INTRODUCTION

Military Identity and Multiple Identities

This book is not a regimental history. Nor is it a study of all the battles and campaigns undertaken by Scotsmen during the specified period of study. Rather, it addresses two main themes. It traces the development of Scottish martial society over a 450 year period. Through general surveys and more detailed case studies it tackles the role played by military identity in transforming a fractured Scottish society in the 1580s, through the Scottish military epoch as an independent nation in the 1640s, to the consolidation of the nation's martial status within the global British Empire. In so doing, it confirms that these military experiences were a vital crucible for new identities while simultaneously generating considerable ambiguities and reactions that recast older regional and Scottish sensibilities.

Ever since the publication of the first formalised Scottish regimental history in 1637 there have been books recording the exploits of Scottish soldiers in print.[1] Regimental histories aside, there are many exemplary books detailing the lives and campaigns of particular individuals and units, though not as many which deal with issues of Scottish and British identity. However, these collections seldom ask fundamental questions such as 'why did Scottish soldiers go to war?', 'in what way did they express their identity?' or 'what did they believe they were fighting for?'. Instead they take it as read that the soldiers were present, and wished to be present for the objectives their political and military leaders had set. With this nominal reading of the soldier's identification dealt with, the focus can then be directed onto the campaigns and outcome of the fighting. Yet with the changing political relations between the component parts of the United Kingdom there has been an upturn in academic

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[1] R. Monro, *His Expedition with the worthy Scots Regiment called Mac-Keyes* (London: 1637). See also the new edition, W. Brockington, ed., *Monro, His Expedition with the worthy Scots Regiment called Mac-Keys* (sic.) (Westport: 1999). For examples of Scottish regimental histories see I.H. Mackay, ed., *The Scottish Regiments of the British Army* (Edinburgh: 1943); A.H. Bowling, *Scottish Regiments and Uniforms 1660–1914* (London: 1971); P. Mileham, *The Scottish Regiments 1633–1966* (2nd edition, Staplehurst: 1996).

debate around the historic role of Scottish soldiery in maintaining a Scottish identity while also fashioning a new British one. Underpinning this critical re-examination of what would appear to be a self-evident occupation, soldiering, are increased debates regarding what is actually meant by the term 'British'.[2] After all, how can one evaluate the motives and identity of the British soldier if there is no consensus on what is meant by one half of this particular label? Equally, if the idea of Scotland, either as an independent nation or as a segment of the United Kingdom also remains controversial, then the same holds true for the term 'Scottish soldier'. As T om Devine has observed, the extent to which Scottish and British identities co-existed even in the eighteenth century remains a highly debated topic.[3] Inevitably, this adds an additional complicating layer to the identity of those Scots that fought for post-1707 Scotland. What is clear from the veritable flood of articles published in the academic press and Scottish newspapers is that the British army is still seen as a central agency in terms of both British and Scottish identity. As recently as December 2001, a newspaper article appeared based on comments by the Scottish National Party (SNP) MSP, Colin Campbell. He argued vigorously that attempts to restructure the 51st Highland Brigade were:

> yet another blow to Scotland's martial legacy ... And at best it is a dilutation of Scottish Military identity. At worst, it is a threat to the exclusively Scottish dimension of military service under Scottish command.[4]

Campbell's argument, urging that the Scottish units remain distinct from English ones within a wider British military context, is not new. Indeed from Anglo-Scottish ventures in the Netherlands (Murdoch)

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[2] S. Murdoch, *Britain, Denmark-Norway and the House of Stuart 1603–1660* (East Linton: 2000) 1–22. See also C. Russell, 'The British Problem and the English Civil War' *History*, 72, (1987); J. Morrill, 'The Scottish National Covenant in its British Context', in J. Morrill, ed., *The Scottish National Covenant in its British Context* (Edinburgh: 1990); B. Bradshaw and J. Morrill, eds., *The British Problem c. 1534–1707; State Formation in the Atlantic Archipelago* (London: 1996); C. Russell, *The Fall of the British Monarchies 1637–1642* (Oxford: 1991).

[3] Indeed Devine states that two articles show 'how far we are from consensus on this important issue'. See T.M. Devine and J.R. Young, eds., *Eighteenth Century Scotland: New Perspectives* (East Linton: 1999) intro., 4. The two articles in this collection are A. Murdoch, 'Scotland and the idea of Britain in the Eighteenth century' and R.J. Finlay, 'Keeping the Covenant: Scottish National Identity'.

[4] I. Bruce, 'Scottish identity fears on restructuring of army' *The Herald*, 29 December 2001.

in the 1570s through until the Napoleonic period and beyond (Streets and Horsbroch) it has been a theme of the Scottish military experience. However, the irony of an SNP parliamentarian fighting to retain 'the importance placed on Scotland's commitment to the British army' is simply a contemporary example of the surprising associations generated when multiple identities are mixed into a unified military structure.[5]

And yet plural or multiple military identities have undoubtedly been a constant feature among the fighting men of Scotland. Someone could emphasise their Gaelic, or Lowland Scottish identities and still be seen as Scots. Robert Monro, though a Highlander, emphasised his Scottishness both in the title of his regimental history and in the way he talked throughout his book about his countrymen. On the first few pages he noted with pride how Scottish officers refused to fight under a Danish flag, and even had Charles I intervene to allow them to fight under the Saltire in foreign service. These were not mercenary troops but ones engaged in a struggle for the sister of their king.[6] Yet despite repeated association with the Scottish nation, Monro also raised within his work the sense of a British identity— a Highlander fighting to demonstrate his Scottish identity within a Scottish regimental and wider British context reminiscent of the regimental authors of the nineteenth century. Elsewhere in Scotland, others strove to assert regional or religious identities. This may have been the Gaels of the western seaboard trying to avoid perceived cultural erosion through contact with non-Gaelic Scots. It was true for the 'Fife Adventurers' who mounted a military campaign to try to extirpate the local population from Lewis in the late sixteenth century. MacCoinnich notes the identification with local issues over

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[5] Ibid.

