Literature and Education,' *TSR*, pp134-136

[62] 'Wednesday, 15th August, 1860,' *TSR*, p234

[63] *ibid.*, p319

errors of Popery.[64] There was an acknowledgement that Rome had been on the offensive for too long, and it was time that Protestantism trained some of its own infantry. The Rev Dr Lindsay of the United Presbyterians looked forward to the young men trained by the Institute,

> to be thus prepared to go forth as missionaries to France, and Spain, and Italy, the central seat of the man of sin! Rome spares no effort to spread her principles among us; and we must also send Protestant missionaries to every Popish country where it is possible to obtain a footing.[65]

In his sermon preached at the foundation-stone ceremony, William Symington of the Reformed Presbyterian Church called the Protestant Institute, 'the grand practical improvement,' of the commemoration of the Reformation – the institute was to be Edinburgh and Scotland's monument to Knox and the Reformation. Speaking after Symington, James Begg said that he was in agreement with the idea that Knox required a monument, 'but he thought at the same time that a mere dead, inanimate and unproductive monument would be altogether out of place.' Other speeches delivered at the inauguration were replete with similar statements: the Rev Dr McCrie looked upon the Institute as doing much greater service to Scotland, 'in her highest and holiest interests, than any mere monument of stone, however richly adorned or magnificently constructed;' Mr Morrieson of Harviestoun, who had been given the task of depositing a bottle containing various documents related to the commemoration and the Institute in the foundation stone, said that the building would become,

> the national monument to perpetuate the memory of the glorious Reformation of Religion in 1560, which delivered the nation from tyrannical rule, the superstitious and idolatrous worship, and the soul-destroying influences of Popery.[66]

The Protestant Institute represented the kind of monument that was deemed acceptable to the memory of Knox and the Reformation, in that it was utilitarian, rather than simply commemorative. In this way, it contrasts with both the National Wallace Monument, whose pointlessness was persistently observed by its critics, and the movement to erect a monument to Knox in 1872, which, as examined below,

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[64] *ibid.*

[65] *ibid.*, p324

[66] *ibid.*, p322

was characterised by disagreement over the monument's form and purpose – not that the inauguration of the Protestant Institute was a lesson in harmony and single-mindedness. Certain points of contention did, perhaps inevitably, arise throughout the course of the event, yet these appear to have been heard with toleration by those who might have disagreed. Apparently, however, such was not the case when Dr Lindsay of the United Presbyterians said, at the foundation-stone ceremony, that the only certain way to oppose the endowment of Popery, was to oppose 'all endowments whatever,' a statement that met with 'signs of dissatisfaction,' deemed 'inconsistent with the nature of the meetings.'[67] Undoubtedly, it was felt that, whereas individual speakers were quite within their rights to make such statements as part of a paper delivered at one of the commemorative meetings, to express this sentiment at a public event intended to celebrate denominational unity in the face of a common enemy was not quite as appropriate. That Lindsay made this statement is somewhat surprising, for, as we have seen, the United Presbyterians tended to be the one denomination most intent upon arranging inter-denominational worship at a local level for December. The United Presbyterian idea of shared commemoration was, however, not to disappear; the December commemoration of the Scottish Reformation was to provide another opportunity, one entirely separate from the hand of the Scottish Reformation Society.

1860: Tri-centenary of the Reformation – December

Contrary to the claims of the Scottish Reformation Society, there can be little doubt that the December commemoration of the Scottish Reformation was national in a way that the August event could not have been, with services being held across Scotland and parts of England. Unlike the August commemoration, the responsibility for arranging any December meetings was given to individual ministers and parishes, with some being organised by lay-societies with invited speakers. As a result, the December commemoration was not mediated through any one body affiliated to a specific denomination. As we have seen, each of the three principal denominations had set aside Thursday, the 20th of December, as the date most suitable for the commemoration of the Reformation, and all across Scotland, local magistrates and town provosts ordered that shops and businesses should close

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[67] 'Monthly Retrospect: Tricentenary Commemoration,' *UPM*, September, 1860, p476

early, in order that the people of every church could attend afternoon services or public meetings. In Ayr and Kilmarnock, for instance, places of business were closed at one o'clock; in Falkirk, the order was to close by five p.m.; at Airdrie all banks and public offices were closed for the entire day, though in Coatbridge, which had a significant Catholic population, 'none of the places of business were closed.'[68] In Aberdeen, the tri-centenary of the Reformation was 'pretty well observed,' with the Roman Catholics in the city holding their own counter demonstration; in Perth, most of the shops were closed, though 'the public works were in operation as usual.'[69]

The aim of the December commemorative meetings and services was much the same as that of the August convocation, albeit carried out on a different basis: to celebrate the principles of the Scottish Reformation, and to warn of the threat of Roman Catholicism. The declarations made by the Established and Free Church Assemblies and the United Presbyterian Synod, emphasised, to a greater or lesser extent, the responsibility of including some anti-Popish message in the commemoration: for example, the recommendation of the Established Church committee was that the day involve, 'grateful commemoration of the benefits conferred on us through the Reformation of the Church from Popish error, and the deliverance of the nation from Popish supremacy.' These recommendations were widely accepted. Almost all of the December commemorations of the Reformation share a common feature in that the speaker or speakers contrasted Scotland before and after the Reformation, showing how the civil and religious liberties of Scotland, Britain and other parts of the world had been forged by the Reformation, whilst also stressing the need to maintain the principles of the Reformation if those benefits were to be retained. The emphasis was firmly upon the legacy of the Reformation as being shared by all Protestants, though this did not necessarily entail co-operation between denominations. Implicit in the Established Church's recommendation was that their church had a greater responsibility than the others for the commemoration

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[68] 'Tricentenary of the Reformation,' *GH*, 22nd December, 1860; 'The Tri-centenary of the Reformation: Edinburgh,' *Scotsman*, 21st December, 1860. For Airdrie/ Coatbridge see, Devine, J: 'A Lanarkshire Perspective on Bigotry in Scottish Society,' in Devine, T (ed.): *Scotland's Shame? Bigotry and Sectarianism in Modern Scotland*, (Edinburgh, 2000), pp99-102

[69] *ibid.*

of this great event, with little or no suggestion that co-operation was a good idea; on the other hand, the United Presbyterians were particularly keen on the idea of inter-denominational observance of the tri-centenary. A notice from the United Presbyterian committee on the tri-centenary stated that it was 'most favourable' that some form of ecumenical commemoration should take place,

> not only in all the towns, but in every locality where the ministers and congregations of this Church [ie. the United Presbyterians], by vicinity to those of other Evangelical churches, Established or Dissenting, can promote conjoint meetings for celebrating the Reformation.[70]

This proposal was, at least in Edinburgh, shared by other Protestant denominations: a meeting took place on the 19th of November in Edinburgh, chaired by the Rev. Dr. Smart United Presbyterian minister of St Andrew's Place, in the presence of James Begg and William Peddie of the United Presbyterian Church, at which a resolution was made acknowledging the 20th of December as the shared date, and, furthermore, that any Protestants who were not Presbyterians should be 'affectionately invited to join with us in this great national commemoration of the most blessed event of modern times.'[71] The only denomination in Edinburgh that appears to have carried out its celebration of the tri-centenary in an ecumenical fashion was, indeed, the United Presbyterian Church: two public meetings were held on the evening of the 20th December. The first took place in the Nicolson Street UP Church, with addresses from the Congregationalist, W L Alexander, and the Rev Dr Goold of the Reformed Presbyterians, a keen advocate of the union with the Free Church. The second meeting was held at the UP Church on Lothian Road, with speeches from the Rev Sir H W Moncrieff of the Free Church, the Rev D T K Drummond who was a dissenting Episcopalian, and the Rev Mr Duncan of the Union Church.[72] On the same evening, the Rev P Hately Waddell delivered 'his celebrated lecture on Knox and Luther,' in the Queen Street Hall, with John Stuart Blackie as chairman, tickets priced at one shilling for the centre of the hall and sixpence for the sides and galleries.[73] No concerted effort had been made to arrange the variety of meetings across the capital, indicating that unanimity had not prevailed

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[70] *UPM*, September, 1860, p476

[71] 'The Approaching Commemoration of the 20th December,' *Scotsman*, 20th November, 1860

[72] *Scotsman*, 21st December, 1860

[73] *Scotsman*, 19th December, 1860

in the commemoration events and attendance at the meetings and services held across the city was somewhat erratic. Some drew only a scattering of people, whereas others, such as the Free St John's and the Broughton Street Free Church, attracted large congregations. The uneven patterns of attendance may have been due simply to an oversupply of services combined with the relative popularity of some preachers, though we might also take into account the consideration that the weather across Scotland on that day appears to have been uniformly terrible, with heavy snow and high winds.[74]

In Glasgow, the main focus for commemorative activity was a series of three public meetings held in the City Hall under the auspices of the Glasgow Protestant Laymen's Association, a body similar in many respects to the Scottish Reformation Society. The first of these meetings, held on the 18th of December, with the hall only half-filled, heard speeches from the Rev Dr Taylor of Renfield Street UP church, who spoke on Scotland before the Reformation, the Rev Professor Hetherington, whose speech was entitled, 'Scotland at the Reformation,' and Patrick Edward Dove on 'Scotland after the Reformation.'[75] The second meeting, held the following evening to a hall now three-quarters filled, heard addresses from the three Free Church ministers on 'Scottish Cathedrals,' the Papacy, and, 'Why, among all nations, Scotland especially should commemorate the Reformation.'[76] In contrast to its predecessors, the third meeting, which took place on the 20th of December, marking the anniversary itself, saw the hall 'perfectly crammed,' with an audience of a 'highly respectable character.'[77] At least forty ministers from a variety of denominations – including the Established Church – took their places on the podium alongside over twenty local worthies. The meeting heard addresses from Robert Buchanan on 'The State of Scotland Three Hundred Years Ago, and the First General Assembly.' Buchanan was followed by the Rev Mr M'Dermid on 'The Supremacy and Sufficiency of the Word of God,' the Rev. Alexander Frazer on 'The

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[74] *Scotsman*, 21st December, 1860

[75] 'Tricentenary of the Reformation: Celebration in Glasgow,' *GH*, 19th December, 1860.

[76] 'Tricentenary of the Reformation: Celebration in Glasgow,' *GH*, 20th December, 1860. Unless otherwise stated, all details of the 19th December meeting are drawn from this source.

[77] 'Tricentenary of the Reformation: Celebration in Glasgow,' *GH*, 21st December, 1860. Unless otherwise stated, all details of the 20th December meeting are drawn from this source.

Influence of the Reformation on our Social Condition,' with the final address coming from Norman MacLeod, who spoke on 'The Unity of Protestantism.' The following evening, the Protestant Layman's Association organised a fourth meeting, this time with 'more of a social than an intellectual character,' at which James Dodds was expected to deliver the principal address, though in the end he was unable to attend. Unlike Edinburgh, Glasgow University had opted not to close for a holiday, though most of the city's shops and many offices were closed in the afternoon so that the citizenry could attend an afternoon service. Again in contrast to the capital, the commemoration services in Glasgow appear to have been more strictly organised, with every church in the city conducting a service at two o'clock.

Glasgow was not the only city to carry out a more regimented commemoration: the observance of the tri-centenary of the Reformation in St Andrews appears to have been highly successful, both in terms of its inter-denominational unity and public attendance, despite the 'inclemency of the weather.'[78] All shops and 'other places of business' were closed between two and four o'clock in order that the locals could attend a public meeting in the great hall of Madras College, filled by an audience of 'all ranks and sects,' with further meetings being held in various churches in the evening. The public meeting in the afternoon was presided over by the Rev Dr John Cook, Established Church Professor of Church History, supported by ministers from the Free and United Presbyterians churches, as well as Mr M'Intosh, an independent, and Mr Johnstone, a Baptist. Glasgow and St Andrews do appear to have been somewhat exceptional, yet all over Scotland, inter-denominational meetings were held, most of them in either Free or United Presbyterian churches, with attendance at these meetings varying widely from town to town. In Perth, a general prayer meeting was held in the Free West Church, 'which was, on the whole, well attended,' despite the severity of the weather; in Selkirk, a united prayer meeting was held in the UP church, attended by 'clergymen of the different denominations.'[79] Again there was a marked comparison between Airdrie and Coatbridge: the meeting in Airdrie's West Church hall being 'crowded to suffocation,' while, in Coatbridge, 'attendance at the churches were very

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[78] *Scotsman*, 21st December, 1860

[79] *ibid.*

limited.'[80] Generally speaking, attendance at commemorative meetings appears to have been either respectable or significant. At Falkirk, attendance at each service was 'pretty considerable;' at Maryhill, a public meeting in the Free Church was 'filled in every part'; a commemorative meeting in the UP church at Rutherglen saw ministers and lay-men of 'the various Protestant denominations in the town co-operating harmoniously in the proceedings,' in front of a large and interested audience; at Rothesay there was 'a good attendance at all the diets'; in Alloa, a public meeting in the UP Church saw 'numerous' attendance; and in Ayr, though few turned out for the afternoon services, a public meeting in the Old Church, presided over by the Provost, 'was densely crowded.'[81] There was also a public meeting held at the Freemasons' Hall, Great Queen Street, in London, addressed by 'the leading Presbyterian clergymen of London,' at which, the *Herald's* correspondent reported, 'there was scarcely standing room.'[82]

The December celebration of the Reformation tri-centenary was, evidently, national in its extent; yet the reports of these commemorative meetings as they appear in the press do not, in and of themselves, act as a sufficiently convincing indication of national interest in this anniversary. What they do indicate is, at the very least, widespread curiosity. In the face of severe winter weather, people from all across Scotland came out to attend public meetings, whether sectarian or inter-denominational – contrary to the assertion made in G R Badenoch's response to Henry Renton, the December commemorations were by no means 'obviously denominational.' In fact, it is safe to assume that if any sense of national ownership of this anniversary was exhibited, it was more likely to have been felt in December than in August. As previously stated, the August commemoration might accurately be termed the international commemoration of the Reformation, as compared to the Scottish-national commemoration in December.

With so many sermons being preached and public meetings held – most of which would have heard more than one address – there is, in December, an even more extensive range of voices to be heard than in August, rendering the task of

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[80] *GH*, 22nd December, 1860

[81] *ibid.*

[82] 'Tricentenary of the Reformation (From a Correspondent),' *GH*, 24th December, 1860

distilling the rhetorical character of these events into relatively few words all the more difficult. Still, there was considerable common ground within the discourse of the December commemorations across Scotland, with the rhetorical patterns sketched in August being largely repeated in December. In particular, this involved the contrast being made between the spiritual poverty and ignorance of the Scots under Popery and their transformation into a nation enjoying complete civil and religious liberty after the Reformation. All of the familiar features of the Scottish-Presbyterian national memory are present, scattered across a nation of speeches and lectures. For instance, at the poorly attended Glasgow meeting on the 18th, both the Rev Professor Hetherington and Patrick Dove drew upon the Culdees as well as Wallace and Bruce, using these figures to prove the existence of an unbroken narrative of native Scottish libertarianism, whether civil or religious. Both speakers argued that Wallace and Bruce had set the nation free on a civil basis, but it was for the Reformation to achieve the greater and more fundamental freedom of religion. Hetherington even went so far as 'to state his belief that Wallace was at heart a Culdee, not a Papist.'[83] Despite the fact that the format of the December commemorations was markedly different from those predating it, the rhetorical character of these commemorations remained fairly uniform: the glories of the Reformation were based upon the dissemination of the word of God, and Scotland owed its civil and religious liberties, as well as its commercial prosperity and educated people, to the principles of the Reformation, principles that must be remembered and acted upon if Scotland was to resist the lure of Popery. With this discourse in mind, two of the speeches made at this time – at the Glasgow Protestant Laymen's Association meetings – are worthy of more attention: the speech from Patrick Edward Dove at the poorly attended meeting on the 18th of December, and the speech by the Rev Dr Norman MacLeod of the Established Church, given on the 20th December, when the City Hall was reported as overflowing with eager listeners.

Dove was a man of broad interests, whether physical, religious, philosophical or political: he was an enthusiastic sportsman and crack-shot, the author of several philosophical works, a keen participant in a variety of radical political movements, including the NAVSR, and was, for a time, the editor of the *Free Church Witness* and

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83 'Tricentenary of the Reformation: Celebration in Glasgow,' *GH*, 19th December, 1860.

the *Commonwealth*. No less than John Stuart Blackie described Dove as having combined, 'the manly directness of the man of action with the fine speculation of the man of thought.'[84] In his speech to the 'Justice to Scotland' meeting in Glasgow in December, 1853, held as part of the agitation of the NAVSR, Dove proposed a resolution in favour of increased parliamentary representation for Scotland, extending this argument to propose a form of administrative – not legislative – devolution, using the Presbyterian form of church government as his model: 'We need self-administration,' he claimed, 'for only by self-administration can we ever come to be what we ought to be – a united nation.'[85] Dove was also a popular public speaker, giving numerous lectures to the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution, with subjects including Wallace and Bruce, 'Wild Sports by Flood and Field,' as well as the Commonwealth and the Crusades, and it was undoubtedly for this reason, aligned with both his reputation as a political philosopher and his popularity with working-class and middle-class audiences, that Dove was invited to address the Glasgow meeting.[86] His speech is notable for its schematic view of Scottish constitutional history, and particularly for the manner in which Dove articulated an historical model of Scoto-British constitutionalism that is mostly implicit elsewhere. Asserting that the principles of the Reformation, 'were destined to give birth to a new form of civil constitution,' principles that were not sectarian, but national:

> The principles of national unity had descended from Wallace and Bruce. There was, first, the principle of national independence – the Crown of Scotland not subject to any other Crown; 2nd, the principle of the Reformation, the Bible above the Church, and above all human authority; 3rd, the principle of the Covenanters, conscience above the King; and 4th, the principle of the Revolution – the King must reign according to the law. (Applause.)[87]

Each of these stages in the constitutional development of Scotland and Britain, Dove argued, could not have occurred had it not been for the preceding one: 'Except for the triumphant struggle of independence, there could have been no question of a Scottish Reformation,' and with every milestone passed on the road to

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[84] Anon, 'Dove, Patrick Edward (1815-1873),' rev J Cunliffe: *ODNB*; 'The Late Patrick Edward Dove,' *Scotsman*, 1st May, 1873

[85] '"Justice to Scotland" – Meeting in Glasgow,' *Scotsman*, 17th December, 1853

[86] *Scotsman*, 1st May, 1873; Hanham, *Scottish Nationalism*, p81

[87] *GH*, 19th December, 1860

present national magnificence, new freedoms had been won. Conforming to what we might expect of a radical national voice, Dove declared that, though much had been achieved, much had also been lost, and there was still an on-going struggle to maintain Scotland's liberties. Not only that, but the truly 'positive side' of civil and religious liberty was yet to be enjoyed; what was required now, was for these principles to be taken abroad, to inoculate the earth in many spots with a safeguard against the person of despotism.' It is this setting-out of the grand plan of Scoto-British constitutionalism that distinguishes Dove's speech, not just from those others delivered in December 1860, or during that year's commemorations, but within the broader context of the rhetoric of Scottish national memory in the nineteenth century – Dove articulated a model which is rarely depicted in such straightforward terms. Resistance to oppression was fundamental to this model; whether that resistance was carried out by Wallace, Knox or the Covenanters, Dove outlined the development of Scottish nationality as being equal parts civil and religious – balanced, combined and drawing from shared roots. The tyrant may be Edward I, the Pope, Charles II or James VII; at each stage the Scottish nation had derived new liberties from overcoming the oppressor, to assert its national independence, political or spiritual. In so doing, Scottish civil and religious liberties were a beacon to other peoples, oppressed by tyrannical nations or religions.

