Anglicisation in the letters of Marie Stewart, Countess of Mar and her family: A sociolinguistic perspective

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to further our understanding of the development of the Scots language by focusing on the family letters of the elite noblewoman, political influencer, patron of the arts and mother of 12, Marie Stewart, Countess of Mar (1576–1644). The multilingual circumstances of Stewart's life as a French-born Jacobean courtier turned Scottish Covenanter establish her as a fascinating research subject. Stewart's extant letters preserved in the National Library of Scotland archival collections, along with those sent by her husband John Erskine, 2nd Earl of Mar and their children, date from the first half of the seventeenth century and were written during the period of anglicisation in Scotland initiated by the Reformation and reinforced by the Union of the Crowns in 1603. Almost entirely overlooked by scholars until now, these remarkable manuscripts present a rare opportunity to explore how different members of the same family responded to the linguistic change. A historical sociolinguistic, pragmatic approach will uncover the conditioning factors that influenced the senders' language, such as sex, recipient, and sender location. Corpus linguistic techniques track 23 iconic features of Early Modern Scots in a purpose-built corpus compiled from new diplomatic transcriptions of 47 manuscripts. Then a methodology that combines quantitative and qualitative variation analyses compares the senders' use of linguistic forms. The dissertation concludes that micro-level studies of small numbers of language users can produce the nuanced picture that many scholars now consider necessary to pinpoint the complexity of what happens during linguistic change. The findings reveal a range of levels of anglicisation within a single family's correspondence, their behaviour serving to augment our understanding of Scotland's compelling linguistic history.

LIST OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

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ABBREVIATIONS

DSL	Dictionary of Scots Language
EM English	Early Modern English
EM Scots	Early Modern Scots
HCOS	Helsinki Corpus of Older Scots
LAOS	A Linguistic Atlas of Older Scots
NLS	National Library of Scotland (Edinburgh)
ODNB	Oxford Dictionary of National Biography
OED	Oxford English Dictionary Online
OS	Older Scots
RPS	The Records of the Parliaments of Scotland to 1707
SCAN	Scottish Archive Network
ScotsCorr	Helsinki Corpus of Scottish Correspondence
Standard SE	Standard Southern English
SSE	Scottish Standard English
SSNE	The Scotland, Scandinavia and Northern European Biographical Database
WISH	Women in Scottish History Database

CONVENTIONS

Page numbers

The main text of this study uses a standard Arabic page numbering system, for example, Page 1, Page 2 and Page 3. The appendices page numbers are prefixed with 'A', for example, Page A1, Page A2 and Page A3. [APPENDICES REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.]

Formatting

The study uses small caps to indicate sociolinguistic factors, for example, SENDER, RECIPIENT and COMPOSITION.

Photographs of the manuscripts

Due to copyright restrictions, it was not possible to reproduce my entire set of high-definition photographs of the manuscripts in the published version of this dissertation. However, the NLS has kindly granted permission for cropped images to be included. These 'snippets' are used as evidence to support, for example, the handwriting analysis in Chapter 1. Due to Covid restrictions at the NLS archive, time constraints meant it was not possible to measure the manuscripts, so the snippets are not 'real-life' size. However, snippets have been neither shrunk nor enlarged but cropped and reproduced directly from the manuscript photograph to maintain parity of scale.

Naming conventions

Until the eighteenth century, the custom within Scottish cities and in the Lowlands was for women to retain their birth family surname (maiden name) after marriage, and so Marie Stewart, like all the Scottish women discussed here, retained Stewart as her surname throughout her life (Reynolds & Zancarini-Fournel 2017: 255–257). This convention notwithstanding, many of the women discussed here were known by various names, their titles often altering when they married, some of them more than once. Similarly, the nomenclature of elite male writers was subject to change when they were awarded or inherited titles or appointed to positions of importance within society. This study introduces individuals by their full name and any titles. After that, if they are neither a letter sender nor a recipient, they are referred to by either their title or birth surname. Thus, for example, John Leslie, 6th Earl of Rothes, is referred to subsequently as Rothes and Alexander Henderson as Henderson. One exception is Ludovick Stewart, 2nd Duke of Lennox, referred to by his given name, Ludovick, to avoid confusion with his

father, also Lennox. Letter senders and recipients also referred to as *informants,* are treated differently to highlight their status and to differentiate between those people who share the same surname. Thus, tables and figures use the informant name, and the text uses the shortened informant name (see Table 1.1). Marie Stewart is therefore set apart as the only Stewart; Lord Mar identified as the holder of the Mar title; the children grouped as Erskines but identified individually by their given names, and the other recipients set apart from the family by their names or titles. The appendices label the letter transcriptions and manuscript images with the senders' full names and any titles. [APPENDICES REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.]

Table 1.1 Informants: names and titles

Senders: full name and title(s)	**Informant name**	**Shortened informant name**	**Relationship to Marie Stewart**
Marie Stewart, Countess of Mar	Marie Stewart	Stewart	-
John Erskine, 2nd Earl of Mar	Lord Mar	Mar	Husband
Anne Erskine, Countess of Rothes	Anne Erskine	Anne	Daughter
Mary Erskine, Countess of Marischal	Mary Erskine	Mary	Daughter
Sir Charles Erskine of Cambuskenneth and Alva	Charles Erskine	Charles	Son
Colonel Alexander Erskine	Alexander Erskine	Alexander	Son
Sir Arthur Erskine of Scottiscraig	Arthur Erskine	Arthur	Son
Recipients: full name and title(s)	**Informant name**		**Relationship to Marie Stewart**
Mary Hope, Lady Bandeath	Mary Hope	Mary Hope	Daughter-in-law, Charles' wife
George Norvell	George Norvell	Norvell	Servant
John Murray of the Bedchamber, *later* 1st Earl of Annandale	John Murray	Murray	Courtier, family friend
Sir Thomas Hope, Lord Advocate	Thomas Hope	Thomas Hope	Father-in-law to Charles Erskine
William Douglas, 7th Earl of Morton	Earl of Morton	Morton	Cousin of her husband

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION AND MATERIALS

1.1 Introduction

Today more than four hundred years since the Union of the Crowns in 1603, the status of the Scots language and its relationship to Present-Day English continues to arouse both public and scholarly debate. This study aims to contribute toward a deeper understanding of the development of Scots by directing attention to the seventeenth century, a crucial turning point in the history of the language when it was affected by religious discord initiated by the Reformation, followed by constitutional division and civil war after the death of King James VI/I. The changes wrought by these sociohistorical events have long been cited, together with the rapid expansion of print culture, as compelling reasons for the anglicisation of the Scots language, which took place from the mid-sixteenth century onwards (Devitt 1983; Macafee & Aitken 2002; Meurman-Solin 2005, 1999, 1997, 1989; Smith 2012; Millar 2012; Kopaczyk 2013). With historical spoken data inaccessible to us, the informal speech-like language found in personal letters has been recognised as uniquely valuable by scholars of linguistic variation because they argue that innovation is more likely to be displayed in these texts than in other more formal documents (Nevalainen & Raumolin-Brunberg 2003: 26). Moreover, private texts like letters may afford a more intimate view of what was happening in the writers' lives, offering a 'nuanced view on the development of [their] written idiolect over time' (Williams 2016: 2). In particular, women's early modern letter writing has been transformed into a distinct field of study over the past two decades; nevertheless, insufficient attention has been paid to women writing in Scots (Dunnigan 2003; Stevenson 2012; Williams 2016; Newsome 2018). The pressing need now to examine the Scottish archives is attested by two new, connected projects on Scottish letters: the Archives and Writing Lives Project, which examines Mary, Queen of Scots' writings (2017–ongoing) and Helen Newsome's forthcoming edition of the letters of Margaret Tudor, Queen of Scots, both of which offer a vibrant scholarly context for this study. The focus here is on the Scottish familial correspondence of Marie Stewart, Countess of Mar (1576–1644), an elite noblewoman whose royal connections and marriage to John Erskine, 2nd Earl of Mar (c. 1558–1634) secured her place in the highest echelons of Scottish society (Goodare 2004). Stewart's extant correspondence is preserved in the Papers of the Family of Erskine of Alva collection in the National Library of Scotland (NLS). This study has identified 62 of Stewart's letters in the archives: 22 sent and 40 received. No detailed catalogues exist for the Erskine papers, so it is difficult to give an exact total of Stewart's extant papers; however, along

with c. 62 letters, it is estimated that between 50 to 100 other manuscripts may be contained in another ten volumes. The collection also includes 62 family letters sent or received within Stewart's lifetime by her husband Mar, their children and other relatives, friends and servants.

Marie Stewart was born in France, and until her relocation, to Scotland, aged 11, she lived with her family on their estate in Aubigny (Cust 1891: 88). This study of her correspondence will show that, as well as French, she had linguistic abilities in Scots, English, and perhaps even Latin (see Section 4.2). Her husband, Mar, undoubtedly had Latin, Greek and French as he was tutored alongside the king by the humanist historian George Buchanan (Goodare 2004). Therefore, this multilingual couple and their children embody the polyglot identity of early modern Scotland, and the family correspondence presents an ideal opportunity to investigate how Scottish writers used language in the early seventeenth century. Naming this language is, however, less straightforward. As pointed out by Kopaczyk, most scholars, including Meurman-Solin (1993), Macafee (2002) and Smith (2012; 2000), have followed Aitken's model of periodisation, which split the development of the Scots language into three chronological periods bounded by the years 1100 and 1700 (2013: 239). These periods are *Pre-literary Scots* (1100–1375), *Early Scots* (1375–1450) and *Middle Scots* (1450–1700), this last period being further split into *Early Middle Scots* and *Late Middle Scots*, on either side of the year 1550 (Aitken 1985: xxiii). Devitt also adhered to Aitken's dating but replaced the word 'Scots' with 'Scots-English' in her study (1989: 9). Alternatively, the broader term *Older Scots* can be used, defined by Smith as 'the form of Scots which survives in records from the period up to around 1700' (2012: 1).

However, in her reassessment of Aitken's periodisation, Kopaczyk pointed out that such labelling falsely suggests that language development can be neatly divided into time units rather than accurately representing the complex and continuous process (2013: 233). Nevertheless, she accepted that boundary setting can create a valuable framework of reference, and Anne Curzan also noted its practical benefits, acknowledging that whilst the periodisation of English is similarly 'inherently artificial', it allows historical information to be organised when carrying out interpretive studies (2012: 1234). Given these advantages, this study will choose a name that pinpoints the language used during the narrow time period when the letters were written, that is, Stewart's lifetime, 1576–1644. One option is to use Late Middle Scots, used by Aitken to refer to the period of Scots between 1550 and 1700. However, Kopaczyk has convincingly argued that when compared to the synchronous Early Modern English (EM English), this label presents an anachronistic view of Scots as forever trailing behind in linguistic developments (2013: 239). Instead, Kopaczyk proposes two alternative labels, first *Late/Transition Scots,* which she hopes

would ‘capture the progressive diluting of the standardising Scots back into the form of dialects’, and second, *Early Modern Scots* (EM Scots), which would remove any mistaken impression that the language was lagging in the wake of EM English (2013: 253). Indeed, the latter term, EM Scots, both establishes the language as distinct and moving toward standardisation until extralinguistic factors halted that process. This study, therefore, selects EM Scots as the label which will be used to refer to the language spoken and written in Scotland in the period 1550–1700, which coincided with the composition of the letters under examination. The term Older Scots (OS) is also used as a broad term to refer to the entire language from around 1100 to 1700.

A cursory reading of the family’s letters, henceforth termed the *Stewart Erskine letters*, shows a spectrum of EM Scots and EM English language usage according to changes in the scribe and other circumstances. To document and untangle the possible reasons for this variation, this study will investigate the language in the letters, thereby offering fresh linguistic insights into a critical period of Scottish history. The research materials are new diplomatic transcriptions explicitly created for this study from the original manuscripts. As the intention is to reveal the extralinguistic factors which may have influenced the language used during a period in the past, historical sociolinguistics presents an apt methodological framework. As pointed out by Robert McColl Millar, to uncover how people from history used language, we must first comprehend the broader society in which they lived and the social distinctions that may have influenced them (2012: 41). As well as using techniques of variation analysis from historical sociolinguistics, the study will also use methods from historical pragmatics. Recently, Jeremy J. Smith has suggested a new term for historical pragmatics: ‘reimagined philology’, a method he states will shed ‘new light on the emergence and development of societies undergoing shifts from orality to literacy, or from script to print, resulting in insights with profound implications for present-day societies’ (2020: 29). This study sets forth two arguments: firstly, examining language variation via the application of corpus-based techniques to sociolinguistic methods results in conclusions founded on accurate, measurable data. Secondly, studies must focus on a restricted set of texts to create a nuanced picture of language change. As discussed further in Chapter 3, Section 3.2, investigations of early modern Scottish texts rarely use this type of mixed methodology. Nevertheless, the study will demonstrate that the researcher can unpack and interpret the peculiar details of language change by combining quantitative and qualitative analyses. The benefits of this dualistic approach will be discussed further in Chapter 2, Section 2.4.

As noted above, an initial broad survey of the Stewart Erskine letters indicates they are characteristic of seventeenth-century Scottish manuscripts, displaying aspects of both EM Scots and EM English. Whilst, like all languages, EM Scots and EM English were constantly evolving, it is possible to pinpoint in both a set of prototypical diagnostic features (Smith 2012: 5). This study has identified 24 of these much attested, iconic diagnostic features in the linguistic categories of grammar and spelling, where the process of anglicisation has been observed most prominently in previous studies by Meurman-Solin (1993; 2005), Macafee (2002), Smith (2012), Williams (2016) and van Eyndhoven and Clark (2020). All instances of these 24 diagnostic features will be identified in the Stewart Erskine letters along with their anglicised counterparts, these specific examples being termed EM Scots *forms* or EM English *forms.* The forms extracted will then be coded for sociolinguistic data to address the following research questions:

I. How did the Stewart Erskine senders respond to anglicisation?
II. To what extent did sociolinguistic factors condition their language?

The remainder of this introductory chapter will describe the materials, their arrangement in the archives and the selection of a focussed dataset (Section 1.2), followed by a set of palaeographical and material analyses of the handwriting and composition of the Stewart Erskine letters (Section 1.3). Chapter 2 outlines the methodology as follows: editorial principles of the letter transcriptions (Section 2.2) and the steps involved in the quantitative and qualitative analyses (Sections 2.3 and 2.4). Chapter 3 contextualises the study, opening with a survey of OS (Section 3.2), moving on to a review of related scholarly research work (Sections 3.3–3.5), current Scots language projects (Section 3.6) and publications that refer to Stewart and her family (Section 3.7). Chapter 4 presents a historical background to Stewart and the Erskine-Mar family, providing biographical sketches of the senders (Sections 4.1–4.4). As noted above, Chapter 5 will show the quantitative and qualitative analyses (Sections 5.1–5.5). Lastly, Chapter 6 will explore the significance of the results (Section 6.1) and suggest possible avenues for future research (Section 6.2).

1.2 Materials

1.2.1 Selection of Marie Stewart as a research subject

The scarcity of studies of early modern Scottish women's writing was acknowledged by the Leverhulme Trust in 2003 when recognising that such papers were often difficult to locate in archives, it awarded Suzanne Trill with a fellowship which allowed her to begin the extensive task of recording manuscripts housed in the Edinburgh collections. The resulting publication, 'Early modern women's writing in the Edinburgh archives, c. 1550–1740: A preliminary checklist', proves an excellent research tool. It assisted with the identification of Stewart as a research subject for this study because Trill specified that only documents 'demonstrably written by a woman' were to be included and stressed that 'signature alone is not a sufficient basis for inclusion' (2004: 202). However, whilst providing a much-needed aid to finding women's writing, the fact that Trill lists Stewart as three separate individuals, each with a slightly different title, highlights the potential difficulties involved in matching women to their manuscripts, as shown in the three entries below:

Listed under "Other books":			
*[NAS]	Stewart, Marie, Countess of Mar (Account book)	n.d.	(2004: 208)
Listed under "Correspondence":			
MS.80, nos. 51–3.	MAR, Marie Stewart, Countess of	1604	(2004: 211)
Listed under "Letters: Single":			
Adv. 33.1.1, Vol 5, no. 118.	Stewart, Marie.	c17th	(2004: 221)

As shown, Stewart is identified in three different ways: as 'Stewart, Marie, Countess of Mar', as 'Mar, Marie Stewart, Countess of' and as 'Marie Stewart', which is potentially confusing for researchers. Moreover, the checklist only records three letters demonstrably written by Stewart, whereas, as will be argued in Section 1.3.1, a total of 14 survive, together with a further eight scribal letters. Despite the publication of this checklist, finding suitable extant materials remains the main barrier to research into female writing, and Stewart's letters are no exception. The NLS archive preserves the majority of her letters in a volume entitled 'General correspondence of the family of Erskine of Alva', and although the content is described as being 'chiefly that of Marie Stewart, Dowager Countess of Mar', the letters are

designated *Erskine* letters by the NLS rather than *Stewart* letters (NLS online catalogue 2017). As well as her letters, a large quantity of other extant documents which relate to Stewart's private and business affairs are retained in the NLS and are likewise mislabelled as 'Family of Erskine'. In some cases, Stewart's name is attached to individual folios; however, this only becomes obvious if one takes the time to drill further down the record tree. These papers testify to Stewart's socio-historical position as a woman who, as both wife and widow, actively involved herself in business and financial affairs and took a keen interest in wider religious and political events. The manuscripts comprise financial papers, legal bonds, contracts and inventories of her properties. Given that early modern female correspondence in any language was often not preserved with the same care as that of their male counterparts, the fact that so many of Stewart's letters have survived establishes her as a significant research subject in the field of epistolary studies.

From 2007 onwards, researchers have used the *Helsinki Corpus of Scottish Correspondence* (ScotsCorr) to search digitised transcriptions of some of Stewart's letters (Meurman-Solin and Research Unit for the Study of Variation, Contacts and Change in English [VARIENG] 2007). The resource contains early Scottish correspondence penned by male and female writers from 1540 to 1750. It includes nine holograph letters sent by Stewart (seven to Charles and one each to Mary Hope and the Earl of Morton) as well as a letter sent to Stewart by the Marchioness of Hamilton. ScotsCorr also contains nineteen sent by her husband, Mar (including 12 of those examined here which he sent to Morton) and 51 received by him, 18 of which are from his sons (see Table 1.2 for details of the letters in ScotsCorr which are in the Stewart Erskine dataset). In July 2021, the entire corpus became available to download for research purposes, thereby increasing the accessibility of the texts. Nevertheless, Stewart's remaining 13 sent letters and 40 received letters were not included and remain unavailable for online research purposes. As well as this, despite her royal descent and active widowhood when she provided written and financial support for the Covenanters during the Bishops' Wars, Stewart's letters have never been edited. A nineteenth-century edition of Sir Thomas Hope's correspondence included three of her letters as regularised transcriptions but relegated them to footnotes (Thomson 1843: 109–113).[1] The Historical Manuscript Commission (HMC) also undervalued Stewart's writings. In the report the HMC produced on the Erskine papers, the commission dismissed the letters she sent as 'relating almost wholly to domestic matters, the references to public affairs being few and slight' (1874: 524). Although letters sent by her

[1] These letters are: MS.5155 f 30 sent to Sir Thomas Hope on 22 November 1640; MS.5155 f 19 sent 28 May 1639 and MS.5155 f 20 sent on 30 July 1639 both to Sir Charles Erskine (Appendix B) [REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS].

husband Mar and her sons have on occasion been used to illustrate the arguments of historians such as Keith Brown (1993) and Dauvit Horsbroch (1999), for the most part, their writings have also been ignored.

In the nineteenth century, Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, an antiquarian descendant of Stewart, decided to transcribe and privately publish her household account book as *Extracts from the Household book of Lady Marie Stewart, daughter of Esme, Duke of Lenox, and Countess of Mar* (1815). Trill recorded the original manuscript of this household book in the first entry of the extract above (2004: 205).[2] Sharpe also frequently mentioned Stewart and the Erskine family in his correspondence, edited by Alexander Allardyce after his death and printed in the volume *Letters from and to Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Esq.* (1888). He clearly had access to Stewart's papers because he alluded to some of her letters now preserved in the NLS in volumes MS.5070 and MS.5155, stating they were sent to her by 'the Queen of Bohemia, Lady Gabrielle Stewart the Nun, and from many of the prime Covenanters' (1888: 406).[3] The financial outlay involved in the publication of her household book, the various drawings and etchings he produced of Stewart and the Erskine family, together with references made to them in his letters, testify to his pride in his royal Stuart ancestry.[4] Nevertheless, the apparent desire to highlight his connection to Stewart is belied by his frequently derisory commentary on her, as described by William Kirkpatrick Bedford in his preface to the edited volume of Sharpe's correspondence as 'full of outspoken sarcasm and simulated contempt of people whom in other ways he highly esteemed' (1888: 8). Sharpe tried to mock Stewart and her daughter-in-law by producing humorous, fake petitions 'written' by both women, which portrayed them as vain, complaining and over-privileged (1888: 10). Another nineteenth-century descendant, Sir David Erskine, made an equally spiteful yet unsubstantiated commentary in the short biography of Stewart and Mar he included in *Annals and antiquities of Dryburgh and other places on the Tweed* (1836). Erskine created a vivid picture of an 'extremely proud' woman who was initially 'highly indignant' when marriage to Mar was first suggested (1836: 131–133). He stated that Stewart, 'being of a hasty spirit, disdained' the proposed match because Mar was a widower and already had a son and heir who would inherit his earldom and lands (131–133). Historians who chose to reinforce such unfavourable

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[2] However, so far I have been unable to trace the exact location in the NAS of this manuscript.

[3] Elizabeth Stuart, Queen of Bohemia was the daughter of James VI/I and Anne of Denmark. Lady Gabrielle was the younger sister of Marie Stewart (see Section 1.2.2).

[4] For example, in his letters to Sharpe, the Earl of Gower thanks and praises his friend for sending him a portrait Sharpe had made of Esmé, Duke of Lennox and subsequently of Stewart, noting that he might use them to illustrate a history of Sutherland he was writing (1888: 498, 506–507). As well as this, in his letter to Gower of 1811, Sharpe compares the likenesses of Stewart and her sister Henrietta as seen in their portraits with duchesses of his own time, stating that the Stewart sisters were 'no small dames in their time […] our present Dukes of Lenox and their Madame's are but wallidrags in comparison' (1888: 477).

gendered stereotypes have undermined the reputation of other early modern women. For example, as argued by Wiggins, many biographers of Bess of Hardwick have hand-picked quotations from her letters to support their 'drastically simplified accounts [which] pass down the same negative caricature' (2017: 11). Apart from this unwanted attention, versions of the early modern period have, for the most part, overlooked Stewart's letters and the entire collection of Erskine-Mar correspondence. *The new biographical dictionary of Scottish women* (Ewan & Pipes 2018), the *Women in Scottish History Database* (Ewan 2016) and *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (ODNB) (2004) all exclude her. A scholarly examination of the linguistic and historical data in this undervalued cache of letters and papers is well overdue, underlining its validity as a set of research materials.

1.2.2 The Stewart Erskine letters in the archive

Two large albums purchased in the twentieth century by the NLS special collections department from an Erskine descendent contain most of the family's letters from the seventeenth century. The catalogue lists them as:

- NLS MS.5070: General correspondence of the family of Erskine of Alva. 1604–1650 (172 folios)
- NLS MS.5155: General correspondence of the family of Erskine of Alva. 1620–1680 (170 folios)

Two more sets of papers owned by the NLS incorporate several other family letters from the 1600s, these being:

- NLS MS.80: Morton papers, volume 8: 'Letters of Noblemen and Gentlemen'.1627–1648 (80 folios)
- Adv.MS.33.1.1 [v]: State papers collected by Sir James Balfour of Denmilne, volume 5: letter and papers, 1610–1622 (chiefly 1614), 1604 (147 folios)

Together these four volumes hold over 400 folios relating to the family, including Stewart's 62 extant letters plus the additional 62 family letters sent during her lifetime (Section 1.1). The materials are available for public consultation via appointment; nevertheless, they are controlled by copyright

regulations until 2039. By kind permission of the NLS Curator of Archives and Manuscript Collections, Dr Ulrike Hogg, several images cropped from the author's photographs of the manuscripts are reproduced here, together with quotations from the letters. However, although it was possible to include the entire set of photographs and transcriptions made for this study in the unpublished thesis, these have been redacted from the published version due to copyright restrictions.

The letters are inserted into the four NLS volumes in chronological order (MS.80, the Morton Papers, groups them chronologically and then also by the sender). For the most part, in excellent condition, with minor damage and often retaining their wax seals, the letters present an exemplary set of research materials. Nonetheless, MS.80 is the only volume equipped with a table of contents which renders the other three, MS.5070, MS.5155 and Adv.MS.33.1.1, less accessible as they have no such reader's aid. Various nineteenth-century inventories of the papers exist and assist the researcher; however, subsequent reordering of the letters means these are at best a rough guide.[5] Therefore, the first research task prescribed was to create a curated list of the letters, this document recording each letter's shelf-mark, folio(s), sender(s), recipient(s), date of sending, location of the sender, the script(s). As the focus of this study was Stewart, it was only necessary to catalogue those letters sent within her lifetime, 1576 to 1644. Throughout several research trips to the NLS in Edinburgh, hundreds of high-definition photographs of the manuscripts were captured for this study, which allowed the surveillance process to continue at home and safeguard against any further archive closures brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic. Before taking each photo, a rectangle of acid-free paper indicating the shelf-mark and folio number (recto or verso) was placed beside each manuscript to ensure their accurate identification. The final stage involved naming each photo file as, for example, MS.5155 f 8r.HEIC, which contains the image of MS.5155 folio 8 recto.

This task complete, the resulting curated list of all the letters sent whilst Stewart was alive totalled 112. It includes letters sent by Stewart to her son Charles; to her husband's cousin, William Douglas, 7th Earl of Morton; to Charles' wife Mary Hope, Lady Bandeath; to Sir Thomas Hope, Mary Hope's father who was Lord Advocate of Scotland from 1626 to 1641; to John Murray of the Bedchamber, *later* 1st Earl of Annandale, and lastly to George Norvell who was Stewart's servant. Letters received by Stewart include several sent by prominent figures of the time, including Alexander Henryson, the joint author of the National Covenant; Alexander Leslie, Earl of Leven, who was commander of the Covenanting army

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[5] The nineteenth-century inventories mentioned here are preserved in the NLS in MS.5114 'Inventories of the family of Erskine of Alva' and may have been commissioned as part of the HMC report on the Erskine papers made by Sir William Fraser in 1873 (NLS Catalogue of Manuscripts 2017).

and the poet Sir David Murray of Gorthy. Letters also exist sent to Stewart by her siblings Lady Gabrielle Stewart and Ésme Stewart, 8th Seigneur d'Aubigny, as well as three of her sons-in-law: John Leslie, 6th Earl of Rothes; Thomas Hamilton, 2nd Earl of Haddington and John Lyon, 2nd Earl of Kinghorne, who were all leading Covenanters (Goodare 2004). The preserved documents must represent a fraction of Stewart's original correspondence as they contain frequent references to other letters received, responses sent, enclosures or letters forwarded from different senders. Age or fragility may have destroyed some of these documents, or they may have been removed. Alternatively, letters unrelated to the estate business of land-owning families like the Erskines may have been deemed unworthy of preservation, as argued by Daybell (2016: 31). With many letters potentially lost, it is essential to realise that those that have survived privilege certain relationships and topics. For example, most of Stewart's sent letters are to her son Charles and these, along with many of her received letters, focus on a legal dispute she had with her son-in-law John Erskine, 3rd Earl of Mar, her husband Mar's heir. A desire to keep a documentary record of this ongoing quarrel may explain why these letters were kept, at least in the short term. In the long term, Stewart's elevated position, together with the distinguished status of her son Charles may have contributed to their continued preservation. The list of 112 letters curated for this study also includes 14 sent by Stewart's husband Mar and several sent by their children. However, many of the letters there did not relate directly to Stewart and were exchanged between distant family members, in-laws, servants, politicians and merchants. Therefore, the intention here being to undertake a study of the EM Scots language via her private familial correspondence (Section 1.1), the next task was to identify a subset of letters that would allow the investigation to concentrate on the writings of Stewart and her immediate family, that is to say, her husband and children.