[6] See Brockington, *Monro His Expedition*, 12. Monro recorded that 'His majesty [of Denmark] would have the officers to carry the Dane's crosse, which the officers refusing, they were summoned to compeare before his majestie at Raynesberge to know the reasons of their refusals; at the meeting none would adventure, fearing his majestie's indignation, to gainestand openly his Majestie's will, being then his Majestie's sworne servants; and for the eschewing of greater inconvenience the officers desired so much time of his Majesty as to send Captain Robert Ennis into England to know his Majestie of Great Britaine's will, whether or no they might carrie without reproach the Dane's Crosse in Scottish colours. For Charles I's designs for military flags incorporating the Saltire with a Danish cross in the corner see PRO SP75/ 8 f. 61. 'The state of the king of Denmarke's army' 1626. For a wider discussion of the incident see Murdoch, *Britain, Denmark-Norway and the House of Stuart*, 212–213.

regional or national as the backdrop for this campaign while observ-
ing that the Gaels themselves have no written record of the Lowland
adventurers. Such localised interest persisted well into the seventeenth
century.[7] Identification with causes other than regional or national
also relate to Scottish Catholics like the Maxwells in the southwest
or Gordons in the northeast, equally bent on resisting the centralis-
ing policies of the Crown. In any case, historians usually tried to
bill these episodes as a kind of warfare between the various ethnies
of Scotland. Yet not all Gaels fought along the same lines of divi-
sion and indeed nor did all Catholics. During the period of the
Scottish medieval Wars of Independence 'the different peoples of
Scotland who variously spoke French, Scots and Gaelic were united
by their differences'[8] and from that period 'until 1707 the language
of the Scottish parliament was Scots, as was the language of legis-
lation and court procedure'.[9] However, it was common in the early
modern period for Gaels also to be referred to as 'Ersche' or Irish,
a complication for the historian of the period, but not, MacCoinnich
argues, for contemporary Scots at the time.[10] Certainly there were
some overlaps between Scottish Gaeldom and Ireland, particularly
with Clan Donald and Clan Campbell contesting territory on both
sides of the Irish Sea (MacCoinnich and Cathcart).

As Horsbroch shows, for some the complex layering of identity
could lead individuals to express regional (Ayrshire), national (Scottish)
and supra-national (British) identities even within one corpus of work.
It is not entirely accepted that soldiers could deal with such com-
plexities and it has previously been argued that the supra-identity

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[7] The 'local' over the 'national' was espoused by particular Gaelic poets in the
seventeenth century whose word has subsequently been taken to refer to all of
Gaeldom rather than their localised parts of it. See in particular the work of Iain
Lom reproduced in A.M. Mackenzie, ed., *Orain Iain Luim: Songs of John Macdonald,
Bard of Keppoch* (Edinburgh: 1964). In particular see his poem *La Inbhir Lochaidh* (The
Battle of Inverlochy 1645) on pages 20–25. This battle was between a Scottish
Covenanting army representing the Scottish parliament fighting a mixed Scottish-
Irish force fighting under the royal standard with a mix of Highland, Lowland and
Irish officers. The poet expresses little of this and frames the battle as one between
the Campbells (who made up the c. 50% of the Covenanting army) and Clan
Donald. He noted *'S bha buaidh a' bhlàir le Clann Dòmhnaill*— Victory on the field was
with Clan Donald!

[8] M. Lynch, *Scotland—a new history* (London: 1991) xiv.

[9] K. Mackinnon, *Gaelic in 1994: A Report to the European Union Euromosaic Project*
(Black Isle: 1994) 13.

[10] J.D. McClure, *Why Scots Matters* (Edinburgh: 1988) 14.

could only confuse the men. P.H. Scott argues that it was only dur-
ing this period that Scots began to share patriotic feelings with their
neighbours and that 'this new British consciousness did not destroy
the Scottish identity, but it inevitably tended to weaken and confuse
it'.[11] Clearly in this volume the contributors argue for a different
interpretation. A common British identity was already forming gen-
erations before the period Scott talks about and the evidence shows
that serving together re-inforced Scottishness. Arguably, it was the
intellectual elite who appear confused.

Examining this disparity forms one of the underlying themes of
this book. As if to illustrate this, there is the obvious problem that
soldiers might also express any one of these identities and leave it
to historians to try to work out what they meant by it. Fortunately,
when Scottish servicemen write similar things today we can actually
ask them what they meant by their statements (see below). Interestingly
there is often no ambiguity intended. Scottish soldiers in non-Scottish
units can retain a strong sense of who they are and why they are
in the British army without relinquishing any sense of Scottishness.
Comments from the last years of the twentieth century underline
how these hierarchies of loyalty form a constant element in any
attempted assessment of Scottish soldiering identity. As such they
also hold true for a sixteenth-century Gaelic-speaking clansman, a
seventeenth-century Covenanter, an officer in the eighteenth-century
Scots-Dutch Brigade or a Glaswegian serving in a kilted battalion of
Victoria's army. Thus one Royal Marine wrote recently; 'I've finally
done it—I've joined the Brits'.[12] Compare this statement by one from
the same man several years later regarding forthcoming Hogmanay
celebrations; 'There are less than 10 Scots on board [HMS Endurance]
and I'm the only one with a kilt which is a poor show, but I wear
it at every opportunity to make up for it'.[13] A letter from a few days
later noted that;

> I've organised a Burns night and have got all the guys [Englishmen]
> into the spirit of it (I've converted several into hardened whisky drinkers
> already and many wish they were born North of the border—not
> everyone can be that fortunate though!).[14]

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[11] P.H. Scott, 'The last Purely Scotch Age', in D. Gifford, ed., *The History of Scottish Literature, vol. 3, Nineteenth Century* (Aberdeen: 1989) 18.
[12] Royal Marine Johannes Engebretsen to Steve Murdoch, Devon, 1992.
[13] Engebretsen to Murdoch, HMS Endurance, South Georgia, 10 December 1996.
[14] Engebretsen to Murdoch, HMS Endurance, South Georgia, 6 January 1997.