Patrick Edward Dove may have been a popular speaker, but his appeal was nothing in comparison to that of Norman MacLeod; whereas Dove had been preaching his lesson to a small audience, Norman MacLeod addressed a crowded hall. These two men occupied markedly different realms within Scottish society. Dove was an intellectual radical, Macleod was of both the establishment and the Establishment, having been appointed chaplain to Queen Victoria in 1857, going on to be Moderator of the Established Church in 1869, as well as, from 1860 editor of the popular religious monthly, *Good Words*.[88] Despite their differences, however, MacLeod evidently had no less of a social conscience than Dove, and was decidedly liberal in his views, supporting both total abstinence and missionary activity. In addition to his popularity as a preacher and public figure – Drummond and Bulloch wrote that 'No other minister of his time was in such intimate contact with the ordinary people of Scotland,' – Macleod was an enthusiastic advocate of 'practical

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[88] 'Macleod, Norman, D.D. (1812-1872)': *DNB;* Wareing, G, 'MacLeod, Norman,' *DSCHT*

help' for the poor rather than 'exhortation' of dogmatic divines: poverty bred tumult, MacLeod believed, and it was the duty of the national Church not to abandon the underclass.[89] In her journal, Queen Victoria described MacLeod as 'warm, genial and hearty… His own faith was so strong, his heart so large, that all – high and low, weak and strong, the erring and the good – could alike find sympathy, help and consolation from him.'[90] The *Scotsman's* obituary of MacLeod wrote that, 'His strength lay not in research or speculation or combat, but in touching the hearts of the people.'[91] In testament to MacLeod's popularity, at his funeral, almost three-thousand people walked in the procession from Glasgow to Campsie.[92] In relation to the perceived aggression of the Roman Catholic Church, by 1860, Macleod had changed his position from that of organising a petition against extension of the Maynooth Grant in the mid-1840s, to one of greater understanding – as we shall see from his address at the December commemoration in Glasgow.

Speaking on the subject of 'The Unity of Protestantism,' Macleod began his address by returning his thanks to the Church of Rome. The Catholic Church had, Macleod said, provided the world with many benefits, be they 'learned Universities, …many and august cathedral and beautiful parish church,' as well as the 'undisturbed pursuits of literature, and science, and of philosophy.'[93] None of these represented, however, the greatest debt owed to Roman Catholics: 'Let us not forget,' MacLeod said, 'that to Roman Catholics themselves we owe the Reformation'[94] The fact that 'the best of her priesthood and of her people,' had agitated for and achieved reformation was proof, argued MacLeod, of the terrible state the Church had got itself into: 'The very fact of the Reformation by such men, and at such a time, seems to me to vindicate its absolute necessity.' If we take the identification of an alien threat to the nation's civil and religious liberty as the gauge

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[89] Drummond & Bulloch, *Church in Victorian Scotland*, pp312, 109

[90] Quoted in, MacLehose, John (ed.): *Memoirs and Portraits of One Hundred Glasgow Men who have died during the last thirty years*, vol II, (Glasgow, 1886), p210

[91] 'Death of the Rev Dr Norman MacLeod,' *Scotsman*, 17th June 1872

[92] Quoted in, Drummond & Bulloch, *Church in Victorian Scotland*, p31; MacLehose, *One Hundred Glasgow Men*, p211

[93] *GH*, 21st December, 1860

[94] *ibid.*

of a speaker's position on the scale of moderate to radical nationality, MacLeod's Protestantism was manifestly moderate: a significant proportion of his address was taken up with the confident assertion that Protestantism, far from being threatened by a revivified Roman insurgency, 'shall never perish from the world.' Having depicted the absurdity of the Catholic love of relics and of miraculous signs from heaven, MacLeod stated, in order to ensure,

> the permanence of Protestantism we demand only what the nations of the earth must soon obtain – civil and religious liberty, education and an open Bible. To secure the downfall of Popery we ask no more![95]

The sentiments of MacLeod's address stand in stark opposition to the gloomy calls to arms of Begg and his ilk at the August commemoration. Though we should not necessarily take MacLeod's statements as symptomatic of the Established Church's policy on the matter of Papal aggression – as we have seen, the General Assembly, in common with the Free Church and United Presbyterians, had included a warning against 'Popish error' in their resolutions concerning the Reformation tri-centenary – the moderation of MacLeod's statements are still striking when compared to the dominant rhetorical character of so much of the commemoration of the Scottish Reformation. This is not to claim that MacLeod deviated from the common representation of the Reformation as having secured civil and religious liberty, 'the right of private judgement,' and 'an unshackled Bible,' nor to suggestion tolerance of Roman Catholicism, but more that his statements were significantly less militant than, for instance, the members of the Scottish Reformation Society. In MacLeod's opinion, the most effective bulwark against Popish error was unity amongst Protestants: what was wanted was not a monolithic Scottish church, dogmatically sealed, but,

> the unity of a mighty multitude listening eagerly to music, each man differing from his neighbour in the degree of his musical taste and culture, in his estimate of the productions of the greatest musicians, yet all hearing and enjoying the same music.

Those who ought to unite against the tyranny of Rome were, 'Eighty millions of the most educated, the most prosperous, the most intelligent and freest people of the nations of the earth.' Quoting 'the old British chief,' Calgacus, MacLeod referred to the unity of 'Rome Papal' as being the same as that of 'Rome

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[95] *ibid.*

Imperial': 'They make a solitude and call it peace.' Where the Protestant peoples were wanting was not in unity of doctrine, church government or other denominational issues, but 'in the unity of love.' If the legacy of the Reformation had been squandered, MacLeod claimed, it was not through the countenance of Popish error, but through 'seeking too much our own selfish sectarian ends rather than the good of our country.' In short, Macleod's speech was unambiguously intended to suggest responses to the spread of Roman Catholicism, yet he did so with a moderate missionary spirit. There is no sense in MacLeod's speech of the necessity to train foot-soldiers in the war against Papal tyranny, but rather to extend to Papists the benefits gained from the Reformation, and, in so doing, showing them a more enlightened path to God.

Here, then, are two markedly different speakers, each adopting a different stance with regard to the risks of subversion of the civil and religious legacy of the Reformation, yet for both men the principles upon which Scottish national independence was founded were the very principles that ought to be broadcast to the world, in order that other nations might also enjoy similar freedoms. Conforming to the spirit of the time, the Reformation had clearly bequeathed a missionary legacy, civil and religious; while the principles it represented were still in any doubt, the Reformation was not complete – work needed to be done. That work may have been ridding the world of Roman Catholicism or, in its secular counterpart, of aiding oppressed nations under the yoke of a dominant neighbour, but regardless of the face the tyrant wore, the Scottish Reformation represented a victory against such oppression, one that continued to resonate with Victorian Scots, irrespective of denomination. It was a reading of the past that fitted neatly into the over-arching model, as articulated by Patrick Edward Dove – the history of Scotland was defined by the development of a constitution, each stage achieving a new level of national independence.

1872: The Knox Tercentenary

The next significant national commemoration of the Scottish Reformation took place in November, 1872, when the 'tercentenary' of the death of John Knox was marked in churches across Scotland. In a virtual repeat of the overture pronounced for December of 1860, the General Assembly of the Free Church instructed its ministers, 'to call the attention of their people to the subject of Popery,

and the blessings we derive from the Reformation,' on Sunday the 24th of November, with a committee being appointed to compose an address on that subject.[96] It would appear that the United Presbyterians also issued an instruction to its Presbyteryies, that the anniversary should be marked by preaching on the work of the Reformation.[97] Again, the emphasis was firmly on the need to remind congregations of the need for vigilance in the face of Popish inroads, sustaining this through the commemoration of the principles and blessings of the Reformation. Since 1860, there had been some alterations in the complexion of the religious face of Scottish and British Protestantism, and, indeed, of those aspects of society sacred to the requirements of Evangelical Presbyterians. Ritualism in the Church of England was still a concern, as was a marked lack of progress in convincing politicians and the state that the acceptance of Roman Catholicism was the first step down the slippery slope in the direction of Papal tyranny. A new element had been added to this threat with the passing of the 1872 Education Act (Scotland), which took control of the education of Scottish children out of the hands of the churches and into the realm of the state through elected school boards. If James Begg and his ilk were concerned about the effect of a government dangerously tolerant of Roman Catholicism, then the control of education by such a government indicated an even more grave threat to the Protestantism of Scotland and Britain.[98] Established Church and Free Church conservatives together formed the Scotttish Educational Association, as a means of ensuring that the Education Bill secured religious instruction as a component of national education.[99] There was further concern that the centralisation of administration would encourage assimilation with English educational practice, threatening the essentially Scottish character of Scottish education, and, in turn, undermining the Scottish nation itself.[100] Though these fears would not be borne out – the transfer of control to local School Boards appears to have increased local involvement in the educational process, rather than

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96 *PGAFCS*, 1872, p467

97 *GH*, 25th November, 1872

98 Hutchison, *Political History of Scotland*, pp120-121

99 Anderson, R D: *Education and the Scottish People: 1750 – 1918*, (Oxford, 1995), pp67-68

100 Smith, *Memoirs of James Begg*, pp467-473, 480-481, 487; Drummond & Bulloch, *Church in Victorian Scotland*, p99

retarded it – the long-term effects of the Act were still to be seen.[101] For the conservative element within the Established and Free Churches, there was still genuine concern that one of the pillars supporting Scottish Presbyterianism was in the process of being eroded.

In its extent and nature, the tercentenary of Knox's death mirrors the national commemoration of the Reformation in December 1860: commemorative sermons were preached across Scotland and in parts of England, with ministers of all denominations taking part.[102] In Glasgow, numerous sermons and lectures were made, the vast majority of which appear to have been preached by ministers of either the Free or United Presbyterian churches, with a similar pattern in Edinburgh and Paisley. Lectures were also given at the Scottish National Presbyterian Church in London, as well as at venues in Liverpool and Berwick.[103] Where the commemoration differed from 1860, unsurprisingly, was in a greater rhetorical emphasis upon the personal qualities of Knox himself. The Rev Dr Wallace of the Campbell Street UP Church described Knox as, 'the prophet of his nation;' the Rev Riach Thom of the Free St David's in Glasgow, called Knox, 'a true patriot,' who had 'done much for the cause of civil liberty and much for education,' though, above all, Knox had lifted, 'religious truth clear out and away from the corruptions [*sic*] of Romanism.'[104] One of the most widely reported commemorative meetings was a lecture given by the former missionary, the Rev Dr Alexander Duff of the Free Church, to the 'working men of Edinburgh,' at the Edinburgh Literary Institute. Duff had been one of the most conspicuous proponents of the 1846 Edinburgh Knox monument and, indeed, recycled a good deal of his material from the proposal for that monument in his 1872 lecture. One original piece drew Knox in truly heroic terms.

> In Knox was found the grandest embodiment of the resolute iron will, the intensity of concentrated intellect, the resistless avalanche of energy, and other peculiarities of the Scottish national character, [not seen] since the days of Wallace wight and Bruce of Bannockburn… [Knox displayed] a burning zeal, an adamantine firmness of principle, an

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[101] Anderson, *Education and the Scottish People*, pp68-72

[102] 'Tercentenary of the Death of John Knox,' *Scotsman*, 25th November, 1872

[103] *ibid.*

[104] 'Tercentenary of the Death of John Knox,' *NBDM*, 25th November, 1872

> inflexible firmness of purpose, an unconquerable perseverance and consistency, an incorruptible integrity, a dauntless intrepidity, a boldness of enthusiasm, a high prowess, a matchless achievement, which stamped him as a chieftain among heroes, and which extracted from the regent of the realm the finest and noblest epitaph ever spoken – "There lies he who never feared the face of man."[105]

This quotation from Regent Morton, allegedly spoken at Knox's burial, was something of a watchword in the commemorative rhetoric of Knox: time after time, speeches and sermons summon forth Morton to deliver his crucial line. Despite the fact that Knox and the Reformation were now enjoying their second national commemoration, the need to defend Knox from accusations of intolerance or extremism persisted. At the laying of the foundation stone of the Glasgow monument in 1825, the defence had been that extreme times called for extreme measures – Knox had been a product of his struggle – and so it remained in 1872. In his sermon at Kinning Park Free Church in Glasgow, the Rev A.B. Birkmyre, admitted that Knox had been 'rough… in speech and manner,' yet these were precisely the qualities required at that crucial moment: 'the time was not a time for smoothness – it was a time for stern resistance, prompt decisions and downright honesty. Knox was stern and prompt and honest, and by being so saved his country.'[106] In the lecture on Knox at the Scottish National Church in London, Dr Cumming – a major proponent of Established Presbyterianism in England, and leading figure in the Reformation Society, the English equivalent of the Scottish Reformation Society – felt it necessary to defend Knox from 'charges of iconoclasm,' and other 'unfavourable criticisms;' Cumming described Knox as 'uncompromising but never uncharitable, enthusiastic in his attachment to truth, but never a fanatic.'[107]

Vindication was still a prominent part of this commemorative discourse, yet it was also acceptable to express some mild criticism of Knox and his fellow reformers, as long as this criticism was suitably qualified. Looking back upon the tercentenary of the Reformation, the *United Presbyterian Magazine* was confident

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105 *Scotsman*, 25th November, 1872

106 *NBDM*, 25th November, 1872

107 'Tercenternary of the Death of Knox: Dr Cumming on John Knox,' *GH*, 25th November, 1872; Wolffe, *Protestant Crusade*, p149

enough to claim that, 'Knox was not perfect, nor was his teaching absolutely without flaw; but he was a man of rare zeal as well as clear understanding, of high courage as well as integrity.' Dr Walter Smith of the Free Tron Church in Glasgow argued that the Reformers of three-hundred years ago had done, 'the work that was needed at the time,' but there were now new tasks requiring to be done:

> If they were severe, stern, harshly controversial, they could hardly well be otherwise; but there is no reason why we should be of the same mind. That is the main lesson I read in them. They did a grand work of beginnings. Let us follow it up in a like free and fearless spirit. They laid foundations, let us build thereon… going on to complete the house of God.[108]

As in 1846 and 1860, the work of Knox and the Reformation was deemed incomplete, and, once again, the most commonplace task remaining to Knox's Victorian legatees was resistance to Popery.

At a meeting held in the Greenock Temperance Institute, on the Monday following the official tercentenary date, three resolutions were passed by the 'clergymen of various denominations' who were present: the first acknowledged 'the great civil and religious blessings,' bequeathed to Scotland by the Reformation; the second that Knox had been 'the main instrument' in this; and, thirdly, resolving 'to use all Scriptural mean for resisting the attempts of Popery, and of maintaining the Protestant cause.'[109] The Protestant Institute in Edinburgh – the building now complete and carrying out its intended purpose of educating young Scots about the errors of Roman Catholicism and the truths of Protestantism – also held a meeting on the same day, with a similar set of resolutions. The Rev W Graham of the Established Church – promoter of the Lochmaben Bruce statue – proposed the first resolution, acknowledging the Reformation's, 'great and invaluable blessings, both civil and religious,' as well as that of, 'delivering them from the darkness of Romish superstition, and the cruel oppression of Popish tyranny.' The second resolution, proposed by the Rev W Scott-Moncrieff, who described himself as a minister of the Church of England, singled out Knox's particular contribution, with the final resolution, proposed by James Begg, being identical to that of the Greenock

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108 *NBDM*, 25th November, 1872

109 'The Knox Tercentenary: Greenock,' *Scotsman*, 26th November, 1872

meeting.[110] We might infer from the similarity in the resolutions of these meetings that they both drew upon a circular issued, perhaps, by the Protestant Institute itself – the speeches that followed each of the resolutions at Edinburgh are certainly representative of the concerns of active anti-Catholics in this period. A Dr Thomas Smith said that there were 'duties incumbent' upon all Protestants with regard to education, and Popery, 'in its more direct form.' In his remarks as chairman of the meeting, Lord Polwarth said that, as the Act had now been passed, 'all who loved God's Word and desired that there should still be a free Bible in a free land, ought to co-operate in endeavouring to continue its blessed teaching in every home and every school throughout the kingdom.'[111] Begg also warned of the changes brought about by this new era in Scottish educational provision. In a reference to the composition of the new school boards he said: 'However different opinions might be upon the wisdom or expediency of the recent Act, there could be no difference of opinion in regard to the great responsibility which it imposed upon the people.'[112]

The sermons delivered at this time are filled with the sense that the Papal threat was greater than ever, and that the principles of the Reformation were more relevant than at any time since Knox had lived. The Rev. Dr. MacEwen of Claremont Street UP Church in Glasgow cautioned against believing that 'Popery has changed its character,' claiming that, 'The evils against which Knox protested still exist, and we cannot be too faithful in denouncing them.' In a sermon delivered at the Nicholson Street Reformed Presbyterian Church, the Rev Mr John M'Donald of Loanhead is reported as having pointed out,

> several respects in which the British nation and Churches abandoned Reformation attainments, giving special prominence to the temporising spirit of Britain in giving so much encouragement and support to Popery.[113]

In a letter to the *United Presbyterian Magazine*, Henry Renton – who might be described as the UP counterpart to James Begg – wrote that, 'At no time since the Reformation has Popery had a foothold in Britain comparable to what it holds at

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110 *Scotsman*, 26th November, 1872

111 *ibid.*

112 *ibid.*

113 *NBDM*, 25th November, 1872

present,' citing the increase in adherents to Catholicism, as well as the growing number of priests, convents, 'and the widespread favour for its tenets and practices among an influential portion of the Church of England.'[114] Renton's comment is representative of what appears to have been a greater emphasis at the 1872 commemorations on the place of Britain, both with respect to the threats posed by Popery, Prelacy and Ritualism, and in the attendant portrayal of Knox's place in the establishment of British civil and religious liberties. At the Protestant Institute meeting, the Rev Graham bemoaned, 'Would to God that John Knox had been permitted to put his stamp as permanently upon the English Reformation as he had been permitted to put his stamp upon the Scottish Reformation.' At the same meeting, in proposing the resolution to Knox, the Rev W Scott-Moncrieff made the same appeal:

> And had his influence been as complete in England as it had been in Scotland, we should not see the present miserable contest going on between those who loved the Reformation and those who, in an enlightened and educated country, wished to go back to Popish darkness.[115]

Scott-Moncrieff preceded this statement with the assertion that history was increasingly recognising the role played by Knox in the Reformation of not just Scotland but England also, calling him 'by far the greatest British Reformer.'