1.2.3 Selection of a focused dataset

To create a focussed set of research materials, henceforth the *Stewart Erskine* dataset, which would focus attention on Stewart, her husband Mar and their children, the following criteria were applied to the 112 extant family letters sent within her lifetime, 1576–1644, identified in the NLS collections:

- The dataset must include **ALL** letters sent by Stewart = 22 letters
- The dataset must include **ALL** letters sent by Mar within Stewart's lifetime, 1576–1644 = 14 letters

- The dataset must include any letters sent by the Erskine children where the recipient is either: Mar or Stewart **OR** is a recipient of Mar or Stewart **AND** is sent within Stewart's lifetime, 1576–1644 = 11 letters.

Five out of the twelve Erskine children, Anne, Mary, Alexander, Arthur and Charles, have letters that survive in the four volumes listed in Section 1.2.2 and which were sent within their mother's lifetime. The criteria singled out only one of these letters for exclusion from the dataset: a note sent from Charles Erskine to John Rollock because was Rollock not a recipient of Stewart or Mar. Also excluded from the resulting dataset via this criteria were various other letters received by family members from distant relatives, friends or servants. Thus, the requirements identified 47 letters that form the Stewart-Erskine dataset. Table 1.2 gives a complete list of the senders, recipients, dates and shelf-marks of each letter:

Table 1.2 Letters in the Stewart Erskine dataset

Note: Letters contained in ScotsCorr are indicated thus: (SC)

Marie Stewart to Earl of Morton (4 letters)					
3 holograph	MS.80 f 54	Undated/1604	1 scribal	MS.80 f 53	3 February 1604
	MS.80 f 55	Undated/1604			
	MS.80 f 56	Undated/1604 (SC)			
Marie Stewart to John Murray (1 letter)					
1 holograph	Adv.MS.33. 1.1 [v] f 118	Undated/10 October 1614			
Marie Stewart to Thomas Hope (1 letter)					
1 scribal	MS.5155 f	22 November 1640			
Marie Stewart to Mary Hope (1 letter)					
1	MS.5070 f	17 June 1640 (SC)			
Marie Stewart to Charles Erskine (14 letters)					
9 holograph	MS.5155 f	28 May 1639	5 scribal	MS.5155 f	23 November 1640
	MS.5155 f	30 July 1639		MS.5070 f	17 October 1639
	MS.5070 f	9 November 1639		MS.5070 f	16 December 1639
	MS.5070 f	15 November 1639		MS.5070 f	27 June 1640
	MS.5070 f	28 November 1639		MS.5070 f	6 June 1642
	MS.5070 f	13 January 1640			
	MS.5070 f	17 January 1640			
	MS.5070 f	10 February 1640			
	MS.5070 f	29 June 1640 (SC)			
Marie Stewart to George Norvell (1 letter)					
1 scribal	MS.5070 f	20 June 1640			
Lord Mar to Lord Morton (13 letters)					
13 holograph	MS.80 f 40	10 October 1608		MS.80 f 47	9 January 1631 (SC)
	MS.80 f 41	25 January 1627		MS.80 f 48	14 May 1631 (SC)
	MS.80 f 42	23 April 1627 (SC)		MS.80 f 49	29 November 1633 (SC)
	MS.80 f 43	28 August 1627 (SC)		MS.80 f 50	3 December 1633 (SC)
	MS.80 f 44	5 September 1627		MS.80 f 51	12 January 1634 (SC)
	MS.80 f 45	9 October 1627 (SC)		MS.80 f 52	9 August 1634 (SC)
	MS.80 f 46	30 June 1628 (SC)			
Lord Mar to John Murray (1 letter)					
1 holograph	Adv.MS.33. 1.1 [v] f 119	10 October 1614			
Mary Erskine to Marie Stewart (1 letter)					
1	MS.5155 f	24 July 1635			
Lord Rothes & Anne Erskine (joint letter) to Marie Stewart (1 letter)					
1	MS.5070 f	14 February 1636			
Alexander Erskine to Marie Stewart (4 letters)					
4 holograph	MS.5155 f	31 July 1631		MS.5155 f	24 July 1638
	MS.5155 f	17 September 1635		MS.5155 f	16 August 1638
Arthur Erskine to Marie Stewart (3 letters)					
3 holograph	MS.5155 f	15 October 1639		MS.5155 f	19 May 1643
	MS.5155 f	8 December 1640			
Arthur Erskine to Charles Erskine (1 letter)					
1	MS.5155 f	17 May 1642			
Charles Erskine to Marie Stewart (1 letter)					
1	MS.5070 f	5 January 1640 (SC)			

Table 1.2 groups the letters first by the sender and then by the recipient and begins with Stewart's set. The first three rows on the left of the table list the letters she sent to Morton, followed by the one she sent to Murray. Of the four letters sent by Stewart to Morton, only one, MS.80 f 53, has a date written in the manuscript: 3 February 1604. Nevertheless, as is explained in the transcription headnotes of her other three undated letters sent to Morton, MS.80 f 54, f 55 and f 56, these letters have been catalogued by the NLS as dating from 1604 and are therefore treated as such within this study (see Appendix B). [APPENDIX REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.] Thus, the dates for these letters, MS.80 f 54, f 55 and f 56, are given as 'undated/1604' in Table 1.2 and in the text and the letter transcriptions. However, to perform diachronic analysis, within the tables and graphs, they are given the date value of 1604. Stewart's letter to Murray: Adv.MS.33.1.1 [v] f 118 is also undated; however, this letter was enclosed with her husband Mar's letter to Murray dated 10 October 1614 and is catalogued as such by the NLS. Therefore, as before, in the text and transcriptions, the date is given as 'undated/10 October 1614', but in the diachronic analysis, the date 1614 is used. Thus, as shown in Table 1.2, the 47 letters in the dataset range from 1604 to 1643 and were sent by Stewart, her husband Mar and five of their children, Anne, Mary, Charles, Alexander and Arthur. Table 1.3 counts the letters sent by each informant:

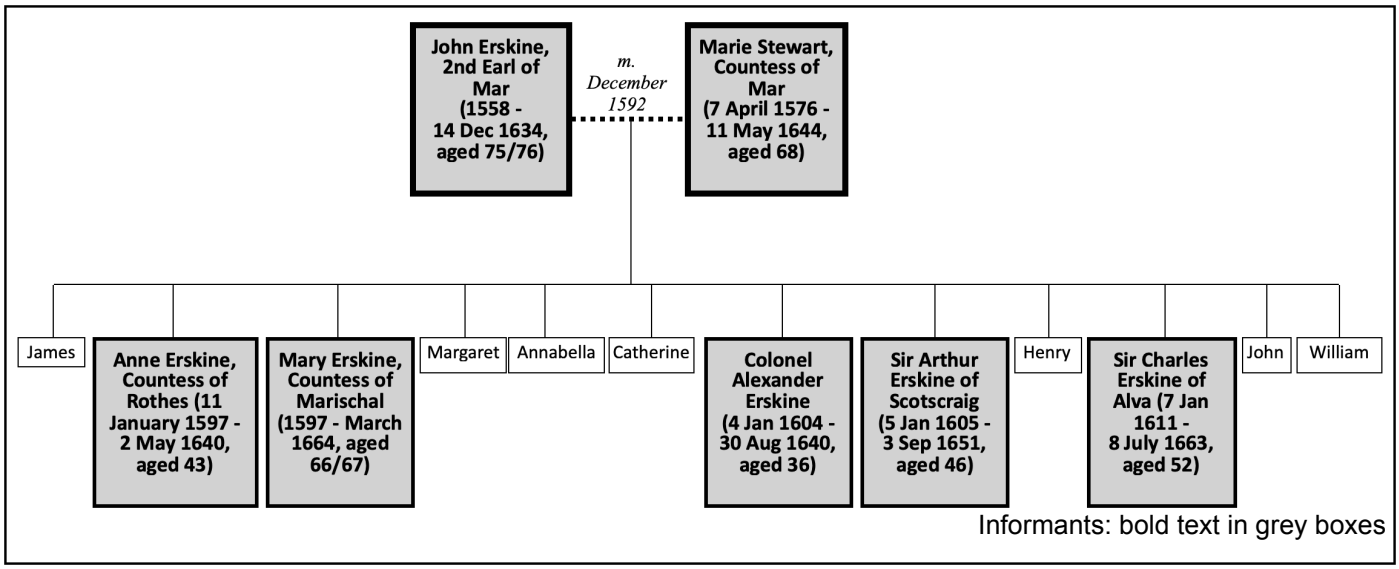
Table 1.3 Number of letters in Stewart Erskine dataset by sender

Sender	No. of letters
Marie Stewart	22
Lord Mar	14
Anne Erskine	1
Mary Erskine	1
Charles Erskine	4
Alexander Erskine	4
Arthur Erskine	1
Total	**47**

Whilst the dataset includes Anne as a sender, hers is not a complete letter but a brief postscript of a few lines at the end of a joint letter sent with her husband Rothes (MS.5070 ff 32–33, 14 February 1636), as indicated in Table 1.2. According to the criteria for inclusion in the dataset, Rothes' section of the letter is excluded from the quantitative analyses because he was Stewart's son-in-law. However, to contextualise Anne's postscript, a complete transcription of the letter is included in Appendix B.

[APPENDIX REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.] The text written on the verso leaf of folio 65 of the letter sent by Marie Stewart to Norvell (MS.5070 ff 65–66, 20 June 1640) is treated in the same way, being transcribed in its entirety but excluded from the quantitative analysis (see Appendix B). [APPENDIX REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.] This is because it is not a personal letter but rather a signed legal document called a *discharge,* a receipt for payments received or due (Discharge n. DSL 2004).

Figure 1.1 contains a simplified family tree that shows Stewart, her husband and children:



(data from Paul 1908: 615–612)

Figure 1.1: Simplified family tree

The Stewart Erskine dataset includes correspondence from the family members whose names are highlighted in bold text and grey filled boxes. The family tree also shows the given names of the seven other Erskine children and the order of birth of all 12: James, Anne, Mary, Margaret, Annabella, Catherine, Alexander, Arthur, Henry, Charles, John and William. Figure 1.2 presents a visual representation of the letters sent and received within the Stewart Erskine dataset:

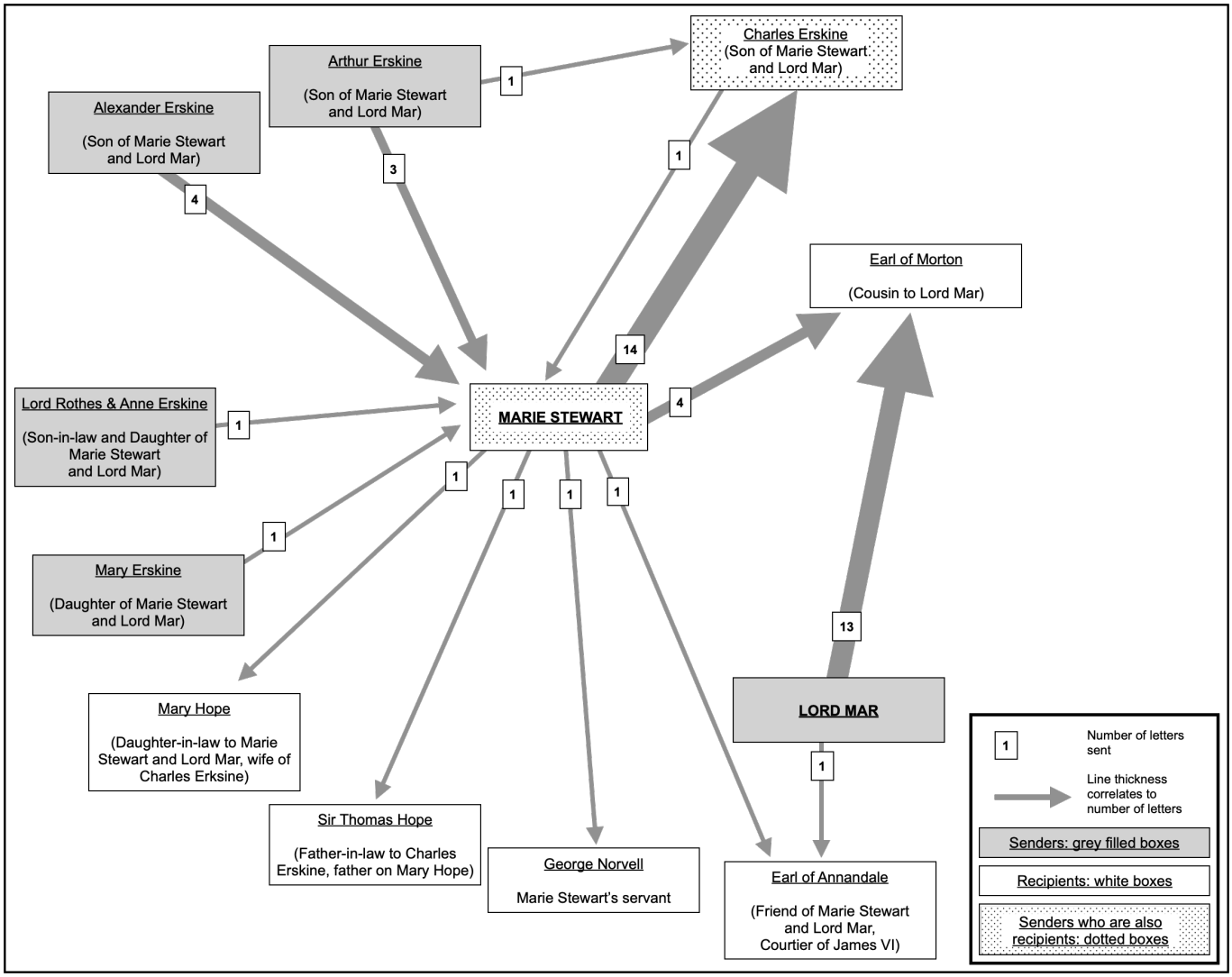


Figure 1.2: Stewart Erskine letters sent and received

This infographic demonstrates that the largest number of letters sent to a single correspondent was 14, sent by Stewart to her son Charles, then 13 sent by Mar to Morton, his cousin. The latter succeeded him as Treasurer of Scotland in 1630 after Mar had retired from the position (Stevenson 1973: 236). Stewart also sent four to Morton and individual letters to Mary Hope, Charles' wife, and Thomas Hope, Mary's father. She also sent one to her servant Norvell and one to Murray, to whom Mar also sent a single letter. Murray was a very successful courtier who had become Keeper of the Privy Purse in 1611 and would later be created 1st Earl of Annandale in 1625 (MacDonald 2004). Stewart also received the following number of letters from each of her children: Alexander four, Arthur three, Charles one, Mary one and

Anne one (a joint letter with her husband, Rothes). Arthur also sent one to his brother Charles. The composition of the letters, including a discussion of their composition and authorship, follows in the next section (1.3).

1.3 Composition and authorship analysis

The study's aim appears straightforward: to produce a sociolinguistic analysis of the Stewart Erskine letters via an examination of their grammar and spelling. However, the statement has the embedded assumption that it will be possible to connect the linguistic forms selected in the letters with the life circumstances of the person who sent them, in other words, to connect the text to the writer. As Evans has pointed out: 'Holograph documents […provide…] the least fallible connection between the graphical transcription and the social background of the author' (2012). Nevertheless, establishing who wrote such aged documents is often difficult or impossible, there being little information to confirm the provenance of four-hundred-year-old letters. Moreover, the findings of scholars such as Daybell (2016: 59) and Wiggins (2017: 7) challenge our modern notion of letter-writing as an innately private activity instead of describing various communal composition processes which occurred during the early modern period. For example, after dictating their letter word-for-word to a secretary and then signing it, the sender could add a postscript in their handwriting; alternatively, the scribe could be given a higher level of autonomy and tasked with creating a letter based on only a brief instruction from their employer (Wiggins 2017: 7–9). On the other hand, a husband and wife could contribute handwritten sections to a joint letter that was then folded and sealed by one or both (as seen in Rothes and Anne's joint letter in the Stewart Erskine dataset: MS.5070 f 32, 14 February 1636). Thus, most early modern letters resulted from some level of collaboration, with many senders employing the skills of an amanuensis. As such, the idea that one can map a single letter sender onto a single writer is misleading. Given these facts, it may never be possible to make definitive statements regarding the original compositional nature of the Stewart Erskine letters.

Nevertheless, although modern cases require rigorous proof of handwriting authenticity, for historical documents such as these, 'it is reasonable to cautiously accept a scholarly identification of the handwriting that depends on a balance of probability' (LIMA 2005). Tom Davis provided a set of instructions that describe the application of forensic methods to old documents in 'The practice of handwriting identification' (2007), and the method of palaeographic analyses outlined there, in

combination with archival research, has made it possible to establish authorship with some degree of confidence here, at least of the main body of each letter. Using /a/ as an example, the terms used in the analysis conducted here are: the grapheme /a/ refers to the letter independent of any particular realisation of it; idiograph is the way (or one of the ways) in which a writer habitually writes /a/ and a graph is a unique instance of /a/, as it appears on a particular page (Davis 2007: 255). Via a combination of archival research and palaeographic analyses, the study found that:

1. There is no reason to suggest that any of the Stewart Erskine letters are modern copies.
2. It is possible to divide the Stewart Erskine letters into two categories: *holograph* and *scribal* letters: 39 are holographic letters sent by multiple family members, and eight are scribal, all of which Stewart sent. The distinction between holograph and scribal is as follows: where evidence suggests the person named as the sender wrote the letter's main body, then the letter is referred to as holograph. Correspondingly, if the analysis findings indicate that a person other than the sender wrote the letter, then the letter is deemed scribal. The term holograph does not preclude other input to the letter; for example, it may include a postscript or marginalia written in another *hand*, a palaeographic term used here to denote a person who was involved in the physical act of writing, or the sender may have received oral assistance with its composition.

The remainder of this chapter will outline the evidence to support these decisions regarding categorisation and the nature of the evidence.

1.3.1 Marie Stewart's italic script letters

Transcriptions: Appendix B
Image Nos: 1.1–1.64, Appendix C
[APPENDICES REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.]

Stewart's letters can be broadly separated into those penned in *italic,* a script whose clear and simple letterforms were in everyday use by the early seventeenth century and those in the older *secretary* script, predominantly a business hand (Starza-Smith 2013). The italic script letters number 14: nine were sent to her son Charles, three to Morton, and one each to Mary Hope and Murray. Of the eight letters in secretary

script, five were to Charles, and the other individuals were to Thomas Hope, Murray and Morton (see Table 1.2 for shelf-marks and dates of these letters). Examining Stewart's italic script letters first, there are several reasons to support the conclusion that they are in her hand. Firstly, the one Stewart sent to Murray is identified as a holograph letter in the NLS catalogue of Manuscripts (2017) as follows:

> 18 'Holograph letter, undated, of Marie Stewart to John Murray of the Bedchamber thanking him and his wife for their good offices' (Adv.MS.33.1.1 [v] f 118r-118v, undated/10 October 1614, Appendix C). [APPENDIX REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.]

Secondly, the family inventories (NLS, MS.5114), Sharpe's letters (1888: 406), the HMC report (1874) and Erskine's historical account (1836) all identify these letters as written by Stewart. Thirdly, as noted in Section 1.2.1, nine of her italic script letters are included in ScotsCorr, whose online manual states that the corpus prioritises 'holograph letters by a single writer' (Meurman-Solin 2007) (see Table 1.2 for full details of these letters). Fourthly, Stewart has three entries in Trill's checklist of early modern women's writing in which she specifies that she excluded documents attributed to women but not written by them (2004: 202). Although these reasons lend weight to the argument that the letters are holographic, they are still based on the conclusions of other scholars and do not in themselves constitute solid evidence. Perhaps most convincing of all is the evidence found within the letters themselves, which strongly implies Stewart penned them. In four of the letters sent to her son Charles she directly refers to the physical act of writing:

> 'my heart for the present is so ouercherged with greifes that hardly can I frem my mind or hand to wreat' (ll. 3-4, MS.5155 f 19)
>
> 'I am weiritt of wreating so now I end' (ll. 29-30, MS.5070 ff 47–48)
>
> 'My mind and heart is so opprest that I can wreat no more' (ll. 31-32, MS.5070 f 58)
>
> 'I haue no time now to wreat the carier is in such hest.' (ll. 10-11, MS.5070 ff 61r-62v)

Additionally, a striking concordance is observed throughout the material features of handwriting, duct and page layout in her manuscripts. For example, the hand is clear and neat with regular line spacing and consistently slopes to the right. Moreover, her letters are distinguished by the dollar-like symbols she included near the address term, subscription or, most frequently in the superscription, as illustrated in

Figure 1.3 which shows the address leaf of her holograph letter to her son, Charles, MS.5070 ff 45–46, 19 November 1639:

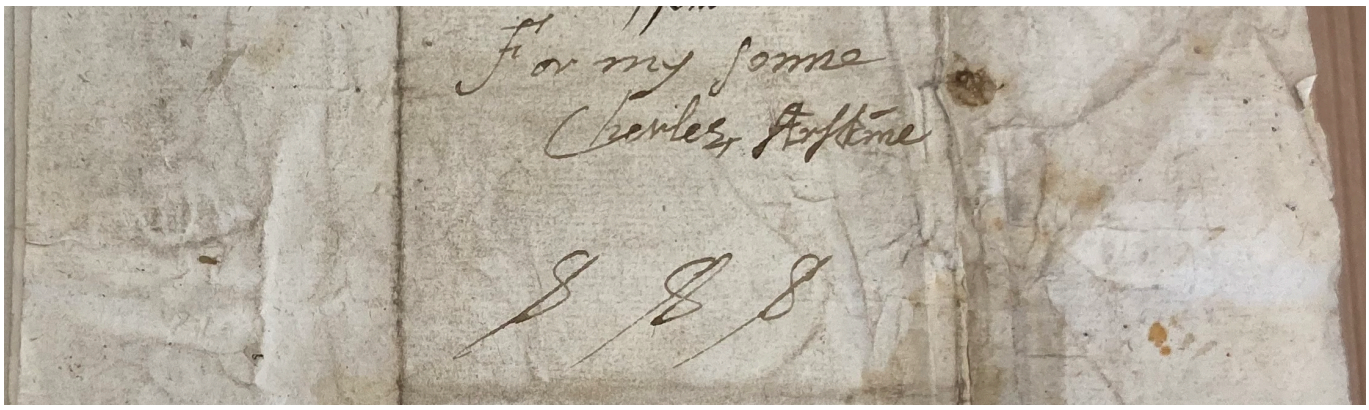


Figure 1.3 Stewart's handwritten fermesse symbols
(MS.5070 f 46v, superscription)

Early modern female writers often used *fermesse* symbols to convey fidelity and intimacy, suggesting a close bond between Stewart and her addressee (Wolfe 2013). As well as this, the early modern epistolary technique of using 'significant space' and layout to signal the social status of the recipient visually was used by Stewart, which speaks to a sophisticated and layered process of composition (Gibson 1997: 4). In the subscription of her letter to Morton, MS.80 f 56r, undated/?1604, she left a gap of approximately three lines between the end of the main text of the letter and its subscription, placing her signature on the bottom right-hand side to indicate social deference to the recipient (Fulwood 1568: sig. A8r, as cited in Gibson 1997: 1).

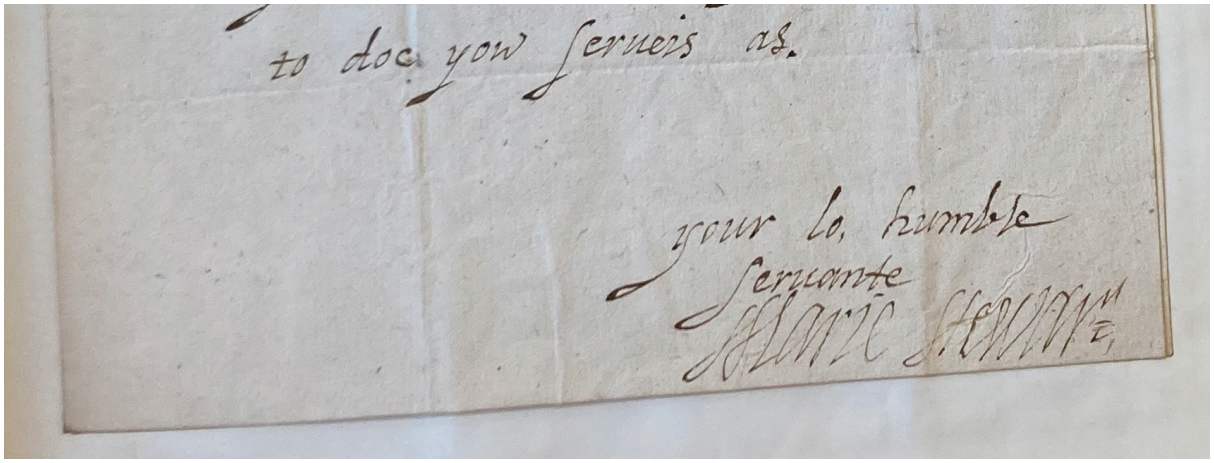


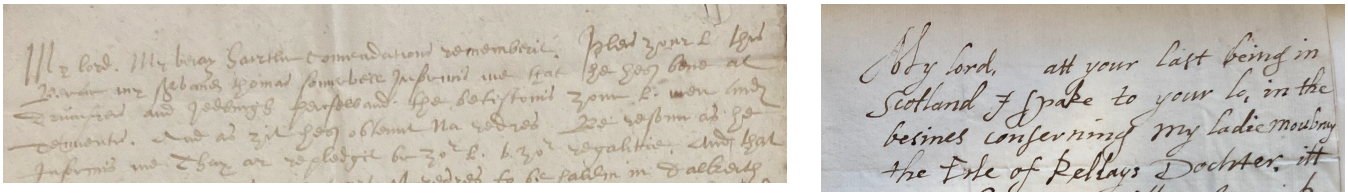
Figure 1.4 Stewart's use of significant space
(MS.80 f 56r, undated/?1604)

Therefore, this study concludes that Stewart penned her 14 extant italic script letters for these varied and convincing reasons.

1.3.2 Marie Stewart's secretary script letters

Transcriptions: Appendix B
Image Nos: 1.1–1.64, Appendix C
[APPENDICES REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.]

Stewart's eight secretary script letters are set apart from her 14 italic script letters by their handwriting, layout and content, aspects which are well illustrated via a comparison of the four letters she sent to Morton at the start of the seventeenth century. Within this set of four, the single secretary script letter, MS.80 f 53, 3 February 1604, contains 353 words and is far longer than the other three holograph manuscripts, containing 202, 82 and 97 words each. Moreover, the scribe's handwriting is small and densely packed across the lines, unlike Stewart's, which is much larger and spaced out, as shown in Figure. 1.5:



Scribe hand in MS.80 f 53r Stewart's hand in MS.80 f 55r

Figure 1.5 Comparison of Scribe hand A with Stewart's hand

As well as this, the scribal letter uses formal phrases and being entirely concerned with business, it contains many Scots legal terms such as *repledgit* (l. 5), *ane court of redres* (l. 6), *absente for reput* (l. 8), *conformit to ane decrei*t (l. 12) and *poynd* (l. 16). In contrast, the three holograph letters discuss family matters and are less formal in style. For example, here Stewart reminds Morton of their private conversation regarding Anna Erskine, Lady Mowbray, who was her husband's first cousin (ODNB 2004):

> My lord, att your last being in Scotland I spake to your lo*rdship* in the besines conserning my ladie moubray the Erle of Kellays Dochter. itt seimed ye was willing to make a bargain with her, I doe inttreat your lo*rdship* now to remember her (ll. 1–7 MS.80 f 55, undated/1604)

Stewart's seven other scribal letters were written between 1639 and 1642, over three decades after her first, MS.80 f 53, and the majority reflect the same level of formality and business content, except for one sent to Charles on 27 June 1640 in which she expresses concern for him as he prepares to depart for war. Thus, on the evidence of her 22 extant letters, it would appear that Stewart tended to use a scribe when writing such structured, official letters. Moreover, the difference in content to her holograph letters may suggest that the amanuenses Stewart employed had responsibility for a large part of the composition of her scribal letters, perhaps working to her previously dictated or written instructions.