Nor do such sentiments remain politically neutral, as might be expected in the a-political military. On the suppression of the Gaelic and Scots languages by the education system in Scotland Corpral Bruce Strachan wrote from Bosnia;

> With my limited knowledge of Scottish history, one thing shines through. We spend more time and energy fighting each other rather than the main problem. Whatever that is! Its funny how I know a lot of Trogs [Welshmen], from all over . . . They are all proud of Welsh [the language].[15]

His letter then contained some strikingly derogatory remarks about the English framed round the backdrop of a Scotland v. England rugby game which the Scots lost. Asking Strachan to expand on what he meant by the above, and how this related to his service in the British army he stated:

> English people have no idea what it feels like to be from Scotland, Ireland and even Wales. . . . I cannot put my finger on it, there are a lot of great people come out of the place but there's something about them in certain situations. They get right up my nose, you could call it Englishness and it's not a compliment.[16]

In their own uncompromising words these modern servicemen reveal how, even in non-Scottish units, a vibrant sense of Scottish identity can still exist in an overwhelmingly British military environment. What we cannot do is pretend to know how the majority of soldiers have prioritised that plurality either now or historically.

Accepting that multiplicity exists within an apparently monolithic military identity ensures a far more nuanced approach to why Scots took up arms. One particular area where this sensitivity has often been absent is of course the Highlands. Without caution one cannot accurately talk in such broad historical terms as 'the Highlanders' or 'the Lowlanders'. These groups seldom, if ever, acted as a homogeneous mass and the composition of Scottish armies and institutions usually contained large numbers of people from all her linguistic communities. Scottish soldiers fought for a variety of reasons ranging from coercion, religious conviction, feudal commitment or material gain. By contrast, the tendency to associate sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century

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[15] Cpl. Bruce Strachan to Steve Murdoch, Bosnia 1993.
[16] Sgt. Bruce Strachan to Murdoch, 15 January 2002.

Gaeldom with Clan Donald and its allies limits the fact that Gaels were as able to express a plurality of identity in the same way as their Lowland countrymen. Additionally, those Gaels who did not support Clan Donald were not betraying their ethnic culture when they fought against them. John MacInnes tells us that one thing we can deduce 'from the evidence of Gaelic tradition is that the integrity of Alba, Scotland, is never in question'.[17] It would seem to follow that anything which threatened the integrity of Scotland should consequently be treated historically as 'anti-Scottish'. The House of Argyll has had a bad historical press and one author tells us that the Campbells were '*Gaeil ag troid ar son na Galltachta in aghaidh na Gaeltachta*'[18]— Gaels fighting for the Lowlands against the Highlands. It is equally possible to evaluate 'the Campbell position' as that of 'loyal Scottish-Gaelic subjects' defending Scotland against harmful internal destabilising elements (Cathcart). After all, leaders of Clan Donald had tried to use their powerful position in the fifteenth century with the Treaty of Westminster to 'no less a task than the dismemberment of the [Scottish] kingdom'.[19] A century later they entered into an alliance with King Henry VIII of England with the aim of aiding an English invasion of Scotland.[20] Nor does such re-appraisal apply only at the national level. If the local motives for military service are included then a similar reversal of military identity can be applied to the clans of the Jacobite era, with Hanoverian kindreds clearly adhering to clannish notions of warfare in a way that was less true of their supposedly more traditional Highland opponents (Mackillop).

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[17] J. MacInnes, 'The Gaelic perception of the Lowlands', in W. Gilles, ed., *Gaelic and Scotland, Alba agus A'Ghàidhlig* (Edinburgh: 1991) 93. The Gaelic poem, *An Cobhernandori* supports the notion of Scottish unity when it mentions the largely Lowland army of the Engagement of 1648 as 'Ar n-armailt'—*our army*. Despite the fact that this army was defeated by the English, the poet declined a perfect opportunity to snipe at his non-Gaelic countrymen. Allan Macinnes discusses this poem in detail in his article 'The First Scottish Tories?', *Scottish Historical Review*, LXVII, (1988), 56–66. See also C.Ó Baoill ed., *Gair nan Clarsach: The Harper's Cry, An Anthology of Seventeenth-Century Gaelic Poetry*. Translated by M. Bateman (Edinburgh: 1994) 116–120.

[18] C.Ó Baoill, 'Gaeilge na hAlban—Gaeilge gan ghluaiseacht', *Meascra Uladh* (1974) 90.

[19] D.J. Macdonald, *Clan Donald* (Loanhead: 1978) 102.

[20] Macdonald, *Clan Donald*, 144.

Foreign Service as Military Patriotism

One obvious feature of military consciousness in Scotland, particularly in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, although evident also into the last decades of the eighteenth century, was the number of Scots serving in the military machines of foreign states. This early modern phenomenon was in some respects merely the continuance of an earlier medieval tradition.[21] Yet the substantial numbers in the period covered by this volume do not mean the Scots were unique. Lacking the internal fiscal structures and indeed political culture that enabled the formation of armies comprised of their own nationals, it was a general characteristic of early modern militaries to rely on *ad hoc* levies of foreign recruits.[22] Yet although part of a European wide culture of contractual soldiering, the involvement of thousands of Scots in the armies of Sweden and the United Provinces did result in an understanding of foreign state-service which had few other parallels on the continent. Whilst the tendency to emphasise socio-economic motives, such as dearth or lack of economic opportunity, would seem to suggest Scots had no reason to endow foreign service with an ideological basis or strong notion of identity, this is not in fact the case. Fighting in wars apparently unconnected or unimportant to Scotland itself was actually seen in two distinct though linked ways. Most, but not all, Scots fought in armies that stood for Protestantism and all the perceived political liberties this ensured. Indeed, Presbyterianism was a specific motive for serving in the Army of the Covenant (1639–1640),[23] the Solemn League and Covenant (1643–1647) and even the Army of the Engagement (1647) were specifically formed not only to defend Presbyterianism in Scotland

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[21] D. Ditchburn, *Scotland and Europe: The Medieval Kingdom and its Contacts with Christendom 1214–1560* (East Linton: 2001) 224–227.