Though we have already encountered numerous declarations of Knox's pivotal place in the development of British liberties, a new element in the historiography of Knox seems to have confirmed this view. The publication of James Anthony Froude's 12 volume *History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Death of Elizabeth*, in the 1850s and 1860s, lent a new impetus to the representation of Knox's role in the establishment of British constitutional civil and religious liberties, dove-tailing with the reading of Knox inherited from Thomas McCrie. Froude's history, inspired in part by Carlyle's emphasis upon the historic role of the 'great man', cast Knox in a highly favourable light: 'No grander figure can be found, in the entire history of the Reformation in this island, than that of Knox.'[116] Such a

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114 'Tricentenary of Knox's Death: to the Editor of the United Presbyterian Magazine,' letter from Henry Renton, *UPM*, 2nd December, 1872, p554

115 *Scotsman*, 26th November, 1872

116 Froude, J A: *History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Death of Elizabeth*, vol X, (London, 1866), p455

portrait of the Great Reformer in a hugely popular historical work was pounced upon by those seeking further to elevate Knox's achievements. Even though Froude's history appeared in instalments, two volumes at a time, between 1858 and 1870, even while it was still being released it acted in support of Knox's role in the Scoto-British reading of Britain's constitutional past. A letter written to the *Scotsman* in 1865, written in support of a proposal for a Knox monument being made by John Stuart Blackie, makes reference to Froude's representation of Knox:

> England also, without doubt, owes John Knox a deep debt of gratitude; for history is now showing in the light those plots against the Protestant religion and the "bastard" Queen, which John Knox then knew and most sedulously watched and thwarted.[117]

In 1865, Froude himself opened the winter session of the Edinburgh Philosophical Institution with a lecture on 'The Influence of the Reformation on Scottish Character,' in which he stated, 'Good reason has Scotland to be proud of Knox. He only, in this wild crisis, saved the Kirk which he had founded, and saved with it Scottish and English freedom.'[118] Froude's history provided the commemoration of Knox with renewed evidence of Knox's decisive role in the political and constitutional crises of mid-sixteenth century England, and, as a result, his and the Scottish Reformation's place in the grand narrative of British history. There is a hint of irony in this, however, as Froude's history was accused – not least by the author himself – of being more concerned with the drama of history than with any deeply empirical or scientific grounding. For the commemoration of John Knox, however, all that mattered was the text's authoritative weight when deployed in support of oratorical contentions.[119] Froude was cited – directly or indirectly – on a number of occasions throughout 1872. In his contribution to the tercentenary commemorations, the Rev Dr Taylor of Renfield Street United Presbyterian Church quoted a lengthy passage from Froude's history, concerning the fact that English history must now recognise its debt to Knox, specifically that Knox's role in establishing the reformed religion in Scotland had saved England from the threat of

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117 'A Knox Statue,' *Scotsman*, 13th April 1865

118 'Philosophical Institution: Mr Froude on the Influence of the Reformation on Scottish Character,' *Scotsman*, 4th November 1865

119 Pollard, A F, 'Froude, James Anthony (1818-1894), rev. W Thomas, *ODNB*

a Catholic neighbour to the north. In his lecture to the working men of Edinburgh, the Rev Dr Duff of the Free Church cited Froude's history as evidence of,

> the sagacity and energy of Knox which detected and baffled the oft-renewed Popish conspiracies and confederations in the South, and thereby saved the throne of Elizabeth, saved England and the Reformation, and with the Reformation, the cause of civil, constitutional, and religious liberty throughout the British Isles, and far beyond.[120]

Just as Wallace had ridden to the rescue of British constitutionalism when it was threatened by the decidedly un-British tyranny of Edward the First, so, too, Knox thwarted the plans of Popish conspirators in England. The commemoration of Knox in 1872 revisited the contention that the Scots had consistently played a decisive role in the constitutional history of Great Britain; had it not been for a Scottish patriot-hero saving the day, Britain would not be anywhere near as great. Wallace, Bruce, Knox and his fellow Reformers were viewed as British heroes. At the same time, either through implication or, more often than not, in open, public statements, the Scottish Reformation was represented as having been superior to the English. The English had only briefly enjoyed Knox's 'resistless avalanche of energy'; the greatest benefit had been reserved for the Scots. Preaching at the Wellington Street UP Church, the Rev Dr Black said that,

> neither in Germany nor in England had the work of the Reformation been as thoroughly done as in Scotland; and that this explained how there were not purer forms of worship, sterner adherence to principle and truth, and more earnest contendings against error and threatened infringement of religious liberty, than in our country. The drippings of Popery had remained in the Lutheran and English Church, and were yielding their bitter fruits in Rationalism and Ritualism.[121]

Across such a broad range of sermons and speeches there were, inevitably, differences of opinion on some of the finer points, particularly with regard to the threat posed by 'the drippings of Popery,' yet there is no doubt that the discourses highlighted above do define the commemorative rhetoric of the 1872 tercentenary. What is remarkable, however, is the dog that does not bark in the night: there was precious little mention of the ecclesiastical politics that were dominating the church

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[120] *NBDM*, 25th November, 1872; also Froude, p457: the original text read that '...Scotland would have been the lever with which France and Spain *worked* on England.' [my emphasis]. There is no way of knowing whether this error was the Rev Taylor's or whether it was the *NBDM's*; *GH*, 25th November, 1872

[121] *NBDM*, 25th November, 1872

courts at this time, specifically the intention to unite the Free and United Presbyterian Churches, which, although on the wane, was still a live issue. The three-hundredth anniversary of Knox's death does not appear to have been used as an opportunity either to promote or denigrate the virtues of denominational union, despite the fact that the most vocal contributions to the commemoration were made by members of these churches. Nor was there any sustained discussion of Voluntaryism and establishment. This absence emphasises further that the character of the commemoration of Scotland's Presbyterian past was largely determined by the more conservative and hard-line Calvinist components within Scottish Presbyterianism. Calling to remembrance the vital contribution made by Knox and the Reformation to Scotland's civil and religious liberty was a weapon in the battle against Popery, not a salve to heal the divisions within the Kirk, and does not seem to have borne much relation to the questions that were sustaining significant breaches within and between Scotland's Presbyterian denominations.

Press reaction to the tercentenary commemorations seems to have been uniformly positive, reflecting the view of Knox as one of the great heroes of Scottish nationality. The *Glasgow Herald* described Knox as representing 'all that is noblest in our national history,' through a combination of 'the enthusiasm of an intensely earnest man with an enlightened and statesmanlike prudence.'[122] As well as quoting the Regent Morton, the *Herald's* editorial made sure to balance its acknowledgement of Knox's intemperance with a glowing portrait of the proud reformer, depicting his confrontations with the Catholic Mary as 'the foundation of our civil liberty.' In a lengthy commentary on the anniversary, the *North British Daily Mail* drew a detailed picture of Knox's life and achievements. Using a common device to emphasise the quality of Knox's legacy, the *North British Daily Mail* contrasted an 'oppressed and benighted' Scotland before the Reformation with the pious and well-educated nation that Knox helped to forge.[123] The *North British Daily Mail* also attested to Knox's sense of humour and the gentleness of his manner. The editorial in the *Glasgow Herald* also dealt with a meeting that had taken place in Edinburgh the preceding Friday to discuss the prospect of a monument to Knox in Edinburgh. The character of this meeting will be dealt with below, but it is worth

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[122] *GH*, 25th November, 1872

[123] *NBDM*, 25th November, 1872

noting that the *Herald*, having expressed its regret at the meeting's lack of unanimity, suggested that the truest monument to Knox might well be the recent Education Act, which had 'given for the first time an opportunity of realising [Knox's] idea in relation to the increased population of the country.'[124]

1872: The Edinburgh Monument Movement

As we have seen from the controversy that surrounded the selection of a design for the National Wallace Monument, though different and often opposed perspectives on the meaning of the past could co-exist relatively peacefully if expressed solely in public speeches, when attention then turned to commemorating national heroism in a more enduring, monumental form, these differences had a tendency to create problems. Though reported in newspapers or re-printed in pamphlet form, rhetorical commemoration was relatively transient, whereas material commemoration was intended as a permanent signifier of the meaning of the past. Attempts to erect enduring memorials tended to exacerbate competition over the ownership of the past, as different perspectives vied to ensure that their reading of the person or event being signified was the representation deemed most legitimate, all based upon the naïve belief that this version would go on to guide the perspective of subsequent generations. That the subject of this monumental remembrance should be an infamous iconoclast and hater of idolatry, could only make the situation all the more complex.

After the Free Church's monument movement of 1846, the next significant attempt to memorialise Knox – other than the Protestant Institute – took place in 1872, as part of the tercentenary commemoration, though it was not the first such movement to have taken place in the intervening period. As briefly noted above, in 1865 John Stuart Blackie had written to the *Scotsman* newspaper, proposing that a monument to Knox should be erected somewhere in Edinburgh. The erection of such a monument, Blackie argued, would not represent 'a narrow and purely sectarian interest,' but instead be a memorial of Knox as 'one of the most honest and manly and courageous Scotsmen that ever trod the streets of Auld Reekie.'[125]

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[124] *GH*, 25th November, 1872

[125] 'A Knox Statue,' letter from John Stuart Blackie, *Scotsman*, 30th March, 1865

To Blackie's mind, there had been five names upon which Scotland's fame as 'an intellectual and moral nation' rested: Scott, Burns, Hume, Buchanan and Knox. Visitors to Edinburgh looked in vain for a monument to these last three. As one found statues to Erasmus in Rotterdam, to Goethe in Frankfurt and to Beethoven in Bonn, so, too, Edinburgh was honour bound to erect a monument to Knox, and it ought to have been a source of some considerable shame that no such memorial had yet been erected.[126] Blackie's proposal attracted a handful of responses, though little concrete action. A letter from 'Sarah Sugarbools' supported Blackie's idea, describing Knox as 'one of the very greatest and best men that Scotland has ever produced;' another letter from 'Pro-Knox,' – whose reference to Froude has been quoted above – reiterated the point that Edinburgh had neglected the memory of one of its greatest figures, and depicted Knox as, 'no canting hypocrite, straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel.' The third and apparently final response from 'A.M.' proposed that the memorial should be a simple stone erected in the Parliament Square, in an attempt to right the wrong perpetrated when the equestrian statue of Charles II had been placed on top of the Reformer's last resting place.[127]

Little else seems to have occurred to the desired end until the tercentenary of Knox's death revived calls for some more enduring form of monumental symbol. Around the time of the tercentenary, a provisional committee dispatched a circular, calling a meeting in Edinburgh on the 22nd November, 'to form a committee of all denominations for the purpose of raising subscriptions for a suitable memorial to John Knox, the Scottish Reformer.'[128] As part of the circular, a variety of potential memorial ideas were proposed: a stained glass window in St Giles; the issue of a popular edition of Knox's *History of the Reformation*; a memorial hall; or a lectureship, 'by which the principles of the Reformation might be kept before the country.'[129] Present at the meeting were the Rev William Graham, James Begg, Alexander Duff,

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[126] *ibid.*

[127] 'Proposed Statue to John Knox,' letter from 'Sarah Sugarbools,' *Scotsman*, 3rd April, 1865; *Scotsman*, 13th April, 1865; 'John Knox,' letter from 'A.M.,' *Scotsman*, 5th April, 1865

[128] 'John Knox Memorial,' letter from 'A Constant Reader,' *Scotsman*, 22nd November, 1872; 'Proposed Memorial to John Knox,' *Scotsman*, 23rd November, 1872

[129] *Scotsman*, 23rd November, 1872. Unless otherwise stated, all details of the 22nd of November Knox Monument meeting are drawn from this source.

John Stuart Blackie, and the antiquary, David Laing, as well as the Free Church Liberal MP, Charles Cowan, who only appears to have turned up to offer the Lord Provost's apologies. The meeting got off to an inauspicious start when none of those present were willing to take the chair. Thomas Smith moved that R A MacFie, Liberal MP for Leith, should preside, but MacFie responded that he could not do so, 'because the idea of erecting a monument to John Knox seems to me most incongruous, and I am here to protest against it.' Macfie was evidently not the only one to arrive with this intention, and it was not until 'several other gentlemen were nominated, but declined to act,' that David Laing consented to be chairman, and from the very beginning, an argument erupted as to the proposed form of the memorial.

Despite there being general agreement that the nature of the memorial would be determined by the amount of money raised, each of the various types of memorial proposed met with a negative reception from one or more of the attendees. Alexander Duff looked upon the idea of a stained-glass window in St Giles as 'unworthy, paltry, discreditable,' going on to add: 'I would shatter it into tatters. I am satisfied that if Knox were to see it, at the risk of getting his fingers bleeding, he would knock the panes out of it as a mockery and a disgrace.' Both James Begg and David Laing agreed, with Begg opting for the issue of Knox's *History* and the appointment of a lectureship. The advocate Thomas Ivory thought that this would only lead to 'battlings among the various sects as to what the principles of Knox were and how far they should be enforced.' A Dr Andrew Thomson agreed, suggesting that a 'great column' would be the most suitable form of memorial; one Captain Mackenzie agreed also, but went so far as to suggest that the best scheme would be to complete the National Monument on Calton Hill, a proposal that was met with 'a laugh.' J S Blackie also favoured a monumental memorial, though neither a column nor a stained-glass window, adding that, 'A lectureship was open to objections, especially if it got into the hands of such a fiery determined old hater of images as Dr Begg.' In the end, it was Blackie who proposed the meeting's only resolution, which was, in effect, that the meeting agreed that Knox was worthy of some sort of enduring memorial, without determining either its form or location. References both to a monument being 'erected' and to its being ideally sited in Edinburgh were removed before the resolution was agreed

to. Despite this vague outcome, however, a committee was appointed to determine the next step.

An editorial in the *Glasgow Herald* lamented that the meeting had done, 'little else than supply a striking illustration of how short a way we have gone in the direction to which Knox's work pointed during the three centuries that have passed since he died.' It was in the pages of the *Scotsman* that the meeting ruffled the most feathers. A letter from 'Another Reader,' took Blackie's view that the absence of any monument to Knox was 'a strange anomaly,' when massive towers had been erected to Scott and to Wallace:

> how much more should the memory of the stern Scottish champion for the freedom of thought and speech be honoured by a generation that now boasts of enjoying the privileges that Knox advocated in a barbaric age, and feared not the face of man.[130]

A couple of days later, the artist J H Lorimer – whose 1891 painting 'The Ordination of the Elders,' would be highly admired by Blackie – suggested that the ideal form for a memorial to 'one of the greatest, if not the very greatest of Scotchmen,' should be a massive chapel for the University of Edinburgh, situated in the grounds of Heriot's Hospital.[131] In the same edition, 'J.I.,' who claimed to have been present at the meeting but had not spoken, looked down upon most of the meeting's more vocal contributors, yet deemed a monument situated in Princes Street Gardens, 'somewhere between those of Sir Walter Scott and Professor Wilson,' as the best form and situation.[132] Another correspondent, 'W.S.,' writing on the 29th of November, proposed that Haddington would be a better location than Edinburgh, because Haddington was 'now beyond all doubt,' Knox's birthplace,' as well as being easily accessible by rail and road, and having 'romantic surroundings.' Furthermore, the monument, 'could be made more of a national character it if was kept out of any large town,' removing the threat of, 'a spirit of jealousy arising between large towns,' – an argument roughly similar to that used in

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130 'The Proposed Knox Memorial,' letter from 'Another Reader,' *Scotsman*, 23rd November, 1872

131 'Memorial to John Knox,' letter from J Lorimer, *Scotsman*, 25th November, 1872; Morrison, J: *Painting the Nation: Identity and Nationalism in Scottish Painting, 1800-1920*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh Univ. Press, 2003), p222

132 *Scotsman*, 25th November, 1872

favour of the Abbey Craig, i.e., the monument would not so much be sited in Haddington as *not* sited in Edinburgh.[133]

The committee met again on the 9th of December, when a report was presented by William Graham stating that it was the decision of the committee that the memorial should be 'of a monumental character and on a scale worthy of the man and of Scotland.' The preferred form – though this was by no means definite – was a colossal statue with other 'figures of large size,' representing George Wishart, Erskine of Dun, Kirkcaldy of Grange, and the Regent Murray.'[134] Despite objections – James Begg, though not present, made certain that his dissent from the committee's conclusions was placed on record – the report was carried. Duncan McLaren, who at this time was one of Edinburgh's MPs, advised the meeting that it would be better to contact some of 'the wealthier members of the community,' in order to see how much they would subscribe, prior to opening the subscription lists. In this way, it would be possible to launch the movement to the public with a healthy amount already promised, working on the assumption that the estimated cost of the monument ought to be 'not much less than £10,000.' Some voices were raised, objecting that the form of the monument had still not been determined; in response, it was resolved that the amount of the funds available would settle this matter. The committee then wrote out to 'several of the nobility and wealthier and more influential members of the community,' stating that it had been resolved to erect the monument, and that, before determining its nature, it would be necessary to, 'ascertain what measure of monetary support the Committee are likely to obtain.'[135] In this letter, signed by the Lord Provost of Edinburgh as Chairman of the committee, the sum aimed at was stated as £20,000, in the hope that each of the individuals approached would be able to donate between £100 and £500, so as to provide a stable financial foundation for any subsequent appeal.