As well as grouping the scribal letters according to an early letter date (1 in 1604) or a later letter date (7 between 1639 and 1642), an examination of the handwriting suggests that the latter set can be attributed to the hand of a single scribe, except for the letter sent to Norvell on 20 June 1640 which is in a different hand (MS.5070 ff 65–66). As noted in Section 1.2.3, this letter also has a *discharge* (receipt) on the verso leaf of folio 65, written in a third person's handwriting and signed by two witnesses (see Appendix C, p. A141, Image 1.46). The hand used to write the discharge is very likely to be Arthur Erskine's given the opening line of MS.5070 f 65v:

> I Arthur Erskene fier of scotiscraig be thir p*resen*s Grans Me to have receued…
>
> (l. 14, MS.5070 f 65v, 20 June 1640, Appendix B.) [APPENDIX REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.]

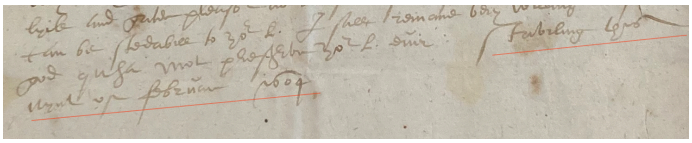
As noted in Section 1.2.3, the quantitative analysis excludes the text of this discharge because it is not a personal letter.

Figure 1.6 contains snapshots of each of the subscriptions written at the end of the eight scribal letters, which give the date and location of sending: six from Stirling and two from Alloa. On the left of Figure 1.6, Set A shows the subscription from the early letter dated 1604, and the other seven later letters are in Set B on the left. Comparing the subscriptions reveals they are positioned differently in the two sets. In Set A, in the subscription from MS.80 f 53r, the scribe placed the text almost directly after the end of the main letter text and on the same line and then wrapped it around into the following line. In contrast, the scribe positioned each subscription in a neat three-line text box adjacent to the signature in Set B.

Moreover, the handwriting in the two sets is different: the <S> idiographs in Set B of *Stirling* are written with a swirling, circular flourish entirely different in execution to the plain, unembellished long <s> used in *Stavling* in Set A. This comparative exercise offers palaeographic evidence to support the

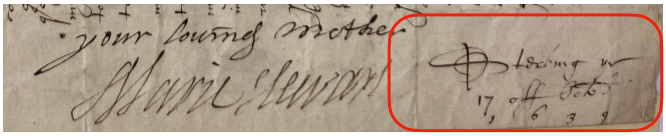
argument that there are two discrete handwriting styles in Stewart's scribal letters: Scribe A, who wrote the 1604 letter to Morton, and Scribe B, who wrote the seven others to Charles, Norvell and Thomas Hope. Unfortunately, no contemporary records exist which allow identification of either of these scribes and therefore establishing their sociolinguistic background is problematic. Chapter 5, Section 5.5 will query the involvement of Stewart's amanuenses in the composition of these letters and their potential influence upon the linguistic forms she used.

Set A (1604)

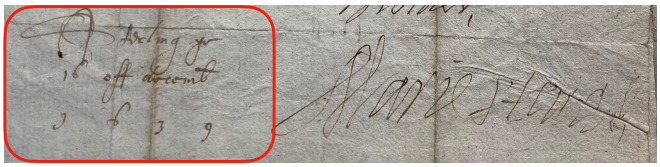


MS.80 f 53r

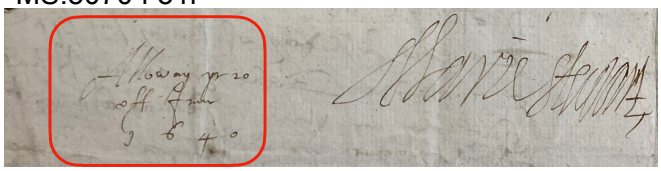
Set B (1639–42)



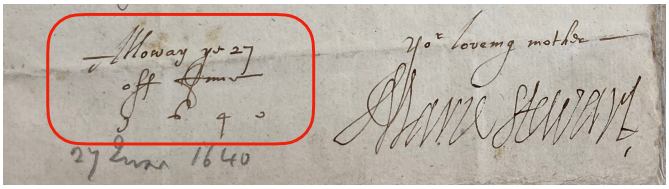
MS.5070 f 43r



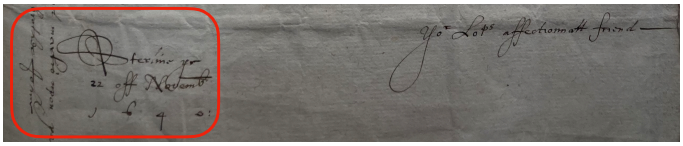
MS.5070 f 51r



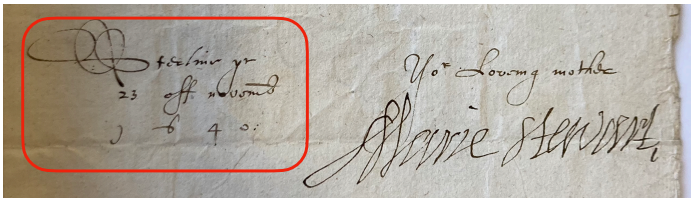
MS.5070 f 65r



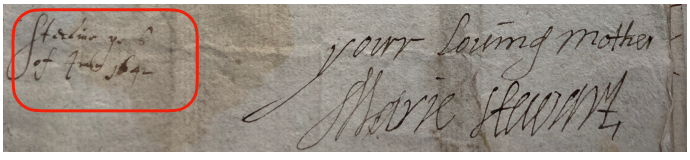
MS.5070 f 67r



MS.5070 f 30r



MS.5070 f 33r



MS.5070 f 92r

Figure 1.6 Comparison of handwriting in Stewart's scribal letters

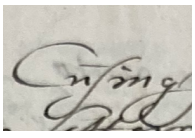
1.3.3 Lord Mar's letters

Transcriptions: Appendix B
Image Nos: 2.1–2.38 Appendix C
[APPENDICES REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.]

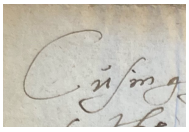
Several reasons offered as evidence for Stewart's letters being holographic also apply to Mar's letters. First, Mar's letter to Murray (Adv.MS.33.1.1 [v] f 119r-119v) is also identified as a holograph in the NLS Catalogue of Manuscripts (2017) as follows:

> 19 'Holograph letter of the Earl of Mar to John Murray of the Bedchamber. Dated Alloa, 10 October 1614' (Adv.MS.33.1.1 [v] f 119r-119v, undated/10 October 1614, Appendix C). [IMAGES HAVE BEEN REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.]

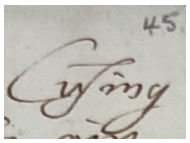
Second, as noted in Section 1.2.1, Mar's 12 letters sent to Morton contained in the Stewart Erskine dataset are included in ScotsCorr, where they are identified as holograph compositions (see Table 1.2 for details of these letters). Third, the handwriting is analogous throughout, as shown in Figure 1.7, which displays examples of the word *Cŭsing* in Mar's handwritten in 1608, 1614 and 1627:



To Morton
(MS.80 f 40, 10 October 1608)



To Murray
(Adv.MS.33.1.1 [v] f 119, 10 October 1614)



To Morton
(MS.80 f 45, 9 October 1627)

Figure 1.7 Comparison of Mar's handwriting

In these three examples, the writer uses the same idiographs of /C/, which are large curved and open, of long /s/, whose descenders curl back to the left to cup the underside of the preceding /ŭ/ and of /g/, whose descenders have a closed loop. Given the strong proof offered by this material evidence, this study makes the reasonable assumption that the letters sent by Mar in the Stewart Erskine dataset were holograph letters.

1.3.4 Alexander Erskine's letters

Transcriptions: Appendix B
Image Nos: 3.7–3.17 Appendix C
[APPENDICES REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.]

Although the four letters Alexander sent to his mother included in the Stewart Erskine dataset are not included in ScotsCorr, 14 other letters he sent to his father between 1618 and 1623 are in that corpus. The NRS archive preserves the manuscripts in the volume GD124/15/35, 'Correspondence to the Earl of Mar from Mr Alexander Erskine, his son, visiting the Continent'. Although, due to copyright restrictions, it is impossible to reproduce photographs of these 14 letters, nevertheless, an in-person visual comparison satisfies that their handwriting matches the handwriting found in the four letters he sent to Stewart. Furthermore, there is compelling textual evidence that the letters are in Alexander's handwriting:

> 'as for my not cuming hame as I haue vret, the nesessity of my bussinesses hier doe force my stay' (ll. 21–22, MS.5155 ff 12–13, 17 September 1635)
>
> 'I dare not vret many times vhat I most desir yow should know' (ll. 34–35, MS.5155 ff 12–13, 17 September 1635)
>
> 'I haue not time now to vret to any if my frendes the packet being now going' (ll. 43–44, MS.5155 ff 12–13, 17 September 1635)
>
> 'I doe not vret this because I thinke that your Ladyship vill bee vnwilling' (ll. 21–22, MS.5155 ff 14r–15, 24 July 1638)
>
> 'I vould faine vret more clearly but nather dare, nor vill not for many reasons, that ar als vnfitting to bee vrit' (ll. 18–21, MS.5155 f 18, 16 August 1638)
>
> 'I doe not vret all this, for to mow your Ladyship to assit (sic) in this' (ll. 30–31, MS.5155 f 18, 16 August 1638)

He refers to the physical act of writing the manuscripts on six occasions in three letters. Moreover, throughout the text, /v/ and not /w/ is used in word-initial position, for example, *vret*: write, *vill*: will and *vnfitting*: unfitting. Most convincingly, Alexander adopted his mother's custom of adding fermesses to

symbolise familial affection and loyalty, as demonstrated in Figure 1.8, which shows the address terms in his four letters. For these reasons, this study will assume that the manuscripts were holographic compositions.

MS.5155 f 8r MS.5155 f 12r MS.5155 f 14r MS.5155 f 18r

Figure 1.8 Alexander's fermesse symbols

1.3.5 Arthur Erskine's letters

Transcriptions: Appendix B
Image Nos: 3.18–3.29 Appendix C
[APPENDICES REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.]

In contrast to Stewart, Mar and Alexander, Arthur Erskine has no holograph letters in ScotsCorr to compare with his in the Stewart Erskine dataset. Nevertheless, as is the case with his mother and brother Alexander, textual evidence can be gleaned from Arthur's letters which confirm they are in his handwriting. On two occasions, he refers to the act of writing:

> 'excuse my euell wreitt' (l.33, MS.5155 f 34, 8 December 1640)
>
> 'Madam I haŭe taken the occasion to wreitt to your La*dyship* Againe' (l. 40, MS.5155 f 44–45, 9 May 1643)

This section presents a handwriting analysis that will argue that the hand used in the two manuscripts, MS.5155 f 34 and MS.5155 f 44–45, is the same as in Arthur's other letters, MS.5155 f 22 and MS.5155 f 42. The four letters exhibit a blend of both italic and secretary forms which exemplifies the new mixed hand that became more commonplace in the seventeenth century as secretary hand was influenced and then overtaken by the fashionable Italian script (Simpson 1986: 26). Figure 1.9 shows two columns that contain four examples of similar words written in italic script from Arthur's four manuscripts. Under the

'h graphs' column, the words *what* and *that* are compared and under 'short s' are the words *his* and *is.* Both sets demonstrate markedly similar handwriting where the writer used clear, simple, cursive letterforms characteristic of the italic script such as the looped top, open graphs of /h/, which do not dip below the line as a secretary script form would, and the rounded /a/ which, unlike a secretary /a/, has no slanted stroke across its top.

Figure 1.9 Arthur Erskine's italic script graphs of /h/ and /s/

The comparison of the words written in the secretary script shown in Figure 1.10 indicates nearly identical handwriting across the four manuscripts. In each of the words in the first column, the initial /c/ graphs are typical of secretary script, composed of two vertical and horizontal strokes that join to form a right-angle. The horizontal stroke is then joined to each word's second letter, /o/. The second column in Figure 1.10 illustrates how the writer's /e/ graphs appear like a squashed /d/. In the third, the /h/ graphs have subscript loops that dip below the text line, demonstrating that all these idiographs are typical of secretary script.

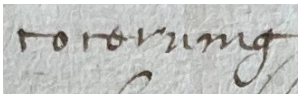
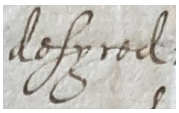
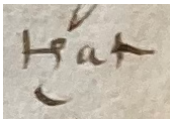
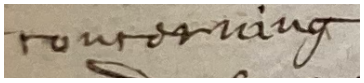
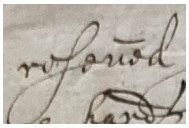
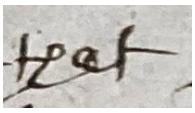
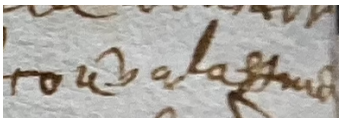
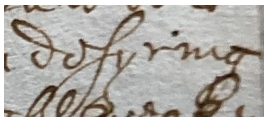
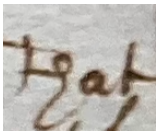
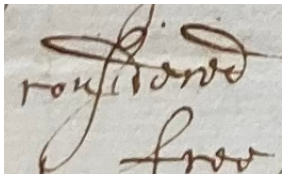
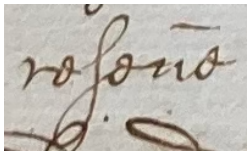
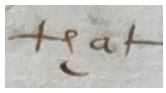
Letter shelf-mark & folio	**right angle c graphs**	**e graphs**	**h subscript loop graphs**
MS.5155 f 22r	 *cocerning*	 *desyred*	 *that*
MS.5155 f 34r	 *concerning*	 *reseŭed*	 *that*
MS.5155 f 42r	 *convalastance*	 *desyring*	 *that*
MS.5155 f 44r	 *considered*	 *reseŭe*	 *that*

Figure 1.10 Arthur Erskine's secretary script graphs of /c/, /e/ and /h/

Figure 1.11 provides further evidence of resemblant handwriting, showing parallel examples of *most* and *Madam.*

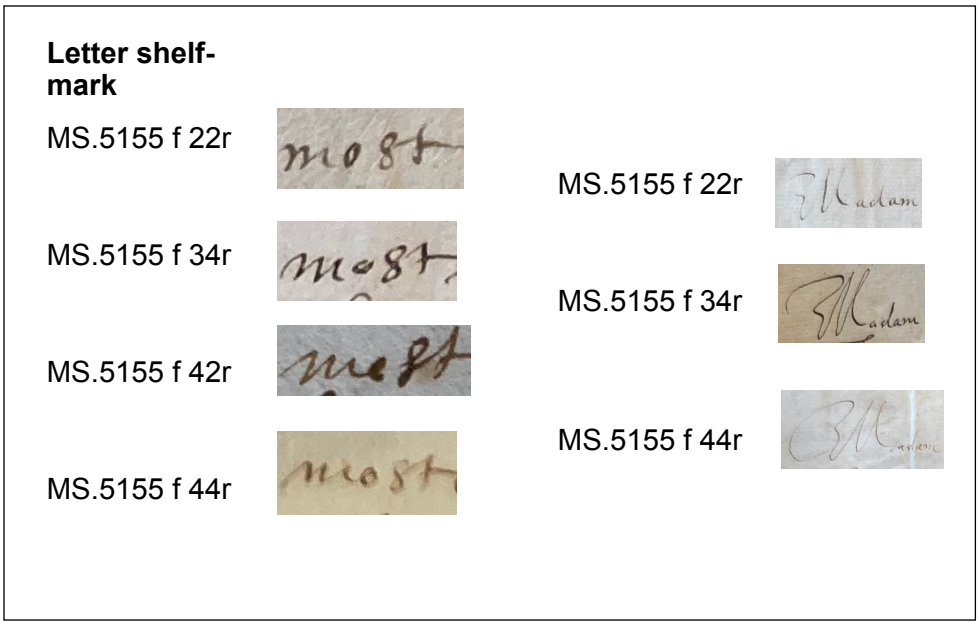


Figure 1.11 Arthur Erskine's graphs of /m/ and /M/

The four examples of *most* are related: in each /m/ of *most*, the same curved loop approaches the first minim, and the writer used the same open jagged /v/ shape in the second minim. In particular, the almost identical flourish added to the uppercase /M/ in each example of *Madam* adds weight to the argument that the same person, Arthur, penned all four letters. Thus, this study asserts they are his holograph compositions.

1.3.6 Charles Erskine's letter

Transcriptions: Appendix B
Image Nos: 3.30–3.34 Appendix C
[APPENDICES REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS].

Although the Stewart Erskine dataset only includes one of Charles' letters, of all the Erskine children, he has by far the most surviving correspondence. At least three complete volumes of manuscripts

comprising over 600 folios dated 1643 to 1647 are preserved in the NLS collection: MS.5088, MS.5089 and MS.5090. A broad visual survey of these letters, the majority of which were sent by Charles to his wife Mary Hope from the time he was away from home fighting in the civil wars, finds them to be written in the same italic hand as the letter examined here which is dated 6 January 1640 (MS.5070 ff 54–55). Charles' letters to Mary Hope, numbering at least 170 documents, were stated to be holograph compositions by the Reverend Robert Paul, a nineteenth-century antiquarian whose study and accompanying transcriptions are contained in the NLS volume, MS.5157 'Typescripts of letters of the Honourable Sir Charles Erskine of Cambuskenneth'. Moreover, ScotsCorr incorporates seven of Charles' letters to his wife and the letter he sent to his mother, Stewart supporting the argument that all were written by Charles (see Table 1.2). However, again paleographic evidence lends the greatest weight to this suggestion because, like Alexander, Charles adopted his mother's practise of adding fermesse symbols to his letter. Figure 1.12 shows three fermesses in a row beneath the superscription on the address leaf of his letter, MS.5070 ff 54–55, 6 January 1640. His letter is accepted as a holographic composition for these reasons.

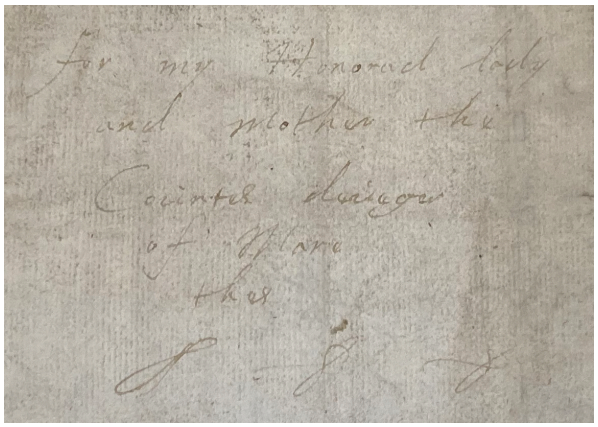


Figure 1.12 Charles' fermesse symbols
(MS.5070 ff 54–55, 6 January 1640)

1.3.7 Mary Erskine's letter

Transcriptions: Appendix B
Image Nos: 3.5–3.6 Appendix C
[APPENDICES REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.]

Although the NLS catalogue provides no information regarding the composition of Mary's letter dated 24 July 1635, the sender herself firmly establishes its holographic status via her apology: 'the berrer is in hist so that I cannot wryt mor at this tym' (ll. 6–8, MS.5155 f 11) and the fact that the upward right sloping, slightly angular hand used in the main body is the same throughout as shown in Figure 1.13:

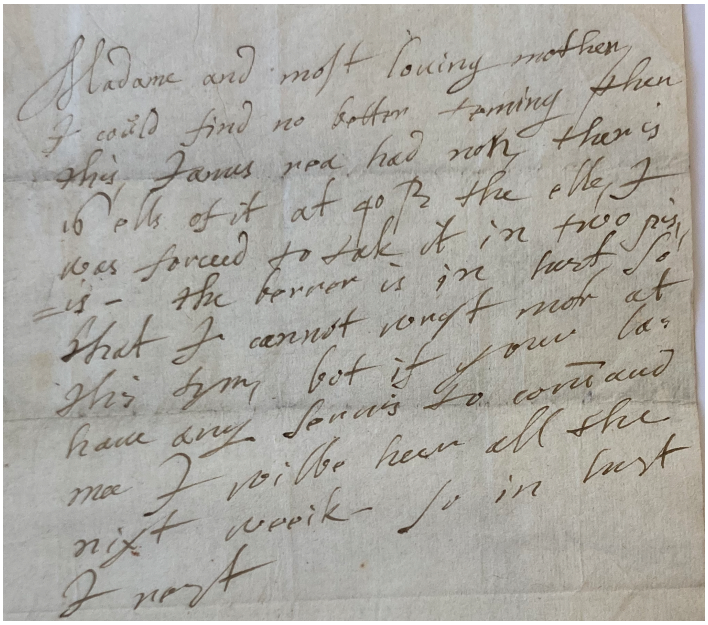


Figure 1.13 Mary's letter to Stewart: Main body
(MS.5155 f 11, 24 July 1635)

However, this letter does contain writing in another hand in the form of the endorsement 'payit ye 9 off March i636', situated between the end of the letter body and the subscription as shown in Figure 1.14:

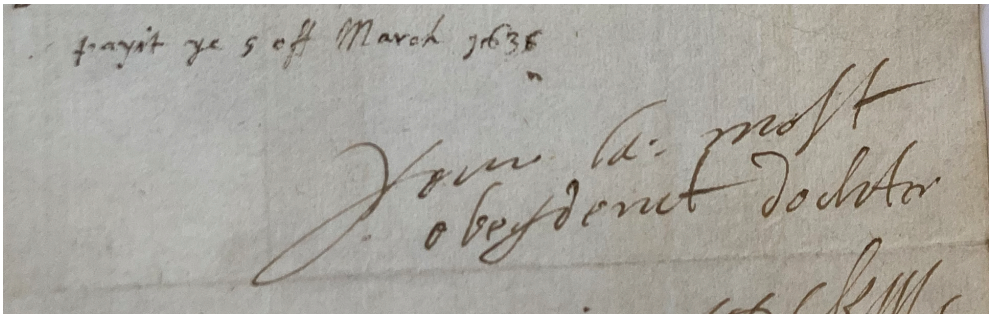


Figure 1.14 Mary's letter to Stewart: Endorsement and subscription
(MS.5155 f 11, 24 July 1635)

This type of addition describes the afterlife of the letter suggesting that on receipt, Stewart's secretary filed and subsequently endorsed it when payment was made the following year for the cloth purchased by Mary.

1.3.8 Lord Rothes and Anne Erskine's joint letter

Transcriptions: Appendix B
Image Nos: 3.1–3.4 Appendix C
[APPENDICES REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.]

As Section 1.4.3 explains, the quantitative analysis of this letter focuses on data extracted from Anne's postscript and not the main letter text. Therefore only these lines of handwriting are examined here. This letter is not described in the NLS catalogue, nor is it included in ScotsCorr, plus Anne has no other extant letters, and she makes no allusion to the act of writing in her postscript. Therefore identification of the hand proves more difficult in this case. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that anyone other than Anne wrote these lines for several reasons. First, the writer used an italic script that fits Anne's status as an elite noble female writer (Wolfe 2009: 31). Second, as a daughter writing to her mother, it may have been expected that her 'letters be personally written as a marker of intimacy and respect' (Daybell 2015: 509). Third, this is a brief, personal message and Anne's expressed wish to see her mother as soon as the weather improves: 'bot if the wader war once fear I sall sie yow which I lang werie much for' (ll. 59–60, MS.5155 f 32, 14 February 1636) conveys affection and intimacy, a style not usually associated with professional scribal letters. Whilst there is no other documentary or scholarly evidence to add weight to this assertion, these three reasons increase the likelihood of the hand being Anne's. Therefore, on balance, this study accepts her postscript as a holographic text.

CHAPTER TWO: METHODOLOGY

2.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology, first defining the editorial policy applied to the letter transcriptions (Section 2.2). Then, an account of the quantitative analyses will explain the selection of the corpus software and its compilation (Section 2.3.1), the choice of the diagnostic features (Section 2.3.2), the collection of the linguistic forms (Section 2.3.3) and the sociolinguistic coding procedure (Section 2.3.4). Lastly, the final section discusses the process of qualitative analysis (Section 2.4).

2.2 Editorial principles of the letter transcriptions

With the focussed dataset established, the next step was to transcribe the 47 Stewart Erskine letters to render their text into a digital format suitable for quantitative analyses. As mentioned in Chapter 1, Section 1.2.1, ScotsCorr contains 22 letters sent in the Stewart Erskine dataset. However, this study is based on new transcriptions created directly from the original manuscripts (see Appendix B, Edition of Stewart Erskine letters). [APPENDIX REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.] As emphasised by Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg, historical sociolinguistic analyses must be based on reliable editions, so it is vital to take the utmost care with the 'text interpreting, editing and palaeography' of the original manuscripts (2012: 28). Scrutiny of the manuscript photographs facilitated the editing exercise, allowing magnification of every handwriting detail. Using digital pictures means that sections of the script can be compared quickly using 'cut and paste' to lay them out side-by-side in a new document (Appendix C, Stewart Erskine letter images). [APPENDIX OF IMAGES REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.]

The examination proposed here is of grammar and spelling. Thus the primary objective of the transcription process was to represent the original orthography accurately. As Elspass has stressed, 'it goes without saying that for linguistic analysis, (historical) manuscripts must be presented in an authentic form, that is, unabridged and without any changes to spelling, grammar, or style' (2012: 164). Grant Simpson adopted the same approach in his book, *Scottish handwriting 1150–1650*, stating his intent was 'to show the reader as exactly as possible what the writing in each document was intended to

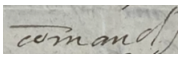
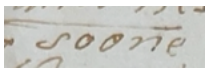
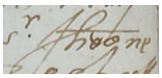
represent' (1998: 47). Jeremy Smith uses a similar policy of minimal editorial intervention in *Older Scots: A linguistic reader* (2012). The aim here is the same: to deviate as little as possible from the original text, and so the editorial principles follow Simpson's methods, with some minor modifications detailed below. The letters are edited diplomatically, either directly from the NLS manuscripts or the author's photographs, and the transcriptions are grouped by the sender then printed in chronological order. A title which provides the sender name, recipient name, date and shelf-mark heads each transcription, followed by headnotes which give the following information if known: identification of script and hand including any secretaries; details of signature; seal, endorsements and marginalia; sent from and sent to location and letter bearer if known. Any damage or missing sections are also recorded here.

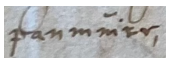
The word folio is abbreviated to **f,** recto to **r** and verso to **v**. Line divisions are preserved and are numbered in fives. Lines are referenced in the gloss or notes as (l. 5). Editorial notes are in **Arial font size 10** and are placed in square brackets to the immediate left of the section of the transcription to which they correspond, for example, **[body text, secretary script, scribal hand].** The following parts of a letter are identified: address term, letter text, subscription, postscript, superscription, signature and marginalia. The hand (if known) and script are identified in the editorial notes at the beginning of each folio and whenever a change of either occurs. A dotted line across the entire transcription signals a new folio leaf. The majority of the folios have been endorsed by modern-day archivists whose marks, frequently pencilled in the top or bottom margin, are transcribed and noted as **[hand of archivist].** Many of the archivist marks made by NLS staff are enclosed by square brackets. These marks are identified in two ways: by their font, Times New Roman size 12 (used for all the transcribed text) and their location on the right-hand side of the transcription. They should not be confused with editorial comments, which are given in **Arial font size 10** thus and are on the left-hand side. A change of text direction is indicated by an editorial comment describing the switch, for example, **[postscript, written sideways in the left margin]**.