[22] For discussion of the structure and changing nature of western Europe's militaries see G. Parker, *The Military Revolution: military innovation and the rise of the west 1500–1800* (Cambridge: 1988); For specifics on foreigners within the army of Denmark-Norway, which was heavily reliant upon such soldiers, see G. Lind, *Hæren og Magten i Danmark 1614–1662* (Odense: 1994).

[23] *SRP*, VII, 252, 28 June 1638. Alexander Leslie observed to Axel Oxenstierna that the two issues at stake for Scotland at this period were those of religion and national liberty. For a discussion of this and other sources which relate to Scottish identity as perceived in Sweden during 1638–1640 see A. Grosjean, 'General Alexander Leslie, the Scottish Covenanters and the *Riksråd* debates, 1638–1640', in A.I. Macinnes, T. Riis and F.G. Pedersen, eds., *Ships Guns and Bibles in the North Sea and the Baltic States c. 1350–c. 1700* (East Linton: 2000) 116–124.

but, in the case of the last two armies, also to export it abroad.[24] Through their military experience, in other words, Scots could Europeanise the powerful Protestant element of their identity and make it meaningful and respectable to external observers.[25] Projecting national status in this way lay so deep within Scots culture that one observer noted Scotland's loss of independence 'prevented the Scots from exerting themselves lately as they used to do long ago when they had the vanity to say a part of the ballance of Europe was in their hands'.[26] A close empathetic relationship with Protestant powers like Sweden and the United Provinces is however such a broad and changeable notion that it should perhaps be viewed as a context for military identity rather than a defining feature. Yet overseas service had a far more explicit and immediate impact because it came to be seen as an effective way by which Scots could influence the political, religious and even constitutional destiny of their own nation. For periods of the regal union Scotland was deprived of the normal avenues of political leverage, such as regular parliaments, a privy council genuinely able to reflect Scottish priorities and, the ultimate safeguard, an effective military capable of resisting armies raised from the monarchs' other kingdoms.[27] Given this distinctive constitutional position, is it surprising that large numbers of well-trained Scots soldiers came to be identified as a national resource and intrinsic part of the country's overall fabric, no matter how distant they were in physical terms? As Furgol's chapter makes more than clear, it was ultimately the ability of overseas soldiers like Alexander Leslie to combine the latest military techniques and organisation to ensure a

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[24] The text of the Solemn League and Covenant and the Engagement make this point explicit. See G. Donaldson, *Scottish Historical Documents* (2nd edition, Glasgow: 1974) 208–210 and 214–218.

[25] For attempts to export Scottish Covenanting principles to the continent see J.R. Young, 'The Scottish Parliament and European Diplomacy 1641–1647: The Palatinate, The Dutch Republic and Sweden', in S. Murdoch, ed., *Scotland and the Thirty Years' War 1618–1648* (Leiden: 2001) 89–92.

[26] J. Ker, *The Memoirs of John Ker of Kersland in North Britain, Esq. relating to Politicks, Trade and History* (London: 1726) 13.

[27] This is most obviously the case during the reigns of Charles I, II and James VII. See K.M. Brown, *Kingdom or Province: Scotland and the Regal Union 1603–1715* (London: 1992) 13–18; A.I. Macinnes, *Charles I and the making of the Covenanting movement 1625–41* (Edinburgh: 1991) 141–44; R. Lee, 'Retreat from Revolution: the Scottish Parliament and the Restored Monarchy, 1661–1663', in J.R. Young, ed., *Celtic Dimensions of the British Civil Wars* (Edinburgh: 1997) 187–96; A. Murdoch, *British History 1660–1832: National Identity and Local Culture* (London: 1998) 30–32, 42–3.

campaign so effective that it restructured Scotland's whole status and identity in truly spectacular fashion. The events of 1638–40 set an emotional and practical precedent that resulted in overseas soldiering being seen as a positive, nation-enhancing process.

Grosjean's chapter on the role of Leslie after the debacle of the Cromwellian occupation of Scotland hints at a possible decision to fall back onto this use of the foreign-service option once more. Clearly Leslie, for all his personal and kinship reasons, was attempting to re-establish a coherent Scottish military platform in Sweden. Perhaps the hope, forlorn as it transpired, was that with shifting diplomatic luck the Swedes would again release highly trained Scots to act as arbiters in Scotland's political condition by militarily reversing English supremacy. However murky the affair of Cranstoun's levy, the stark precedent of 1638–40 helped ensure that the country's overseas veterans did indeed influence national development on another occasion. Joachim Migglebrink's chapter reveals the close interconnection between the expatriate communities of the Scots-Dutch Brigade and Scotland during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The Brigade was re-Scotticised in the mid-1670s at a time when increased political and religious controversy in Scotland had resulted in a drift of conscientious objectors into the United Provinces. This could only have served to stiffen the Protestant ethos surrounding the Brigade and infused it with an up-to-date understanding of its home society. Ultimately this umbilical link found tangible expression in the enthusiasm with which the Brigade's commander, Hugh Mackay of Scourie, came north as the indigenous Scottish face of the Williamite revolution (Horsbroch). However much the events surrounding James VII and II's downfall were in reality driven by English concerns, Scots cannot be blamed for perceiving the Scots-Dutch regiments as finishing in 1688–91 what Swedish veterans had started in 1638–40. Whilst Irish regiments in French service offer a nominal comparison to this interface between domestic identity and foreign state-service, arguably no other nation in western Europe could identify two separate occasions when its overseas soldiers were so decisively involved in altering the country's entire direction.[28]

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[28] É Ó Ciardha, *Ireland and the Jacobite Cause: A Fatal Attachment* (Dublin: 2002) 30–4, 103–8, 137–51, 194–208, 219–23, 251–69, 295–99, 350–58.

The Failure of Lowland Military Identity?