When considering the degree of care being taken by the Knox Memorial committee at this stage, it is difficult not to infer the influence of the National Wallace Monument Movement. It had been only three years since the Abbey Craig

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133 'John Knox Memorial – A Word for Haddington,' letter from 'W.S.,' *Scotsman*, 29th November, 1872

134 'The Knox Memorial,' *Scotsman*, 10th December, 1872

135 'Lord Rosebery and the Knox Memorial,' *Scotsman*, 6th January, 1873

monument had been completed, and the travails of the Wallace Monument committee may well have influenced the speed at which the Knox monument was being promoted. There was to be no massive, national meeting to launch the Knox memorial, but instead, this movement was begun with a private appeal, intending to gather large sums before the possibility of a broader subscription was even to be considered. Furthermore, the Wallace Monument movement had been criticised for its lack of tact, as well as for its poor organisation and administrative incompetence – these were challenges that the Knox committee evidently did not wish to face. There was, however, another contrast: despite the accusations that had been thrown at it, the Wallace Monument had achieved considerable success in its early stages. The Knox Memorial movement, on the other hand, began not with a bang, but with a whimper. Two responses to the committee's initial letter were printed in the *Scotsman*, one from Lord Rosebery, the other from Lord Elcho. Rosebery replied that he would give no more than £20 – the same amount as he had donated to the fund for a memorial to Thomas Chalmers – explaining that any monument to Knox would be better promoted as belonging to the common mass of the Scottish people:

> It was not from the wealthy that John Knox derived his power, it is not among the wealthy that his memory is most dear. He was essentially, I think, a man of the people; the memorial to him should be essentially popular.[136]

A subscription list headed with a number of massive donations, Rosebery argued, would only discourage the lower orders from contributing by putting their subscriptions in the shade. Whereas Rosebery was essentially telling the committee that they were barking up the wrong tree, the 'arch-conservative' Elcho took the national approach.[137] Just as Wallace and Bruce's true monuments were 'the independence of my country from Saxon rule, and the embalming of their memories in the living verse of "Scots Wha Hae,"' the 'Presbyterianism of Scotland and her freedom from Romish spiritual thraldom are more satisfactory memorials of the great religious Reformer than sculptured stone.'[138] These letters attracted a spirited response from Professor Blackie, who attacked the 'shallow excuses' offered by the two noblemen, returning to the argument that any 'intelligent' visitor to Edinburgh

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136 *Scotsman*, 6th January, 1873

137 Fry, *Patronage and Principle*, p79

138 'The Knox Memorial,' *Scotsman*, 7th January, 1873

would wonder why statues had been erected to Charles II and George IV but not to Knox or Buchanan.[139] In particular, if Elcho's reasoning was in any way sound, Blackie contended, 'then there should be no monument to Washington in America, none of Frederick the Great in Berlin... and none of Walter Scott in Edinburgh.' Prompted by Blackie's letter, the *Scotsman* printed an editorial on the matter, disagreeing with everyone and trying to set them all straight. Countering Blackie's argument concerning Washington, Scott, *et al*, the editorial argued that these were monuments erected 'in or immediately after the generation in which the subjects of them lived or were personally known,' reason being that this generation, 'could not possibly know whether or not the objects of their commemorative exertions were likely to remain for ever prominent in the public recollection.'[140] Knox, however, was different, in that his legacy and his fame were so firmly established that no monument was necessary to keep his name alive: 'without aid of the smallest morsel of brass or marble, his name has lived on conspicuously for three hundred years.' In this sense, Elcho's refusal to contribute was legitimated to a certain extent. Rosebery's, on the other hand, was less capable of being defended. The *Scotsman* editorial suggested that, by virtue of the scale of any monument required to sufficiently commemorate John Knox, the cost must needs be more than 'a mere bagatelle like £20,000.' Though it was correct that the lower classes should contribute what they could to a monument to Knox,

> it does not seem a very kind thing that eloquent commemorationists should go about using the weapons of persuasion and excitement to induce persons who can ill afford it to a squander hard-won pittance upon a purely sentimental gratification.

In its turn, the *Scotsman's* editorial drew criticism from a new contributor to the debate, signing himself 'Noslokin,' who claimed that, 'Either there ought to be no monuments at all,' erected through public subscription, or that, 'the monuments should be erected as far as possible to the greatest and worthiest men.'[141] As far as 'Noslokin' was concerned, the critics had been missing the point:

> As I apprehend, the use of a monument is to keep visibly before the eyes of men, in an artistic form, the remembrance of a person who has done some good service. It is an

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139 'The Knox Memorial,' *Scotsman*, 8th January, 1873

140 *Scotsman*, 8th January, 1873

141 'The Knox Memorial,' letter from 'Noslokin,' *Scotsman*, 24th January, 1873

expression of gratitude, recognised among all the most civilised nations, as a fitting testimony of the public sentiment.

The writer went on to describe monuments as 'an educational agency,' promoting then in terms familiar to us from other speeches and texts: monuments were, in and of themselves, didactic, inculcating a sense of patriotism or loyalty in the viewer. The *Scotsman* responded to 'Noslokin' by claiming no monument to Knox was required as an 'educational agency,' an end achieved much more efficiently 'by the literature of this country.'[142]

The objections levelled at the proposed Knox Memorial were, then, aimed at all monumental commemoration of the heroes of Scotland's past: there was simply no need for a monument to Knox as his legacy was already being kept at the forefront of the national mind on a daily basis. Knox's and Wallace's and Bruce's monument *was* Scotland. To attempt to embody the national memory of any of these heroes in monumental form was looked upon as being inherently counter-productive: no monument worthy of the legacy of Knox could possibly be erected in a manner representative of that legacy. This, in turn, rendered it impossible for any monument to claim legitimacy as truly national. These arguments appear to have killed the Knox monument movement stone dead. In December of 1873, the minute was published of a meeting of the 'acting committee of the subscribers to the Knox Memorial,' which recorded in no uncertain terms that the committee had relinquished its attempt to raise a 'great national memorial… from want of encouragement given to the movement.'[143] Instead, the meeting resolved to use the funds available to them to obtain a marble statue of Knox to be placed in some prominent location in the capital, with a call for models to be prepared and submitted for consideration by artists.[144] Despite scaling down their aims, the project remained unfulfilled: at a meeting of the Presbytery of Edinburgh the following February, the Rev. William Graham expressed the hope that the memorial would still be erected in Edinburgh, but also proposed that a better idea might be to erect a 'John Knox Memorial Church' in the city. This proposal was rejected. One is left with the impression that the Presbytery were somewhat tired of the idea, and

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142 *Scotsman*, 24th January, 1873

143 'Knox Memorial,' *Scotsman*, 19th December, 1873

144 *Scotsman*, 19th December, 1873

keen to move on to other business, Graham withdrawing his motion.[145] It seems that the idea of erecting a monument to the Great Reformer was so fraught with controversy that it was better to ignore it in the hope that it would go away.

Go away it did, at least until August of 1879, when the prospect of a national monument to Knox was revived, associated this time with the name of the former secretary of the Acting Committee of the National Wallace Monument movement, the Rev Dr Charles Rogers. Rogers, who had been involved in the – successful – movement to erect a statue to Thomas Chalmers in Edinburgh, had approached David Laing concerning the matter of a Knox memorial in 1878. Laing assured Rogers that he was once more in the process of setting something in motion but, unfortunately for this attempt, Laing died soon after, leaving behind a bequest of £100 towards a Knox monument.[146] According to Rogers, James Meldrum, an associate of Laing's, invited the Reverend Doctor to assist him in continuing Laing's efforts towards, an invitation which Rogers enthusiastically accepted. No doubt one of the reasons for Rogers joining with Meldrum in this new attempt was that he viewed the movement of 1872 as having 'lacked organisation,' the promoters being, in Rogers's words, 'unable to agree among themselves.'[147] Rogers arranged a meeting in London – where he was still living at this time. Despite poor attendance, the meeting was able 'to pass resolutions and form a committee,' with Rogers as honorary secretary. Further to this meeting, subscriptions began to be gathered.

These details for the early stages of the 1879 monument movement are derived from Rogers's responses to questions asked of the monument committee in a series of letters to the *Scotsman* from 'A Parish Minister.' This correspondent, aware of Rogers's reputation for getting up committees out of thin air, and for – allegedly – pocketing a significant percentage of the money raised, was concerned with the prospects of this new monument movement. Rogers, in his predictably prolix manner, responded to 'A Parish Minister's' questions at considerable length. It would appear from the movement's subsequent history that the enterprise was legitimate. In August of 1879, the Knox Monument committee, with the Rev. Dr.

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145 'Ecclesiastical: Presbytery of Edinburgh,' *Scotsman*, 26th February, 1874

146 'The Knox Monument,' letter from Charles Rogers, *Scotsman*, 6th August, 1879

147 Rogers, *Autobiography*, p334 (footnote); 'The Proposed Knox Monument,' *Scotsman*, 7th August, 1879

Chrystal, moderator of the General Assembly of the Established Church, as chairman, met to inspect a model prepared for the monument by D W Stevenson of a statue of the Great Reformer.[148] Stevenson's model had Knox, 'in the attitude of preaching, with his finger pointing towards an open Bible resting on a desk,' the figure denoting, 'a combination of force and earnestness... physical energy and strong determination.' The committee approved of the monument, and commissioned Stevenson to proceed when sufficient funds were available. In addition, it was resolved that, should there be enough of a subscription, figures of Patrick Hamilton, George Wishart, George Buchanan and Andrew Melville should be placed on the statue's pedestal. The committee further agreed to approach the city authorities in order to have the statue erected west of St Giles Cathedral, facing the High Street, though at the date of the meeting only £400 of the required £2000 had been subscribed.

The report of this meeting of the committee and their approval of Stevenson's design prompted yet another flurry of correspondence in the *Scotsman*, with letters both for and against the current movement and its method of business, as well as the inevitable suggestions as to a more suitable form or location for the monument. At least two correspondents resuscitated the idea of completing or adapting the National Monument on Calton Hill.[149] The principal argument was started by a letter from 'L.W.,' who accused the committee of not consulting with the Scottish public before going ahead with the selection of design and site, as well as the crime of commissioning a statue before sufficient funds had been raised, an accusation supported by other letters in the following days.[150] A response to this argument came from James D. Crichton of the Knox Monument Committee, who assured the critics that the committee had chosen to adopt a more conservative approach to the gathering of subscriptions, having 'determined not to "blow the trumpet" before they can "raise the wind."'[151] In common with the 1872 movement,

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[148] 'The Knox Monument,' *Scotsman*, 30th August, 1879

[149] 'The Knox Monument,' letter from 'M'K,' *Scotsman*, 11th September, 1879; 'The Knox Monument,' letter from 'A Douglas,' *Scotsman*, 18th September, 1879

[150] 'The Knox Monument,' letter from 'L.W.,' *Scotsman*, 2nd September, 1879; 'The Knox Monument,' *Scotsman*, 5th September, 1879

[151] 'The Knox Monument,' letter from J D Crichton, *Scotsman*, 11th September, 1879

it had been resolved to approach potential major donors before then extending the subscription to all others, the total required not being limited to £2000, though it was acknowledged that the monument could be erected for that sum if no greater amount was raised. There was also, again as we might expect, a letter from 'Stirlinensis,' expressing concern about the role being played in this monument movement by certain controversial parties who had also been involved in the National Wallace Monument. Crichton responded to this letter by pointing out – without naming any names – that the treasurer and two secretaries were 'purely honorary, and as such render service without remuneration.'[152]

Though a design had been selected, and the committee had every confidence that the movement would be a success, it was not to be: no John Knox monument was erected in Parliament Square. The reasons for this failure, as with the movement in 1872, would appear to be the absence of public support and an ensuing lack of motivation from within the committee. The spectre of Rogers's Wallace Monument Supplementary Committee appears also to have risen again to haunt the Reverend Doctor. The movements to erect a national monument to Knox in 1872 and 1879 do read as a somewhat sorry tale of poor organisation and deep-rooted public disapproval. It would appear that Scotland simply did not want a monument to Knox, the principal reason being that Knox was just too big to be commemorated by a monument. As an editorial in the *Scotsman* following the 1879 movement argued, any monument erected on a scale truly worthy of Knox's legacy must needs be so costly as to be utterly impractical. Perhaps, the editorial stated, a set of small marble busts would be most appropriate if it brought to an end, 'an agitation which serves no purpose except giving vent to the energy of a number of restless and fanciful people who cannot be content to leave well alone.'[153] As with the National Wallace Monument, or any of the other smaller-scale monuments erected to Wallace and Bruce, what was needed was a committed body of men, prepared to suffer public criticism and determined not to let the monument die – despite the controversies that it had suffered, the National Wallace Monument was erected owing mainly to the sustained efforts of Charles Rogers and William Burns.

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152 'The Knox Monument,' letter from 'Stirlinensis,' *Scotsman*, 12th September, 1879; 'Knox Monument Movement,' letter from James D Crichton, *Scotsman*, 15th September, 1879

153 *Scotsman*, 20th September, 1879

The monumental commemoration of Knox did not enjoy such enthusiastic patronage, and, as a result, faltered. Furthermore, as we have seen with Wallace and Bruce, all previous attempts to raise colossal monuments to national heroes in Edinburgh had been unsuccessful for very similar reasons – no one could agree on the cardinal issues: what form should the monument take, where should it be sited, and was it appropriate in the first place? Edinburgh would, however, finally raise not one but two statues to Knox, neither of them particularly colossal.

THE KNOX STATUES AT NEW COLLEGE AND ST GILES

When statues to the Great Reformer were erected in Edinburgh, it happened with a remarkable degree of calm. Two statues were raised in Edinburgh within just over ten years of each other, and there does not appear to have been any great public outcry that Knox was being inappropriately commemorated. In May, 1896, a statue by John Hutchison was raised at the Free Church New College in May, with a statue by Pittendreigh MacGillivray placed in St Giles Cathedral in November 1906. The issues that had been dominating church politics since the 1850s were now reaching either some form of resolution or were in abeyance. By the mid-1890s, the issue of disestablishment had swung back in favour of the Establishment, with the results of the 1895 general election coming down firmly in its favour.[154] On the other hand, union between the Free Church and the United Presbyterians, drawing ever closer together in their views on all matters from Voluntaryism to the relaxation of Calvinist orthodoxy, now seemed only a matter of time. Practical negotiations began in early 1894, and, with Robert Rainy assuming once again a leading role, joint meetings took place from 1897, leading ultimately to the formation of the United Free Church on the 31st October 1900.[155] At the same time, it would appear that the fire of anti-Catholic propaganda was dying down now that the bearers of that torch were in their graves: James Begg had died in 1883.

The movement that resulted in Hutchison's statue being raised at New College appears to have started as yet another Edinburgh attempt to erect a national

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[154] Machin, 'Voluntaryism and Reunion,' pp227-228; Drummond & Bulloch, *Church in Late Victorian Scotland*, pp118-125

[155] Machin, 'Voluntaryism and Reunion,' pp228-229; Drummond & Bulloch, *Church in Late Victorian Scotland*, ch6

memorial to Knox in the capital, one that had, in common with earlier movements, met with both approval and objection, and no doubt its success was owed as much to the relative modesty of the proposal as to the overcoming of dissenting voices.[156] The original idea to have the statue raised had come from John Usher of Norton, who had guided the movement with the assistance of a Mr Wesley of the Bank of Scotland.[157] In much the same way as Patric Park had built a model of his Wallace group, Hutchison had been working on a statue of Knox for some time in the hope of finding a patron who would erect the statue in an appropriate site. The evidence suggests that it was the coming together of Usher and Wesley's monument attempt with Hutchison's existing statue that contributed to the ultimate realisation of the project. However, whereas the form of the monument was not a particularly problematic, the site most certainly was. One might be tempted to assume that Hutchison's Knox statue being sited in New College was yet another example of the Free Church's attempts to claim ownership of the Great Reformer – just as they had in 1846 – yet this site had not been the promoters' first choice. Originally it had been hoped that the monument would be raised on a pedestal at the top of the Mound, in front of the New College.[158] When this site was found to be 'unavailable,' it was proposed that the statue be placed at the crossroads between George IV Bridge and the Lawnmarket. [159] When this, too, was rejected, the promoters attempted to have the statue placed in St Giles Cathedral, but, perhaps owing to the fact that a separate movement had already begun to have a monument to Knox erected there, the site was also refused. Only then did the committee turn to the Free Church authorities who 'at once and without any delay accepted the committee's offer.'

The statue was unveiled during the General Assembly of the Free Church, on the afternoon of the 22nd of May, 1896, 'in presence of a large gathering of ladies and gentlemen,' when Sir John Cowan of Beeslack, representing the committee,

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156 'The Edinburgh Statue to John Knox,' *Scotsman*, 29th May, 1893; 'Unveiling of John Knox Statue in Edinburgh,' *Scotsman*, 23rd May, 1896

157 *Scotsman*, 23rd May, 1896. Unless otherwise specified, all details of the statue's unveiling are drawn from this source.

158 *Scotsman*, 29th May, 1893

159 *Scotsman*, 22nd July, 1893

handed the statue over to Principal William Miller who was the Moderator of the General Assembly in that year. After Cowan had delivered his speech, giving details of the statue's eventful origins, John Hutchison carried out the unveiling, before Principal Miller made a short address on behalf of the Free Church as the statue's new custodians. It is somewhat apt that Principal Miller, one of the Free Church's most influential missionaries, described as the 'natural successor to Alexander Duff,' should deliver a speech, inaugurating the statue. Duff had been one of the foremost proponents of the 1846 attempt to raise a Knox monument in Edinburgh – though, in 1872, he was prepared to smash any stained-glass window erected to the memory of Knox in StGiles. It is with Miller's speech that a shift in the focus of the commemoration of Knox becomes immediately apparent. For Miller, the statue was to stand as a symbol of the common source of all the Scottish churches, Knox's outstretched hand pointing the way towards the time when these churches might, once again, become one entity:

> This was a public, a national statue, and its being entrusted to one particular portion of the Scottish Church was the most signal testimony that could be given that after all, in spite of their divisions, their troubles, their difficulties, and their contentions, all the branches of the Church were one. (Applause.)