Original spelling is reproduced, including the usage of <u> and <v>, <i> and <j>. The obsolete letter yogh <ȝ> is retained, as for example, in <ȝe>  and the letter <y>  in words such as < ye>.[6]

Abbreviations have also been silently expanded, and the missing letters italicised. Thus,  is transcribed as Lo*rdship* (or Lo*rdship's* where possession is indicated) and superscript abbreviations such as  q*uher*off. For the most part, macrons are also silently expanded and the missing letters

[6] Note that, rather than being italicised in this section, linguistic examples are denoted by angle brackets in order to differentiate them from expanded abbreviations which are in italics.

italicised, as in,  com*m*and. However, one exception is Mar, who often added a macron above <n> or <m> where it is possible he did not intend to denote an abbreviation. For example, his word  <soone> is entirely covered with a macron, as is  <Ihoone> (the name John). Those words entirely topped by a macron are not expanded but instead are noted in the editorial comments of the transcription.

As the spelling of proper names was not regularised in early modern times, these abbreviations have not been expanded, and the modern spelling is given immediately afterwards in square brackets; for example,  is transcribed as: Edr [Edinburgh]. When a diacritic such as a tittle (cup mark) is added to <u> graphs, as here in <panmŭire>,  this is transcribed as ŭ. Punctuation is reproduced as accurately as possible, as is space between letters and words. For example, where a writer has left a space before a colon, as here,  this is transcribed as: doe : . Similarly, when a larger space is left, indicating a break between sentences, this is transcribed thus:< him I must…. >. Where words have been broken across two lines, they are transcribed exactly as in the original manuscript. Writers frequently indicate this using a single hyphen <-> or double hyphen <=>, and these are also reproduced precisely. Moreover, when two words are joined, they are transcribed as they appear, for example: <forifyour>. Numerals and dates are transcribed as written, either in Roman or Arabic. When transcribing capital letters, it can often be difficult to state with certainty whether a writer intended an upper-case or lower-case graph. For example, many abbreviated forms of <Ladyship> and <Lordship> do not appear to be capitalised. These letters have been retained as lower-case unless, by careful comparison with other words that begin with a lowercase version of these letters, they can be pinpointed as genuine capitals. Double f graph <ff> is retained and not replaced with capital <F>. The fermesse symbol is transcribed as <$> and ampersand as: <&>.

Words added above the line are denoted by carat marks, thus: ^ye^. Words inserted to the side of the text, in the margins, are noted in the editorial comments. Errors within the handwriting are also recorded throughout. Deleted words that remain legible are transcribed and struck-through as, for example, ~~ye~~ and those which are illegible as [deletion]. When a writer has changed one letter for another or corrected an individual letter, an editorial comment on the left notes the change. Where it was impossible to settle on an accurate transcription of a word or letter, this is indicated in square brackets with a dot corresponding

to each letter missing as [..]. Ink marks, stains or damage are described in the editorial notes, for example,

[ink stain above 'and']. When text is missing due to damage, it is noted as [damage: ?1 word missing] or [damage: 2 characters missing]. Where it is possible to deduce text rendered partially missing or illegible by damage, it is noted as, for example, Lady[damage: ship].

Each transcription provides a reader's gloss at the end for obsolete words, legal terms or those which may be difficult to understand due to their phonetic spelling. A notes section also aims to identify persons and locations mentioned in the letter contents. Appendix C reproduces photographs of all the manuscripts. [APPENDIX REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.] Here, the titles given to the letter images correspond to their transcription, giving sender and recipient name plus shelf-mark. Parts of the letters are also identified on the photos in Appendix C: letter text, superscription, inner leaves, address leaf and endorsement. [APPENDIX REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.]

2.3 Quantitative analyses

As described in Section 1.1, this study will use a variationist approach to link patterns of language to sociolinguistic circumstances. The quantitative analysis data was extracted via computer-based corpus linguistic techniques. As noted by Tagliamonte, there are several advantages to this type of data-driven methodology, most notably that it provides a robust empirical foundation upon which to base comparative linguistic research (2006: 12). A detailed breakdown of the stages of the quantitative analysis will now follow (Sections: 2.3.1–2.3.4)

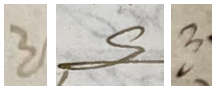
2.3.1 Selection of the diagnostic features

As described in Section 1.1, the study intends to capture salient features of EM Scots grammar and spelling within the Stewart Erskine texts. A *Questionnaire of Diagnostic Features* was drawn up, containing eight in the grammar category and 16 in spelling (Table 2.3). In this questionnaire, columns 2 and 3 distil the variants to a binary choice of either an EM Scots or EM English form. James Craigie's 1944 edition of the *Basilicon Doron of King James VI* was used to verify the hits thrown out by the corpus searches. This is an apt reference text because Volume I contains both an edition of the king's

original 1599 manuscript, written in EM Scots: *MS Royal 18. B. xv,* as well as a translation into EM English from 1603: *Waldegrave 1603,* and thus offers two complete texts which contain characteristic examples of the languages investigated here.[7] As well as containing easily categorised forms (for example, in the diagnostic feature of the indefinite article, *ane* is the EM Scots form and *a* the EM English form), the letters contain many examples of idiosyncratic spelling, early modern spelling practices being far from standardised. Taking the diagnostic feature of regular preterite verbs as an example, Stewart's scribal letter to the Earl of Morton (MS.80 f 53) uses the typical Scottish inflexion -*it,* in words *informit* and *actionit*, however, in one of her holograph letters to Morton (MS.80 f 54) she used the less common -*et* inflexion in words *expeaket* and *permitet*. The data extracted includes these unusual spelling forms, which were checked in DSL online (2002) to ensure their correct classification as EM Scots or EM English. The data excludes proper nouns and place names because the two languages shared these words.

[7] As this dissertation uses James Craigie's 1944 edition (printed for the Scottish Text Society) the spelling is given as *Basilicon* although the title is more frequently spelt as *Basilikon*.

Table 2.3 Questionnaire of diagnostic features

Feature	EM Scots form	EM English form
Grammatical features		
Auxiliary verbs	*hes, dois, wes*	*hath, doth, was*
Indefinite article	*ane*	*a, an*
Modal verbs	*micht, sal, s(o)uld, man, mon*	*might shall should must*
Negative article	*na*	*no*
Plurals	<is>, <ys>, e.g. *decreitis*	<s>, <es>, e.g. *decrees*
PRS verb inflexions (2Sg/3Sg)	*e.g. ȝou keipis, thai keip*	e.g. *you keepeth, they keepth*
Regular PRET verb inflexions	<it>, <et>, <at> e.g. *informit, informet, honorat*	<ed> e.g. informed
thir versus *these*	*thir*	*these*
Spelling features		
<a> versus <o>	<a> e.g. *baith*, *maist, stanes, twa*	<o> e.g. *both, most, stones, two*
<aw> versus <ow>	<aw> e.g. *knaw, knau, shau, shaw*	<ow> e.g. *knou*, *know, shou, show*
<e> versus <a>	<e> e.g. *efter, berar, pert, hes*	<a> e.g. *after, bearer, part, has*
<ei> versus <ea>	<ei> e.g. *greit*, *pleise, mein*	<ea> e.g. *great*, *please, mean*
<ui> versus <oo>	<ui> e.g. bluid, guid, luik	<oo> e.g. *blood, good, look*
<ch> versus <gh>	<ch> e.g. *dochter*	<gh> e.g. *daughter*
<f> versus <v>	<f> e.g. *luf*	<v> e.g. *love*
<k> versus <ch>	<k> e.g. *beseik*	<ch> e.g. *beseech*
<sch> versus <sh>	<sch> e.g. *sche*	<sh> e.g. *she*
<quh> versus <wh>	<quh> e.g. *quhilk, quherof*	<wh> e.g. which, whereof
gif versus *if*	*gif*	*if*
Representation of l-vocalization	e.g. *fow, fou*	<l> vocalization, e.g. *full*
Representation of v-deletion	no <v>, e.g. *deil*	v is present, e.g. *devil*
Retention of yogh <ȝ> versus <y>	e.g. *ȝour* *Examples of yoghs:* 	e.g. *your*
Tittles <ŭ> versus <u>	e.g. sŭm *Examples of tittles:* 	e.g. sum
Word-initial <w> versus <u>	<w> e.g. *wp*	<u> e.g. *up*

Vowel spelling variants adapted from data in Meurman-Solin (1993: 132–135). Other variants adapted from data in Kniesza 1997; Macafee 2002; Smith 2012; Williams 2016.

2.3.2 Software selection and corpus compilation

The corpus analysis techniques used the computer software tool AntConc for several reasons: it is a freeware, multi-platform application, it requires no installation, it is openly available to download as a single executable file, and it contains a simple yet powerful search facility that is ideal for the identification of diagnostic features within texts. As AntConc works only with plain text files, such as those with the file extension .txt, the corpus was created by exporting the entire text of each letter transcription (cleaned of any editorial comments, line numbers and extra spaces that had been added during the transcription process) into a plain text file. Later additions to the manuscript included in the transcriptions (for example, modern archivist marks) were also removed as these were not part of the original text of the letter. Each plain text file preserves the original lineation of the manuscript except for those words broken across lines that are rejoined. The reassembly allowed AntConc's search tool to locate them as whole words. Thus, as a group, these 47 plain text files comprise the study's purpose-built corpus entitled *St-ErCor*. Each of the 47 text filenames is unique and is composed of five parts separated by hyphens, these being: a three-character code that identifies the archive; the archive manuscript number; the number of the first folio of the manuscript; the letter's sent date and the sender's informant name with no spaces. Thus, the name NLS-MS.5155-8-1631-alexandererskine identifies the file as containing the text of the letter preserved in the NLS, whose manuscript number is MS.5155, begins on folio 8, has a sent date of 1631 and was written by Alexander Erskine (see Appendix A, Table A.1 for a complete list of the 47 filenames). [APPENDIX REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.] As a whole corpus, the word tokens in St-ErCor total 12,201 with 2533 word types.

2.3.3 Extraction of linguistic forms

The steps involved in collecting the linguistic forms were as follows:

Step 1: The 47 files in St-ErCor were loaded to AntConc, and the entire corpus was scanned for each diagnostic feature, one by one, first EM Scots then EM English (Table 2.3, Questionnaire of Diagnostic Features).

Step 2: Each search on AntConc began by setting the Search window size to 0 (zero), then under Kwic sort options, level 1 was set to 0 (zero), and levels 2 and 3 were deselected. These settings meant only the individual words found by the search routines (and none of the text surrounding them) would appear in the results window.

Step 3: Any resulting word list was checked manually to ensure the hits were valid and weed out false results. To illustrate, Figure 2.1 shows the example of the search term *it, which was entered to find Scots verbs with the suffix –it in the diagnostic feature of verb inflexions. Here, for example, the verbs *actionit* and *aristit* are valid results, whereas *decreit* and *estait* are invalid because they are not verbs but nouns. The disadvantage of this type of erroneous data output was easily overcome because the size of St-ErCor is relatively small at 12,201 total tokens. Each set of results was manually checked, and any invalid hits were discarded. Plurals and present tense singular verb inflexions were the features that posed more problems than any other because both end in -s. For example, the search term *s would return both the plural noun *sisters* and the verb *intends*. Both sets were coded carefully according to their diagnostic features. Any other anomalous results were checked using DSL and *The Basilicon Doron of King James VI* (Craigie 1944).

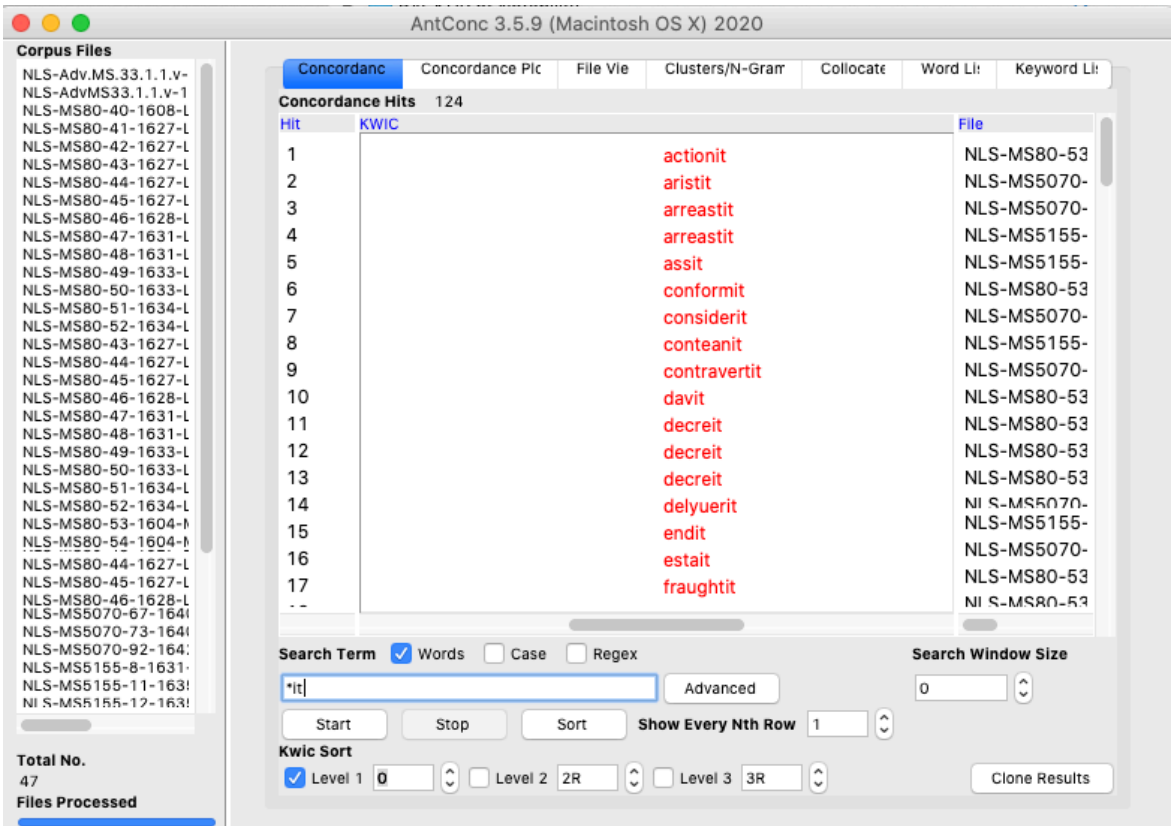


Figure 2.1: AntConc results for search term *it with only hits shown

Step 4: The valid results from AntConc were transferred into the MS Excel workbook entitled 'St-ErCor Analysis.xlsx', which was designed for this study. The worksheet titled 'All Data' contains all the forms extracted from the corpus. The following columns in the worksheets were filled with corresponding data from AntConc, as Figure 2.2 shows:

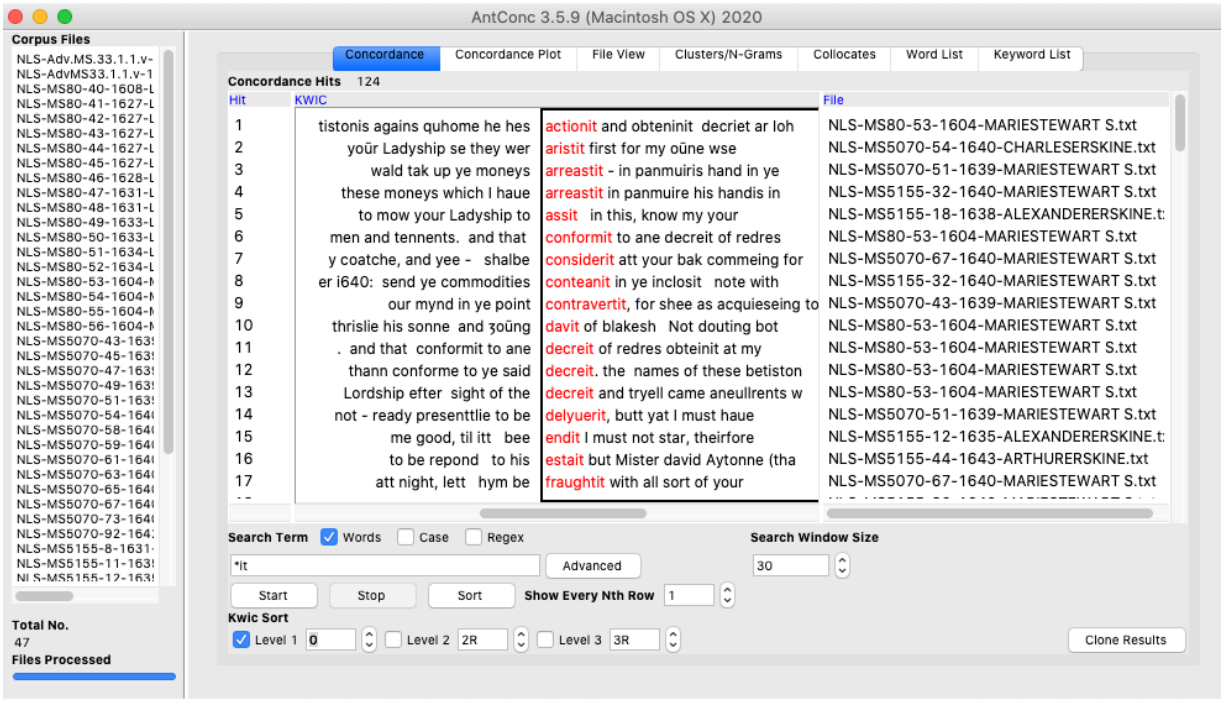


Figure 2.2: AntConc results for search term *it with context shown

- **Filename**: the plain text filename in St-ErCor was copied from AntConc's far-right column, *File* and pasted into the worksheet column *Filename*. The MS Excel text import wizard (with <tab> set as the delimiter and the last two columns skipped) was used to ensure that only the filename text was copied with no extra characters.

- **Context**: to reveal the text surrounding each hit word (shown in red text on Figure 2.2), the AntConc Search window size was increased from 0 (zero) to 30 and the search rerun. To copy this text into the *StErCor Analysis.xlsx* workbook, first, a plain text file was created from AntConc via the options: *File*, *Save output* and *Save*. Second, the file created called *antconc_results.txt* was opened in the text editing software, TextEdit, and the options *Select all* and *Copy* were chosen to copy all the lines output. Lastly, this text was pasted into the *Context* column in the corresponding worksheet, again using the text import wizard to ensure no extra characters were copied over but this time set to the option 'fixed width text'.

- **Hit**: the valid words (highlighted in red in the middle column of Figure 2.2) were copied as a list and pasted directly into the worksheet *Hit* column.

Step 5: After the data had been copied over from AntConc, the following four columns on the MS Excel worksheet were also filled in manually:

- *Search*: the search term input on AntConc to find the hit was filled in here
- *Form*: the form of each hit was identified as EM Scots or EM English
- *Linguistic category*: type of category input here as Grammar or Spelling
- *Diagnostic feature*: the specific feature from the Questionnaire of Diagnostic Features was input here, for example, Verb inflexions or Tittles (see Table 2.3).

Step 6: After all searches were complete, the total was noted: 4,002 tokens were extracted from AntConc and copied to the worksheet 'All Data'. This data was now ready to be coded for a series of sociolinguistic variables.

2.3.4 Coding the data for sociolinguistic variables

The steps involved in coding the data were as follows:

Step 1: As well as the worksheet of results 'All Data' contained in the MS Excel workbook 'St-ErCor Analysis.xlsx', a further worksheet entitled 'Handlist for Lookups' was created to hold the sociolinguistic data for each letter with the letter filename used as a unique identifier (an explanation of the filenames in given Section 2.3.1 and Table A.1, Appendix A contains the complete list of filenames). [APPENDIX REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.]

Step 2: The MS Excel formula VLOOKUP was used to pull in sociolinguistic data relating to the letters stored in the worksheet 'Handlist for Lookups', thus automatically populating the following columns in the 'All data' worksheet:

- SENDER: the informant name, e.g. Marie Stewart (see Table 1.1, Naming Conventions)
- SENDER SEX: F/M
- SENDER LOCATION: as given in the letter text, e.g. Alloa, Stirling, unknown
- RECIPIENT: the informant name, e.g. Thomas Hope (see Table 1.1, Naming Conventions)
- RECIPIENT SEX: F/M
- RECIPIENT LOCATION: this field was not completed due to lack of data, as only two of the letters specified a location for the recipient
- RELATIONSHIP: relationship between sender and recipient. The following relationships are described in the Stewart Erskine dataset: son to mother, mother to son, mother-in-law to daughter-in-law, daughter to mother, cousin to cousin, in-law to in-law, friend to friend, noble to servant (as shown in Figure 1.2)
- COMPOSITION: Holograph or Scribal
- SCRIPT: Italic, Secretary or Mixed Italic/Secretary script
- DATE SORTING: number created from date for sorting purposes
- YEAR: letter sent year
- DATE AS TEXT: letter sent date as text
- SHELF-MARK: shelf-mark of volume and folio of letter
- SCRIBE ID: Auto = Holograph letters; A or B = Hand A or B (in Marie Stewart's scribal letters)

A note regarding the date fields: The three date fields represent the solution to a problem with MS Excel where the software cannot store dates before the year 1900, which means the letters could not be sorted in date order. The date was converted to three different formats to overcome this issue:

- DATE SORTING
  - converted to a number in the format **yyyymmdd**, e.g. 16141010, thus creating a field that can be used to sort the letters by date
- YEAR
  - as a year only, in the number format yyyy, e.g. 1614, thus allowing letters to be grouped according to their year of composition.
- DATE AS TEXT
  - as text to use purely as a label in data tables and graphs, e.g. 10 October 1614

Step 3: The coding completed, a quantitative examination of the data was conducted on MS Excel by generating a series of PivotTables and PivotCharts, contained in Chapter 5. These interactive tools were selected because they can analyse and summarise data by categories and allow category levels to expand or collapse to focus the results. The qualitative analyses are based on the results described by these tables and graphs.

2.4 Qualitative analyses

Following the identification of the diagnostic features using corpus linguistic techniques and the subsequent sociolinguistic data coding, which led to query-based tables and charts (Sections 2.3.3–2.3.4),

the next stage was to produce a fine-grained study of the texts. This methodology draws on critical theories that argue we can apply modern sociolinguistic insights to the language of the past. The uniformitarian principle underpins this approach, which assumes that past social structures were similar to those in the present day and that their language patterns were subject to similar variation and change, as argued by Suzanne Romaine (1982). Nevalainen & Raumolin-Brunberg pointed out that 'human languages have always been used in speech communities and, consequently have been socially conditioned throughout their histories' (2003: 22). Jeremy Smith stated: 'In sum, natural language is — and always has been — a shared social tool, continually negotiated between its users over space and time' (2021: 24). This idea will be applied here to comment on the seventeenth-century language in the Stewart Erskine letters. However, to uncover the possible sociolinguistic reasons for the language encountered therein, it is first necessary to contextualise the documents. When conducting studies using corpora, Jucker and Taavitsainen have noted that researchers:

> may not be familiar with the background facts of texts, and without this knowledge, qualitative analysis of examples cannot be performed without risking the integrity of the study (2012: 42–43).

Their comments reveal it is essential to maintain awareness of the historical circumstances of the composition of the texts under examination whilst making such interpretative judgements. Smith notes that this kind of qualitative analysis which 'deals with how language works in particular interactional situations [including] letters often overlaps with sociolinguistics (2020: 24). In this way, techniques from reimagined philology, add nuance to the sociolinguistic framework described here to address the research questions listed in Chapter 1, Section 1.1.[8]

[8] Smith coined the term 'reimagined philology', as discussed in Section 1.1 (2020: 29).

CHAPTER THREE: SCHOLARLY CONTEXT

3.1 Introduction

This chapter begins by contextualising the linguistic environment in which the Stewart Erskine family operated via an overview of the OS language (Section 3.2). The next three sections situate this study within a scholarly framework by providing critical accounts of the methodologies and solutions used in previous scholarly investigations that have adopted a historical sociolinguistic approach. Studies of the anglicisation process (Section 3.3), studies of early modern letters (Section 3.4) and pragmatic analyses of Scots (Section 3.5) are considered in turn. The final two sections review modern-day Scots language projects (Section 3.6) and those few biographies and academic historical works which reference Stewart and her family (Section 3.7).

3.2 Outline of the development of Older Scots

Initially referred to as Inglis, the language of the Scottish people originated from the same West Germanic roots of Old English and Old Norse as Middle English. However, by the late fourteenth century, the two had evolved to be entirely distinct. Over the next two hundred years, the Inglis language would shed its misleading name to become Scottis, the dominant language south of the Forth (with Gaelic spoken in the North and the Western Isles) (Templeton 1973: 6, as cited in Smith 2012: 8). Scottis was used in literature, personal writings, correspondence and religious treatises, replacing Latin as the language of official records and Acts of the Scottish Parliament. At the beginning of the 1500s, the range of linguistic variants found in Scottish printed texts was narrowing, and linguistic standardisation was incipient, as particular variants began first to be selected and then recognised as the ‘acceptable’ form (Devitt 1989: 8 and references there cited). However, the sixteenth century was a period of immense change for the country, described by Devitt as the ‘peak of the rise and the beginning of the fall of Scots-English’ (1989: 9). Scots was declining across all genres by the end of the century due to various extralinguistic religious, social, and political developments. The Reformation, which took place in Scotland in 1560, triggered an immediate demand for non-Latin bibles. As it was cheaper to print and import books from abroad, the Geneva Bible, written in English and not Scots, was adopted by the

Scottish kirk (Smith 2012: 15). The result of the decision was that Scotland's most widely circulated text was written in English, and its pervasiveness, as well as the fact that the number of new texts being published in England far outweighed those in their own country, meant that literate Scots were far more likely to read in English (Stevenson 2012: 358). As well as this, displacement of the royal court from Edinburgh to London in 1603 meant that Scots nobles now spent a great deal of time in the South where political, legal and administrative business was concentrated. As a result of this increased contact with English, Scots altered rapidly throughout the seventeenth century, helped by the fact that the two were already related and mutually intelligible. As well as in printed texts, anglicised forms became more prevalent in manuscripts; however, the spelling systems of individuals were still variable (Macafee & Aitken 2002). The Stewart Erskine letters were written during this intense linguistic adjustment in Scotland. Chapter 5 will examine how each sender's system reflects the language variants of standardising Scots, anglicised Scots and standardising English which co-existed in the country in the seventeenth century.

3.3 Historical sociolinguistic approaches to anglicisation

A variety of previous scholarly investigations have argued that sociolinguistic factors conditioned the anglicisation of EM Scots, with several acting as a springboard for this study (Devitt 1989; Meurman-Solin 1993, 1995, 2005; Macafee 2002; van Eyndhoven 2018; van Eyndhoven and Clark 2020). First and foremost, Anneli Meurman-Solin's groundbreaking studies have been of great value, being underpinned by corpus linguistic techniques, which she used to answer questions about historical language change. Meurman-Solin describes how she solved the problem of how to 'study numerically, spelling practices in idiolects' by initiating a large-scale project to transcribe Older Scottish texts, which led to the compilation of the *Helsinki Corpus of Older Scots* (HCOS) (1993: 236). Before the publication of corpora like HCOS in 1995, accessing OS source material could be problematic because the manuscripts are distributed throughout various archives and often uncatalogued; hence, studies of Scots spelling were scarce. In Veronika Kniezsa's rare account of the evolution of the language's spelling practices, she reasoned that research into OS was infrequent because there is 'hardly any material to draw from' but, as indicated in the discussion in Chapter 1, Section 1.2.1, it is more likely that the material is uncharted rather than non-existent (1997: 24).