The high profile impact of returning foreign-service soldiers only serves to throw into greater contrast the apparent insignificance of the Lowlands after 1707 as an element in the country's sense of its military self. In almost every way this is surprising: The population in this part of Scotland was certainly exposed in most if not all Scottish campaigns between 1638–1746 to propaganda legitimising and rationalising military culture (Mann). More practically, the Lowlands represented the political and economic centre of Scotland. Demographic trends should have inevitably reinforced this supremacy and given Scotland's martial profile an overwhelmingly Lowland character.[29] Yet for all its obvious dominance over the north, the Lowlands appear to have seriously underachieved in projecting a martial image. Indeed, the editors have been struck at the imbalance between the amount of research and work on Highland militarism, especially in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when compared to the Lowlands. This is reflected in the clear disparity within the volume of articles addressing the two regions. There is an urgent need, not least because of the centrality of war within current understanding of Britishness, for research on how Lowland Scotland constructed its military persona, how much it became subsumed by British Highland identity and why. In the absence of such work any attempt to construct a general model of Lowland militarism in the era after 1707 must be cautious if not speculative. Nonetheless there were clear political, economic, intellectual, religious and regimental factors working against the emergence of a powerful explicitly Lowland image of Scottish military identity.

One reason why Scotland's post-union militarism did not assume a clearly Lowland character relates to the ideal and influence of improvement. As the nation sought to reconcile its status within the British union the need to modernise Scotland took on ever more importance, not least to end the humiliating disparity with England in terms of wealth and material status. This sense of playing economic catch-up with its neighbour had been evident by the later seventeenth century but was reinterpreted in the eighteenth century

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[29] C.A. Whatley, *Scottish Society 1707–1830* (Manchester: 2000) 236.

as both a justification for and a tangible benefit of the union.[30] The result was a form of economic patriotism whereby all manner of practical civil improvements in agriculture and commerce were seen as promoting and enhancing Scotland's position within the new domestic British set-up.[31] With the nation's leadership behind it, and the practical stimuli of English markets, capital and colonial territories, Scotland embarked after 1760 on the fastest rate of agrarian and urban change in western Europe.[32] It is worth stressing the essentially 'civilian' nature of Lowland improvement, a fact that contemporary opinion reflected in its paranoia over the need for a Scots militia in order to preserve a supposedly decaying martial spirit in the southern districts of Scotland.[33] Regret at the perceived passing of the Lowland's military capacity turned to a tangible sense of disgrace with the fall of the Central Belt to less than 3,000 clansmen in 1745. Yet the desire to maintain or resurrect a martial spirit was blunted continually at the leadership level by the competing patriotism of civil improvement. These tensions within competing Scottish ideologies explain why caution was evident when the prospect was mooted of raising regiments in the country's economically dynamic districts.[34]

Arguably however there were far more positive as opposed to negative reasons why Lowland Scotland did not feel the need to construct an explicit self-reflecting military identity. Surveys of eighteenth-century Lowland attitudes to soldiering reveal a consistent religious element, a sense that fighting was an ordained duty, sanctioned by God and thus to be conducted in a righteous manner and with religious objectives (Horsbroch and Mann). This suggests a definite thread of continuity from the Covenanting era when military activity was conceptualised as a contractual duty to the nation's god-given

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[30] R. Saville, 'Scottish Modernisation to the Industrial Revolution, 1688–1763', in T.M. Devine and J.R. Young, eds., *Eighteenth Century Scotland: New Perspectives* (East Linton: 1999) 20–21.

[31] T.C. Smout, 'Problems of Nationalism, Identity and Improvement in later Eighteenth Century Scotland', in T.M. Devine, ed., *Improvement and Enlightenment* (Edinburgh: 1989) 18–19.

[32] T.M. Devine, *The Transformation of Rural Scotland: Social Change and the Agrarian Economy 1660–1815* (Edinburgh: 1994) 1–40; T.M. Devine, 'Urbanisation', in T.M. Devine and R. Mitchison (eds.), *People and Society in Scotland, volume 1. 1760–1830* (Edinburgh: 1988) 28–31.

[33] J. Robertson, *The Scottish Enlightenment and the Militia Issue* (Edinburgh: 1985) 79–89.

[34] *A Letter to his Grace the Duke of Buccleugh on National Defence to which is added a postscript relative to regiments of fencible men raising in Scotland* (Edinburgh: 1778) 18.

religion. Interestingly, the fact that Lowland and Presbyterian mili-
tary motivation still seemed to exhibit, although less explicitly, this
religious emphasis parallels the argument which stresses how Scotland's
whole identity after 1707 was still very much defined by the Covenant.[35]
Admittedly, this analysis of eighteenth-century Scottish consciousness
is by no means universally accepted. Nonetheless, if this sentiment
was at all evident then it raises the possibility that Scots felt their
wars to defend presbyterianism had been won on the political field,
with the security of the Kirk enshrined in the union settlement. This
sense of achievement would have lessened any immediate sense that
the Covenant and its church needed defending in a physical way.
This in turn would erode, but not necessarily erase, what had been
a central pillar in seventeenth-century Lowland attitudes to soldiering.
This subtle interaction between Scottish Covenanting militarism, the
British religious settlement and the decline in a Lowland military
self-image in the eighteenth century surely requires further research
and examination.

   Two last elements are worthy of note regarding Lowland Scotland,
both practical rather than ideological. One reason why, despite its
increasing demographic position, the region did not come to define
the country's military image was the impact of the Royal Navy. All
too easily Scotland's contribution to Britain's armed forces tends to
be seen almost exclusively in terms of the army. Yet the navy was
an increasing influence that drained Lowland manpower away from
the land service. Crucially, as Scotland's economic performance
improved its merchant tonnage increased dramatically over the cen-
tury. This ensured that more Scots were employed as able-bodied
seamen: indeed by 1787 the number of merchant sailors north of
the border was reckoned to be well over 13,000.[36] These men were
prime targets for the press gangs, an avenue that left little or no
choice and which could rapidly drain Scotland's ports of a surpris-
ingly high percentage of males. In the 1790s, for example, the parish
of Crail in Fife lost one in five to the navy. In the Seven Years'

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[35] For analysis which stresses the centrality of the Covenant to eighteenth-century
Scottishness see R.J. Finlay, *op. cit.*, 124–30. For a contemporary comparison that saw
Scotland's disproportionate mobilisation as part of the British effort to hold the 13
colonies as pleasing evidence of neo-Covenanting, see J. Dalrymple, *Reflections upon
the military preparations which are making at present in Scotland* (Edinburgh: 1778) 3.
[36] HL, Stowe Collection, ST 34, 'Abstract of Ships Registered in Great Britain,
September 1787', 14–15.