The statue might have been positioned in the quadrangle of the Free Church College, but the fact that the Free Church were now in possession of the Great Reformer's likeness, did not represent a claim to sole ownership of his legacy: 'any one of the Churches of the Reformation that had sprung from John Knox was regarded by all the others as worthy of the inheritance of his name,' Miller said. The inscription on the pedestal was clearly intended to be all-encompassing, and is admirably concise: 'Erected by Scotsmen who are mindful of the benefits conferred by John Knox on their native land.'[160] The unveiling was a relatively small event, with only two speeches being delivered, the rhetorical character determined by Miller's brief speech, which was entirely concerned with the issue of church unity. There appears to have been no anti-Catholic component, nor was any aspect of the unveiling given over to Free Church propaganda. Miller continually stressed the common origin and common objects of the Scottish churches. The commemoration of the legacy of Knox had finally caught up with the spirit of the

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[160] 'The Statue to John Knox,' *Scotsman*, 22nd May, 1896

times: no more was the commemoration of John Knox a stick for shaking at the Papists. Amid the flourishing spirit of Presbyterian conciliation, the inauguration of the New College Knox statue was deployed as a means of signifying that all Scottish Presbyterians had stemmed from the same source, a common heritage that, rather than being used to build barricades against Prelacy, now represented a rallying point for union.

Hutchison's statue was – and remains – a fairly dynamic representation of Knox: as described by the *Scotsman* on the day of its unveiling, the statue carries a large Bible, 'into the leaves of which the fingers are pressed as it to keep the place; the right hand is uplifted, head high, as if to enforce some exhortation.'[161] In contrast, Pittendreigh MacGillivray's statue is somewhat more reflective, Knox still holding the Bible in his left hand with his fingers keeping a page, as, with his right, he points towards its pages; whereas Hutchison's statue was intended for an open air site, MacGillivray's was to be mounted in a gothic canopy in the Albany Isle of St Giles Cathderal.[162] It must be noted that neither of these two memorials was erected in a public place: the New College Knox was sited in the quadrangle, the St Giles memorial inside the church itself. Comments made in the *Glasgow Herald* with reference to the St Giles monument may indicate why this was so, and why there was such difficulty in finding a home for Hutchison's statue: a public statue would attract too much of the wrong kind of attention:

> In a somewhat unheroic and prosaic Edinburgh age, John Knox is the most exciting subject that the street preacher can produce. Jesuit and Hope Trust lecturer alike are sure of a large and amused audience, and only last winter the police found it necessary to intervene to prevent partisan fisticuffs.[163]

Any public monument, the *Herald* went on to claim, 'could not well escape becoming the cock-shy of belligerent Romanists, or involving constant guard by descendants of Covenanting fathers.' For this reason, it was deemed wiser to place

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[161] *ibid.*

[162] *Unveiling of Memorial to John Knox in St. Giles Cathedral, Wednesday, 21st November, 1906 at 2 o'clock*, (n.p., n.d.)

[163] 'Knox and St Giles: the Newest Memorial,' *GH*, 17th November, 1906. The Hope Trust was an anti-Catholic movement, formed through the legacy of John Hope, one of nineteenth-century Britain's most vocal anti-Catholic agitators. See, Wolffe, *Protestant Crusade*, p306

any monument to the Great Reformer safely behind lock and key, sparing Edinburgh from further sectarian fracas.

If the two statues have some elements in common, the most telling distinction must be their intended significance. The St Giles monument was begun by the minister of St Giles, Rev J Cameron Lees who, having ministered to a congregation in Melbourne, Australia for some six months in 1894, was given over £360 as a gesture of thanks, the aim being to use the money as the basis of a fund for the erection of a monument to Knox in the cathedral.[164] It was not until 1901, however, that a memorial committee was appointed with the aim of bringing the project to completion, with Charles Guthrie, Sheriff of Ross, Cromarty and Sutherland as one of its conveners, and a lengthy honorary committee appointed to lead the subscription list. Indeed, the tactic adopted by the St Giles memorial committee appears to share a good deal with that of the 1879 movement. With the Australian money as its basis, a large subscription was gathered before any public appeal was made. A letter printed for circulation in 1904 asking for donations to the monument fund, reported that £1150 of the required £1350 had already be subscribed – including a promise of £100 from Andrew Carnegie – so that a mere £200 was all that was needed to fund the memorial.[165] The roll-call of committee members listed in the letter included the former Scottish Secretary and prominent Established Churchman, Lord Balfour of Burleigh, as well as the Rt. Hon. Charles Scott Dickson, the Lord Advocate and Principals Rainy and Story.[166] The required £200 was no doubt forthcoming, as the completed monument was unveiled two-and-a-half years later in November, 1906, before not only the Lord Provost, Magistrates and Town Councillors of Edinburgh, but also the Earl of Stair, Lord Salvesen, ministers from both the Established and the United Free churches, plus 'a very large congregation,' with the memorial being unveiled by Balfour of Burleigh.[167] It is evident that old arguments concerning the suitability of any monument to Knox still lingered: in a speech made prior to the unveiling, Charles Guthrie of the

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164 'Statue to John Knox,' *Scotsman*, 8th January, 1895

165 *Letter from the Executive Committee of the John Knox Memorial*, (n.p., 1904)

166 *ibid.*

167 'John Knox in St Giles: Unveiling of Memorial,' *GH*, 22nd November, 1906. Unless otherwise specified, all details of the unveiling of the St Giles' memorial are drawn from this source.

Executive Committee said that justification of the monument or the movement that had led to its erection should not be necessary. Referring to the 'very strong feeling that it was nothing less than a national scandal,' that no monument had yet been raised to Knox in St Giles, Guthrie celebrated the fact that the monument had been successfully paid for by public subscription, the breadth of which was reflected in the inscription: 'Erected by Scotsmen in Great Britain and Australia and Canada and India and the United States.'

Guthrie's speech was followed by Balfour of Burleigh's, in which the Conservative peer provided a customary portrayal of Knox and of his legacy for Scotland. Knox, he said, had been the man Scotland needed in time of crisis, represented by the 'contest' between 'the Queen with all her charm,' and Knox, 'with his rugged commonsense [*sic*] and his patriotic self-devotion.' Even in the early years of the twentieth century, accusations of extremism had to be countered, Balfour defending Knox against charges of 'intolerance' by stressing that the past should not be judged by present standards. Overall, Balfour proclaimed, Knox had been a great Scotsman, who had forged the nation's civil and religious liberties, as well as laying the foundations of Scotland's education system:

> He stood out manfully for pure religion, for personal liberty, and for a high standard of general education. In other words, he was not only a great ecclesiastic, but as had gone hand in hand with that title in the case of other ecclesiastics, he was also a great statesman.

Even though a memorial in St Giles was most worthy of John Knox, Balfour also returned to a familiar refrain in the commemorative rhetoric we have encountered hitherto, with reference to Knox, Wallace and Bruce: that the greatest memorial of the national hero was the nation itself:

> They might say of him as regarded Scotland what was said of Sir Christopher Wren in St. Paul's: '*Si monumentum requiris, circumspice.*' If they looked round Scotland they would find that Scotland as it was to-day was largely a memorial of the statesmanship of John Knox..

Balfour of Burleigh's role in the erection of this monument is indicative of the fact that Knox was now being used as a focal point for reconciliation. Balfour himself was both a Conservative and Establishment figure – with an Anglican wife – who had opposed dis-establishment agitation in the 1880s, yet was also intent on

Presbyterian re-union.[168] In common with earlier commemorations, Balfour claimed at the unveiling of the St Giles statue that there was still work to be done if the Scots were to fulfil Knox's vision of Scotland, yet – as with Miller's address at New College in 1896 – the crux of the matter was not to educate the populace in the evils of Popery, but to effect a closer relationship between the churches in Scotland. Should the 'better feeling' between the two principal denominations ever 'be brought to its consummation,' it was likely that such an event would take place under the watchful eye of the new memorial. Clearly, the St Giles Knox was intended as a more potent symbol of Protestant unity than the Free Church statue, placed, as it was, in a more evocatively 'national' site, with the closing benediction being delivered by the Rev. R. S. Simpson of the United Free Church.

The inauguration of both the New College and St Giles Knox memorials provide yet more evidence that the character of the commemorated subject is derived from the perceived requirements of the present. Whereas when bodies such as the Scottish Reformation Society called the tune, Knox's legacy was bound inextricably with anti-Catholicism, pushing the Papal threat to the forefront of commemorative discourse, as ecclesiastical priorities shifted, the representation of Knox's legacy altered better to serve current demands for unity. In the absence of such vocal enemies of Knox's monumental commemoration as James Begg, the spirit of the age had altered to one that was more open to the raising of memorials to the Great Reformer, memorials that were not promoted as didactic symbols of resistance to Papal tyranny, but, instead, were intended to symbolise the shared roots of Scottish Protestantism to which both the Established and United Free Churches should look.

CONCLUSION

With the proliferation of Presbyterian denominations in nineteenth-century Scotland, not to mention other Protestant churches, one might have expected the commemoration of John Knox and the Reformation to be the battle-ground over which each denomination fought for possession. This was not the case. Undoubtedly, there were tensions between the different denominations as each

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[168] Bebbington, D W, 'Balfour of Burleigh, Lord (1849-1921),' *DSCHT*, p53; Drummond and Bulloch, *Church in Late Victorian Scotland*, p114-116; Fry, *Patronage and Principle*, pp95,113

made its claim to the Great Reformer, particularly in terms of the Free Church's need to promote itself as the genuine Church of Scotland, yet there was no open warfare for possession of Knox's legacy. As with the collective remembering of Wallace and Bruce, successful commemoration of Knox and the Reformation was dependant upon the actions of motivated individuals and groups in possession of a shared agenda: in the period under examination, that agenda was primarily defined by anti-Catholicism. This was the rallying-point that allowed the commemoration of Knox to overcome its heterogeneity and consistently to organise high-profile national forums for commemoration of an ecclesiastical and national memory. In time, the anti-Catholic component of these commemorations was to fall away, as the generation of conservatives represented by James Begg finally gave way to the new age of co-operation and denominational union, mirrored in the erection of the two Edinburgh statues. Knox was persistently represented as the tap root of Scottish Protestantism, yet whereas he had once been a symbol of Protestant aggression, he ended the century as a much less belligerent figure. He was no longer the first weapon deployed in the battle against the Papists; instead, he was the still point around which Scottish Presbyterians could gather.

Problematic associations with Catholic ritual in the practices of commemoration were overcome by appealing to the hand of God in Knox's work. Celebrating anniversaries was not idolatry under a different name, but an effective device for reminding the nation of God's hand in its development, and in the achievement of those national virtues that had and would always define the Scots. Knox's magnificence was a result of his being favoured by God, owing to the Great Reformer's exemplary piety and patriotism. In much the same way as Wallace had forged civil liberty for the Scottish nation, Knox won for the Scots their religious independence – Scotland remained a free nation, able to follow its own course. One distinction between the commemoration of Knox and the Reformation, and that of Wallace and Stirling Bridge is, however, that those commemorating Knox were not shy of promoting the Scottish Reformation above its English counterpart. The Reformation of Knox was, quite simply, better than the English Reformation, and superior to most other Calvinist Reformations across Europe. The moderation that defined the commemoration of Wallace, with its concentration on the importance of Wallace's proto-Britishness, was by no means a dominant consideration in the commemoration of Knox and the Reformation. Nevertheless, Britishness did enter

into the commemoration of the Reformer, and, in common with the depiction of Wallace's legacy, Knox was increasingly shown to have made a decisive contribution to the development of Great Britain.

In terms of national memory, the narrative development of the Scottish nation mapped out at in this period becomes increasingly clear: Scotland, historically Protestant, had been subjected to the foreign tyranny of Rome; at the Reformation Scotland had been restored to its true self, religiously and civilly liberated from alien oppression. Free access to the Word of God and the concomitant advantages derived from a national education system created a spiritual and knowledgeable nation. This nation went on not only to achieve world-renowned commercial and artistic prosperity, but also to inspire other nations through its pious and patriotic example. When examining this narrative model across the century, however, a distinction can be traced between more moderate and radical readings of this national story, distinguished mainly with regard to the presence of the threat of Roman Catholicism. The antagonistic rhetoric of activists such as James Begg may have provided many of the definitive statements of the commemoration of Knox and the Reformation, but this was achieved by the possession of effective means of communication: the Scottish Reformation Society and its allies arguably shouted louder than anyone else about the meaning of the Reformation. It is perhaps ironic that what was, in one sense, the most radical representation of Scottish Presbyterian memory was being deployed by the most conservative group within the Scottish churches.

Still, a degree of caution is required. The radical voice of the anti-Catholics, and, indeed, the more moderate expressions of the Established Church and United Presbyterians – particularly in 1872 – should not necessarily be read as representing the *collective* memory of John Knox and the Scottish Reformation. In a sense, this examination of the rhetorical character of the commemoration of Knox highlights one of the deficiencies of the analysis of these media: that they represent a past as viewed by one dominant sector of Scottish national cultural expression. In concert with the commemoration of Wallace and Bruce, what can be determined by this examination is that commemorative practices in Victorian Scotland subscribed to the historic civil and religious liberties of Scotland as a means of legitimising current concerns. That is to say, whether the issue was the threat of anglicisation, the spread of Roman Catholicism, or increased centralisation – or, if we consider the education

question from the perspective of James Begg, all three of these – the theme of civil and religious liberty was sufficiently malleable to be able to fit neatly with the national concerns of Victorian Scots. In very much the same way as the myth of Wallace, lacking problematic detail, provided a blank screen on to which nineteenth-century anxieties could be projected, so, too, civil and religious liberty was both remarkably potent and malleable as a signifier of the historic legitimacy of any social, political or religious movement in this period. Any movement which contained elements of resistance to an authority deemed either oppressive or interfering – the centralised British state, Roman Catholicism, church establishment, anglicisation – could be represented as another incarnation of the continuous struggle for genuine national independence. In framing their endeavours within this narrative, Victorian Scots legitimised their aims by rendering them more convincingly national. Not only was their cause a necessary one, it was also definitively Scottish, the latest chapter in the Scots' struggle to be truly free and independent. At the more moderate end of the national scale, this battle had already been won, and all that remained was to work out the details; for those who tended towards the radical, there were still fundamental questions to be asked, and major battles to be fought: the legacy of independence had still not been achieved. The Reformation was still not complete. Across the spectrum of Scottish Protestantism, Knox was still needed to fight necessary battles, even if the protagonists were moderate-minded clergymen.

8. Commemorating the Covenanting Martyrs

Introduction

The commemoration of William Wallace, Robert Bruce and John Knox fitted these national heroes into the fundamental framework of the Scottish past, wherein each turning-point on the road to the Great British present involved the foundation of new and more deeply rooted civil and religious liberties. If a distinction was to be made between the legacy of the Wars of Independence and the legacy of the Reformation, it was a distinction implicit in the ubiquity of 'civil and religious liberty'; Wallace and Bruce had laid the foundation of civil liberty that subsequently allowed Knox to effect religious freedom. As the defining characteristic of Scottish national memory, 'civil and religious liberty' could be moulded to fit the demands of the present, whether political, cultural or ecclesiastical. Commemorative discourse placed the present within this narrative of Scottish nationality, as part of a self-conscious attempt to prove that the achievements and endeavours of the present had inherited the mantle of those patriotic heroes. In turning now to consider the commemoration of the Covenanters in this period, one enters a slightly different *milieux*, though one replete with familiar sentiments.

The commemoration of the Covenanters differed from that of Wallace, Bruce and Knox in that not only had the Covenanting period stretched for almost fifty years, it was also crammed with exemplars of heroism and virtue, whether on a grand scale – Argyll, Richard Cameron, James Renwick – or the more lowly, if no less heroic – John Brown of Priesthill, the Wigtown Martyrs. As a result, one is presented with an enormous number of commemorative foci.[1] Furthermore, the Covenanting era was arguably two distinct periods: from 1637 to the Restoration in 1660, and from the Restoration to the 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688/9, the latter dominated by the so-called 'Killing Times' of the 1680s. If measured purely in terms of monumental commemoration, the latter period is by far the most significant, and the majority of this chapter will concern itself with monuments to these later martyrs

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[1] For details on the locations and subjects of the majority of Covenanter memorials, see, Campbell, Thorbjorn: *Standing Witnesses: a guide to the Scottish Covenanters and their memorials, with a historical introduction*, (Edinburgh, 1996)

– the commemoration of the first period of the Covenanting struggle, as carried out in 1838 and 1843, has been examined in Chapter 6. Here we are concerned with a consideration of the rhetoric deployed in aid of the construction of monuments to the later Covenanting martyrs, as well as charting the changing complexion of those who assumed responsibility for raising them. One further contrast between the commemoration of the Covenanters and of Wallace, Bruce and Knox is the extent to which the Covenanters required a degree of rehabilitation. At the beginning of the period under examination, the achievements of Wallace, Bruce and Knox were commemorated by moderate and radical nationality. The Covenanters, on the other hand, were much more radical subjects, deemed too extremist for the moderate mainstream of commemorative practice. One of the principal aims of this chapter is to follow the Covenanters' shift from the fringes of Scottish commemorative culture, to a position alongside those other potent signifiers of civil and religious liberty. To this end, the analysis in this chapter will concentrate less on the finer points of commemorative discourse – those which, by this stage, have become familiar – and focus more on the gradual movement of the Covenanters away from the fringes of commemorative culture by means of their increasing popularity as yet another milestone in the historic narrative of Scoto-British civil and religious liberty.

As outlined in Chapter 6, much of the theoretical basis for the promotion of civil and religious liberty as being a definitively Scottish historical phenomenon was drawn from the writings of the Secession minister Archibald Bruce, and, after Bruce's death in 1816, Thomas McCrie, who continued to cast the Covenanters in the pivotal role of 'genuine and enlightened friends of civil liberty.'[2] McCrie's defence of the Covenanters in the face of their dismissal from the mainstream of historiographical and cultural representation, specifically in his response to Walter Scott's *Old Mortality*, must represent one of the most commonly cited examples of the debate over the significance of the Covenanters in early nineteenth-century Scotland. In McCrie's view, Scott had represented the Covenanters as a body bent on imposing their religious and political model on the entire nation.[3] Whereas Scott was intent on making clear that he differentiated between the earlier, arguably more

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[2] McCrie, T: *Works*, VII.12, (Edinburgh & London, 1855-6), p113, quoted in Kidd, *Subverting Scotland's Past*, p203

[3] Murray, D M: 'Martyrs or Madmen? The Covenanters, Sir Walter Scott and Dr Thomas McCrie,' *The Innes Review*, vol XLIII, No. 2. Autumn 1992, p174.

moderate Covenanters and the later extremists portrayed in the novel, McCrie tended not to make such a distinction, something he had in common with those who would commemorate the Covenanters later in the century.[4] The same might be said of the portrayal of the Covenanters in John Galt's novel, *Ringan Gilhaize*. Written partly in response to *Old Mortality*, Galt used the Gilhaize family as a means of maintaining a consistent ideology spanning not only the period before and after the Restoration, but also between the Covenanters and the Scottish Reformation in the sixteenth century – the Covenanters as one of the binding threads of Scottish national memory.[5] The martyrs' most consistent written commemoration was, however, to be found in a canon of Covenanting texts, comprised of sermons and famous last words of the later Covenanting period, that had been preserved for the spiritual edification of later generations. Two of the principal works in this canon were John Howie of Lochgoin's *Biographica Presbyteriana*, or *Scots Worthies*, and the *Cloud of Witnesses*, a work written and compiled by members of the Praying Societies, the ecclesiastical descendants of the post-Revolutionary Covenanting remnant. The *Scots Worthies* was a collection of biographical sketches of Covenanting martyrs, compiled with scrupulous antiquarianism by the relatively uneducated Howie, whilst the *Cloud* contained the last testament of the Covenanting martyrs along with details of their burial sites. Both texts ran to several editions, and kept the flame of the Covenanting tradition burning during the nineteenth century.[6] In a sense, these enduring works achieved for the Covenanters what McCrie's lives of Knox and Melville had done for the Reformation, albeit in a radically different form. Furthermore, whereas Bruce and McCrie had been products of the Secession, the *Cloud of Witnesses* and *Scots Worthies* were intimately connected to the Reformed Presbyterian Church.