In the 1980s, Amy Devitt produced one of the first studies of the anglicisation of the language she chose to call 'Scots-English'. This mislabelling ignores that Scots functioned as a discrete system reaching standardisation before this development. The period examined by Devitt, 1520 to 1659, corresponds to EM Scots (as used in this study) or to Late Middle Scots, according to Aitken's 1985 model. Devitt used 'socio-historical linguistics' methods, stating of her research: 'it measures the differences among writing samples objectively, it seeks the patterns in these differences, and it examines factors that may correlate with those patterns' (1989: 15, see also Romaine 1982: 13). Her methodology has been developed and refined since then to form the basis of several influential linguistic studies, for example, Meurman-Solin (1993; 2005) and van Eyndhoven and Clark (2020).

However, at the time, Devitt was hindered because she relied on editions of the original manuscripts for data which, as she admitted, are accompanied by issues such as 'the biases of preservation, the use of scribes and their idiosyncrasies, the anonymity of authors, the editing of copyists and printers' even though she tried to ensure 'only editions which explicitly maintained original spelling were used' (1989: 101). Moreover, a few constraints undermined her methodology: she examined only five variants, thus excluding various other diagnostic features of EM Scots, as indicated by the Questionnaire drawn up here, which contains almost five times as many (see Table 2.3). Furthermore, by limiting each pair of features to a single Scottish or English spelling, the characteristic variability of early modern spelling was ignored. Besides this, her comparative analysis was restricted to two extralinguistic factors, GENRE and CHANGE OVER TIME, thereby potentially overlooking other influences. Finally, neither their audience nor composition was considered when classifying texts into different genres, as highlighted by van Eyndhoven and Clark (2020). The discussion below will expand this point.[9] Despite these drawbacks, the validity of Devitt's primary hypothesis, that once the anglicisation process had begun, it was possible to connect the level of English features identified in a Scottish text to extralinguistic influences, was sound. Her approach was adapted and refined by Meurman-Solin to probe the phenomenon of anglicisation by tagging the texts in the HCOS for sociolinguistic variables to explore quantitively and qualitatively how the language was affected by conditioning factors (1993: 36). However, as was the case for Devitt, she had to rely on editions, many of which she noted did not specify their editorial principles (1993: 237).

Caroline Macafee also cited sociolinguistic elements as a potential cause of variation in written language in her discussion of anglicisation (DSL 2002). Whilst noting that differently spelt versions of the

[9] The five variables along with their corresponding 'primary pairs' as used in Devitt's study are: 1. relative clause marker (quh or wh), 2. Preterite inflection (-it or -ed), 3. Indefinite article (ane or a/an), 4. Negative particle (na or no), 5. Present participle (-and or -ing) (1989a: 16).

same word identified in holograph manuscripts may have reflected the phonological system of the writer, she argued it is equally possible that they were attempting to replicate another speaker's pronunciation. Moreover, she hypothesised that when Scots used anglicised forms in their speech, they were copying from written forms in anglicised texts (2002). Her suggestions will be discussed in relation to Marie Stewart's choice of forms in Chapter 5. Nonetheless, Macafee reminded us that her discussion was speculative and not based on any large-scale study; therefore, she noted spelling choices may be completely unrelated to these theories (2002).

Sarah van Eyndhoven aimed to advance sociolinguistic variation studies by using contemporary statistical modelling techniques to obtain the most accurate, objective picture of the pattern of language change via a corpus of eighteenth-century Scottish political texts (2018: 64). She sought to explore the conditioning factors of anglicisation by comparing Scottish items with their corresponding English items: an approach that this study reflects. Unlike many other studies that provide a summarised methodology (Devitt 1989; Meurman-Solin 1993; Cruickshank 2013), the reader can track the logical steps involved in the analysis because van Eyndhoven meticulously documented every research task. This study takes the same approach, recording each step of the analyses in Chapter 2. Moreover, although her examination was limited to lexical items and therefore ignored more functional, morphosyntactic words, her decision to search for a broader range of diagnostic features than Devitt, who only used five, afforded the best chance of tracking all the variants. By choosing to track 24 diagnostic features (Table 2.3), this study endorses van Eyndhoven's aim to locate a broad range of distinctive aspects of EM Scots in the texts (2018: 64).

In a later joint study, van Eyndhoven and Lynn Clark opted for a different plan, concentrating instead on one feature alone: <quh->, an item they described as undergoing 'clear and unambiguous anglicisation' to become <wh-> (2020: 214). They used statistical modelling techniques to query texts in the HCOS and their findings contradicted Devitt (1989) and Meurman-Solin (1993), who asserted that the sociolinguistic factor of TEXT TYPE had a more significant effect upon its variation than the factor of its AUDIENCE. Van Eyndhoven and Clark provided evidence for their argument that AUDIENCE was more important, via the example of religious texts which, rather than being lumped together into a single category, they asserted must be separated into two AUDIENCE types: PUBLIC or PRIVATE, a distinction which significantly influenced the diagnostic features they identified in the texts (2020: 226). As well as analysing large patterns of data, their study scrutinised individual, anomalous texts they termed 'random intercepts' via which they argued:

> we are able to see which individuals are leading the change and who lags behind, indicating interesting trends and the highly individual nature that language change can assume once the analysis is broken down to the micro-level (2020: 231)

Their statement may remind us to approach the findings of large-scale studies with caution because they can create a falsely smooth picture of language development which is in reality 'fuzzy' (Smith 2012: 5). Smith has also stated that moments of linguistic change 'cannot be ascertained with […] precision' but are instead 'gradual, processual, emergent phenomena' (2007: 5). Van Eyndhoven and Clark highlighted the high level of anglicisation they identified in personal letters (which they categorised as having the audience type FAMILY) as confounding their expectations, as did the high level of Scots retained in letters written to James VI/I (categorised as having the AUDIENCE type ROYAL/OFFICIAL) (2020: 224). In an attempt to explain the data that ran contrary to their preconceptions, the authors suggested that the senders of the personal letters adapted quickly to southern linguistic forms to suit their relatives who had relocated to London with the royal court. In contrast, they theorised that James VI/I's correspondents were trying to foster an 'in-group identity' with a Scots speaking king who felt no need to alter his language (224). However, as pointed out by the authors themselves, the results relate entirely to the limitations of the corpus examined because, within the two categories of FAMILY and ROYAL/OFFICIAL, only these specific types of texts exist. Were researchers able to include a much larger variety and a greater number of texts, the results may be completely different. This example may support the argument that, while statistical analyses are successful, the limitations of their original data must be taken into account when evaluating the results and reinforce the value of small scale, in-depth studies as planned here.

3.4 Historical sociolinguistic approaches to early modern letters

The compilation of corpora such as the *Corpus of Early English Correspondence* (CEEC 1993–1998) and the parsed version (PCEEC 2006) offer proof of the widely held scholarly view that 'personal letters are a speech-like genre and provide access to everyday language use in the past', thus presenting a

valuable data source for historical sociolinguistic investigations (Culpeper & Kyto 2010: 17). Datasets constructed from 'vernacular style' personal letters whose compositional elements are varied (for example, different senders, recipients, dates, geographical locations and genders) represent ideal research materials for tracing language development (Elspass 2012: 165 and references cited there). The extensive diachronic studies of English performed by Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg using personal letters in the CEEC demonstrate how historical linguists can use social history to analyse linguistic variation (2003).[10] However, a significant drawback of the PCEEC is that it was compiled from previously edited texts. Recently, Samuli Kaislaniemi argued that the 'perennial problem for studying the history of English spelling after the advent of print is the lack of suitable corpora' and noted that new projects like ERRATAS underline the challenges involved in determining how reliable edited historical texts are without recourse to the original manuscripts (2021: 1, 12).[11] Meurman-Solin had previously pointed out the lack of authentic digitised transcriptions of historical texts and responded by creating ScotsCorr, a new corpus of OS letters that contains only transcripts of 'original letter manuscripts which reproduce the text disallowing any modernisation, normalisation or emendation' (Meurman-Solin 2007). In 2003, the completion of the first version of ScotsCorr created a rich online resource that prioritised holograph letters (see Section 1.2.1 and Table 1.2). Meurman-Solin used phonological evidence from the seventeenth-century letters of a close family group in ScotsCorr in her study, 'Letters as a source of data for reconstructing early spoken Scots' (1999). Her conclusion that the senders' varying levels of anglicisation correspond to extralinguistic factors such as their sex, relationship, status and social ties is explored regarding the Stewart Erskine senders in Chapter 5 Sections 5.3.3 and 5.3.7 (1999: 319). Additionally, in her discussion of the conventions of Scottish women's writing, 'Women's Scots: Gender-based variation in Renaissance letters' (2005), she refuted previous scholarly claims which linked variated female spelling practices to incompetency, instead of arguing that the women were attempting to recreate speech and so were in fact, innovators (2005: 430–440). Nevertheless, despite her explicit statement that 'only data based on diplomatically transcribed original manuscripts can be used for this kind of research', Meurman-Solin was obliged to include some letters in this study that were only available in editions (2005: 429). This study responds to the scholarly call to base historical linguistic research on original

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[10] A new research project: 'Changing styles of letter-writing? Evidence from a POS-tagged corpus of 18th-century letters', will also use the PCEEC texts (Vartiainen, Siirtola and Nevalainen 2021)

[11] Kaislaniemi, Samuli, Oona, Hintikka, Anna Merikallio, & Anni Sairio. 2020. *ERRATAS database of editorial principles and practices in printed editions of historical correspondence* [Data set]. Zenodo. doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.3855596. (23 February 2022.)

manuscripts and therefore represents a distinct contribution to knowledge (Meurman-Solin 2005; Elspass 2012; Nevalainen and Raumolin-Brunberg 2012; Kaislaniemi 2021).

3.5 Historical sociolinguistic pragmatic approaches to Scots

Via new editions of OS manuscripts, Jeremy Smith has engaged critically with texts' punctuation, script, spelling and font, exploring how sociolinguistic factors affected their language (2012; 2020). In an endorsement of the scholarly argument discussed here that personal letters may offer us the best chance of recapturing voices from the past, Smith has studied the pragmatic features of letters written by two Scotsmen, Archibald Campbell and Lord Ilay (2013) and Robert Burns (2007 and forthcoming). Although the focus here is on the spelling and grammatical features of the Stewart Erskine letters (as noted in Section 1.1), the qualitative discussions in Chapter 5 benefit from his concept of reimagined philology (2020: 29).

Janet Cruickshank also recognised the unique opportunities for linguistic research afforded by letters in her account of Lord Fife's eighteenth-century manuscripts. However, her decision to limit her study to single orthographic features may risk overlooking many salient items (2013). In the eighteenth century, anglicisation had transformed EM Scots; however, although his status as an elite noble meant that Fife had acquired the new prestige language of Scottish Standard English (SSE), Cruickshank found that he retained a significant number of Scottish lexical items: *Scotticisms*, in his correspondence. Cruickshank applied Thomason and Kaufman's argument to her case study thus: where Scots is the first language, and Standard Southern English (Standard SE) the contact language, identification of lexical items from Standard SE in Scots may not necessarily signify anything more than a surface link with the contact language because such new vocabulary is easy to learn and use quickly (1988: 74, as cited 2013: 35). On the other hand, when morphosyntactic features from the contact language, Standard SSE, began to appear in the first language, Scots, then this suggests that Standard SE had a more substantial influence, furthermore that the writer may be as competent in the contact language, Standard SE as a native speaker (1988: 74, as cited 2013: 35). The approach taken in this study reflects that adopted by Cruickshank, combining corpus linguistic techniques with historical pragmatics to uncover sociolinguistic correlations between Fife's use of Scotticisms and the topic under discussion. She concluded that the Scotticisms increased when the content referred to matters of agriculture or law, and she suggests this may be because no English equivalent existed for the terms used. The findings described in Chapter 5 support Cruickshank's conclusion that extralinguistic factors condition Fife's language. For example, she linked

the Scottish morphosyntactic items he used to the sociolinguistic factor of the RECIPIENT, who was a Scots speaker.[12]

Joanna Kopaczyk has also combined corpus-driven data analysis with pragmaphilological analysis to examine Scottish texts (2013). The findings of her full-length study of the legal language of medieval Scotland supported the argument set out here that language alters in reaction to external as well as intralinguistic events. As noted by Jucker and Taavitsainen, 'Historical pragmatics studies language use in its social, cultural and above all historical context'. (2013: xi). Kopaczyk shared their conviction, and her choice to incorporate an interdisciplinary historical context section within her study is reflected here in the inclusion of sociolinguistic biographies of the Stewart Erskine family in Chapter 4 (2013: 1).

The importance of historical context was similarly foregrounded in two recent studies made of the correspondence of Margaret Tudor, Queen of Scots (1489-1541) by Graham Williams (2016) and Helen Newsome (2018). Both these scholars based their qualitative, pragmatically-oriented analyses of Queen Margaret's letters on the manuscripts' original spelling, orthography, spacing, and punctuation. Indeed, for her PhD thesis, which discussed Margaret's epistolary strategies to develop her role as a diplomatic mediator, Newsome (2018) produced diplomatic transcriptions of the queen's entire correspondence. These will form the basis of her forthcoming critical edition of the monarch's holograph letters.

Like Marie Stewart, Queen Margaret was an immigrant; in 1503, at the age of 13, she was removed to Scotland from England in preparation for her marriage to the Scottish king, James IV (Newsome 2018: 17). As did Cruickshank, Williams used a mini corpus of letters to target spelling variation in the texts, aiming to uncover how sociocultural circumstances may have affected Margaret's language. Although Margaret lived almost a century before Stewart and had English, rather than French, as a first language, their lives display similarities: neither was born in Scotland, but both moved there as young women and, as far as we know, no letters survive that were sent by them before they arrived in the country, thus, any analysis of their idiolect is confined to an examination of the letters they sent after their relocation (2016: 1). Therefore, the letters they sent may contain evidence of how the foreign arrivals adapted to their new sociolinguistic surroundings at the Scottish royal court, albeit a century apart. Daybell has pointed out that servants often read early modern letters aloud, especially in 'courtly-diplomatic contexts', giving rise to the idea that the queen and countess may have listened as manuscripts like these were given voice by Scottish courtiers, using their Scottish pronunciation (2012: 24). Chapter 5 will discuss this theory with respect to the Stewart Erskine letters.

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[12] She states that estate factors like William Rose would have had 'a relatively lowly position in society, would most likely have been Scots speakers.' (2013: 26).

3.6 Scots language scholarship in the 21st century

As indicated by the literature reviewed so far, over the past two decades, research into the language of OS, and more specifically EM Scots, has increased and benefited from technological advances such as the creation of corpora and computer-based statistical data analysis. At the end of the last century Charles Jones' edited volume, *The Edinburgh history of the Scots Language* (1997), prefigured a new scholarly interest in Scots followed by the creation of online research tools such as *A Linguistic Atlas of Older Scots* (LAOS), the *Breadalbane Collection* and the digitised volumes of the Scottish History Society, which grant access to previously hidden texts.[13] The history of the orthography of Scots has benefited from these new resources with LAOS used as the base-corpus for the FITS project: *From Inglis to Scots: Mapping sounds to spellings* (2014–2018) whose goal was to output two linked corpora of spelling variation which offer facilities in searching, mapping and cross-referencing to researchers.[14] Jennifer Bann and John Corbett's new account of Scots spelling (2012) likewise granted a welcome extension to the scholarship of the language; however, it centred on literary texts after 1700 and so excluded earlier and personal writings including letters. This study aims to complement these resources, which testify to a reignited desire on the part of scholars to illuminate previously inaccessible historical Scottish documents and perhaps reflect a broader, modern desire to have the language recognised in its own right, as made evident by the establishment of the 'Oor Vyce' campaign, the Doric Film Festival and The Scots Language Centre organisation.[15]

3.7 Historical scholarship on Marie Stewart and the Erskine family

As part of the recent interest in the linguistic output of early modern female writers, as described above, several studies of the letters of elite English women such as Lady Arbella Stuart (Steen 1994), Lady Anne Bacon (Allen 2014) and Bess of Hardwick (Wiggins 2017) have been produced, leading to

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[13] In 2008 the *Linguistic Atlas of Older Scots* (LAOS) went online at lel.ed.ac.uk/ihd/laos1/laos1; the *Breadalbane Collection*, edited by Jane Dawson was published on the internet in 2015 at ed.ac.uk/divinity/research/resources/breadalbane/letters and in 2016 the volumes of the Scottish History Society were digitised for the National Library of Scotland website and can be viewed at digital.nls.uk/scottish-history-society-publications.

[14] More information about the FITS project is available at: www.amc.lel.ed.ac.uk/fits/index.php/about/the-fits-project.

[15] oorvyce.scot 2021; doricfilmfestival.com 2020; scotslanguage.com/articles/node/id/161 2021

their successful rehabilitation, however, scant regard has been given to Scottish senders. Nadine Akkerman's new and complete edition of the correspondence of James VI/I's daughter, Elizabeth Stuart, Queen of Bohemia, has begun to redress the balance in favour of Scottish women (2011–2015). However, Queen Elizabeth of Bohemia was removed from her birth country, aged seven, and her letters were not composed in Scots but in English and French. Editors Douglas Gifford and Dorothy McMillan (2020) successfully highlighted previously overlooked women's literature and diaries; however, their volume did not examine correspondence. Although the mention of Marie Stewart in modern scholarly works is exceptionally infrequent, she was included by Jane Stevenson in her survey of 'Reading, writing and gender in early modern Scotland' in her capacity as an early modern female reader (2012). Stevenson used Sharpe's edition of Stewart's household book to investigate her book-buying habits, which revealed she had purchased works of literature, including a text by the pre-reformation Scots poet, Sir David Lyndsay, and 'Hymnes, or Sacred Songs' by the Presbyterian minister and Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, Alexander Hume (2012: 350).

As well as her documenting her interest in literature, Stewart's household book speaks to her appreciation of music, which Dolly MacKinnon briefly discussed in her study of orality, literacy and musical culture in early modern Scotland (2016).[16] MacKinnon described how Stewart's servant George Monorgun recorded the payments she made to various singers and instrumentalists, for example, to 'twa hieland singing-wemen at my Ladies command', 'ane woman clarshocher' (a harpist) and 'Blind Wat the piper', however, her letters are not mentioned (2016: 44). Michael Pearce's account of Queen Anne's transformation of the Scottish court revealed Stewart's distinguished position within the royal household through the matching gowns which were ordered to be worn by Queen Anne, Stewart and the foremost woman of the chamber, Margaret Winster, to highlight the 'group identity of the Queen's household' (2019: 141). Pearce also discovered that James VI/I purchased two gowns for Stewart's trousseau, which were of fine cloth with extra embellishment and, therefore, more expensive than those he bought for other courtiers (148). Moreover, the masque written by the king for her wedding day at Holyroodhouse in 1592 offers further evidence for her special status (148).

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[16] MacKinnon also states that some virginals (a type of early keyboard similar to a harpsichord) said to be owned by Stewart are now on display in the National Museum of Scotland (2016: 47). This statement was confirmed in an email conversation in August 2020 with the museum's Principal Curator of Renaissance and early modern History, Anna Groundwater. She notes that the 'Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland' and the attribution given at donation provide the following information about the virginals: 'Donations to the Museum, 1973–4; Vol. 105, p.325, no. 41: Virginals said to have belonged to Lady Marie Stewart, Countess of Mar. Bequeathed by Lord Elibank.' A comprehensive description of the instrument was presented in Darryl Martin's article (2000).

Apart from these brief mentions, Stewart's life has merited little scrutiny throughout history. In contrast, biographers have chosen to document the lives of her contemporaries, for example, her fellow lady-in-waiting and older sister Henrietta; her mother-in-law, Annabelle Murray, dowager Countess of Mar; her daughter Mary Erskine, Countess of Marischal; Agnes Leslie, Countess of Morton; the poet Elizabeth Melville, Lady Culross and the calligrapher Esther Inglis all have entries in the *New biographical dictionary of Scottish women*, but Stewart does not (Ewan and Pipes 2018).

McLaughlin's recent historical biography of Stewart's brother Ludovick confirmed the continuing scholarly interest in the man she stated was 'the premier noble in the kingdom' (2017: 136). Moreover, Stewart's sister Henrietta's life is recounted in *Rethinking the Scottish Revolution: Covenanted Scotland, 1637–1651* (Stewart 2016) plus she is one of three subjects discussed in Ruth Grant's 'Politicking Jacobean women: Lady Ferniehirst, the Countess of Arran and the Countess of Huntly, c.1580—1603' (1999). Like her siblings, Henrietta benefited from James VI/I's indulgent protection, and she was one of Queen Anne's closest confidantes; however, her life took a markedly different path (Pearce 2019: 146). After her conversion, Stewart lived out her life as a devout Protestant, whereas Henrietta refused to renounce her Catholic religion. For this reason, along with her loyalty to her husband, George Gordon, 6th Earl of Huntly, who was also Catholic, Henrietta was persecuted by the Scottish kirk and eventually excommunicated and exiled in 1641 (Ewan 2018: 340).

Biographical accounts are also available for the courtier Agnes Leslie, Countess of Morton (born after 1541– c.1606), singled out along with Stewart and six other women, to attend the infant Prince Henry in 1594 (Sanderson 2004). Extracts quoted by Sanderson from Leslie's letters suggest that the countess has several manuscripts that survive in archives like Stewart (2004). Another courtier who lived concomitantly with Stewart was Elizabeth Melville, Lady Culross, whose literary works such as *Ane Godlie dreame* explain her increased scholarly attention. Melville's life circumstances mirrored Stewart's in several ways: her father was similarly close to the king, she was a Covenanter, and Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe also transcribed her letters (Baxter 2015: 205). In addition, the Edinburgh University Library collection preserves two letters sent from Melville to her son James and the maternal advice they contain calls to mind Stewart's letters to her son Charles. A further nine surviving letters to her clerical protege, John Livingstone, indicate that, like Stewart, she was a patron of protestant ministers and provided them with financial support (Baxter 2015: 218). Along with 22 other women, Melville's contribution to the Covenanting cause was praised by the Reverend James Anderson in his monograph *The ladies of the*

Covenant: Memoirs of distinguished Scottish female characters, embracing the period of the Covenant and the persecution (1857); however, he too excluded Stewart.

In conclusion, very few scholars have selected to study either Stewart's life or to narrate the content of her letters, thus making a solid case for a new and comprehensive inspection of these forgotten documents.

CHAPTER FOUR: SOCIOLINGUISTIC BIOGRAPHIES

4.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to sketch out the life backgrounds of the Stewart Erskine informants, paying particular attention to their early linguistic and educational influences and the language contact they may have as they grew older via relatives, friends, books, and travel. First under discussion is the childhood and education of Stewart and her daughters (Section 4.2), then Mar's upbringing and his connection to the king follows (Section 4.3), and the last profile is of the three Erskine sons (Section 4.4).

4.2 Marie Stewart and her daughters, Mary and Anne

Born in France in 1576, Stewart was transported to Edinburgh as a young girl in 1587 along with her siblings after their father Esmé Stewart, 1st Duke of Lennox, first cousin to Henry Stuart, Lord Darnley, had died (Ewan & Pipes 2018: 340). As his most intimate and revered favourite, the king had granted Lennox exceptional wealth and power, including in 1579 the first Scottish dukedom (Brown 2001: 107). However, despite his protestant conversion in 1580, the Scottish nobles distrusted Lennox's previous Catholicism and his intimacy with the king. Finally, several of them, including Marie Stewart's future husband Lord Mar, engineered the Ruthven Raid in 1583 to ensure his permanent separation from James VI/I. Eventually, Lennox returned to France, where his involvement in a Spanish Catholic plot may have led his Scottish and English opponents to murder him (McLaughlin 2017: 137). Nevertheless, his children continued to benefit from royal esteem throughout their lives, with James adhering to Lennox's wish that the king offered them protection. Stewart quickly became established at the Scottish court, and in 1590, aged 14 and at the request of her sister Henrietta, she was appointed lady-in-waiting to the new queen, Anne of Denmark (Pearce 2019: 146). Two years later, aged 16 years, she married Mar, who had been brought up alongside James VI/I, and the match, along with her successful conversion to Protestantism, strengthened her position at court. The Presbyterian minister responsible for her conversion, Patrick Simson, praised her as a pious example of 'humilitie, modestie, Godlinesse, and all other vertues' (1624). The realignment of her religious beliefs would eventually lead to her complete espousal in widowhood of

the Solemn League and Covenant ideals, unlike both her father and her sister Henrietta whose Catholic allegiances ultimately led to their exile. Her belief in the Covenant is confirmed via her private correspondence with Henryson as well as her promotion of Protestant ministers as evinced in her instructions to Charles:

> If ye find my Lord off Rothes and m*ister* Ale*xander* hendersonne togither speake a good word for M*ister* Robert Key his preferme*n*t to ye vaiking kirk off Inuerkething' (ll. 9–12, 27 June 1640, MS.5070 ff 67–68)

Stewart further demonstrated her allegiance when, along with other Scottish noble families, she pawned her valuables to fund the Scottish army during the civil wars (Chambers 1859: 118). Her letter to Charles of 23 November 1640 attests to her financial prudence as she directs him to pawn her silver plate to raise money for the cause:

> …lett me know concerneing ye silver warke if it be prefred to come in to conzie house, yat I may tak some conese with yat I haue in Edrg [Edinburgh], try what securetie is giuen to others yat I may haue no worse, as yee shall infome me be your nixt lettere I will ather send one off my seruants with ye inventare off the peeces to sie it weighed and delyverit and band receavit for it or send yow warand for (ll. 4–10, 23 November 1640, MS.5155 ff 32-33)

Throughout her life and even during the civil wars, Stewart managed to balance friendships with followers of both religions, as she did with the Protestant King James VI/I and Queen Anne, who was said to have secretly converted to Catholicism and later with both Charles I and the anti-royal Scottish forces. Despite her Covenanting connections, Charles I honoured the preference shown to her by his father, endowing her with a royal pension for life which continued even after her sons led Scottish troops against him in the Wars of Three Kingdoms (Erskine 1836: 131). The stability of Stewart's marriage was in direct contrast to that of her sister Henrietta who spent a large proportion of her life interceding on behalf of her husband, Huntly, who faced various charges of treason and conspiracy (Grant 2017: 70). Stewart's collection of received letters not examined in this study similarly reflect the opposing factions that existed in Britain at the time and testify to people's ability to sustain relationships and even friendships despite their differences.