War, meanwhile, the press took a total of 67 men from the burgh of Kinghorn and its hinterland. Not only did this remove 14% of all males but 15 were described as 'landmen', namely individuals without nautical training and precisely the type of men the army could expect to enlist.[37] Although Gaeldom did undoubtedly contribute men also, the fact remains that the level of Greenwich pensions given to ex-Royal Navy sailors was much higher in the Lowlands.[38] For all its reserves of population therefore, the Lowlands simply had less men available to the land branch of Britain's military machine. That, however, does not mean southern and central Scotland was somehow a demilitarised culture simply because it lacked a high profile association with soldiering.

This pattern was compounded by and reflected in the make-up of non-Highland Scottish regiments, like the Royal Scots and the 55th Foot, which traditionally recruited north of the border. As part of a review of the British army in North America in 1757 the nationality of its redcoats was listed for each unit. The results show a clear contrast between mainstream 'Scottish' regiments and Highland battalions. Scots made up 427 of the 55th's 786 rank and file, or 54%. In the Royal Scots, the country's oldest regiment and surely an institution that should have formed the kernel of a Lowland military tradition, Scots made up only 462 out of a total of 1,124 men, 41%. Indeed the Irish contribution, at 444, was all but equal. This strongly suggests the regiment was not perceived, either by Scots themselves or the army authorities, as a particularly Scottish entity.[39] By contrast, Highland units, especially during the wars of 1756–63 and 1775–1783 tended to be far more homogenous with their rank and file characterised by a heavy preponderance of Highlanders. The 114-strong company of Captain George Munro in the 77th Highland regiment, for instance, contained 86 men from Munro lands clustered around the Easter Ross parishes of Kincardine and Alness. Tellingly, Munro did not list nationality or even county, his men instead were denoted by the farm from which they were taken.[40]

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[37] D.J. Withrington and I.R. Grant, eds., *The Statistical Account of Scotland*, vol. 9 (WakeWeld: 1978) 164–7; NLS, Minto Papers, Ms 11014,ff. 41–44.

[38] A. Mackillop, *'More fruitful than the soil': Army, Empire and the Scottish Highlands 1715–1815* (East Linton: 2000) Appendix 3.

[39] HL, Loudoun (American) Collection, LO 4011(1); LO 3936(1).

[40] NAS, Robertson of Kindeace Papers, GD 146/18/1/2, 'Muster Roll of Captain George Munro's company in the 77th Highland Regiment, 1757'.

The same census of the army which revealed the very mixed nationality profile of the Royal Scots, meanwhile, showed that the 1,060-strong 77th Highland Regiment contained 1,001 Highlanders and 59 Lowlanders: in effect all but 100% Highland and most certainly a Scottish unit.[41] As Streets and others have demonstrated kilted regiments were not actually manned exclusively by Highlanders from the 1790s onwards and indeed by the Victorian period often contained only a minority of men from what would be seen as a classic Highland background.[42] Yet the impression made by these regiments from the 1750s and 1770s should not be underestimated. Had an obvious eye-catching Scottish presence existed in nominally Lowland regiments of the same period then arguably Highland units might not have attracted the attention they did. Yet the outward differences of their dress, culture of regimental music and Gaelic language only compounded an initial mid-century reality that their manpower was unequivocally Scottish in a way that left a lasting cultural impression. That impression was to be one of the formative early elements in the well-known process by which Scotland and her soldiers acquired a Highland image.

The Highlandisation of Scots Military Identity

One of the apparent ironies of post-Union Scotland was that its military face seemed to reflect, in however distorted a way, the culture of the one region deemed to be the greatest political, economic and social loser in the country's overall development. The phenomenon of Highlandism has been well charted elsewhere and this introduction need add little. It is often analysed by the present academy as a form of Lowland cultural imperialism whereby the symbols of the subordinated society were removed and refashioned in a way that made them artificial and geared instead to non-Highland sentiments.[43]

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[41] P.J. Marshall, 'A Nation defined by Empire, 1755–1776', in A. Grant and K.J. Stringer, eds., *Uniting the Kingdom? The making of British History* (London: 1995) 210.

[42] J.E. Cookson, *The British Armed Nation 1793–1815* (Oxford: 1997) 129.

[43] One of the most comprehensive critiques of Highlandism, which places its apparently baleful effects very much at the feet of Lowland cultural mythmaking is P. Womack, *Improvement and Romance: Constructing the Myth of the Highlands* (London: 1989). See also C.J. Withers, 'The Historical Creation of the Scottish Highlands', in I. Donnachie and C. Whatley, eds., *The Manufacture of Scottish History* (Edinburgh: 1992).