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[4] Murray, 'Martyrs of Madmen?' p175

[5] Mack, D: "'The Rage of Fanaticism in Former Days". James Hogg's *Confessions of a Justified Sinner* and the Controversy over *Old Mortality*,' in Campbell, I (ed.): *Nineteenth Century Scottish Fiction: Critical Essays* (Manchester, 1979), pp39-40.

[6] Cowan, E J, 'The Covenanting Tradition in Scottish History,' in Cowan, E J & Finlay, R, (eds.): *Scottish History: the Power of the Past*, (Edinburgh, 2002)

COVENANTER MONUMENTS AND THE REFORMED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The hills and moorland of southern Scotland must stand as the 'Hall of Heroes' for the later Covenanting martyrs: at a conservative estimate, over twenty columns, obelisks or other memorials were erected in Lanarkshire, Ayrshire and Galloway alone between 1810 and 1900, an estimate which does not include the renovation of existing Covenanter grave-markers. In addition to these material commemorations, numerous commemorative sermons were preached at Covenanting sites throughout the century: for instance, there appears to have been a sermon preached annually at the site of the battle of Rullion Green.[7] The thread that binds the majority of these monuments together, is that almost all of them were erected in connection with members of the Reformed Presbyterian Church. If, after 1843, the Free Church was intent on proving that it, not the Established Church, was the true church of Knox and the Reformation, the Reformed Presbyterians were arguably even more intent on asserting their role as the custodians of the Covenanting legacy. After the Revolution of 1689/90, members of the United Societies and, post-1743, the Reformed Presbyterian Church, committed themselves to preserving whatever traces of the Covenanting martyrs still remained, not only by collecting together the final testaments of the martyrs or in publishing the illuminating details of their lives, but also by ensuring that the graves of the martyrs were properly inscribed.[8]

One of the most significant examples was the commemorative slab placed in Greyfriars Kirkyard in Edinburgh.[9] According to J H Thomson's, *The Martyr Graves of Scotland*, the inscription on the original slab – reproduced on the current monument, which dates from 1771 – was written by Hugh Clark, member of the Reformed Presbyterian church and one of the original editors of the *Cloud of Witnesses*. In the nineteenth century, the Reformed Presbyterians were to develop this commitment to maintaining the Covenanter graves by erecting commemorative monuments. Whereas the eighteenth-century grave-markers tended to be modest

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7 'Rullion Green,' *Scotsman*, 23rd August, 1881

8 Hutchison: *Reformed Presbyterian Church*, pp132-133

9 Thomson, J H: *The Martyr Graves of Scotland: Being the Travels of a Country Minister in His Own Country*, (Edinburgh, 1875), pp111-117

stones, albeit often with elaborate inscriptions, even the earliest nineteenth-century monuments were pillars or obelisks, usually erected through subscriptions raised from the general public, prompted and promoted by a sermon. Two of the earliest examples of this type of Covenanting commemoration were the monument to John Brown of Priesthill, erected in 1825, and the monument to the Cameronian preacher James Renwick, in 1828. The Renwick monument was the idea of the Rev Gavin Mowatt of Whithorn, who had managed to collect the £100 necessary to erect the monument from 'Christians of all denominations.'[10] The monument at Priesthill, on the other hand, was erected, 'at the instance of a Society instituted in Renfrewshire and Ayrshire,' with the express intent of renewing and maintaining Covenanter graves.[11] The language of monumental commemoration was evidently still being worked out, as earlier monuments appear to have had a tendency towards prolixity and inappropriate emphases. The Priesthill monument was looked upon as 'a pillar of mockery,' as it contained only the name of the minister who had preached the inaugural sermon, as well as 'sundry directors, who seem to have undertaken the onerous duty of getting the little stone wall built around the grave, and a monument erected in memory of themselves.'[12]

This tendency to commemorate the commemorators was shared by another unpopular monument, erected at the site of the Battle of Drumclog in 1839. (Figure 5) As with the Renwick and Brown of Priesthill pillars before it, the movement to have this monument erected was initiated by a sermon delivered at the scene of the battle by a minister of the Reformed Presbyterian church, this time the Rev Archibald Rogerson, Reformed Presbyterian minister at Darvel, in 1836. The sermon managed to raise £16 1s 1½d, yet the monument was destined to be remarkably unpopular, as it appeared to commemorate Rogerson and the monument committee as much as those who fell at the battle.

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[10] Wodrow, R: *The history of the sufferings of the Church of Scotland from the Restoration to the Revolution; with an original memoir of the author, extracts from his correspondence, a preliminary dissertation, and notes by Robert Burns*, vol III, (Glasgow, 1828-1830), footnote, p454

[11] 'The Graves of the Martyrs,' *Scottish Presbyterian*, Aug 1841, p112

[12] 'A Visit to the Grave of the Martyr of Priesthill,' *UPM*, Jan 1857, p7

Figure 6: Original Drumclog Monument

Described by one writer as a 'ponderous effusion, sufficient to have crushed a tower of more weighty and durable material,' the inscription, composed by Rogerson, covered all four sides of the gothically styled monument and ran to 370 words.[13] In terms of its broader commemorative context, however, what is significant about this 'ponderous effusion,' is that it contained references to 'the grand results, civil and ecclesiastic, of the Reformation attained to, between 1638 and 1649,' as well as marking that the victors at Drumclog had, 'imprinted the image of their character on the destinies of the nation.'[14] The Rev Rogerson's sermon, preached to a congregation of somewhere between three and four thousand, also evoked the tradition of the Covenanters as champions of civil and religious liberty. In addition to having fought for, 'the *exclusive supremacy* of our Lord Jesus Christ *in the church*; and *her consequent independence* of all political control,' Rogerson argued that the Covenanters, 'waxed valiant in fight, for *their own*, and *their country's civil rights and privileges*.'[15] [original emphasis] These are key recurring themes of both Covenanter commemoration, and the rhetorical commemoration of Scottish religious and patriotic endeavour more generally: i.e., the church's independence of state control, added to the assertion that Covenanters had fought a truly national battle for both

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[13] Gibson, J: *Inscriptions on the Tombstones and Monuments Erected in Memory of the Covenanters with Historical Introduction and Notes*, (Glasgow, c. 1875), p30

[14] *ibid.*

[15] 'Sermon at Drumclog,' *The Scottish Presbyterian*, July 1836, p172

civil and religious privileges. Moreover, at any sermon preached in the middle of the Ten Years' Conflict, these issues would not have been far from the mind of any church member, be they Moderate, Evangelical, Secessionist or Reformed Presbyterian.

Beyond the realm of monumental commemoration, the Covenanters were increasingly being drawn upon by political causes more acceptable to the mainstream of Scottish society. In August, 1832, a celebration of the newly passed Reform Bill was held at Drumclog, connecting the 'advantages that would naturally flow from such an extension of the elective franchise,' with the spot where the nation's 'Covenanting forefathers made such a vigorous and effective stand.' The Chartist press was replete with references to the perceived Scottish tradition of championing liberty and freedom, mapped from Wallace and Bruce, through the Reformation and the Covenanters to the present day. Attending the massive Chartist demonstration on Glasgow Green in 1838, a detachment from Strathaven bore a banner carried at Drumclog.[16] However, in terms of public commemoration, the Reformed Presbyterians appear to have practically owned the Covenanters. As keepers of the Covenanting flame it was in the interests of the tradition they sought to transmit, that the Covenanters were seen to be paragons of that which made Scotland Scottish. When a movement was begun in 1848 to erect a monument to the Wigtown Martyrs, the *Scottish Presbyterian,* journal of the Reformed Presbyterians, concluded that the selection of William Symington as the principal speaker proved that, 'however much some may claim to be the successors of the Martyrs,' that at least the 'various leader in Wigtownshire,' believed that the honour still belonged to the Reformed Presbyterians.[17] Articulating the legitimacy of their claim to the Covenanting inheritance was fundamental to Reformed Presbyterian participation in these commemorative events; though the Reformed Presbyterians comprised a small minority of church-going Scots in the nineteenth century, their public profile surely

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16 'Strathaven, Aug 10,' *Scotsman*, 18th August, 1832; Smith, D C: *Passive Obedience and Prophetic Protest: Social Criticism in the Scottish Church, 1830 - 1945* (New York, 1987), pp164-165

17 'Monument to the Martyrs at Wigtown,' *Scottish Presbyterian*, October 1848, p702; 'Monument to Margaret M'Lauchlan [*sic*] and Margaret Wilson, The Wigtown Martyrs,' *Dumfries and Galloway Standard*, 21st August, 1858

benefited from this self-conscious association with their Covenanting forefathers.[18] The Wigtown event tends to support the view that interest in the martyrs, their monument and in what Symington had to say about them was fairly widespread, though anyone listening to Symington's sermon in the hope of learning something about the lives of Margaret Maclaughlan and Margaret Wilson may have left disappointed.[19] Rather than recount the details of the martyrs' sorry end – allegedly by drowning – Symington's sermon dealt primarily with the idea of martyrdom. In terms of the discourse of Covenanting tradition, the content of Symington's sermon closely mirrored that of the Rev Rogerson at Drumclog, including,

> the right of resistance to such civil rulers as usurp the prerogatives of the Redeemer, tyrannise over his church, oppress the people, and lend weight of their influence to the subversion of constitutional equity, liberty, and law...[20]

Once again the Covenanters were characterised in terms deeply sympathetic to the Reformed Presbyterian church, yet also to the aims of Evangelical religion and the secular virtue of the rights of resistance to tyrannical civil rulers who attempt to subvert 'constitutional equity, liberty, and law.' The Covenanters were promoted as champions of much more than the freedom to worship according to a pattern of one's choosing – they were also patriots, true and loyal Scots, acting in the grand tradition of civil and religious liberty. In an earlier sermon, Symington had clearly stated the connection between the religious ideals of the Covenanters and their commitment to a libertarian Scottish nationality. 'In them piety and patriotism were kindred feelings,' Symington said, adding,

> *God and our country!* was the governing sentiment of their patriot hearts. They have been represented as traitors;– their persecutors were traitors. At the time they lived there existed

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[18] Callum Brown estimates that, in 1851, the Reformed Presbyterians amounted to only 1% of Scottish church-goers, although the figure for Glasgow was 2%. Their membership was largely concentrated in the south and west. Brown, *Religion and Society*, p45

[19] Adams, S, 'Wilson, Margaret (1666/7–1685)', *ODNB*. It must be noted that the evidence concerning the execution of the Wigton Martyrs is both ambiguous and controversial.

[20] 'Sermon VIII: The Souls Under the Altar: Or the Opening of the Fifth Seal (Delivered at Wigtown, September 24,1848; in aid of a fund for erecting a monument in honour of the martyrs whose ashes repose in the churchyard of that parish.)' in Symington, William: *Discourses on Public Occasions*, (Glasgow, 1851), pp228-229

not a spark of true liberty in our land but what burned in the bosom of these traduced and persecuted wanderers.[21]

In its attempt to turn the tables on those who would accuse the Covenanters of rebellion, this extract is reminiscent of the commemoration of Knox and the early Covenanters encountered in the preceding chapters. There was evidently a perception that the Covenanters required defending against such accusations, a theme that would become more persistent as the martyrs entered the mainstream of Scottish commemorative culture. Though the Reformed Presbyterians would continue to assert the direct genealogical link with their religious forebears, the authority of the Covenanting tradition was to spread beyond the realm of the Cameronian inheritance.

Nationalising the Covenanting Martyrs

Signs of this shift from the periphery toward the cultural mainstream can be found at Wigtown ten years on from William Symington's sermon. On the 17th August 1858, the Martyrs' monument was inaugurated, when the foundation-stone of the new obelisk was laid before a gathering of three to four thousand people. A procession, led by the Provost, Council and Magistrates, walked to the site of the monument from the town square, where a psalm was given out by the Rev James Fleming, United Presbyterian minister at Whithorn.[22] The foundation-stone having been laid by the Provost, the day's principal speaker addressed those able to squeeze into the United Presbyterian church. The speaker in question was James Dodds.[23] Dodds was a member of the Free Church, albeit from a Secession background, derived his position as principal speaker not from any direct association with the Covenanters – as he might have done, were he a Reformed Presbyterian – but from his position as a popular authority on the subject. About a year prior to the inauguration of the new monument, Dodds had given a course of lectures on the Covenanters in Wigtown, 'which had the effect of stirring up a determination to have the [monument] proceeded with.' Dodds's address on this occasion, though

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[21] Sermon III: 'The Character and Claims of the Scottish Martyrs,' in Symington: *Discourses*, p84

[22] 'Monument to Margaret M'Lauchlan [*sic*] and Margaret Wilson, The Wigtown Martyrs,' *Dumfries and Galloway Standard,* 21st August 1858

[23] Knight, W: *Some Nineteenth Century Scotsmen*, (Edinburgh, 1908), p374

didactic, reflected the shift in ownership of the Covenanting tradition towards one much more self-consciously integrated with the binding narrative of civil and religious liberty. In Dodds's view, the Covenanters had been, 'instrumental in working out constitutional order ecclesiastically, but also constitutional order politically.'[24] At Wigtown, Dodds represented the martyrs as champions of both religious and civil liberty: whereas under the authority of Reformed Presbyterian speakers, civil liberty tended to merely complement religious freedom, Dodds was keen to attribute equal weight to both. The inscription on the finished monument reflects this emergent balance by representing the martyrs' achievements as securing 'our religion and liberties.'[25]

The Reformed Presbyterians still had a word to say, however. At a dinner held after the monument inauguration, the Rev Mr Easton of the Reformed Presbyterian Church thanked Dodds for name-checking the Reformed Presbyterians but went on to complain that, as Easton's denomination 'had as close an affinity to the Martyrs as any other in Scotland,' no one connected with that church had been asked to take part in the day's proceedings.[26] The Secretary of the monument committee responded to Easton by saying that one of the committee's most active members was a Reformed Presbyterian, yet Easton's complaint stands as an indication of the fact that ownership of the Covenanters was slipping from the Reformed Presbyterians' fingers. As other bodies recognised their debt to the martyrs, so the Reformed Presbyterians were sidelined, to the extent that the movement to erect a monument, instigated by members of that church, could be taken over by a combination of civil society and other religious denominations.

This trend away from an association with the authority of the Reformed Presbyterians towards other denominations, favouring a balance between secular and religious commemoration, can also be detected by returning to Drumclog. The original, prolix monument, having been built of very poor quality stone, soon began to fall into a state of disrepair, its end sealed when a lightning strike rendered it little

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24 *D&G Standard*, 21st August, 1858. For

25 Gibson, *Monuments*, p286

26 *D&G Standard*, 21st August 1858

more than a pile of rubble.[27] A new monument was proposed, subscriptions duly collected, and the new monument's foundation-stone was laid in December 1867. In contrast to the civic splendour of the Wigtown event in 1858, there was no procession from Strathaven or Darvel and no gathering of local worthies; instead, a prayer was said by the Rev Mr Leiper, Free Church minister at Chapelton and secretary of the monument committee.[28] Though the inauguration itself bears little resemblance to that in Wigtown, there are significant parallels in the content of the speeches. Leiper called the monument a 'national' monument, 'not so much because the nation has charged itself with the building of it, as because it ought to have done so.' Drumclog, the speaker protested, represented one of the great moments in the Scottish historical narrative of civil and religious liberty, emphasising the importance of the civil component in the struggle for Scottish liberties. In contrast to 'the ambitious grasping that has characterised the wars of others,' Scotland's battles had been, 'heroic and self-reliant endeavours to maintain her own independence.'[29] Unlike James Dodds, however, the Rev Leiper chose to elevate the Covenanters' victories in the name of religious liberty above those of more mundane freedoms. Though he would not dare 'under-estimate any of those noble stands [the nation] made for civil freedom or for national existence,' citing Bruce and Wallace, the Rev Leiper made a point of singling out battles such as Drumclog, fought for 'conscience sake,' in the name of Scotland's religious freedom.

That the Rev Leiper was a minister of the Free Church, and not a Reformed Presbyterian indicates the ecclesiastical component of Covenanting commemoration moving away from the fairly peripheral realm of the Reformed Presbyterians and towards those churches more actively engaged in civil society. The United Presbyterian and Free Church commitment to Evangelicalism encouraged the use of permanent public symbols such as monuments, and the ideological precedents of the Covenanting tradition resonated with the Evangelical need for religious liberty,

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27 Gibson, *Monuments*, pp30-33; for the full text of the original inscription see (McMeeken, J W): *A Sermon Preached on the Battle-Field of Drumclog, on Sabbath, 24th June, 1849 by the Rev J W MacMeeken*, (Glasgow, 1849), Appendix; see also, Todd, A B: *The Homes, Haunts and Battlefields of the Covenanters*, (Edinburgh, 1888), vol II, pp66-72

28 'The Drumclog Monument,' *Hamilton Advertiser*, 7th December 1867; 'The Monument at Drumclog,' *Glasgow Herald*, 7th December 1867

29 *ibid.*

and – just as with the legacy of Knox – provided these denominations with historical legitimacy. Whereas the Reformed Presbyterians could deploy the Covenanters by citing uninterrupted genealogical descent, the Evangelicals, lacking this direct connection, ideologically aligned themselves with the tradition within which the Covenanting martyrs fought and died. Added to this, former members of the Reformed Presbyterians, frustrated by their church's rejection of civil society, defected in considerable numbers to the Free Church and the United Presbyterians, bringing devotion to their Covenanting forefathers with them. [30] This, in turn, contributed to the acceptance of the Covenanters as suitably resonant subjects for public commemoration. This definition of the process does not, however, fully take into account the secular component of Covenanting commemoration. The Wigtown Martyrs' monument is representative of the change in ownership of the Covenanting heritage, as it moved away from the Reformed Presbyterians towards civil society itself. That is to say, while still carried out primarily as a means of providing a didactic marker of the Covenanters' contribution to Scottish nationality, erecting monuments to Covenanting martyrs increasingly became a matter of civic pride and identity.