As well as serving to illustrate her active involvement in religion, Stewart's correspondence speaks to her keen interest in politics and current events. This documentary evidence complements new gendered perspectives of seventeenth-century Scotland, such as Laura Stewart's recent analysis of the civil war era,

in which she argued that the movement led to the politicisation of women as well as men (2016). News reports Arthur included in his letters to his mother speak to Stewart's desire to be acquainted with current affairs:

> Madam as for newis we hier the parlament will be ȝett continŭed bŭt how long I knaw not, ther is certen word cŭme that king hes w*ith*drawine his ships from betŭixt the spayards and Hallandders because he sent to them for ane sight of the com*m*ission q*uhil*k thy refused, whervpon the holl com*m*ons with the counsell of Ingland supplicat the king to that affect, so that we think thy haŭe certenlie fochine be this tyme, […] there are ane hundereth saill moe spanich s-ships w*ith* fourscoire thowsant land soiours (ll. 14–23, 15 October 1639, MS.5155 ff 22–23)
>
> Gloss: *fochine*: fought (Fecht v. DSL 2004), *hallanders*: Hollanders, native of the Netherlands, *holl*: whole, *spanich*: Spanish, *spayards*: Spaniards, *soiours*: soldiers

Arthur's other letters to Stewart sent in 1640, and 1642 contain similarly comprehensive updates about the ongoing political situation. Moreover, as did his brothers Charles and Alexander in their letters to their mother, Arthur lists multiple financial transactions for tenancy leases, crop income and other landholding expenditures. This level of detail suggests that Stewart wanted her sons to keep her informed about family affairs. Her behaviour reflects the findings made by Rebecca Mason in her study of married women and the law in Scotland between 1600 and 1750, which revealed that although Scots law denied women an independent legal identity, they often became actively involved in the court system (2019). In fact, in Stirlingshire c. 1633–4, Stewart went so far as to preside over the sheriff court, standing in as a replacement for her husband Mar (Brown 2011: 97). This high level of involvement in public discourse would suggest that Stewart had developed a significant level of fluency in reading EM Scots by this time as legal records were composed in the language. Moreover, she was proactive in bringing legal action against her son-in-law, John Erskine, to recover monies he owed to her after his father's death when he had become the 3rd Earl of Mar. The list of orders given in her letter to Charles of 30 July 1639 implies her participation:

> I pray yow informe my Lord Aduocatt, and latt him doe whatt he may to keep him from ane suspension (ll. 15–17)
>
> …there is six hondreth and fiftie markes from william Graye acording to mester Gorge monorgen his note, and asignation mead to yow, send with this (ll. 22–25)

> … if ye can see my lo*rd* Traquare tell him I doe expeak his halpe in so fare as I haue reason on my syde (ll. 35–36) (MS.5155 ff 20r, 30 July 1639)

The legal claims she was obliged to bring before the Scottish court dominated Stewart's widowhood and many of the letters she sent communicate how she enlisted her sons, Charles and Arthur, and her in-laws, Rothes and Haddington, to act as agents in the dispute. Her correspondence speaks to the early modern Scottish society of patronage and reward, disclosing her attempts to exploit her social connections to thwart what she perceived as an attempt by her stepson to shame and dishonour her. She also appealed to Charles' father-in-law, Thomas Hope to assist her, as indicated in a letter sent in 1640 which begins:

> Now when necessitie compellethe me, I am forced to haue my recourse to yo*ur* helpe (ll. 2–3) (MS.5155 ff 30–31, 22 November 1640

Hope was a powerful ally as he was a wealthy and successful lawyer, politician and member of the Scottish privy council, whom Charles I favoured and appointed a baronet in 1628 and king's advocate 1637–1643 (Stevenson 2009). Eventually, Stewart became a guest at Hope's house in the Cowgate, Edinburgh, and she died there aged 68 in 1644 (Thomson 1843: 205).

This study has uncovered no primary source evidence that details the care and education Stewart and her sister Henrietta received after arriving in Edinburgh in 1587. In contrast, details of their older brother Ludovick's early schooling is recorded in a manuscript preserved in the NLS archive that James VI issued on 1st December 1583, which instructs his nurture and tutoring (MS.5127 f 1) (Great Britain 1874: xxi). As the first-born male and heir to their father, Lennox, Ludovick had been brought to Scotland four years before his sisters (Juhala 2000: 93). Walter Stewart, who had been schooled alongside the king and Marie Stewart's husband Lord Mar by the famous Latin scholar George Buchanan, was appointed as his tutor to develop the young duke's classical and European languages (93). The king consistently set Ludovick above all others, and he would grow up to become one of the most successful and charismatic courtiers of the age (McLaughlin 2017: 136). The youngest of the Stewart siblings, Ésme, had remained in France as the new seigneur d'Aubigny after their father's death; however, by 1603, he moved to London with Ludovick, where he received similar personal and financial support from the king (Smuts 2008).

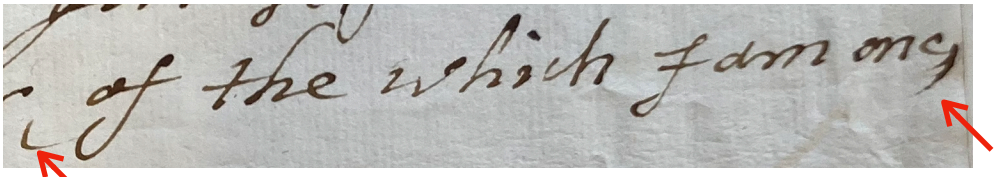
As adults, all four Stewart children would eventually live permanently in the British Isles, with Marie Stewart and Henrietta based in Scotland and Ludovick and Ésme in England. However, we have no information about the languages they learned before their repatriation from France. Although their father,

Lennox, lived in Scotland for several years and formed a close friendship with James VI, there is no evidence that he had any comprehension of EM Scots. His handwritten receipt for his earldom papers is entirely French, and Lady Elizabeth Cust has stated this 'was the only language familiar to [Lennox]' (1891: 90). Gallagher suggested that early modern Europeans took a dim view of EM Scots and English, believing that French or Italian was necessary if people from those countries wanted to travel (2019: 3). However, other scholars have cited documentary evidence which supports the argument that both EM Scots and EM English had a high status (Williams 2012: 2). Horsbroch has stated that EM Scots was internationally recognised as distinct from English during the period 1500 to 1700, citing as evidence the Scots interpreters employed in European courts as well as letters written in Scots from foreign royals, Mary I of England and Phillip II of Spain and Elizabeth I of England (1999: 6–12).

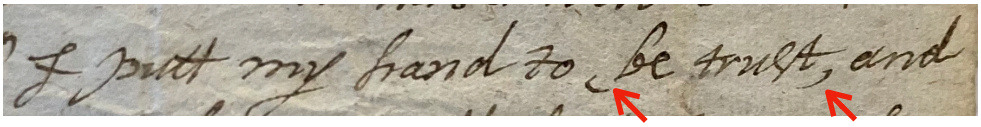
Additionally, letters penned by elite early modern French women indicate they had familiarity with English and Italian, Spanish, and knowledge of the classical languages of Latin and Greek (Broomhall 2012: 18). France was unusually advanced among European countries, as exemplified by highly educated French women such as Marguerite de Navarre and her daughter Jeanne d'Albret. They played a significant and visible part in politics and may have afforded increased educational opportunities for young French women like Stewart (Broomhall 2012: 20).

Although we cannot state with certainty whether Stewart had EM Scots or EM English as a child, the letters she wrote and received in adulthood confirm that she went on to develop skills in both languages. Moreover, evidence from her household account book suggests she read texts composed in Scots and English as she purchased the Scots poet Alexander Hume's *Hymnes or Sacred Songs*, the 'buik of the Martyres of England's lives', 'Dyke's Good conscience' and 'Answeare to the K. proclamation in England' (Sharpe 1815: 38, 30, 34, 34 as cited in Stevenson 2012: 350 and van Heijnsbergen & Royan 2002: xix). As well as this, Stewart was a book dedicatee. For example, the Protestant minister Patrick Simson (who had converted the countess) dedicated his religious text to her, *A Short compend of the historie of the first ten persecutions* (1613–1616), as did James Caldwell his *The countess of Marres Arcadia, or sanctuarie containing morning, and evening meditations, for the whole week* (1625) which was in Latin (van Heijnsbergen & Royan 2002: xviii as cited in Stevenson 2012: 349). Stewart's brothers took part in court masques and were artistic patrons. For example, Ésme shared his home with the dramatist, Ben Johnson for five years and Ludovick supported the poet Alexander Montgomerie (Smuts 2008). As a wealthy, elite woman, it was similarly acceptable for their sister to act as a patron to promote male writers (Broomhall 2012: 20). Stevenson states that a select group of only nine women in early

modern Scotland had books dedicated to them, another being Marie Stewart's daughter, Mary Erskine, Countess of Marischal, later Countess of Panmure, whose single extant letter to her mother is contained in the Stewart Erskine dataset (MS.5155 f 32, Appendix B) (2012: 349–350).[17] [APPENDIX REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.] However, in 1622 Stewart took a further, unusual step of commissioning a female artist, Esther Inglis, to produce a manuscript. Inglis' drawing, previously incorrectly identified as Mary, Queen of Scots, shows Stewart engaged in construction, placing a brick on a partially built wall that supports a range of measuring implements.[18] The dynamic image, headed with the proverb 'Sapiens mulier aedificat domum', which translates as 'A wise woman builds her house' features two separate groups of Latin verse, one dedicated to Mar, and one to Stewart herself, as well as a further French verse (*The Huntington Library Catalogue* 2021). Inglis' use of Latin supports Stevenson's suggestion that Stewart may have been able to read the language because she was an 'atypical Scotswoman', born and educated in France where 'Frenchwomen of her rank and generation were quite often taught to read Latin' (2012: 350). Moreover, Inglis copied the French verse, which annotates her drawing from another poem addressed to Jeanne d'Albret, thereby explicitly linking Stewart with the queen of Navarre, who was well-known for having received a progressive, humanist education (*The Huntington Library Catalogue* 2021). Textual evidence from Stewart's holograph letters also suggests she received humanist tuition. For example, Figure 4.1 demonstrates her use of brackets (indicated by the red arrows) which were a humanist punctuation method:



(Appendix C, Image 1.7: MS.80 f 55 leaf 1r, letter text)



(Appendix C, Image 1.14: MS.5155 f 19r, letter text)

[17] Stevenson also mentions dedications to Mary of Guise; Mary, Queen of Scots; Elizabeth Dunbar, Countess of Moray; Alison Sandelandis; Jean Hamilton, Lady Skirling; Jean Fleming Lady Thirlstane and Elizabeth Melville, Lady Culross (2012: 349–350).

[18] 'Emblematical drawing of Marie Stewart, wife of John Erskine, Earl of Mar: Graphic / Drawin and writin be me Esther Inglis Ianvar 1622', RB 283000 V:III, Huntington Library, San Marino, California.

[APPENDIX OF IMAGES REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.]

Figure 4.1: Stewart's use of brackets

Additionally, a Latin psalm paraphrase was dedicated to Stewart's daughter, Mary Erskine, by Arthur Johnson in 1642, thus offering evidence that she may have had some humanist training (Stevenson 2012: 350, 371). Nevertheless, no documents survive written in Latin by either Stewart or Mary, and as noted by Broomhall, women may not have been expected to comprehend the entirety of such dedicatory texts (2012: 20). Thus, it may never be possible to state with certainty whether Stewart had Latin, but her husband Mar indeed received comprehensive training in the Classics, as will be discussed in the next section.

4.3 Lord Mar

Born in Stirling in 1558, Mar was distinguished from other Scots nobles because he was brought up and educated alongside his lifelong friend James VI/I, who eventually created him Knight of the Garter, the highest order of nobility in England (Brown 1993: 567). In 1566, Mar's father, John Erskine, 1st Earl of Mar, had been entrusted with the infant king's care (Brown 2011: 102). James VI/I also retained a strong relationship with Mar's mother, Annabella Murray, Countess of Mar, whom he nicknamed Lady Minny, *minnie* being the familiar Scottish term for mother (DSL 2004). The tutors George Buchanan and Peter Young instructed Mar alongside the king in Latin, Greek, Spanish, French and Italian (Goodare 2004). Mar's first wife, Anna Drummond, had died in 1587 after producing a son who was to become his heir, and in 1592 his marriage to Stewart took place (Goodare 2004). James VI/I and Queen Anne communicated using French as a language they shared, and Mar and his wife Stewart may have done the same.

In 1603, 11 years after their wedding, the lives of both Mar and Stewart were dramatically altered by the royal court's transferral to England when Mar, like many Scottish nobles, was obliged to uproot himself and accompany the king to London. In Brown's account of 'The Scottish Aristocracy, Anglicization and the Court, 1603–38', he states that Mar initially accompanied the king south but quickly returned to Scotland, saying his health was affected by being so far from home (1993: 544). After this, Mar continued to travel back and forth on court business throughout his life; however, Brown argues

that he, along with most Scottish courtiers 'demonstrated little evidence of anglicization' asserting that there was 'no crisis of national identity among the Scottish nobility in the early seventeenth century (1993: 575). However, Brown does not precisely define anglicisation in this context, and he does not explicitly address the effects of the union on the Scots language. Between 1615 and 1630, Mar was Lord High Treasurer of Scotland, after which the post was transferred to Morton (the recipient of 12 of Mar's letters contained in the Stewart Erskine dataset), at which point Mar retreated from public life, dying four years later at home in Stirling (Erskine 1836: 130).

4.4 Alexander, Arthur and Charles

As elite Scottish noblemen, Alexander, Arthur and Charles may have received a similarly high level of linguistic training as their father, Mar, had done. As an adult, such skills would have significantly benefitted Alexander, who travelled through Europe to promote Covenanting politics. Whilst still a young child, he had been made commendator of Cambuskenneth Abbey by royal appointment and subsequently, his father Mar granted him the lordship of Cardross; however, by the time he was 17, he had fallen out of parental favour due to an illicit affair which had resulted in an illegitimate son (Murdoch & Grosjean, SSNE 2021). He elected to leave Scotland, and in 1625, aged 21, despite serious financial difficulties, he married Margaret Crofts, who was a lady-in-waiting to Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, thereby prompting the monarch to write individual letters to both his mother and father in praise of the union (Akkerman 2015: 552–569). In 1631 he was appointed lieutenant colonel in the Covenanting army serving directly under his step-brother John Erskine, 3rd Earl of Mar. The letter sent when he was 27 years old to his mother from his 'quarter with Lord Mar' on 31 July 1631 (MS.5155 f 18) communicates his efforts to regain Stewart's affection and trust, which his earlier wayward behaviour had dented. Alexander survived fighting in the 1st Bishops' War in 1639; however, an explosion at Dunglass Castle on 30 August 1640 killed Alexander and his brother John and brother-in-law, Thomas Hamilton, 2nd Earl of Haddington (Murdoch & Grosjean, SSNE 2021).

Although both Arthur and Charles also fought in the civil wars and were responsible for entire regiments, unlike Alexander, they had stayed closer to home to oversee their inherited lands before the fighting began. Arthur's letters to his mother were written when he was aged between 34 and 38 years old and after he had married Margaret Buchanan and gained the title and estate of Scotscraig in Fife upon the death of his father-in-law in 1628 (Paul 1908: 622). In 1644 Arthur and Charles were colonel and

lieutenant colonel of a Covenanting horse regiment, fighting in the 3rd civil war together (Plant, BCW Project 2016). Arthur continued to fight in the civil wars and was eventually killed in 1651 at the Battle of Worcester (Paul 1908: 623).

Charles was aged 28 years and married to Mary Hope for a year when he sent the single letter that survives to his mother on 5 January 1640 (MS.5070 ff 54–55) (Thomson 1843: 85). He was a landowner, managing his estate in Cambuskenneth and Bandeath and representing Clackmannan and Stirling at the Scottish Parliament. After his mother's death, he was appointed Governor of Dumbarton Castle in 1649 and was active in the third civil war between then and 1651 (Plant, BCW Project 2016). All the Erskine male senders examined here travelled abroad and may have been subject to various sociolinguistic influences that could have had a bearing on the language found in their letters.

CHAPTER FIVE: SOCIOLINGUISTIC ANALYSES

5.1 Introduction

Each section in this chapter will outline and review a set of quantitative data and then explain the significance of the findings via a qualitative discussion, a plan informed by the layout used in Smith and Holmes-Elliot's sociolinguistic study (2018). To begin, Section 5.2 evaluates the overall distribution of diagnostic features of EM Scots and English in the corpus by the sociolinguistic factor of COMPOSITION. Then Section 5.3 filters the results to display the forms used only in holograph letters by the sociolinguistic factor of SENDER (Section 5.3.1) then discusses the results (Sections 5.3.2–5.3.3). The subsequent sections focus on a subset of four of the informants, starting with a recalculation of the overall spread of EM Scots in their letters to reflect this contraction and then grouping the results extracted from the corpus searches according to linguistic category (grammar or spelling) and SENDER (Sections 5.3.4–5.3.5) then diagnostic feature and SENDER (Section 5.3.6) and then interpreting these findings qualitatively (Section 5.3.7). The penultimate, Section 5.4, investigates how each sender's selection of forms altered according to the sociolinguistic factor of VARIATION OVER TIME (5.4.1) and contains a corresponding explanation of the results (5.4.2). Lastly, Section 5.5 quantitatively scrutinises the forms found in Stewart's secretary script letters by SCRIBE and VARIATION OVER TIME (5.5.1–5.5.2) and then considers the impact of these sociolinguistic influences qualitatively (5.5.3).

In summary, the analyses will address the following list of questions:

1. How are the forms distributed overall across the letters by COMPOSITION? (Section 5.2)
2. How are the forms distributed across the holograph letters by SENDER? (Section 5.3.1)
3. To what extent was anglicisation in the holograph letters conditioned by sociolinguistic factors? (Section 5.3.2–5.3.3)
4. How are the forms distributed across the linguistic categories of grammar and spelling in the holograph letters? (Section 5.3.4)
5. How are the forms distributed across the linguistic categories of grammar and spelling in the holograph letters by SENDER? (Section 5.3.5)

6. How are the forms distributed across the 24 diagnostic features in the holograph letters? (Section 5.3.6)
7. To what extent was the anglicisation across the diagnostic features in the holograph letters conditioned by sociolinguistic factors? (Section 5.3.7)
8. To what extent do the forms selected by the senders correlate to the sociolinguistic factor of VARIATION OVER TIME in the holograph letters? (Section 5.4)
9. How are the forms distributed overall in Marie Stewart's scribal letters by SCRIBE and across the linguistic categories of grammar and spelling? (Section 5.5.1)
10. To what extent do the forms selected by Scribe B correlate to the sociolinguistic factors of VARIATION OVER TIME and RECIPIENT in Marie Stewart's scribal letters? (Section 5.5.2)
11. To what extent was the level of anglicisation in Marie Stewart's scribal letters conditioned by sociolinguistic factors? (Section 5.5.3)

5.1.1 Comparing different sizes of data

As detailed in Chapter 2, the total tokens in St-ErCor are 12,201 (Section 2.3.1). Table 5.1 breaks this figure down to show the number of tokens per sender, sorted in descending order. The count for tokens in Stewart's holograph or scribal letters is given separately.

Table 5.1: Count of tokens in St-ErCor by SENDER

Sender	No. of tokens
Marie Stewart: Holograph letters	3184
Lord Mar: Holograph letters	2954
Marie Stewart: Scribal letters	2314
Arthur Erskine: Holograph letters	1540
Alexander Erskine: Holograph letters	1319
Charles Erskine: Holograph letters	738
Mary Erskine: Holograph letters	90
Anne Erskine: Holograph letters	62
Total tokens in St-ErCor	**12201**

Table 5.1 clearly illustrates the unequal data sizes in the corpus for each informant; for example, there are 2954 tokens in Mar's holograph letters, whereas Charles has only 738. This discrepancy means that a

comparison based on raw counts of the forms extracted per sender would be inaccurate. Therefore, when comparing differently-sized data samples in the analyses, the number of hits (N) extracted from the corpus search is given as a percentage rounded to the nearest whole number. This practice ensures the result is as close as possible to the exact percentage whilst avoiding an excessive number of digits. In some cases, rounding percentages like this means the total will not be 100% but will instead be 99% or 101%. This outcome is an expected effect of rounding.

5.2 Overall distribution of the linguistic forms

To begin, Table 5.2 presents a preliminary evaluation of all the forms identified in St-ErCor by COMPOSITION: holograph or scribal:

Table 5.2: Overall distribution of all forms by COMPOSITION

Letter composition	Scots forms	English forms
Holograph letters (39 letters)	38%	62%
Scribal letters (8 letters)	25%	75%
Totals (47 letters)	**35%**	**65%**

This initial finding shows that in total, the 39 holograph letters examined in this study contained almost twice as many EM English forms, 62% as EM Scots forms, 38% and Stewart's eight scribal letters had three times as many EM English forms, 75% as EM Scots forms, 25%. The remainder of this chapter will examine the holograph and scribal letters separately for the following two reasons: first, although Stewart sent the scribal letters, they were penned by an amanuensis. Evans has successfully argued that this kind of letter can cause 'potential discord between the purported author and the […] forms'; therefore, they will be examined independently of her holograph texts (2012). Second, unlike the Stewart Erskine family members, the scribes are anonymous, making it impossible to account for their sociolinguistic circumstances in the analysis. Thus, the scribal letters are set aside and considered in Section 5.5.

5.3 Holograph letters

5.3.1 Overall distribution: Quantitative analysis

Figure 5.1 charts the total percentage of EM Scots forms in the 39 holograph letters by SENDER:

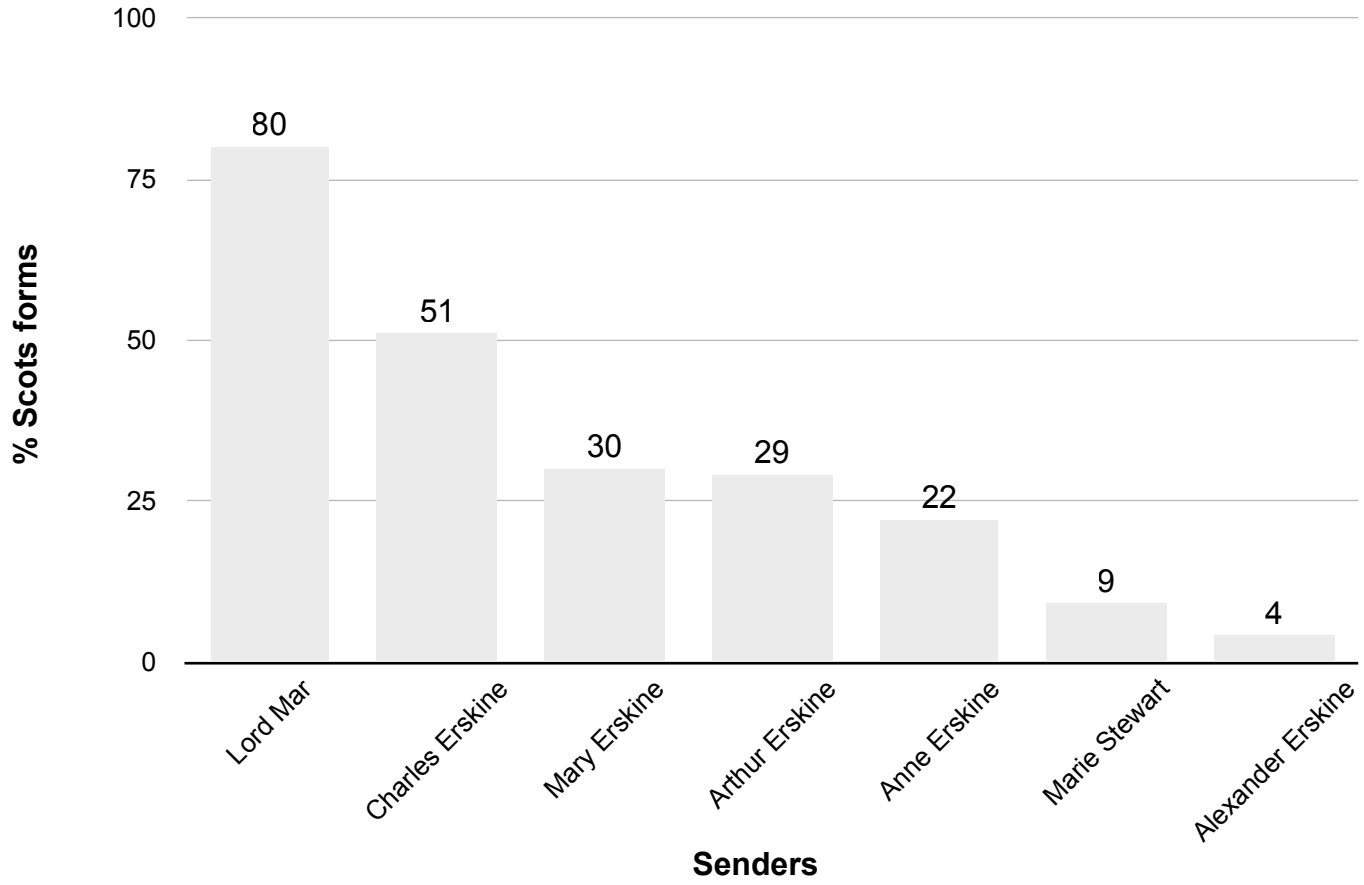


Figure 5.1: Overall distribution of EM Scots forms in holograph letters by SENDER

Mar is instantly recognisable as the highest user of EM Scots, who used 80% in his 13 holograph letters. Next, his son Charles used 50% in his single letter, and his siblings followed on, demonstrating similar amounts: Mary had 30% in her letter, Arthur had 29% in his four letters, and Anne had 22% in the brief postscript she added to Rothes' letter (see Table 1.2 for full details of these letters). Lastly, with 9% EM Scots forms identified in her 14 holograph letters, Stewart used a much lower rate than her husband, Mar, and Alexander exhibited the lowest percentage of EM Scots of all in his letters at 4% only. Although these findings are based on a standard scale that converts the raw counts to percentages, they are still

tempered by the differently-sized data under examination. As discussed previously, the tokens in the holograph letters range between the highest, 3184 for Stewart and the lowest, 62 for Anne Erskine (see Table 5.1). Therefore, the number of forms it is possible to extract for Anne would be far fewer than for Marie. To explain further, Table 5.3 gives the count of forms (N) alongside the percentage and sorts the data so that the sender with the highest total N value is at the top: Mar, N = 1075.

Table 5.3: Comparison of EM Scots and EM English forms in holograph letters by SENDER

Sender	Scots	N	English	N	Total N
Lord Mar	80%	855	20%	220	**1075**
Marie Stewart	9%	90	91%	947	**1037**
Arthur Erskine	29%	138	71%	336	**474**
Alexander Erskine	4%	14	96%	383	**397**
Charles Erskine	51%	111	49%	107	**218**
Mary Erskine	30%	6	70%	14	**20**
Anne Erskine	22%	4	78%	14	**18**
Totals	**38%**	**1218**	**62%**	**2021**	**3239**

The subsequent quantitative analysis will exclude the values for Mary, N= 20 and Anne, N = 18, which are very low. Similarly omitted will be Alexander, whose language displayed almost no variation with 95% EM English forms and was almost entirely categorical. The linguistic behaviours of these three senders will instead be examined qualitatively in the next section, 5.3.2.

5.3.2 Overall distribution: Qualitative discussion of Alexander, Anne and Mary

As indicated by the quantitative data reviewed in Section 5.3.1, in his four surviving manuscripts examined here, Alexander's language was almost wholly anglicised, a finding which may be explained by the life path he took, which was quite different to his brothers, Arthur and Charles. They both show more

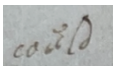
balanced rates of both Scots and English (see Section 4.3). In their investigation of the switch from <quh–> to <wh–> in the HCOS, van Eyndhoven and Clark found high levels of English forms across all the family letters they examined and suggested this may have been because they were exchanged between relatives who had followed the royal court to England after 1603 and their remaining family in Scotland. They argued that the move south had influenced the immigrants' language and, subsequently, their Scottish-dwelling correspondents adapted to match them (2020: 223). Alexander may have been similarly affected by the sociolinguistic factor of SENDER LOCATION as from age 17 onwards, he was not resident in the country of his birth and sent three of his four extant letters to his mother from London (MS.5155 f 8, MS.5155 ff 12–13 and MS.5155 ff 14–15, Appendix B). [APPENDIX REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.] If letters had survived sent from Stewart to Alexander, it would be possible to test van Eyndhoven and Clark's hypothesis to see whether Stewart's language would have been similarly conditioned by SENDER LOCATION so that she adapted her style and increased the levels of EM English forms she used when writing to Alexander.

The extreme limitations of the extant text available for Anne preclude any in-depth commentary on her language (MS.5155 f 32, 14 February 1636, Appendix B). [APPENDIX REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.] What can be said is that the small number of words in the postscript she addressed to her mother were mostly EM English forms: 78% (see Table 5.3). For example, as shown in the underlined words in the extract below, in the spelling feature <ch> v <gh> the word *much* (l. 61) was identified, in the i-digraphs feature *fear* (l. 60), in <quh> v <wh> *which* (l. 60) and in <gif> v <if> the form *if* (l. 59).

> Madam I haw nothing at this tym to trubell
> your, La*dyship* with quhen my lord coms to strling I will not
> get comd with him, I can not leaf my lord
> montgomrie hier, bot <u>if</u> the wader war once
> <u>fear</u> I sall sie yow <u>which</u> I lang
> werie <u>much</u> for and sall euer be your
>
> (ll. 56–61, MS.5155 f 32, 14 February 1636)

She also chose EM English forms right across the feature of tittles, choosing <u> and not <ŭ> in the seven words which contain this letter in her text: *your*, *your*, *trubell*, *seruant*, *quhen*, *much*, *euer.* Moreover, she chose the anglicised form in the feature <ȝ> v <y> in the three possible

words: *your*, *your*, *yow*. Intermingled with these southern forms are four salient EM Scots forms: *dochter* (l. 62) (<ch> v <gh>)*, quhen* (l. 57) (<quh> v <wh>) and *sall,* (l. 60, l. 61) (modal verbs) found twice.