Yet by examining how soldiers actually reacted to this 'artificial' con-
struct this volume has argued that, in a very personal and mean-
ingful sense, notions of the Highland warrior were as real as any
identity can be. This is an important qualification and again under-
lines how soldiers, Highland or otherwise, could reclaim their iden-
tity in a private way that stressed different motives from the public
understanding of why they served in the army. This applied to the
eighteenth century Gael who manipulated British service as a
justification for traditional and threatened concepts of landholding
as much as it did to Victorian soldiers genuinely investing in the
idea of the Highland warrior. (Streets and Mackillop)

At a more general level, the emergence of a Highland military
image reveals the subtle way in which Scottish consciousness and
popular opinion felt its way towards an extremely effective and com-
prehensive accommodation with Britishness. It has been an accepted
orthodoxy that one way in which Scotland survived the Union was
through the continuing existence and influence of its ancient civic
institutions, its universities, its law courts and the Kirk.[44] It is worth
noting the comprehensively non-military character of the nation's
surviving civic forums and that all in turn were traditionally associ-
ated with Lowland values. Moreover, envisaging Scotland's identity
in this way meets two distinct if intimately linked problems: how to
then relate Scotland to a wider sense of Britain and equally impor-
tantly, British Empire? After all, the writ and authority of these insti-
tutions stopped at the border, meaning that the projection and
maintenance of an official sense of Scotland within the domestic rela-
tionship with England could not rely automatically on these partic-
ular platforms. The civic establishments, in other words, might prove
adept at preserving a species of Scotland in aspic within its own bor-
ders. However because no formally recognised role existed for them
at the wider level they were arguably more problematic at giving
Scots a sense of British parity that sprang from an obviously Scottish
source. More crucially, perhaps, it has been increasingly accepted
that Britain tended to be seen less as a simple domestic union between
Wales, England and Scotland and more as an imperial concept.
Participation within any aspect of the British Empire, trade, gov-

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[44] The fact this interpretation is accepted even by those who stress that Britishness
had emerged as a meaningful popular concept by 1815 reveals its established status.
See the seminal L. Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation* 1707–1837 (London: 1992) 12.

ernment, law and defence was thus an important way in which the
various parts of Britain could demonstrate their Britishness.[45] Here,
again, their own indigenous institutions left Scots under-equipped for
the task of proving their imperial Britishness given that all the for-
mal organisation of the empire relied on English precedents.[46]

Scots needed to find a way therefore of making themselves rele-
vant within these two spheres which was not reliant, at least directly,
on the actual organisations that gave them a distinctive profile and
identity. This potentially problematic context explains why Lowland
and indeed Highland Scotland stressed their military contribution,
as well as the fact that that contribution was most definitely Highland.
Highland regiments, particularly in their early incarnations, must be
understood as one of the few official Scottish institutions created *after*
the Union. Moreover, it is telling that Scotland's distinctive man-
agerial political culture, only recently included in the list of factors
like religion and law that continued to shape Scotland, was instru-
mental in securing this new expression of Scottishness.[47] Their role
in what was in many ways the bottom line of empire, namely, phys-
ical conquest and defence, meant this neo-Scottish institution proved
the country was performing a vital, fundamental task which England
needed. Here lay national, not just Lowland or Highland, prestige
and affirmation on a global scale.[48]

Scottish Military Identity: British Centralism and 'Disengagement'

Given the importance of conflict and, more precisely still, military
organisations and armies to the formation of Britain itself, it is worth
considering in conclusion the evolution of British military identity.

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[45] For the imperial dimension to British identity see A. Murdoch, 'Scotland and
the idea of Britain in the Eighteenth century', *op. cit.*, 106–7.

[46] I.K. Steele, 'The Anointed, the Appointed, and the Elected: Governance of
the British Empire, 1689–1784', in P.J. Marshall, ed., *The Oxford History of the British
Empire, vol. II: The Eighteenth Century* (Oxford: 1998) 112–3.

[47] A. Murdoch, *The People Above: Politics and Administration in Mid Eighteenth Century
Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1980) 50, 132; A. Murdoch, 'Scottish Sovereignty in the
Eighteenth Century', in H.T. Dickinson and M. Lynch, eds., *The Challenge to Westminster:
Sovereignty, Devolution and Independence* (East Linton: 2000) 44–49.

[48] One of the defining characteristics of post-Union Scots was their constant trum-
peting of their inordinate military role, see D. Allen, *Scotland in the Eighteenth Century*
(London: 2002) 38–9.

The chapters in this volume suggest a disconcerting pattern of oscil-
lation between centralising tendencies and concessions to regional
and national distinctiveness. This moreover, was evident first within
Scotland itself and then wider Britain. MacCoinnich and Cathcart
both deal with the problems encountered in all parts of Scotland
after the centralising acts of the Scottish Government implemented
when James VI attained his majority. Undoubtedly a series of meta-
morphoses occurred in the years leading up to the Jacobean Union
between Scotland and England in 1603 that attempted to bring the
Scottish ethnies into some kind of national unity. However, the rad-
ical attempt to centralise Scotland could often drive some Scots, such
as the Mackintoshes and Clan Chattan, further from the centre and
thus intensified division. (Cathcart) Despite a few setbacks however,
James VI had established a blueprint with which he could endeav-
our to repeat the process of centralisation in his enlarged realms
after he gained the crowns of England and Ireland. The purging of
radical elements within his kingdoms through the establishment of
Anglo-Scottish military solutions such as the Commissioners for the
Middle Shires, coupled with his bid for full Anglo-Scottish union led
to the first serious attempts to develop a broader British identity
(Murdoch). Moreover, while the tendency has been to look for the
earliest manifestations of this new consciousness within the intellec-
tual and constitutional domain, Britain actually took an explicitly
military form relatively quickly, indeed within a few years of the
regal union.[49] All we can do is identify early forms of it. A concept
of Britishness was certainly forged among the armed forces, partic-
ularly among those who served in mixed Anglo-Scottish forces abroad
(Murdoch). The violent backlash against Stuart centralisation by the
Scottish Covenanters 1638–1640 (Furgol and Edwards) seriously set
back the 'Britishing' process and led to a revived and confident
(though short-lived) Scottish military and political identity. The irony
is twofold in that this reaction was itself centralising in impulse. It
witnessed Scotland maintain significant military units in Swedish,
French and Dutch service as well as full-blown armies in Scotland,
England and Ireland. The country however bled itself dry and English
occupation followed (Edwards). Importantly, however, the foreign
expeditions left a lasting impact on the British army as a whole.

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[49] R.A. Mason, *Kingship and the Commonweal: Political T hought in Renaissance and
Reformation Scotland* (East Linton, 1998) 6–7.