The Secularisation of Covenanter Commemoration

In Sanquhar in 1860, a public demonstration was held in the town's Queensberry Square to commemorate the two Cameronian declarations 'published' in the burgh in 1680 and 1685. There were between two and three thousand people in attendance, many of whom had come by train and 'all sorts of conveyances,' for the occasion.[31] Amongst the decorations flew a flag that had been carried at Drumclog and Bothwell Bridge; two triumphal arches 'composed of evergreens and the beautiful wild flowers of Scotland,' were erected, and numerous civic worthies, the local volunteer corps and three brass bands were in attendance – overall, one

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[30] Brown, *Religion and Society in Scotland*, pp29. The sermon preached in 1879, to mark the bi-centenary of the battle of Drumclog, delivered to upwards of 2,000 people, was made by the Rev Dr Easton of Darvel, formerly of the Reformed Presbyterian church, now of the Free.

[31] Brown, J: *The History of Sanquhar*, 2nd edition (Dumfries, 1891), pp142-143

report recorded, there was 'an appearance of great bustle and pleasing excitement.'[32] The 'leading spirit' in the movement for this commemorative event was the local United Presbyterian minister, the Rev Dr Robert Simpson, author of *Traditions of the Covenanters*, as well as a number of other works chronicling the tribulations of the Covenanting martyrs. All in all, the demonstration was markedly civic in character, with the chairman for the day being the town Provost, and, as the second principal speaker, none other than Professor John Stuart Blackie. All but the Established Church appear to have been represented: on the podium were ministers from the United Presbyterians, the Free Church and the Reformed Presbyterians. After the Provost had given the background to the day and the sequence of events that were to take place, the Rev Dr Simpson delivered a lengthy address. A procession was then formed that, upon arriving at the first triumphal arch, was treated to the Rev Mr Crawford of the Free Church reading out a copy of the first Sanquhar Declaration, before moving on to the ruins of Sanquhar Castle, where they were addressed by Professor Blackie.

This was a commemorative event replete with all the common signifiers of Covenanting commemoration, yet the event also involved a great deal of civic ostentation. It was customary for one of the speakers to take on the role of historian, proving the historical veracity of the event's subject, narrating a brief account of their achievements and providing some pointers for how those achievements might be interpreted. At Sanquhar in 1860, this role was taken by Robert Simpson, whose long and detailed speech included an attack upon Charles the Second for having 'wickedly invaded the rights and privileges of the subjects civil and religious.' True to his role as local historian, with a duty to take the Covenanting history of his locale and project it onto the country as a whole, Simpson made sure to attach the cause of the Cameronians to the whole of the Scottish nation, rather than merely one corner of it. Connecting this event with the Reformation Commemoration due to take place in Edinburgh, Simpson closed his speech with a warning concerning the toleration of Popery, and to exhort the young people assembled before him to 'imbibe' the Christian spirit of their Covenanting ancestry. In marked comparison to Simpson's didacticism, John Stuart Blackie's

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[32] 'The Sanquhar Declaration: Great Public Demonstration at Sanquhar,' *Dumfries and Galloway Saturday Standard*, 23rd June, 1860; Brown: *History of Sanquhar*, p142

address appears to have been more akin to stand-up comedy. Blackie's speech was avowedly national in its character, beginning by placing the Covenanters within the grand narrative of Scottish national memory. There had been, he said,

> only two great battle-fields in the history of Scotland – the field of Bannockburn and the hills of Dumfriesshire and Galloway and Lanarkshire. On the one were established our political, on the other our ecclesiastical liberties.'[33]

Having emphasised the Covenanters' role in resisting the 'tyranny of the later Stuarts,' and countering Scott's caricature of the Covenanters by quoting Burns, Carlyle and Froude, Blackie made the obligatory reference to the Covenanters as paragons of civil and religious liberty, referring to them as, 'prophets of all that we now enjoy; the pioneers of constitutional government, the men who were the first to move in planting that tree of liberty of which we now possess the fruits.'[34] Both Simpson and Blackie defended the Covenanters from their critics' barbs, countering accusations that the Covenanting martyrs were guilty of extremism, of suffering for 'trifles,' and of being rebels. Simpson said,

> if *they* were rebels *then*, *we* are rebels *now*, for the whole nation under the present constitution is in the attitude of rebellion, because we live under a government which in the year of what is called the famous revolution of 1688 adopted something like the principles of the Covenanters in matters political.[35] [original emphasis]

In addition to the celebrity of Simpson and Blackie, there were still speeches to be made by the Reformed Presbyterians. The Rev Thomas Easton's speech was relatively short, yet he made sure to promote the Reformed Presbyterians as the true inheritors of the Cameronian legacy: 'the Cameronians of 1680 can find their best, if not perhaps their only appreciative eulogists among the Cameronians, the Reformed Presbyterian Church of the present day.'[36] Though he joined in with promoting Scotland/ Britain above other nations, Easton added that the Glorious Revolution had, 'ignored the national vows of a covenanted time, ignobly surrendered the victory which had been won, and retained, according to the legal authorities of the

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[33] *ibid.*

[34] *ibid.*

[35] *Dumfries and Galloway Saturday Standard*, 23rd June, 1860

[36] *ibid.*

empire, as an essential prerogative of the crown. (Cheers).'[37] [original emphasis] Easton was the Cameronian conscience of the event, making sure to emphasise the Reformed Presbyterian doctrine of rejecting an uncovenanted state. Nevertheless, he was but one of a number of speakers, and by no means occupied a position of authority. Whereas thirty years beforehand we might have expected Easton, or William Symington to provide the definitive interpretation, that perspective was now provided by a United Presbyterian and a characterful classicist.

This demotion of the authority of the Reformed Presbyterians at the Sanquhar demonstration, is indicative of the Covenanters' shift from what had been commemoration of a primarily religious character, towards a more civic-oriented model. Though lacking the presence of any renowned Covenanting authority, the inauguration of the Martyrs' Monument, in the village of Muirkirk in June of 1887, represents the weaving of local associations and national memories. Paid for by Charles Howatson of Glenbuck, a local laird, the monument was intended to commemorate those martyrs who, in the words of one of the monument's many inscriptions, 'for their adherence to the Word of God and Scotland's Covenanted Work of Reformation, Suffered Martyrdom in Muirkirk Paris.'[38] The inscription was not entirely accurate, as the monument commemorates those who fell at Aird Moss which was in the neighbouring parish of Auchinleck. Whether intentional or not, this error stressed the desire of those responsible for the monument to locate it firmly within the Covenanting martyr tradition, binding Muirkirk to the Covenanters' nationality. Furthermore, the inauguration of the Muirkirk Martyrs' Monument made an unambiguous connection between the civil and religious freedoms bequeathed to Scotland by the Covenanters, and the beneficent reign of Victoria, the inauguration intended to mark Muirkirk's celebration of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee year.[39] The Rev John Wallace, the local Established Church minister, emphasised the contrast between the 1680s and the 1880s:

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[37] *ibid.*

[38] Todd, A B: *The Homes, Haunts, and Batttlefields of the Covenanters*, (Edinburgh, 1888), p145

[39] 'Muirkirk Martyrs' Monument,' *Ayrshire Advertiser and West Country and Galloway Journal*, 23rd June 1887.

> ...we cannot but feel the great and the happy change that has taken place in the relation between sovereign and people since those trying times when the House of Stuart sat upon the Throne... [Victoria] has not only a constitutional, but a moral right to reign.[40]

The other attendant ministers did not celebrate the Queen's reign to quite the same extent, yet this combination of Covenanting martyr tradition and worship of the monarch provided one of the predominant themes for the inauguration, and one could find no better example of the synthesis of potentially exclusive ideologies, signifying the role that commemoration played in binding together diverse elements of the national memory into a coherent whole. The monument was intended to signify Muirkirk's place in the grand narratives of Scottish and British nationality, both as drawn from the national memory, and as celebrated at the present Jubilee. At the same time as the Scots were attempting to prove that their nation had contributed to the civil and religious liberties definitive of Britishness in the age of Victoria on the grand scale, smaller localities were proving that they, too, had a place in the national memory.

Even after the union of the Reformed Presbyterians with the Free Church in 1876, remnants of the Reformed Presbyterian Church continued to play a role in the commemoration of their forebears, specifically as a result of the labours of the Rev Dr James Kerr of Glasgow. Kerr was one of the Reformed Presbyterians' most high-profile ministers: as well as being the editor of several collections of Covenanting texts he had also re-published a collection of Covenanter sermons originally edited by John Howie of Lochgoin. Kerr was also a promoter of commemorative monuments: along with the author A B Todd, he was instrumental in erecting a monument to Howie at Lochgoin, unveiled in June 1896 at that year's international Reformed Presbyterian Convention – sustaining the tradition of the Cameronians remembering their own.[41] Kerr played a significant role in the erection of both the monument to Alexander Peden at Cumnock in 1892, and the 'national' monument at Bothwell Bridge.[42] The Bothwell Bridge monument was first proposed at the 1896 Reformed Presbyterian Convention, with Kerr taking on

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[40] *ibid.*

[41] Homes, A: *Memorial Volume to the Rev James Kerr, DD*, (Glasgow, 1905), pp80-81

[42] 'Peden Memorial at Old Cumnock,' *Ayrshire Advertiser and West Country and Galloway Journal*, 23rd June 1892; Homes: *Rev James Kerr*, pp94-95

the lion's share of the fund-raising, 'through his tact and business capacity.'[43] In 1899, a 'national memorial committee' was formed under the presidency of the Duke of Hamilton, Kerr being one of the honorary secretaries, and the monument was unveiled in June of 1903, with Lord Overtoun delivering the keynote speech. Kerr's participation at Bothwell Bridge maintained the Reformed Presbyterian observance of Covenanting commemoration. At the inauguration of both the Peden and Bothwell Bridge monuments, Kerr moved a resolution expressing the satisfaction of those present, and expressing his hope that such commemorations would, 'prove helpful in stimulating interest in those great doctrines for which Peden and his fellow Covenanters contended, and to which the British Empire owes its present civil and religious liberties.'[44] Despite the deep involvement of a remnant Reformed Presbyterian, the principal speaker on both occasions were laymen – John Stuart Blackie was the principal speaker at Cumnock – and though Kerr took a high-profile role in the monument committees, on the day his place was firmly alongside representatives of other denominations, including the Established Church. It was left to others to make the most public statements regarding the Covenanters' significance. Lord Overtoun at the Bothwell Bridge inauguration, prior to warning a crowd of over 26,000 spectators about the 'Romish Danger,' said that those who 'possess in this favoured land the priceless boon of civil and religious liberty,' must remember that the history of Scotland was, 'really the story of the Scottish Church, and of the heroic souls who, against fearful odds, stood and died for Christ's Crown and Covenant.[45]

The Covenanters no longer lurked on the fringes of Scottish-national commemorative culture; their value had increased to the extent that they could be commemorated from all corners of Scottish society. Commemoration of the Covenanting martyrs raised them to the summit of the pantheon of Scottish national memory, above even the patriot-king Robert the Bruce. With reference to their medieval counterparts in the 'Scots' Valhalla,' the Covenanting martyrs came to represent a safely Presbyterian complement to potentially ambiguous pre-Reformation patriots such as Bruce or Wallace; there was no awkward religious issue

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[43] *ibid.*

[44] *Ayrshire Advertiser and West Country and Galloway Journal*, 23rd June 1892

[45] 'Battle of Bothwell Bridge, Unveiling of National Memorial,' *GH*, 21st June 1903

to be elided from the commemorative discourse. In a nation where the churches, their relationship with the state and with one another, continued to provide one of the defining features of Scottish nationality, the Covenanters, benefiting from two centuries of invention and re-invention, had been transformed into paragons of civil and religious liberty, a source of national pride that had at its heart a devout and expressive Presbyterianism. Just as Wallace and Bruce's 'Romish' loyalties were set aside in order to represent them as paragons of civil and religious liberty, so too the years could soften the focus on the Covenanting martyrs, blurring their dogma into a libertarianism, neatly edited into the narrative of Scottish national self-development.

1880: The National Covenanting Commemoration

Despite the increasing secularisation of the Covenanters' legacy, the most national event held to commemorate the Covenanters in the nineteenth century was an ecclesiastical one, having more in common with the Reformation commemorations of 1860 and 1872 than with the inauguration of any Covenanter monuments. In June of 1880, an inter-denominational committee composed almost entirely of ministers issued a circular proposing that the bicentenary of the 'famous declaration at Sanquhar,' be adopted as the date for a national commemoration of the 'Covenanting Struggle.'[46] The committee – which included James Begg – arranged for commemorative sermons to be preached across Scotland on the 20th of June, with services to follow in other parts of Scotland throughout July, August, and into September. Numerous events were held during the period of the commemorations, with most taking place at or near a site sacred to Covenanting memory. In September, the committee reported that over one-hundred 'special meetings' had been held during the summer, 'many of them in the open air,' and that '14,000 statements, 10,000 tracts, and 12,000 pamphlets had been specially prepared and circulated.'[47] On the 20th of June, the principal date set aside for commemoration, services were held across central Scotland, with both James Begg and James Kerr preaching at Greyfriars – Begg to a much larger congregation –

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[46] 'Commemoration of the Covenanting Struggle,' *Scotsman*, 12th June, 1880

[47] 'Covenanting Commemoration,' *Scotsman*, 18th September, 1880; 'Covenanting Commemoration,' *NBDM*, 18th September, 1880

whilst in Glasgow sermons were delivered on Glasgow Green by the Rev Mr Gault of the Free Church, and at both Cathedral Square and the Barony Church by the Rev Robert Wallace of the Reformed Presbyterians, though neither achieved an audience of any more than a few hundred. The Rev Dr Easton preached at both Bothwell and Hamilton to filled churches, and the Rev Thomas Hobart, Original Secession minister at Carluke, delivered a sermon in Lanark Churchyard to a crowd estimated at either fifteen hundred or two-thousand people.[48] In July, sermons were preached at Solfields in Irvine by ministers from a variety of denominations, and at Torwood Castle near Larbert, followed by a public meeting held in the Temperance Institute in Greenock, addressed by James Kerr. [49] Services were also held at Rullion Green, Ayr, Alness in Ross-shire, and at North Berwick, the latter in remembrance of those imprisoned on the Bass Rock.[50]

The 1880 Covenanting Commemoration was evidently national in its scope and coverage, yet, attendance at the various meetings does not seem to have reflected its intended nationality. Even though most of the services were held at historic centres of Covenanting activity, many were poorly attended, or, as some reports state, were attended only by local parishioners. Aside from the examples given above, the crowd at North Berwick was described as 'not large;' the congregation at Torwood Castle was reported as 'limited.'[51] The size of the congregation at the Rullion Green commemoration numbered over 1,000, but compared unfavourably with other services held at the same site at other times. In 1827, the Rev Mr William Anderson, Reformed Presbyterian minister at Loanhead, had preached to 'not less than 3,000 or 4,000 persons;' in 1881, the year after the national commemoration, a sermon was preached to a congregation estimated at

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[48] *Scotsman*, 21st June, 1880; *GH*, 21st June, 1880; 'Covenanters' Commemoration,' *Hamilton Advertiser*, 22nd June, 1880. Begg's biographer states that Begg, 'regarded this as one of the most memorable days of his life.' Smith, *Memoir of James Begg*, vol II, p534

[49] 'Irvine – Commemorative Services', 'Covenanting Commemoration at Torwood Castle,' *Scotsman*, 19th July, 1880

[50] 'Commemoration of Covenanting Struggle,' *Scotsman*, 22nd July, 1880; 'Covenanting Commemoration at Rullion Green', 'Ayr – Covenanting Meeting,' *Scotsman*, 26th July, 1880; 'Dingwall – the Covenanters,' *Scotsman*, 6th August, 1880; 'Covenanting Commemoration at North Berwick,' *Scotsman*, 13th September, 1880

[51] *Scotsman*, 19th July, 1880; *Scotsman*, 13th September, 1880

three thousand.[52] The example of the Rullion Green event tends to suggest that the relatively poor attendance at the 1880 commemorations should not necessarily be interpreted as indicative of a lack of public interest in the Covenanters, as primarily religious events held to commemorate the martyrs were quite capable of drawing a healthy congregation, even if the event was to be held some distance from a town or village. In July 1891, the Rev Jacob Primmer preached to over 3,000 people at the Cameronian monument at Airds Moss; in July, 1857, a sermon preached by the Rev Peter Carmichael of the Reformed Presbyterians, in aid of a monument to the Covenanting martyrs, George Allan and Margaret Gracie, drew an enormous crowd, even though, as the report in the *Ayrshire Advertiser* stated, 'no conveyance can be taken to it nearer than two or three miles; and there is no village or church nearer the spot than 11 or 12 miles.'[53] The evidence suggests, therefore, that, though attendance at commemorative events held during 1880 was by no means meagre, it did not compare favourably with commemorations held at other times, suggesting that the 1880 commemoration failed to reach beyond its usual body of adherents.

The rhetorical content of the 1880 commemoration conforms to the model we have encountered at other times, with the main theme being that the principles of the Covenanters were as relevant in the 1880s as they had been in the 1680s, and that it was more necessary to resist those influences that might dilute the fundamentals of Protestantism. At the same time, there was evidently still a requirement, felt by some if not all of the speakers, to represent the Covenanters in a positive light and to counteract accusations of extremism and intolerance. In both his addresses, the Rev Dr Easton – former Reformed Presbyterian and member of the Covenanting Commemoration Committee – claimed that Scottish Protestantism had been 'Covenanting from the very dawn of the Reformation.'[54] Countering the argument that the Covenanters were, 'fanatics, traitors, rebels,' Easton claimed that,

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52 'The Covenanters,' *The Times*, 18th August, 1827; *Scotsman*, 23rd August, 1881

53 'Drumclog,' *Glasgow Evening Citizen*, 2nd June, 1879; *Ayrshire Advertiser*, 30th June, 1891; 'Martyrs' Graves,' *Ayrshire Advertiser*, 23rd July, 1857

54 *Scotsman*, 21st June, 1880; *Hamilton Advertiser*, 22nd June, 1880

> It was by their means that our country, small and insignificant and poor among the nations, was raised to a rank equal with the foremost; not, it might be, in material wealth and greatness, but what was far better, in intelligence, worth, and piety.[55]

Indeed, Easton went so far as to claim that it was 'to the Covenanters Scotland owed and Europe owed it that religious liberty had now an actual as well as constitutional existence.'