As is the case with her sister Anne, analysis of Mary's language is constrained by the small amount of text in her single extant letter (MS.5155 f 11, 24 July 1635, see Appendix B). [APPENDIX REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.] However, even within these two small sample sizes, similar patterns can be observed. Like Anne, Mary's forms were around two-thirds anglicised at 70%. She almost wholly avoided the Scots tittle, selecting <u> in the following words: *your*, *your*, *seruis*, *louing*, *haue*, *countesse* and *but.* She also used *if* (l. 8) and not *gif* on one occasion and <y> rather than <ȝ> twice in the word *your* (l. 8, l 14). As well as this, she selected EM English variants in the spelling feature <a> versus <o> using *most* twice (l. 1, l. 14), in the grammar feature of verb endings in *forceed* (l. 5) plus she used *no* (l. 2) as opposed to *na* as a negative article. Nonetheless, she, like Anne, occasionally selected an EM Scots form, twice opting for <e> over <a> in *berrer* (l. 6) and *wes* (l. 5), choosing a Scots ending in *pisis* (ll. 5–6) (plurals feature) and adding a tittle once in *coŭld* as shown here:  (l. 2, MS.5155 f 11, 24 July 1635).

The small data sample size combined with the limited amount of biographical information which is available for these women makes it difficult to make definitive statements about their linguistic behaviours; however, whilst acknowledging these caveats, the amount of EM Scots used by both is not dissimilar to their brother Arthur who used 71%. This tentative pattern may reflect sociolinguistic influences shared by the three siblings, such as location, education and upbringing.

5.3.3 Overall distribution: Qualitative discussion of the remaining senders

In contrast to Mary and Anne, Stewart's larger corpus of letters presents a rich data source to explore in greater depth. She exhibited a low level of variation across her 14 sent holograph letters which contained only 9% EM Scots forms: far fewer EM Scots than her husband Mar, 80% (see Figure 5.1). When Stewart came to Scotland as a young, elite French female she would not necessarily have had knowledge of EM Scots (see Section 4.2). Her arrival at this age may have meant that she never became fully bilingual, as explained by Jennifer Smith:

> If you are exposed to a language after what we call the 'critical period', from around 5 to 8 years old, then it is likely you will never become fully native in that new language. You are

> semi-bilingual, where one language is dominant (in this case French). (Email conversation 2021)

Nevertheless, she wrote her earliest surviving holograph letter, sent to Morton in 1604 (MS.80 f 53, 3 February 1604, Appendix B) in EM Scots rather than French, which suggests that by this time she was able to understand and write in the language. [APPENDIX REMOVED BY THE AUTHOR FOR COPYRIGHT REASONS.] From a sociolinguistic perspective, there may be several explanations for why she selected highly anglicised forms. Whether or not she had skills in EM Scots or EM English before making her home in Scotland, she would undoubtedly have become rapidly familiar with both languages during the process of her Protestant conversion at the age of 16. Listening to preaching conducted in the vernacular was viewed as a crucial aspect of religion in Scotland so that ordinary people might understand the word of God. Moreover, she received direct instruction in her catechism by a native Scot, Patrick Simson and this would have introduced Stewart early on to spoken EM Scots. Although she would have had a great deal of exposure to written EM English via the Protestant bible and the psalms, both of which were written in this language (see Section 3.2), Scots pronunciation was used, not English, during the congregational psalm-singing at kirk services. As noted above, personal letters may offer the closest connection to speech, and Stewart's daily experience of communicating and listening to other Scots speakers may have led to her mimicking Scots pronunciation in the spellings found in her holograph writing (see Sections 1.1 and 3.4).

Another obvious way to develop skills in a new language is via reading. However, this may have posed a problem even for wealthy, educated women such as Stewart simply because there were no books written in EM Scots aimed at a female readership (Stevenson 2012: 350). In England, cookery and embroidery books were written specifically for women, who constituted an essential slice of the book-buying market in that country (351). In Scotland, women were expected to amuse themselves with other pursuits (351). Another way Stewart may have developed linguistic skills was by listening to others reading aloud from books or letters. It is possible that, as Williams argued in the case of Margaret Tudor, Queen of Scots, Stewart may have altered her speech and writing to become more like the people she encountered in her new life (2016: 2). Macafee also argued that spelling in holograph texts might represent how writers read or heard spoken words (2002). The fact that Stewart was regularly receiving a high level of language contact in EM English and EM Scots may explain the rate of anglicisation found in her choice of diagnostic features.

In contrast to his wife, the 80% Scots forms found in Mar's letters demonstrates he consistently selected to use his native tongue, arguably a predictable outcome given his mainly Scottish based upbringing and education. Moreover, Mar's decision not to base himself in England, which may have led to him having less contact with EM English than other nobles, may explain his relatively unanglicised language. This point establishes a correlation between the forms he used and the sociolinguistic factor of SENDER LOCATION (see Section 4.3). Nevertheless, some EM English forms still crept into his language, and Section 5.3 will examine their distribution rate across the linguistic categories of grammar and spelling in further detail.

Several sociolinguistic effects may have contributed to Arthur and Charles exhibiting a more mixed pattern of EM Scots and EM English forms than their parents. Firstly, although their childhoods were Scottish-based as had Mar's had been, Arthur was born in 1605 and Charles in 1611; therefore, both boys grew up over four decades after their father's birth in 1562 and, perhaps most importantly, after the 1603 union had occurred. This momentous alteration in the lives of Scottish people escalated the anglicisation process that began in the sixteenth century and must have exacted influence upon the brothers. The study will now examine in more detail the distribution of forms according to the linguistic categories of grammar and spelling as identified in the holograph letters of these four family members.

5.3.4 Distribution over linguistic categories: Quantitative analyses

This section directs attention to a subset of the senders: Stewart, Mar, Arthur and Charles. Table 5.4 reassesses the overall distribution of forms in holograph letters to include only these senders:

Table 5.4: Overall distribution of forms in the holograph letters of Marie Stewart, Lord Mar, Arthur Erskine and Charles Erskine

Letter composition	Scots forms	English forms
Holograph letters	43%	57%

These results demonstrate that the average level of EM Scots forms has increased from 38% across all senders (see Table 5.2) to 43% after removing three senders (Anne, Mary and Alexander) from the data. The following analyses will ask how the 24 diagnostic features are distributed across grammar and spelling linguistic categories in the Stewart Erskine holograph letters. Table 5.5 separates the forms into two categories:

Table 5.5: Overall distribution of forms in the holograph letters of Marie Stewart, Lord Mar, Arthur Erskine and Charles Erskine by linguistic category

Linguistic category	Scots	N	English	N	Total Ns
Grammar	17%	111	83%	539	650
Spelling	51%	1089	49%	1065	2154
Grand total	**43%**	**1200**	**57%**	**1604**	**2804**

Table 5.5 demonstrates that, overall, these four senders were precisely three times more likely to use EM Scottish forms in the category of spelling features, 51%, than in grammatical features, 17%. However, this finding is tempered because it is based on differing N levels, with a far greater number of spelling forms, 2,154 under examination than grammar forms, 650. It is possible that if more extant letters could be included and therefore a larger quantity of linguistic data available for inspection, then a far greater number of forms might be compared across the two linguistic categories and a different result obtained.

5.3.5 Distribution over linguistic categories by SENDER: Quantitative analyses

Continuing with the process of probing the data to reveal finer details, Figure 5.2 presents a comparison of the EM Scots and EM English forms found in the linguistic categories of grammar and spelling in holograph letters, this time according to SENDER.

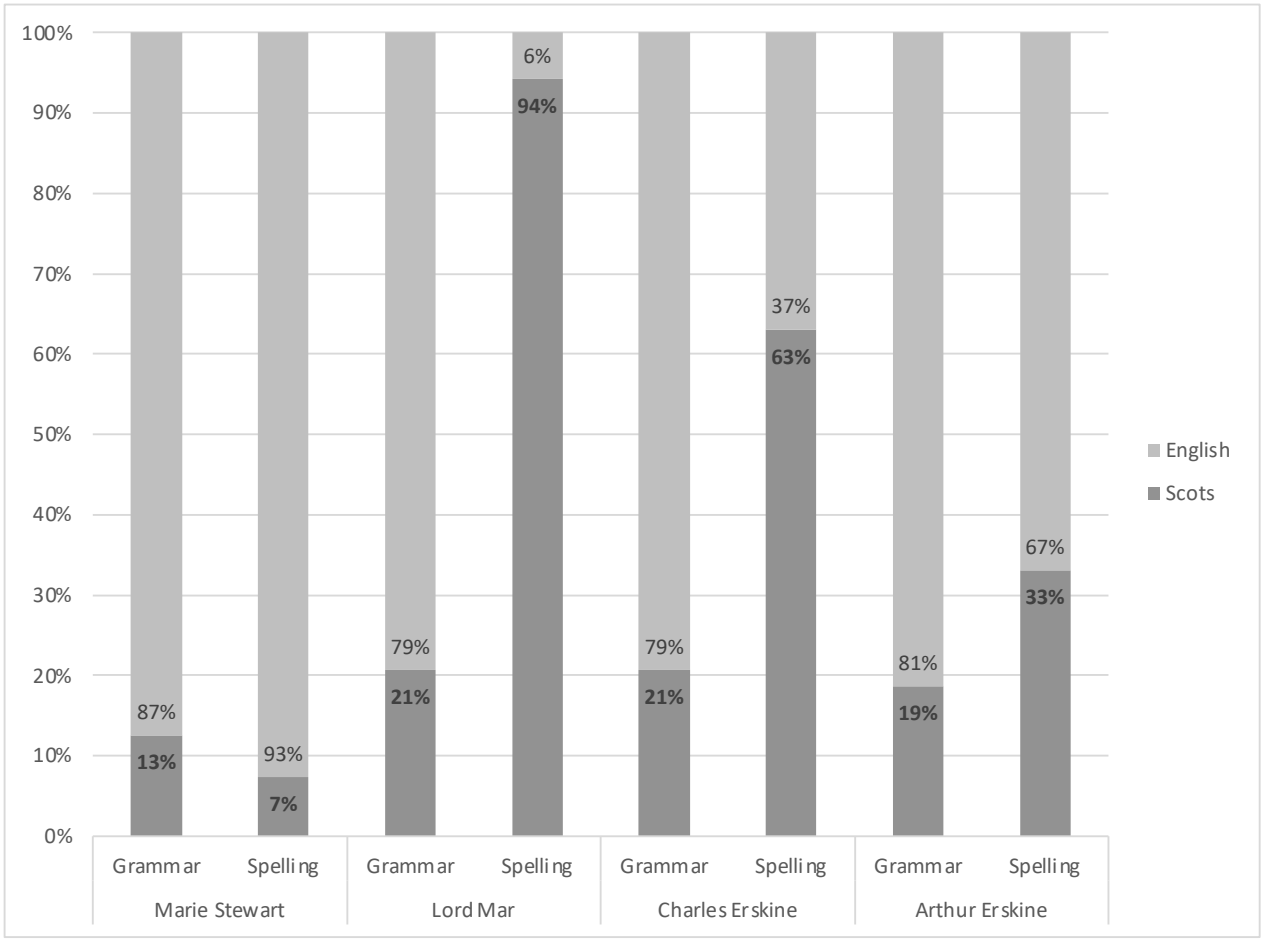


Figure 5.2: Distribution of forms over grammar and spelling by SENDER in holograph letters

What stands out here are the consistently low levels of EM Scots found in the grammar items of all the senders, with all four exhibiting rates of 21% or lower. However, the rates of EM Scots used by Mar and Charles in their grammar was at odds with the rate of EM Scots found in their spelling: Mar's rose from 21% EM Scottish grammar to more than quadruple that amount, 94% EM Scottish spelling and at 63% Charles' EM Scottish spelling levels were precisely three times higher than the 21% EM Scots found in his grammar. On the other hand, at 33%, Arthur's EM Scots spelling levels, although higher than his Scots grammar levels of 19%, were not as divergent as those of his father and brother, and neither were Stewart's, who exhibited meagre rates of EM Scots across both linguistic categories with EM Scots grammar at 13% and spelling at 7%.

5.3.6 Distribution over diagnostic features by SENDER: Quantitative analyses

This section will dig deeper into the results outlined in Section 5.3.5. The following pair of tables describe in greater detail how the forms were dispersed across the entire set of diagnostic features in the holograph letters of the senders Stewart, Mar, Arthur and Charles as before. Table 5.6 shows the features in the category of spelling and Table 5.7 in the category of grammar. Both tables exclude features that returned a hit count of zero in the corpus searches. For example, in Table 5.6, where Charles' letters returned a value of N = 0 for the diagnostic feature: word-initial <w> or <v> spellings, he is excluded from that set of results. Any results that returned a small count for N entirely different from a sender's usual selection, for example, where EM Scots forms were 99% and EM English 1%, were double-checked in the transcriptions to ensure their accuracy. Both tables are sorted by the total of Ns in each diagnostic feature, highest to lowest.

Table 5.6 Distribution of spelling forms over diagnostic features by SENDER in holograph letters

Diagnostic Feature	Sender	EM Scots	N	EM English	N	Total Ns	Grand total of Ns
Tittles	Marie Stewart	0%	0	100%	369	369	1196
	Lord Mar	100%	556	0%	2	558	
	Charles Erskine	100%	96	0%	0	96	
	Arthur Erskine	34%	58	66%	115	173	
<ȝ> v <y>	Marie Stewart	0%	0	100%	160	160	442
	Lord Mar	99%	174	1%	1	175	
	Charles Erskine	0%	0	100%	37	37	
	Arthur Erskine	14%	10	86%	60	70	
<e> v <a>	Marie Stewart	52%	23	48%	21	44	126
	Lord Mar	80%	44	20%	11	55	
	Charles Erskine	71%	5	29%	2	7	
	Arthur Erskine	75%	15	25%	5	20	
i-digraph <ei> v <ea>	Marie Stewart	70%	30	70%	30	43	72
	Lord Mar	65%	11	35%	6	17	
	Arthur Erskine	58%	7	42%	5	12	
<quh> v <wh>	Marie Stewart	70%	30	100%	34	34	69
	Lord Mar	100%	1	0%	0	1	
	Charles Erskine	0%	0	100%	7	7	
	Arthur Erskine	41%	11	59%	16	27	
i-digraph <ui> v <oo>	Marie Stewart	0%	0	100%	29	29	65
	Lord Mar	0%	0	100%	28	28	
	Charles Erskine	0%	0	100%	7	7	
	Arthur Erskine	0%	0	100%	1	1	
gif v if	Marie Stewart	70%	30	100%	21	21	34
	Lord Mar	100%	3	0%	0	3	
	Charles Erskine	0%	0	100%	4	4	
	Arthur Erskine	0%	0	100%	6	6	
<aw> v <ow>	Marie Stewart	100%	16	0%	0	16	37
	Lord Mar	100%	6	0%	0	6	
	Charles Erskine	0%	0	100%	1	1	
	Arthur Erskine	93%	13	7%	1	14	
<a> v <o>	Marie Stewart	17%	1	83%	5	6	25
	Lord Mar	90%	9	10%	1	10	
	Charles Erskine	0%	0	100%	1	1	
	Arthur Erskine	0%	0	100%	8	8	
<ch> v <gh>	Marie Stewart	50%	5	50%	5	10	24
	Lord Mar	100%	8	0%	0	8	
	Charles Erskine	0%	0	100%	2	2	
	Arthur Erskine	0%	0	100%	4	4	
Word-initial <w>	Marie Stewart	0%	0	100%	18	18	21
	Charles Erskine	100%	3	0%	0	3	
sche v she	Marie Stewart	0%	0	100%	13	13	20
	Arthur Erskine	0%	0	100%	7	7	
<k> v <ch>	Marie Stewart	0%	0	100%	10	10	14
l-vocalization	Marie Stewart	0%	0	100%	9	9	9
Totals		**51%**	**1089**	**49%**	**1065**	**2154**	**2154**

Table 5.7: Distribution of grammatical forms over diagnostic feature by SENDER in holograph letters

Diagnostic Feature	Sender	EM Scots	N	EM English	N	Total Ns	Grand total of Ns
Plurals	Marie Stewart	8%	7	92%	81	88	205
	Lord Mar	3%	2	97%	56	58	
	Charles Erskine	5%	1	95%	18	19	
	Arthur Erskine	3%	1	98%	39	40	
Verb endings	Marie Stewart	23%	14	77%	46	60	153
	Lord Mar	16%	6	84%	31	37	
	Charles Erskine	15%	2	85%	11	13	
	Arthur Erskine	2%	1	98%	41	43	
Modal verbs	Marie Stewart	0%	0	100%	52	52	114
	Lord Mar	8%	3	92%	35	38	
	Charles Erskine	13%	1	88%	7	8	
	Arthur Erskine	0%	0	100%	16	16	
Indefinite articles	Marie Stewart	24%	7	76%	22	29	86
	Lord Mar	25%	10	75%	30	40	
	Charles Erskine	60%	3	40%	2	5	
	Arthur Erskine	75%	9	25%	3	12	
Auxiliary verbs	Marie Stewart	13%	2	87%	13	15	52
	Lord Mar	90%	18	10%	2	20	
	Charles Erskine	100%	4	0%	0	4	
	Arthur Erskine	100%	13	0%	0	13	
Negative articles	Marie Stewart	0%	0	100%	9	9	27
	Lord Mar	9%	1	91%	10	11	
	Charles Erskine	0%	0	100%	3	3	
	Arthur Erskine	0%	0	100%	4	4	
thir v these	Marie Stewart	100%	2	0%	0	2	13
	Lord Mar	44%	4	56%	5	9	
	Charles Erskine	0%	0	100%	1	1	
	Arthur Erskine	0%	0	100%	1	1	
Totals		**17%**	**111**	**83%**	**539**	**650**	**650**

Turning first to the results for spelling forms in Table 5.6, three sets of features stand out from the rest as having consistently high N values: tittles, <ȝ> v <y> and plurals. In particular, the Ns counted in tittles are notably raised, totalling 1,196 which is more than double the total Ns in any other feature. Both Mar and Charles almost exclusively selected the Scots form <ŭ> (although Mar chose the EM English form <u> twice and the EM Scots form 556 times, due to rounding, this is expressed as 100% for Scots in Table 5.6). Stewart, in direct contrast, always elected the English form <u>, 369 times to be exact, whereas Arthur varied his choice, opting for <ŭ> 34% of the time (58 times) and <u> 66% (115 times). It could be argued that this diagnostic feature demonstrates higher total Ns than the others because wherever a letter <u> was found in the corpus, it had to be coded as either having the cup-mark or not, so every single <u> in the texts is counted. Although this is true, the steadfast adherence to one form or the other indicated in the writing of three of the senders adds weight to the finding. The findings for <ȝ> versus <y> are similarly strong, with a total N = 442. Stewart and Mar chose 100% English and 99% Scots forms, respectively, thereby conforming to the pattern they displayed in the feature of tittles. Their son Charles did not select the Scots form as he had done in tittles but instead used the English form <y> 100% of the time. Only one other feature, i-digraphs <ui> v <oo>, saw Mar always pick an anglicised form over an EM Scots form (100%, N = 29). For the rest of the spelling features he routinely preferred EM Scots forms, especially in the <e> v <a> feature at 80% (N = 55). Discounting those values of N less than 20 as agreed above, on only one occasion did Stewart show any favouring of an EM Scots form, also in the <e> v <a> spelling feature at 52% (N = 23). Apart from this, her forms were consistently anglicised, as when she selected <wh> and not <quh> 100% of the time (N = 34). At 59% (N = 16) Arthur also chose the English <wh> form more frequently than the alternative Scots <quh> form.

To consider the category of grammar, a scan of Table 5.7 shows that both Stewart and Mar markedly preferred anglicised forms in several features: respectively, their results for EM English forms were plurals 92% and 97%, verb endings 77% and 84%, modal verbs 100% and 92%, indefinite articles 76% and 75% and lastly, negative articles 100% and 91%. These new results lend detail to the findings outlined in Section 5.3.5, where both Mar and Stewart used less than 21% EM Scots grammatical forms. For the most part, the new data confirm the previous observations with the senders altering their behaviour in only the following two sets: in the diagnostic feature of auxiliary verbs, Mar chose 90% EM Scots forms whereas Stewart kept to the EM English form 87% of the time, and in the diagnostic feature *thir* v *these*, the opposite happened with Mar opting to anglicise 56% of his forms, unlike his wife whom this time selected 100% EM Scots forms. Nevertheless, these findings must be viewed with caution, given

that the last two features showed relatively low raw data counts of N = 20 or lower. Like their parents, Arthur and Charles demonstrated a preference for EM English forms in the category of grammar. In fact, in every grammatical diagnostic feature, save for indefinite articles and auxiliary verbs, both these senders' levels maintained a high level of between 85% and 100% EM English. Interestingly the two sons mirrored their father's switch to the EM Scots form of auxiliary verbs, he uses 90% EM Scots, and they both use 100%; however, this is again based on very low N counts.

5.3.7 Distribution over diagnostic features by SENDER: Qualitative discussion

The preceding sections presented a complete numerical picture of the forms extracted from Stewart, Mar, Arthur and Charles' holograph letters, first grouped by linguistic category and then separated into 24 individual diagnostic features (see Table 2.3). This section considers the data from a pragmatic perspective and asks what sociolinguistic factors may have conditioned the results. The broad picture sketched out in Section 5.3.4 showed that, as a group, these four senders were more likely to anglicise their grammar than their spelling. This is an unexpected finding given grammar forms are often less likely to be shaped by sociolinguistic circumstances than spelling forms, as noted by Cruickshank, who argued that such functional words may be greater indicators of fluency than vocabulary and may suggest a higher level of language contact, in this case with EM English (2013: 35, see Section 3.5). In her study of Lord Fife's letters, Cruickshank concluded that Fife continued to use Scottish morphosyntactic items because he was a native Scots speaker, whereas if he had altered his grammar to reflect the incoming anglicised contact language, this would suggest a far higher competency in SSE (2013: 35).

Applying this argument to the case of Mar and his sons, who were also native Scots, would suggest that they too would have been more likely to retain EM Scottish grammatical forms; nevertheless, the forms extracted from their letters disprove this assumption (see Figure 5.2, Section 5.3.5). Focusing on Mar for the moment, the results found for this sender's spelling would seem to be commensurate with his decision to base himself in Scotland. However, in van Eyndhoven and Clark's study, they found that Thomas Hamilton, 1st Earl of Haddington, who was Mar's contemporary, was an early adopter of the anglicised <wh> form and hypothesised that Haddington chose to select the incoming standard because of the critical roles he held in government and subsequent contact he had with parliament and the monarchy (2020: 230). Mar's career was similarly distinguished in both the political and courtly spheres in England; nonetheless, he did the opposite and remained steadfastly Scottish in his selection of the <quh> form.

Furthermore, he chose EM Scots forms across almost all of his other spelling items. Their differing selections might be explained in part by the two mens' divergent educational paths because although Haddington attended the high school of Edinburgh until he was 18, he subsequently enrolled as a student at the University of Paris for six years (Goodare 2004).[19]

Mar's anomalous selection of the anglicised i-digraph spellings <oo> rather than the Scots <ui> is trickier to explain and warrants further examination via a larger corpus of his letters. It is also difficult to explain his selection of English grammatical forms: perhaps it is possible that Mar's language was more anglicised than he cared for, and to counteract this, he made a conscious effort to retain EM Scots spelling whilst at the same time the effects of his contact with EM English were seeping into his morphosyntactic construction. Moreover, this study has only considered how Stewart might have been affected by others; nonetheless, inevitably, she too could affect those around her, and Mar may have unconsciously altered his language to mimic the anglicised grammar that his wife used consistently in her writings. As noted in Section 4.3, the couple may have adopted a lingua franca early in their relationship, leading to unpredictable developments in their linguistic skills.

Another point to consider is the discrepancy between the amount of grammar data versus spelling data, as noted in Section 5.3.4 (see Table 5.5). Mel Evans pointed out the relative ease in extracting larger quantities of spelling forms from smaller corpora in comparison to grammatical data, stating that the 22,400-word corpus she compiled for her study of Queen Elizabeth I's correspondence was only 'borderline productive for a study of morphosyntactic forms, [whereas] spelling analysis incorporates all forms throughout a corpus, and places less demand on the volume of material' (2012). This reminds us to approach these findings with caution whilst considering that the likelihood of reaching robust conclusions may be increased via a larger-scale analysis of more letters in the future. Nonetheless, unlike the results extracted from her husband and son's letters, Stewart's data are entirely compatible with her previous results, manifesting a consistently high proportion of anglicised forms: 100% in nine features of grammar and spelling. Moreover, for those occasions where she chose an EM Scots variant, she may have been copying other speakers' pronunciations of the words (Meurman-Solin 2005: 430–440, Macafee 2002) (see also Section 5.3.3). Finally, regarding her sons, Arthur and Charles, the mixed pattern shown throughout their results must reflect the country's linguistic situation as the seventeenth century progressed and EM Scots became increasingly dilute, pressured more and more by the language contact with its southern neighbour.

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[19] My thanks go to Dr Theo van Heijnsbergen for drawing my attention to this important detail.

5.4 Holograph letters: Variation over time

5.4.1 Variation over time of EM Scots forms: Quantitative analyses

The previous section examined the different rates of EM Scots forms used by four of the Stewart Erskine senders in their holograph letters. This section will now consider how the sociolinguistic factor of VARIATION OVER TIME affected their emergent patterns. Given that Charles Erskine has only one letter in the dataset and therefore cannot exhibit variation across time, his data is removed, thus simplifying the analyses. To begin, Figure 5.3 graphs the percentage of EM Scots forms identified in St-ErCor by SENDER, with each set of letters plotted individually across the years 1600 to 1645. Table 5.8 individually itemises this data, giving the corresponding shelf-mark and RECIPIENT of the letters.