Indeed, the oldest Regiment of the Line in the British army is the Royal Scots who were formed in 1633 as an allied force raised for service in France.[50]

The military centralism of both the Covenanting and Cromwellian regimes and its belated Restoration equivalent under James VII and II from 1685–88 sparked a counter reaction that conditioned attitudes to the army even as Union occurred.[51] Remarkably, there appears to have been little or no thought given in 1707 to a systematic centralisation of the army's identity which would complete the assimilation of the northern kingdom's military consciousness.[52] However central fighting might later prove at bringing Britons together there was no comprehensive sense of this when the nation was actually formed. At one level this is understandable: the army already contained a significant number of Scots, both noble and gentry. As early as 1705 Marlborough's 13 staff and brigade commanders included four Scots, Lieutenant-General Lord George Hamilton Earl of Orkney, Brigadiers Charles Ross, James Ferguson and Lord John Hay.[53] Yet the pro-Unionist Queen Anne also insisted on the preservation of distinctive avenues of Scottish service, such as the Scots-Dutch Brigade, which would inevitably ensure the maintenance of a separated Scottish military culture. As late as 1775, while there were only 26 officers in the army's only standing Highland regiment, the 42nd Black Watch, 99 Scots still served in the Scots-Dutch (Migglebrink).

The oddly *ad hoc*, incremental manner by which Scots came to form a significant component of the British military set the tone for an ongoing tendency for the army to swing between periods of centralism and the recognition of special interests. Thus Frederick Duke of York's standardisation and regulation of regiments in the mid-1790s and again in 1807 found their counterbalance in periods like

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[50] For more on this support for France see M. Glozier, 'Scots in the French and Dutch Armies During the Thirty Years' War', in Murdoch, *Scotland and the Thirty Years' War*, 118–124.

[51] J. Childs, *The Army of Charles II* (London: 1976) 18–19, 46–47; J. Childs, *The British Army of William III 1689–1702* (Manchester: 1987) 2–3, 184–185.

[52] The caution and unwillingness to implement radical 'Britishing' policies in respect of the army or indeed in other public sphere more generally has been tied to the divisive party-political climate. 'Such was the temper of the time that anything but shilly-shallying, 'make do' and the type of unidealistic compromise that brought about. . . . the Union of the Parliaments would have torn a fissure in the nation's constitutional covering'. See R.E. Scouller, *The Armies of Queen Anne* (Oxford: 1966) 22.

[53] HL, Stowe Collection, ST 8/ vol. 1, 'Accounts of James Brydges, Paymaster to H.M. forces in the Low Countries, 24 June 1705–23 December 1705', 2.

1747 when the British state allowed a resurgence in the size and
proWle of the Scots-Dutch, with all the implications for Scots mili-
tary identity that this entailed.[54] Accepting distinctiveness was in fact
one of the defining characteristics of the British state's attitude to
Scottish soldiers. Even the presence of a deliberately Highland/ Scottish
military identity as developed by the Jacobites did not thwart sym-
bolic and tangible concessions to regional, especially Highland, vari-
ation in the later eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (Mackillop
and Streets). Customising service conditions in this way made British
military identity in Scotland a subtle yet immensely successful pro-
ject. This pattern of relaxing centralist or assimilative tendencies sug-
gests that army service should not be seen as working in a mechanically
linear fashion to produce only wider national identities like Britishness.
Indeed, this subtle interaction of Scottishness with British service
identity can be linked to current theories on how states construct
themselves. It had been suggested that the realm, be it James VI
and I's Scotland or post-1707 Britain, applied as much domestic cen-
tralising pressure upon their autonomous regions as was needed to
give the polity a basic, minimal integrity. This would prevent disaffected
elements from linking with foreign enemies, guarantee internal secu-
rity, and enable the state to project itself outwards successfully.
Crucially, though, once these basic aims were accomplished the polit-
ical centre 'disengaged' from its centripetal disposition and redirected
its attention towards maximising the resources that could project its
power outwards. This particular theory has only really been applied
to administration, and not to an abstract like identity.[55] It is argued
here that, having secured Scotland as an safe internal component of
the UK, London 'disengaged' from any further, systematic attempt
to generate an uniform British military identity. Instead, sub-national
and regional expressions of soldier consciousness were accepted and
turned outwards as part of a much larger refocusing of British soci-
ety towards the imperial project. Ultimately, while the British army
was undoubtedly 'the most comprehensively, successfully British insti-
tution of the eighteenth century', that success was built upon the

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[54] For Frederick Duke of York's centralising tendencies see Cookson, *The British
Armed Nation*, 83–5; J.W. Fortescue, *A History of the British Army*, vol. IV (London:
1902) 407. For the Scots-Dutch see BL, Hardwicke Mss, Add Ms 35509, f.309.
[55] J. Innes, 'The Domestic Face of the Fiscal-Military State: Government and
Society in eighteenth-century Britain', in L. Stone, ed., *An Imperial State at War: Britain
from 1689–1815* (London: 1994) 97–101.

recognition of multiple concepts of allegiance rather than the impo-
sition of a singular Britishness.[56] This balancing act between Britishness
and Scottishness continues to the present day. In the year 2000 the
British army in Scotland ran a series of recruiting drives encourag-
ing soldiers to enlist into 'Scottish Regiments' like the Argyll and
Sutherland Highlanders or the Black Watch. Not only that, but on
their 'Be the Best' posters, the Union Flag was temporarily replaced
by the Saltire.[57] This is but the latest in a long historical pattern of
central disengagement predicted on the understanding that Scottish
soldiers cannot and will not be regimented into a pre-determined,
externally fashioned identity.

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[56] J. Smyth, *The Making of the United Kingdom* (London: 2001) 161.

[57] Armed Forces Career Office, Scottish Regimental Advertising Leaflets for
recruiting campaign initiated June/ July 2001. The editors would like to express their
appreciation to Major G. Low, Acting Commanding Officer, Armed Forces Careers
Office, Aberdeen for these leaflets.