The remnant Reformed Presbyterians were, as ever, keen to point out that all was not necessarily well. At Kilbirnie, the Reverend James Dick lamented the fact that, as he saw it, the current commemoration was not motivated by 'genuine doctrinal and practical sympathy with the Covenanters, but it appeared that the sympathy was more merely historical.'[56] Dick complained that the Covenants tended to be represented as interesting historical documents, drafted by men who had made 'a noble stand, but were considerably narrow in their view on most points.'[57] He then went on to prove that this reading of the Covenanters must be rejected, that the Covenants and the Sanquhar Declarations were 'as applicable to the present time as the day in which they were signed,' as it was the duty of every Christian to 'do what he could to bring the nation to which he belonged to the feet of the Lord,' the first step in this process being to disallow atheists from the legislature.[58] The more radical preachers continued to emphasise the threats looming over Scottish Presbyterianism. Both James Begg and James Kerr in their sermons at Greyfriars highlighted the dangers of biblical criticism as undermining an essential foundation of Christian faith; Kerr referred to biblical criticism as 'an interference with the inspiration and authority of God's Word, such as had not been witnessed for the last two centuries.'[59] In other words, as a threat to the principles of Reformation and Covenant, biblical criticism could be likened to the Stuart monarchy's meddling with Presbyterian worship in the seventeenth century, a form of interference that might bring about similar consequences for Church and State. For James Begg, grudgingly admitting that the threats faced by Protestants in the

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[55] *ibid.*

[56] 'Kilbirnie,' *op cit.*.

[57] *ibid.*

[58] *ibid.*.

[59] 'Services in Greyfriars' Churchyard, Edinburgh,' *op cit.*

1880s might not be quite as profound as those under which their Covenanting ancestors suffered, biblical criticism still represented a 'new and portentous form of evil, of which [the Covenanters] little dreamt.'[60] Any attempt to question the divine truth of Scripture represented a deliberate attempt,

> to subvert the whole principles of the Reformation, and of the Constitution of the country, so dearly secured – to set aside the Divine Word in all our public legislation – to overthrow the whole faith of the people – to assail Christianity in her great stronghold – and to introduce universal scepticism.

If such an attempt proved successful, Begg fumed, 'all security for life and property would come to an end; a flood of ungodliness would be followed by a flood of anarchy and despotism,' and the legacy of the Covenanters would be squandered.

To defend against such evils, it was necessary to remember what the Covenanters' attitudes had been to a State that, firstly, did not sufficiently recognise the importance of Bible truth, and, secondly, was too prey to the tyrannical influences of Rome. Begg said that, 'Many seemed at present blind to the fact that two centuries had brought us back to circumstances similar to those in which Cameron testified and the Covenanting martyrs died.'[61] In Begg's view, it was the priest at the king's elbow that had brought about the 'intolerant and bloody despotism' of the Killing Times: whereas the predominant conception was that the Stuart kings were the 17th century equivalent of Edward I – a monarchy that had forgotten its constitutional duties – Begg's spin on this model was to claim that the Covenanting struggle had been brought on as a result of the Roman Catholic Church's continued attempt to increase its power and influence through the Stuart kings.[62] This process of subversion was still ongoing; indeed, the same rule that the Covenanters applied to the Stuarts ought, Begg proclaimed, to be applied to ministers of the present government.[63] The present generation needed to draw their inspiration from the Covenanters' attitude to uncovenanted authority, and to call for

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[60] *ibid.*

[61] *ibid.;* 'The Covenanters' Commemoration: Dr Begg on modern Dangers and their Remedy,' *GH*, 21st June, 1880

[62] *ibid.*

[63] *ibid.*

the 'expulsion' of any ministers of state who were insufficiently loyal to the same Presbyterian principles. There was also much criticism of Establishment and the existing church-state relationship. Begg made sure to harangue against Voluntaryism; James Kerr averred that the Covenanters were no voluntaries, 'in the sense of wishing that the State should have nothing to do with religion.' Speaking as a true Reformed Presbyterian, however, Kerr proposed that though one of the Covenanters 'great aims was to liberate religion from state control, they never for a moment thought that the State should be liberated from the control or religion.'[64]

In common with the national commemorations of the Reformation and of Knox, the 1880 Covenanting Commemoration was very much intent on erecting defences against an embattled religion. Whether the attacks to be repelled were from the traditional Prelatic or Popish quarters, from biblical critics or those who sought to desecrate the sanctity of the Sabbath, the discourse of the 1880 commemoration actively engaged with the role of commemoration as a force for effecting change, for deploying the precedents of the past in aid of present causes. This was no representation of the past for its own sake: as argued by James Dick in his address at Kilbirnie, to commemorate the Covenanters purely as an historic movement that had achieved what it set out to do, was to miss the point of their invocation: it was more vital than ever that the principles of the Covenanters be recalled and put into practice. Furthermore, just as the problematic details of other national heroes could be passed over in favour of an emphasis upon their high ideals and patriotic virtue – Wallace's Roman Catholicism, for instance – so, too, some of the awkward details concerning specific Covenanters were elided in favour of the bigger, idealistic picture. The difficulty was, of course, that the very act of commemoration could itself be represented as suggestive of Romish practices. We have already encountered, in the introduction to Chapter 6, the criticisms hurled at James Begg by 'Original Seceder' in the pages of the *Scotsman*, a sentiment reiterated the following day by 'A Covenanter:' 'Can they hope, in this apeing [*sic*] of the spirit and devices of Antichrist, by relics and commemorative services, to attract this country to a due sense of its rights and privileges?'[65] The response to such accusations, the threat of which was acknowledged at the inauguration of the Knox

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[64] *Scotsman*, 21st June, 1880

[65] 'The Covenanting Commemoration,' letter from 'A Covenanter,' *Scotsman*, 25th June, 1880

statue in 1825, was to emphasise the principles themselves, and, indeed, to ensure that the martyrs were depicted as by no means perfect. For example, at Bothwell, the Rev Easton said that he, 'would not pronounce an unqualified eulogium on all they said and did: it was with the great principles for which these men contended they had specially to do.'[66] By focusing upon the virtues represented by the martyrs, and not the martyrs themselves, an attempt was made to avoid association with the 'spirit and devices of the 'antichrist.'

CONCLUSION

The Covenanting martyrs began the nineteenth century on the fringes of commemorative culture, the preserve of the Reformed Presbyterian church and political radicals. There was no dramatic alteration in the character of the Covenanting legacy across this period; what changed was the scope of its appeal. In simple terms, the meaning of the Covenanting struggle as commemorated in the nineteenth century never really changed from beginning till end. The inscription on the 1903 Bothwell Bridge monument reads,

> In honour of the Covenanters who fought and fell in the battle of Bothwell Bridge, 22d June, 1679, in defence of civil and religious liberty.'[67]

Yet in 1835, writing of a sermon delivered to 'not fewer than *twelve thousand* individuals,' by the Rev Mr Carslaw, Reformed Presbyterian minister of Airdrie and – as James Kerr would be – an editor of Howie's, *Scots Worthies*, a correspondent in the *Scottish Presbyterian* said,

> [At] this moment do we see in the numbers at present upon this ground a living monument of their esteemed worth, and in the present civil and religious liberty enjoyed in Scotland, do we perceive a memorial of their achievements infinitely more valuable than the crown of the conqueror.[68]

Even though the Reformed Presbyterians would continue to play a role in the commemoration of the Covenanting martyrs, even as a remnant after 1876,

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[66] *Scotsman*, 21st June, 1880

[67] *GH*, 21st June 1903

[68] 'Sermon at Bothwell Bridge,' *The Scottish Presbyterian*, November 1835, vol II, p89. The Rev Dr Carslaw also re-published the *Cloud of Witnesses* in 1836.

Covenanting commemoration did not gain broader national appeal until the tradition was drawn upon by the more popular, Evangelical churches. As members of these churches participated in the commemoration of the Covenanters, so that form of the Covenanting tradition proposed by Bruce, McCrie and the Reformed Presbyterians, moved into the mainstream of commemorative discourse. Furthermore, this secular component of commemoration dovetailed with the religious, blurring the rough edges of the Covenanting tradition and rendering it acceptable to large-scale commemorative event. With this shift, the Reformed Presbyterians became one voice amongst the many vying to represent the essence of the Covenanting martyrs, yet what remained was the central theme of civil and religious liberty as the binding thread in both the Covenanting tradition and the narrative of Scottish nationality.

9. Conclusion

The Scottish past was alive and well in the nineteenth century, and if it failed to find a full and rounded expression in the work of historians, it achieved widespread and consistent representation through the commemorative practices of nineteenth-century Scottish civil society. Despite the weakness of political nationalism in this period, suggestions that nineteenth-century Scots experienced a national crisis of confidence would appear to be countered by the prevalence and consistency of their commemorative practices and rhetoric. Commemorative practices were used as a means of communicating nationality, the sense that Scotland had always been and always would be a distinct and independent nation, if not nation-state. National memories had meaning, significance and potency for the Scots, characterised by an emphasis on the historic development and retention of a distinct and independent nationality, and founded upon the transcendent Scottish-national virtues of civil and religious liberty.

In much the same way as the historiographically indistinct Wallace acted as a blank screen onto which any one of a number of images might be projected, the concept of civil and religious liberty was extraordinarily malleable, able to be moulded around the invented and framed traditions of the Scottish past. Civil and religious liberty provided the narrative theme for collective memory of the Scottish past, wherein these freedoms had been defended against the machinations and incursions of tyrannical despots. Whether the villain of the moment was a Plantagenet King, the Papacy, or the later Stuart monarchy, Scotland had continually been restored to its true national path by the efforts of its national heroes. William Wallace had forged the Scottish nation and imbued it with its love of manly independence; Robert the Bruce had reaped what Wallace sowed, sealing at Bannockburn the civil freedoms that Wallace had set out at Stirling Bridge. In turn, John Knox and his fellow Reformers, drawing upon a native Presbyterian tradition begun by the Culdees, had restored Scotland to its true religious self through their victory over the tyranny of Rome, achieving a religious complement to the civil independence founded by Wallace and Bruce. When the later Stuarts attempted to undermine these liberties, the Covenanters arose to remind the nation of its proper nature, representing those Scottish national virtues that would go on to prevail at the Glorious Revolution. Indeed, the significance of the Glorious Revolution as the

consummation of this grand narrative should not be neglected. Despite the constant theme of Britishness that runs through the invocation of national memory in Scotland at this time, it is 1689/90 – and not 1707 – that represented the true turning-point, that saw the victory of virtuous nationality over tyranny. By defeating the Stuart despots, civil and religious liberty had won the battle that had been ongoing since the time of Wallace; 1707 was merely the constitutional validation of the ideological victory in 1689/90. At each stage in this national story, Scottish nationality had retained its integrity in the face of alien attempts to undermine it. The emphasis on 1689/90 reflects the synthesis at the heart of this projection of national memory between enlightenment constitutionalism and the libertarian tradition of the Covenanters.

Defined by its political liberalism, religious Presbyterianism and cultural conservatism, nineteenth-century Scottish society found in this synthesis the well-spring of its own greatness, one that allowed a dialogue to take place between a British present and a Scottish past. Rather than the Union cutting the Scots adrift from their national memories – or forcing them to represent their past as something devoid of significance – analysis of the rhetoric of commemorative practice reveals that nineteenth-century Scots were intent on proving the veracity and relevance of their history, both as Scots and as Britons. The demands of the present were projected into the past, woven in with collective memories of national heroism, and then read back to the present, in order to assert the timelessness of nineteenth-century cultural, social and political qualities. The commemorative rhetoric of this period involved sustained attempts at proving that the Scots had always been net contributors to the development of Britishness. Wallace, Bruce, Knox and the Covenanters were represented as proto-Britons, heroes that could and ought to be celebrated for the contribution they had made to the successful achievement of Great Britain, with Scotland pulling more than its weight in the forging of British nation and Empire. Both Wallace and the Covenanters had taught their fellow Britons a lesson in what it was to be British.

Wallace was depicted as a constitutionalist, defending his fellow Scots against arbitrary power; though they may have been defeated in battle, the ideology of the Covenanters had prevailed, ushering in the Williamite Revolution. Furthermore, John Knox was represented as having played a decisive role not only in the creation of a pious and patriotic Scotland, but also in defending English Protestantism from

Papal plotting, and, by his heroic endeavours as God's instrument, had made a considerable contribution to the process of bringing Scotland and England together.

Scoto-Britishness could prove problematic, however, and despite having endured since Wallace's time, Scottish nationality was itself by no means monolithic. Views of Scotland's role within Great Britain were as varied as the civil society that gave them voice, their quality determined by one's perspective on the role of the Scottish past in the present condition of the British state. Scottish nationality ranged across a diverse landscape of often opposed views concerning past and present, from the romantic to the radical by way of a dominant and agenda-setting, moderate middle ground. Romantics wanted a return to the past whilst radicals demanded a new future, yet both forms of nationality saw the national memory as informing the demands of contemporary calls for change, whether regressive or progressive. For the extremes of Scottish nationality, the greatest threat posed was assimilation, the loss of Scottish distinctiveness in the face of encroaching anglicisation. This was the new tyranny that Scotland had to resist, yet, though both of these groupings were politically and culturally active, neither possessed any of the political or cultural influence of the dominant moderates, for whom anglicisation was no threat at all.

Time and again, it was moderate Scottish nationality that determined the character of Scottish national memory, controlled its meaning, framed its significance. All corners of Scottish society believed their past was important and brimful of lessons that must be learned, and all agreed that Scotland was an historically legitimate nation, distinct and independent, deserving of the name 'nation,' by virtue of its institutions, its history and its identity. What differentiated the moderates from the more nationalistic extremes, and radical nationality in particular, was not how the legacy of the past was characterised, but how that legacy was being spent. For the radicals, this inheritance had been squandered in 1707, when the independent Scottish nation had entered into a political union with a partner nation that insufficiently recognised the Scots' historically legitimised nationality. Complaints concerning the operation of the Union were widespread, and, whether moderate or radical, such complaints were aired in public. It was, however, the extent to which one was prepared to go to assert one's nationality and its place in the present order, that determined its nature. For the moderates, the legacy of the past had been well spent by entering into a union with England as an equal partner. Tinkering with the administration of the British state may be

necessary, with greater recognition of Scottish distinctiveness being the driving force, yet any serious accusations concerning the propriety of the Union were strictly *infra dig.* What these distinctions reveal is that, though Scottish civil society remained too heterogeneous to produce a coherent nationalist voice, it did not lack a meaningful history to draw upon. The two poles of Scottish nationality that produced anything close to nationalism proper, the romantic and the radical, were too clearly divided to produce an enduring nationalist discourse – even if they had wished to do so. With a firm grip on the means of representing Scottish national memory, possessors of a more moderate nationality ensured that the Scottish past was put to quite different use. Rather than being deployed in the name of Scottish nationalism, the Scottish past was used to prove Scotland's historic independence and its role in the formation of Great Britain across time.

One of the defining factors in the characterisation of Scotland's national heroes was their representation as 'men of the people,' a virtue not reserved for William Wallace, but extended to Knox and the Covenanters. Aside from Robert the Bruce, the great men – and women – of Scottish national memory were of relatively lowly birth, yet had raised themselves up to greatness through their personal virtues, most notably a combination of patriotism and piety, embodying all that was great about the nation. It was this element of the memory of Wallace that raised him to the highest echelon, above Bruce; Knox represented the Scottish-national attributes of self-improvement and education, attributes that he inculcated in the Scottish-national mind; the Covenanters embodied the simplicity of the native Lowlander, for whom religious and civil liberty were synonymous. A good deal of the representation of these heroes' characters, and the motivation for their actions, was prompted by the need to defend them from the accusations of their critics, with Knox and the Covenanters benefiting most from this tendency. It is more than evident that, throughout the century, there was a need to counteract accusations of extremism or fanaticism, and, for the Covenanters specifically, unlawful rebellion. In Knox's case, the strategy adopted was to excuse the violence of his temperament by referring to the violence of the times in which Knox rose to greatness; for the Covenanters, it was necessary to emphasises that they had acted in defence of the law rather than against it – rebellion against an oppressive despotic state was no rebellion at all. That said, and to a far greater extent than in the commemoration of Wallace, the flaws of Knox and the Covenanters were acknowledged, yet this was

done in order to prove that the commemorated subject was not being sanctified or idolised. The commemoration of the past involved a dangerous flirtation with the structures of ritual, a resonance identified by many of those who engaged in the practice of commemoration. In order to prove that their commemorative acts were not signs of Popish ceremonial sneaking in under national guise, it was necessary to show that the commemorated subject was by no means being represented as perfect; instead, it was the national hero as God's instrument that was being remembered. Knox the man may be painted in glowing colours, yet the light that shone from him was the light of God's will – the narrative of civil and religious liberty could be said to have been, from the Presbyterian point of view, the story of God's special favour for the Scottish nation. This favour was reflected in commemorative acts with both a religious and secular focus, where Scotland was persistently depicted as a promised land, more virtuous, more coherent, more historic, in short, more national, than any other nation worthy of the name. Scotland's national heroes either belonged alongside the other great heroes of history and liberty – Leonidas at Thermopylae; George Washington; Guiseppe Garibaldi – or were better than other national heroes such as William Tell. The greatness of the Scottish nation, its equality in the Union with England, and its place amongst or above the nations of the world was a result of the achievements of its national heroes: Stirling Bridge was one of the great battles of all time; the Scottish Reformation was more complete and more truly national than any other religious reformation.

Gauged from this analysis of commemorative rhetoric and practices, the Scottish past in the nineteenth century was neither a source of embarrassment nor lacking in significance. On the contrary, it was seen as providing the precedents upon which the present magnificence of both Scotland and Britain were founded. Not only were the Scots articulating the role of their national memories in this period, but these memories were remarkably consistent – regardless of the end to which they were applied. The Scots were attempting to prove that their nation had been making decisive contributions to the development of Great Britain throughout its past. In the nineteenth century, the Scottish past acted as a complement and inspiration to the Scoto-British present.

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