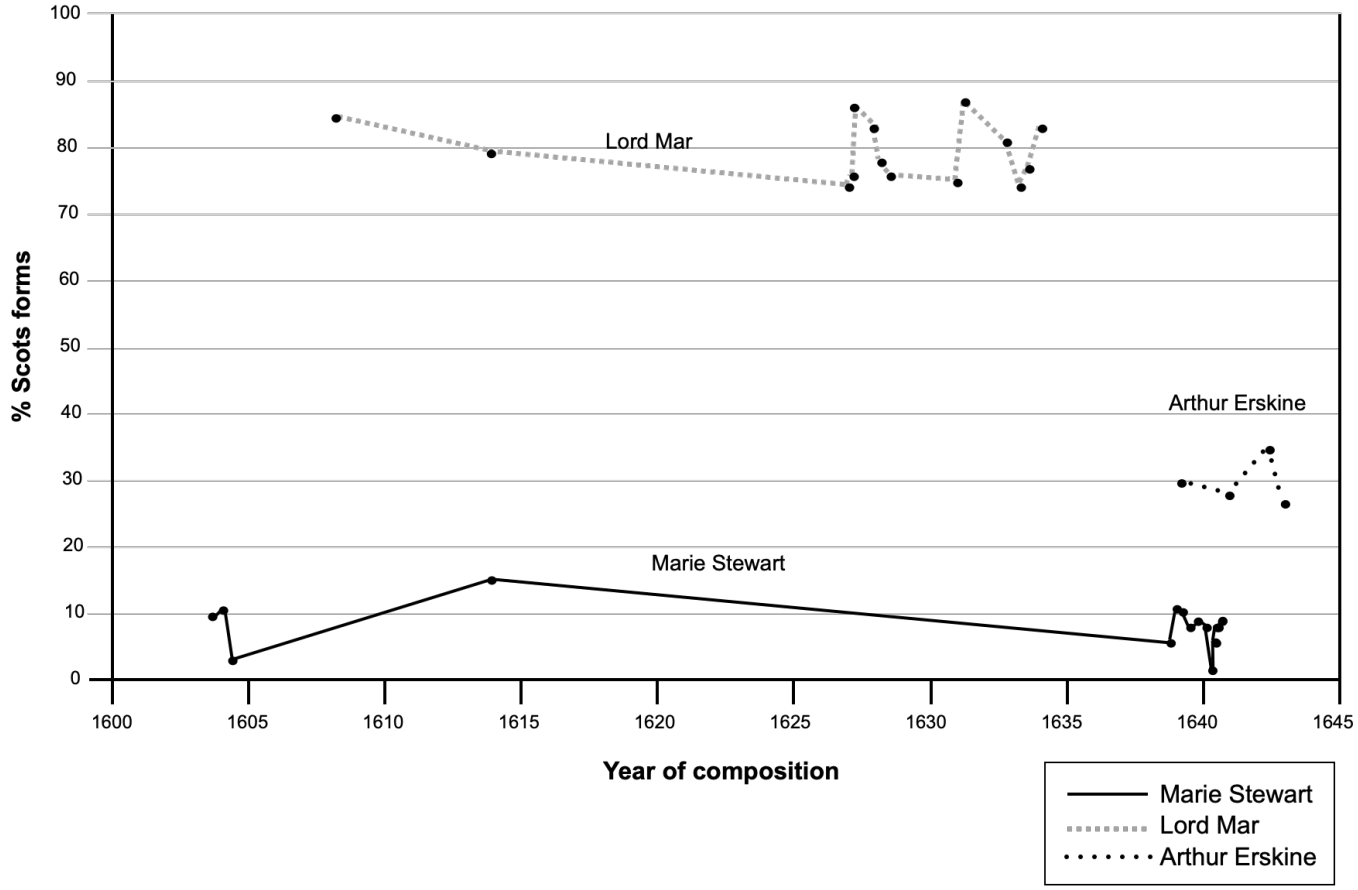

Figure 5.3: Variation over time in EM Scots forms (1600–1645) in holograph letters sent by Marie Stewart, Lord Mar and Arthur Erskine

Table 5.8 Distribution of EM Scots forms in the holograph letters sent by Marie Stewart, Lord Mar and Arthur Erskine

Marie Stewart			
Date	**Shelf-mark**	**Recipient**	**% Scots**
01/01/1604	MS.80 f 54	Earl of Morton	10%
01/01/1604	MS.80 f 55	Earl of Morton	11%
01/01/1604	MS.80 f 56	Earl of Morton	3%
10/10/1614	Adv.MS.33.1.1 [v] f 118	John Murray	15%
28/05/1639	MS.5155 f 19	Charles Erskine	6%
30/07/1639	MS.5155 ff 20–21	Charles Erskine	12%
09/11/1639	MS.5070 ff 45–46	Charles Erskine	11%
15/11/1639	MS.5070 ff 47–48	Charles Erskine	8%
18/11/1639	MS.5070 ff 49–50	Charles Erskine	9%
13/01/1640	MS.5070 ff 59–60	Charles Erskine	8%
17/01/1640	MS.5070 ff 61–62	Charles Erskine	2%
10/02/1640	MS.5070 f 58	Charles Erskine	6%
17/06/1640	MS.5070 ff 63–64	Mary Hope	8%
29/06/1640	MS.5070 ff 73–74	Charles Erskine	9%
Lord Mar			
10/10/1608	MS.80 f 40	Earl of Morton	85%
10/10/1614	Adv.MS.33.1.1 [v] f 119	John Murray	79%
25/01/1627	MS.80 f 44	Earl of Morton	74%
23/04/1627	MS.80 f 43	Earl of Morton	76%
28/08/1627	MS.80 f 45	Earl of Morton	86%
05/09/1627	MS.80 f 41	Earl of Morton	83%
09/10/1627	MS.80 f 42	Earl of Morton	78%
30/06/1628	MS.80 f 46	Earl of Morton	76%
09/01/1631	MS.80 f 47	Earl of Morton	75%
14/05/1631	MS.80 f 48	Earl of Morton	87%
29/11/1633	MS.80 f 50	Earl of Morton	81%
03/12/1633	MS.80 f 49	Earl of Morton	74%
12/01/1634	MS.80 f 52	Earl of Morton	77%
08/08/1634	MS.80 f 51	Earl of Morton	83%
Arthur Erskine			
15/10/1639	MS.5155 ff 22–23	Marie Stewart	30%
08/12/1640	MS.5155 ff 34–35	Marie Stewart	28%
17/05/1642	MS.5155 f 42	Charles Erskine	35%
19/05/1643	MS.5155 ff 44–45	Marie Stewart	27%

The dissimilarity observed previously (Section 5.3.1) between the levels of EM Scots used by Stewart and her husband Mar is reflected in the lines graphed in Figure 5.3. Stewart's course sits far below Mar's, as she fluctuated between a marginal 2% and a high of 15%, whereas her husband's rate of EM Scots never fell below 74% and reached an upper limit of 87%. Arthur sits between the two: his letters are clustered in a short range of four years and exhibited levels of EM Scots, which range between 27% and 35%. Arthur's limited time span presents a less broad view of his linguistic usage when compared to that of his parents, both of whom have fourteen letters in the dataset spread out over a more extended period: in Stewart's case, 36 years and in Mar's 26 years. However, the three letters he sent to his mother showed near-identical levels of EM Scots of 30%, 28% and 27% and his single letter to Charles was only slightly higher at 35%. Thus, it can be stated that within the limited period of 1639 to 1643, in his extant letters to Stewart and Charles, he demonstrated scant influence of VARIATION ACROSS TIME or by RECIPIENT. For this reason, the following qualitative discussion excludes Arthur.

5.4.2 Variation over time of EM Scots forms: Qualitative discussion

The findings reviewed in Section 5.4.1 show that Stewart and Mar continued to adhere to their respective linguistic patterning of either a high level of EM English forms or EM Scots forms over time (see Figure 5.3). Moreover, neither of them displayed a continuous diachronic upward or downward trajectory of EM Scots usage across the period of the sent dates of their letters (Stewart 1604 to 1640 and Mar 1608 to 1634). Instead, their levels fluctuated over the years (see Table 5.8 for values). One potential explanation for the outliers in their results is the sociolinguistic factor of RECIPIENT. One such outlier is Stewart's single extant letter to the Scottish courtier and politician Murray, which contained her highest rate of EM Scots: 15% (Adv.MS.33.1.1 [v] f 118, 10 October 1614). Like her husband, Mar, Murray was a native Scot, and as groom of the bedchamber, he too was part of James VI/I's intimate circle (MacDonald 2004). After the king acceded to the English throne, Murray maintained close ties with his home country because James gave him responsibility for making decisions regarding Scottish affairs (MacDonald 2004). In contrast, the 79% of Scots forms identified in Mar's letter to Murray (Adv.MS.33.1.1 [v] f 119, 10 October 1614) show no notable difference from those found in his other 13 letters to Morton.

Stewart's lowest outlier was her letter to Charles which contained just 2% of EM Scots forms (MS.5070 ff 61–62, 17 January 1640). However, she did not sustain such a meagre amount across all eight holograph letters sent to her son; but instead, her EM Scots usage varied, stretching to 12% (MS.5155 ff 20–21, 30 July 1639). Moreover, this pattern matches that observed in the three she sent to Morton, ranging from 3% (MS.80 f 56, 1604) to 10% (MS.80 f 54, 1604). To summarise, Stewart's two highest values of EM Scots forms to Charles, 12% and Morton, 10%, are only a few per cent lower than her highest value to Murray of 15%. When taken together, the corresponding levels across different recipients contradict the hypothesis that her linguistic behaviour in these letters was affected by the sociolinguistic factor of RECIPIENT. Perhaps instead, an alternative sociolinguistic factor was at work, such as the topic of the letter or another unknown element (Cruickshank 2013: 33–34). On the other hand, Mar adhered to the same model, exhibiting variable levels of EM Scots forms in letters he sent to the same recipient: those to Morton began at 85% in 1608 and oscillated in levels over time; his letter of 1627 contained his lowest rate, 74% along with a high of 86% in the same year. Similarly, 1631 saw one of Mar's lowest levels, 75%, and his highest, 87%. These findings suggest that the two sociolinguistic factors of the RECIPIENT and VARIATION OVER TIME may have had no more influence over the forms he selected than they did over his wife, Stewart.

5.5 Scribal letters

5.5.1 Distribution of forms by scribe: Quantitative analyses

This section will direct attention to Stewart's eight scribal letters, which had 25% EM Scots forms and 75% EM English forms overall (see Table 5.2). Based on palaeographic evidence, Chapter 1 argued that two scribes were responsible for composing these letters: Scribe A and Scribe B (Section 1.3.2). Following this conclusion, the letters are grouped into two sets: SCRIBE A set, which contains the single letter written to Morton in 1604, and SCRIBE B set, which contains the other seven letters written almost four decades later: five to her son Charles, one to Norvell and one to Thomas Hope. Table 5.9 presents an overview of the total percentage of EM Scots forms used per SCRIBE.

Table 5.9: Distribution of forms in Stewart's scribal letters by SCRIBE

Scribe ID	Scots forms	English forms	Letter details
A	62%	38%	1 letter (1604)
B	17%	83%	7 letters (1639–42)
Overall total	**25%**	**75%**	

A striking difference in the results for Scribe A and Scribe B is immediately evident: Scribe A's EM Scots usage was far higher, almost 3.5 times as much, at 62%, than EM Scribe B's usage, which was 17%. Figure 5.4 splits these results across the linguistic categories of grammar and spelling:

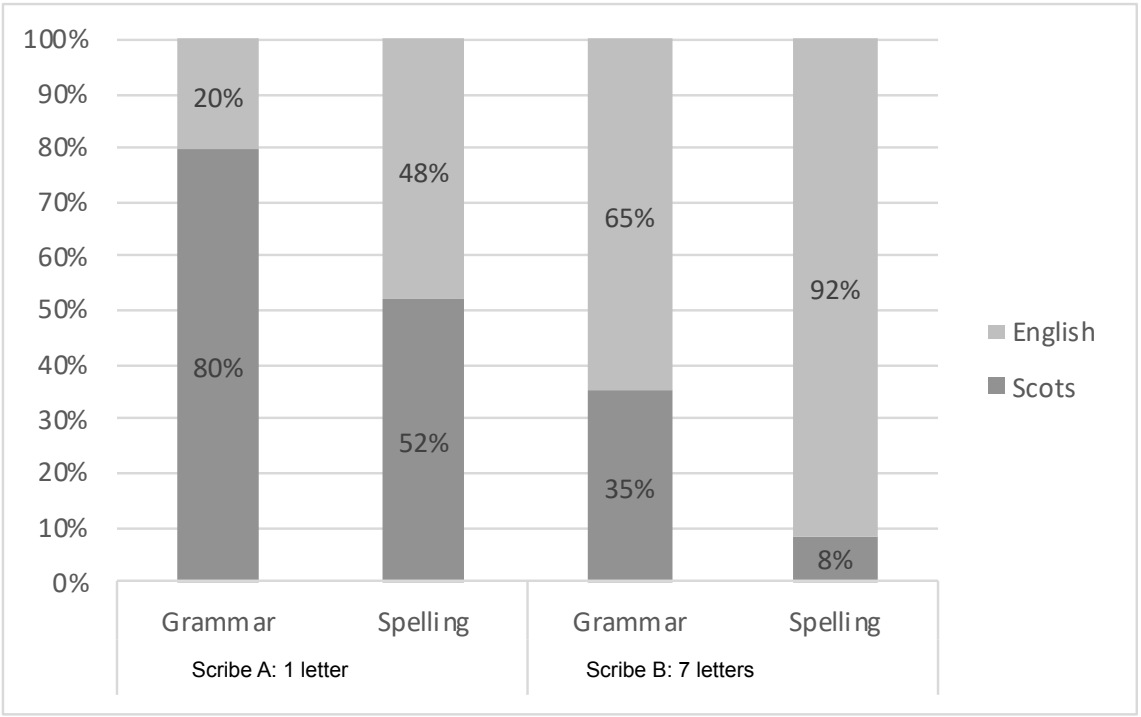

Figure 5.4: Distribution of forms over grammar and spelling by SCRIBE in scribal letters

Regardless of dissimilarities in the actual percentage value, both scribes were more likely to retain EM Scots grammar: Scribe A uses 80% and Scribe B 35% than EM Scots spelling: Scribe A uses 52%, and Scribe B uses 8%. This finding contrasts with Stewart's far higher use of EM English grammar forms

in her holograph letters, 87% (see Section 5.3.4, Figure 5.2). As noted earlier grammatical forms in holograph compositions were often slower to show the impact of anglicisation (see Section 3.5, Cruickshank 2013: 35). The fact that both scribes demonstrated a higher level of EM Scots grammar than Stewart (Scribe A, 80%, Scribe B, 35% and Stewart only 13%) suggests that the scribes had a high level of input into these letters. If Stewart had entirely dictated them, it would follow that the levels of EM Scots grammar forms would be commensurate with those found in her handwritten letters; however, this is not the case.

5.5.2 Distribution of forms by recipient over time: Quantitative analyses

This set of analyses will explore how the sociolinguistic factor of VARIATION OVER TIME may have affected the linguistic forms used by Scribe B alone, given that Scribe A cannot exhibit diachronic variation because they have only one extant letter in the Stewart Erskine dataset. First, the percentage of EM Scots forms extracted from Scribe B's letters is charted in Figure 5.5 according to RECIPIENT, revealing that there was slight variation between the three men: the average EM Scots forms in the five letters sent to Charles was 17%, and in the individual letters to George Norvell it was 12% and to Thomas Hope 19%.

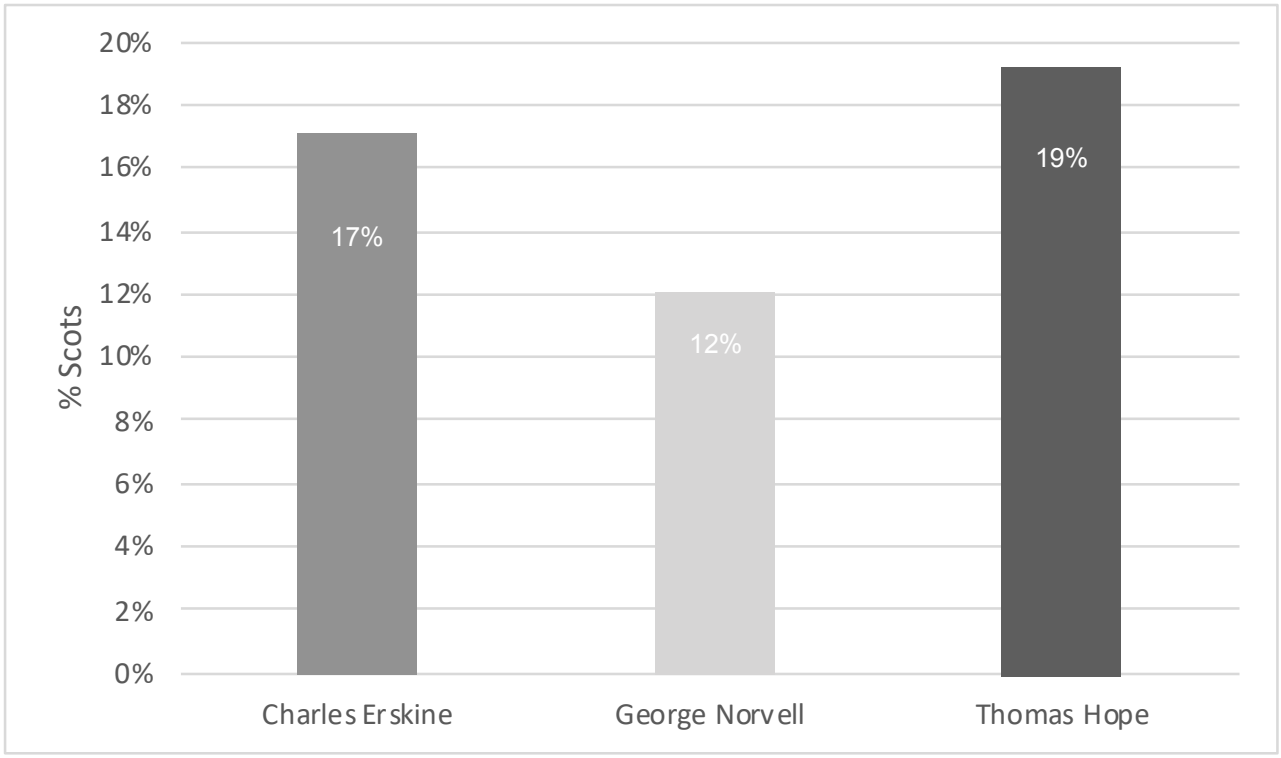

Figure 5.5: Scribe B letters: Percentage of Scots forms by RECIPIENT

However, the addition of a further sociolinguistic variable: LETTER DATE, alters the results slightly so that now the EM Scots usage in the Scribe B letters is shown to fluctuate across time, as Figure 5.6 illustrates:

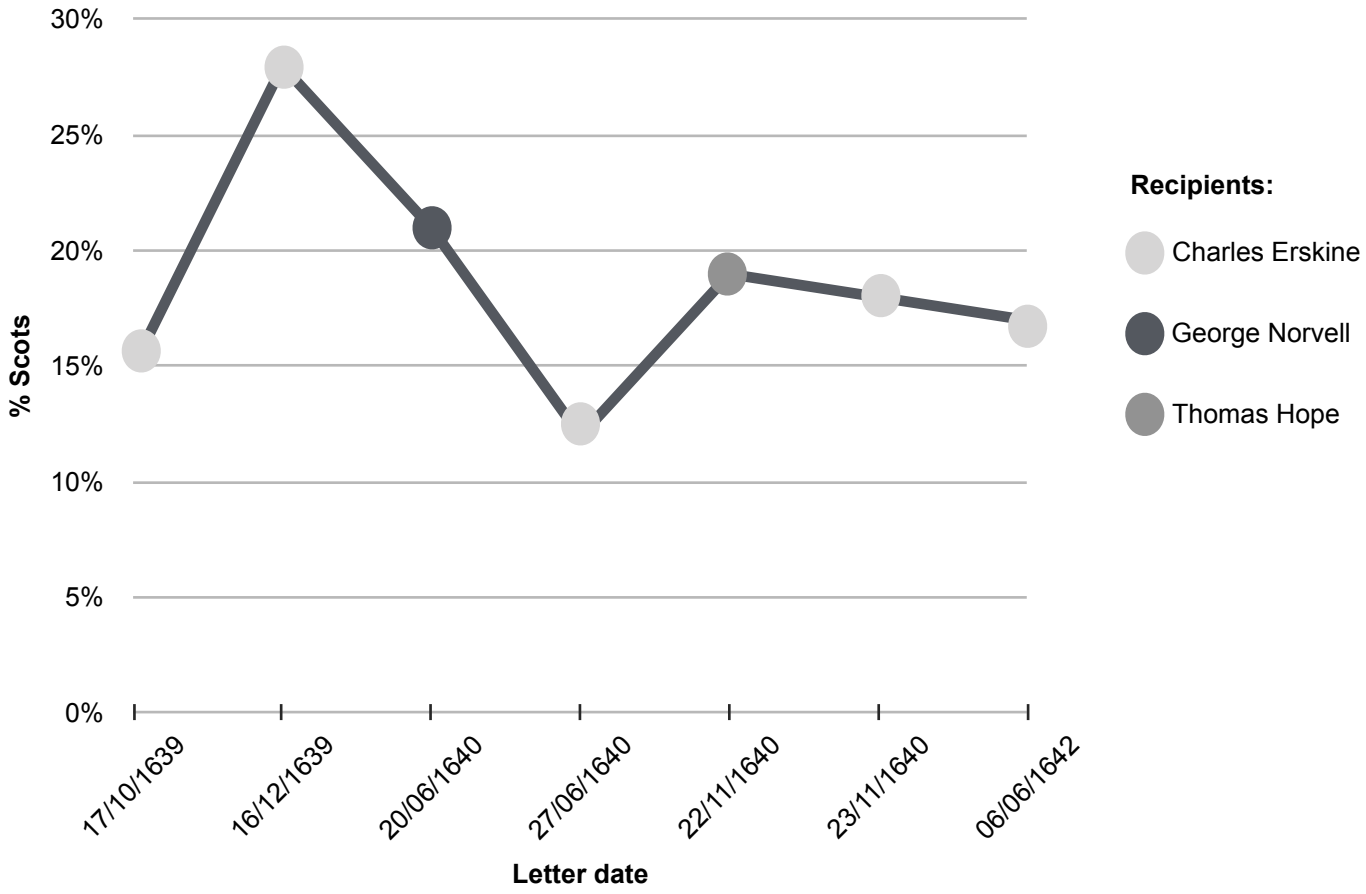

Figure 5.6: Scribe B letters: VARIATION OVER TIME of EM Scots forms

The added extralinguistic factor of LETTER DATE reveals a more pronounced degree of VARIATION OVER TIME between the earliest letter, sent 17 October 1639 and the latest, sent 6 June 1642, with a top value of 28% EM Scots (second node) in the letter, which Stewart sent to Charles on 16 December 1639 (MS.5070 f 51) and a bottom value of 12% (fourth node) to the same recipient dated 27 June 1640 (MS.5070 ff 67–68). These quantitative findings will now be explored further to explain the choices made by the two scribes who functioned as secretaries for Stewart.

5.5.3 Distribution of forms: Qualitative discussion

The quantitative data outlined in Section 5.5.2 showed that Stewart's choice of amanuensis affected the rate of EM Scots in her eight extant scribal letters. Analysis of the holograph letters confirmed a connection between the senders' differing rates of EM Scots and sociolinguistic factors such as their place of birth, education and social circumstances (Sections 5.1–5.4). The same links could be logically formed

for the scribes; however, an explanation is almost impossible given the lack of information to identify either secretary. Similarly, the results for VARIATION OVER TIME for Scribe B are challenging to interpret because there is no biographical context. What can be said is that the Scribe B letters, like Stewart and Mar's holograph letters, do not display a stable ascent or descent within their EM Scots forms across time but instead vary. The greatest number of scribal letters sent to an individual were those sent to Charles, and the same fluctuating levels can be observed here with the two outliers pinpointed in this set. This finding suggests that the linguistic behaviour demonstrated in the scribal letters was, like Stewart and Mar's holograph letters, not influenced by the sociolinguistic factor of RECIPIENT but perhaps by another factor.

CHAPTER SIX: CONCLUSION

6.1 Review of the findings

This study has delivered results that are, by turns, both predictable and unexpected. In line with the previous studies (Devitt 1989, Meurman-Solin 1993; 1999; 2005, van Eyndhoven and Clark 2020) (see Section 3.3), the corpus linguistic techniques unearthed clear evidence of anglicisation throughout the 47 Stewart Erskine letters (Section 5.2). Across the holograph letters, the senders reacted differently to the influence of the southern language: Stewart's language was highly anglicised across both her grammar and spelling choices, whereas her husband Mar indicated a strong preference for the Scots language. However, this was far more obvious in his spelling choices. Van Eyndhoven and Clark suggested that Scottish nobles used the EM Scots language when writing to the king after the Union to promote a sense of group inclusivity and unbroken national identity between themselves and James' VI I (2020: 224) (see Section 3.3). It is possible that Mar, consciously or unconsciously, adopted a similar policy to preserve the unique bond he had shared with the king since childhood, choosing to sustain EM Scots spelling forms while remaining unaware that anglicisation had begun to pervade his grammar forms.

Alexander's language betrayed little use of Scots, whereas Mary, Anne, Arthur, and Charles' linguistic patterning was more varied, and they frequently blended Scottish with English forms. The results showed little influence on the senders' language by the sociolinguistic factors of RECIPIENT and VARIATION OVER TIME (Section 5.4.2). Instead, arguably the most influential factor on the male senders was SENDER LOCATION: put simply, Alexander lived in England and used English most, and Mar, Arthur and Charles lived in Scotland and retained more Scots. The potential conditioning effect of SENDER LOCATION may warrant further investigation, and a future study might consider whether the regional dialect choices of the senders matched their geographical position. For example, did the Stirling-based Stewart and Mar or the Fife-based Arthur demonstrate evidence of the East Central dialect in their linguistic choices? As well as this, the relationship between anglicisation levels in the texts and their lexical items is worthy of exploration, as Cruickshank did with Fife's letters (2013: 33–34) (see Section 3.5). A link between the retention of EM Scots forms and farming or legal lexis may be established by coding the letters for a further sociolinguistic factor: LETTER TOPIC.

The influence of other, different extralinguistic circumstances affected Stewart: her place of birth and early education necessarily shaped the language she used as an adult. Given her highly anglicised language, consideration must be given to the possibility that she received a humanist education that did not focus on EM Scots. The Scots usage she manifests may suggest she was reacting to auditory input from other speakers or textual information via letters she received. The evidence extracted from Stewart's scribal letters contrasted with her predominantly anglicised selections. Their higher retention of EM Scots hints that the secretaries may have a high degree of independence during the letters' composition. Nonetheless, the two scribes identified both showed they were affected by anglicisation, Scribe B choosing a greater number of EM English forms than Scribe A.

Given the multifarious nature of its findings, this study concludes that sweeping, definitive statements about language should be avoided. Andrew Lind argued we must distrust labelling people from history, especially those who existed in Britain during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when Scotland and England experienced a time of social, religious and political disorder, because this kind of categorisation can be detrimental to a deeper understanding of the complex (and sometimes changing) nature of their views and allegiances (2020: 99). To apply Lind's argument to language: throughout Mar's life, before and after the Union, he commanded one of the highest places both at court and in the king's affections (Brown 1993: 568). Although he chose to base himself in Scotland, his position required frequent trips south, and he must have experienced linguistic pressure from EM English; however, on the whole, his language remained steadfastly Scottish. Perhaps the linguistic choices made by individuals are exactly so: individual. Lind warned against trying to predict individual religious or political allegiances. In the same way, we must take care to avoid predicting the linguistic allegiances individuals formed throughout this unstable period in history. Modern researchers must contextualise their conclusions by attending closely to the historical background of their study materials.

6.2 Limitations and directions for future research

The most obvious limitation of the study is the small size of the purpose-built corpus St-ErCor. Extending the corpus to include more letters and informants would certainly allow further insights into the development of EM Scots via an analysis of a broader range of linguistic forms. The NLS collections of the Stewart and Erskine family letters offer almost unlimited further opportunities for study. As noted in the description of the study's archival research process, hundreds more manuscripts are waiting to give

up their linguistic, material and sociocultural secrets to modern scholars (see Section 1.1). The corpus linguistic techniques also revealed a drawback in the methodology: the searches threw out false data (see Section 2.3.3). Given StEr-Cor's size, such spurious hits were easy to reject manually. However, the problem could be avoided entirely by tagging the corpus for parts of speech. Annotation, described by Cantos as 'the enrichment of a corpus in order to aid the process of corpus exploitation' would enable the researcher to, for example, filter out all parts of speech except verbs when searching for the diagnostic feature of verb endings in the texts contained in St-ErCor (2012: 109).

This study emphasises the advantages of applying diverse interdisciplinary methods to investigate small samples of early modern letters. By incorporating techniques from authorship and handwriting analysis, historical pragmatics, sociolinguistic variation analysis, manuscript studies, and social history, the study reveals the subtle and shifting ways individual members of the Stewart Erskine family responded differently to anglicisation. The refined picture of language change described here offers strong support for the efficacy of a dual approach that combines quantitative and qualitative methods. The study calls for more micro-level analyses based on transcriptions created directly from the original manuscripts and supported by a detailed editorial policy. Their conclusions would avoid any false impression of homogenous linguistic change, instead offering a genuine reimagining of the writings of people from the past.

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