



**Peer Power: the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Buccleuch, land,  
industry and paternalism, c.1820-c.1884.**

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A thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

September 2024

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## **Thesis Abstract**

This thesis investigates the understudied Buccleuch estates and their industrial context during the dukedom of the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry (1820-1884). It sets out the first industrial history of the Scottish estates, examining the evolution of trade unionism and its relation to the customary paternalism of the aristocracy which underwent a resurgence during the lifetime of the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke. It also lays out the political landscape within which the Duke operated and effectively controlled as the de-facto leader of the Conservative Party in Scotland during a tumultuous time for the party. Finally, it examines the religious history of the estates of one of the biggest private landowners in Scotland and the impact of the conversion of his wife, Duchess Charlotte Anne to Catholicism at a time of significant religious disruption in Scotland. This thesis unpacks a crucial period in Scottish history, when the country was undergoing significant social and economic change and explores the role played by the traditional (and in Scotland, exceptionally powerful) landed aristocracy. The weight of historiography has always underpinned analysis and understandings of the Highlands of Scotland: the Lowlands lack in-depth historical analysis. This allows this thesis to contribute to giving an overall picture of how Scotland developed during the Victorian period with one of the most important and notable members of the British aristocracy playing a central role.

## **Acknowledgements**

I would firstly like to thank the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry KT, for granting me permission to use his family papers deposited in the National Records of Scotland and for those which are in the Buccleuch family properties. These papers form the basis for this study.

This PhD would never have happened without the support from Northern Bridge Doctoral Training Partnership.

Undertaking a PhD, not to mention a Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA), is the opportunity of a lifetime and it has been made all the more unique and rewarding with the wonderful supervisory team I have had. Professor Annie Tindley made me realise studying history was for me back in 2014 at the University of Dundee. For the last decade she has supported, guided, listened to my mad theories, suggested new ways of doing things and has been an all-round superstar. I will forever be eternally grateful. Crispin Powell, Archivist at Buccleuch Living Heritage Trust and font of all knowledge Buccleuch is an inspiration. His enthusiasm is infectious and regardless of what happens, is always supportive. I have no thanks large enough for you. Professor Olwen Purdue has always been encouraging and enthusiastic providing a wonderful sounding board for all my ideas landed estates. To the three of you, thank you from the bottom of my heart.

I am hugely indebted to all the staff at Newcastle University who have created an environment that has encouraged and supported me to reach this stage.

The nature of a CDA means you meet people from all walks of life, academic and non-academic. This PhD has been a rollercoaster. I want to thank everyone whom I have met, has offered guidance and jeered me on. There are simply too many of you to thank but I will forever be grateful.

To my fellow PhD students at Newcastle University, thank you. Whether it be sitting over a coffee or having one too many pints on a Thursday night, you have been a lifeline.

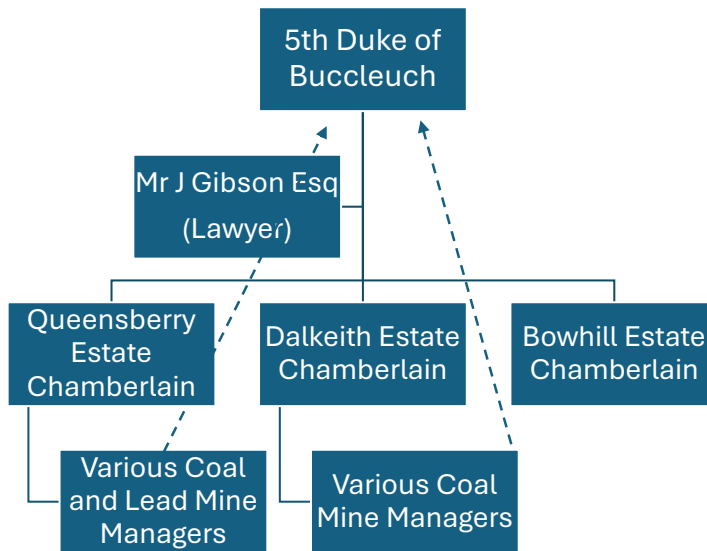
Finally, I would like to thank my family. My parents, Kevin and Elaine, you have always encouraged me to aim as high as I can, supported my passion for all things history and I hope this work shows the results of that lifetime of love and support. I hope I have done you proud. Kiah, you have read every thesis I have ever written from undergraduate to countless drafts of this thesis even if you have no interest in my field of history. You have cheered me on when I thought this may have been a challenge too great. You have all given unlimited love and support which no words will ever do justice.

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### Buccleuch Industrial Management Chart



This management chart illustrates the structure of decision making during the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Buccleuch's life. At the top of the chart is the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Buccleuch with his lawyer based in Edinburgh, J Gibson Esq beneath him. Underneath this level were the various estate chamberlains who managed the respective estates. Technically the various mine managers were beneath the estate chamberlains in hierarchy. However, these individuals - particularly James Wright of the Dalkeith Colliery - was equal in status and trust to the estate chamberlains. They had a direct line of communication to the Duke so he was fully aware of goings on at his various mines.

## Introduction

The Buccleuch estates are one of the largest private landholdings in Scotland and are supplemented by significant property in England. In Scotland this is made up of the Dalkeith estate of c.1000 acres, the Bowhill estate of c.127,000 acres and finally the Queensberry estate of c.90,000 acres. This is in addition to the Boughton estate in Northamptonshire, which covers c.11,000 acres and other property and landholdings across Britain. Overall, the present estates come to c.229,000 acres. How did the family and estates reach this position of security in the nineteenth century, when so many others declined? This is one of the key questions asked by this thesis and to provide an answer, it focuses on the industrial histories of the estates, contextualising them into the family and estate management more broadly, and the patterns of challenge and opportunity faced by Britain's aristocracy in the nineteenth century. It examines the evolution of aristocratic paternalism and constructs a revisionist understanding of the landed aristocracy during the rise of British and imperial capitalism after the Enlightenment. It also incorporates an analysis of the wider political, industrial and financial infrastructure that was required, including mines, docks and railways, banking and local government. The major public movements of the nineteenth century – public health, education, extension of the franchise, religious tolerance, housing and urbanisation – form a further theme, as well as the intellectual and political questions of Chartism, Corn Law repeal and the evolution of Conservative thinking in the nineteenth century.

This thesis focuses on the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Buccleuch, Walter Francis Montagu Douglas Scott (1806-1884) and his Scottish estates, from his accession to the duchy in 1820 until his death in April 1884. This one individual over their lifetime presided over 460,000 acres, spent time at the heart of Conservative government and politics, and alongside his wife, Duchess Charlotte Anne (1811-1895), maintained a close relationship with Queen Victoria and the wider royal family.<sup>1</sup> This study comes from a multitude of angles, but centres around one main question: how did the industrial operations of the Buccleuch estates develop and what were the key drivers, opportunities and restrictions? To do this, the thesis seeks to

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<sup>1</sup> David Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*, (London: Yale University Press, 1990), p. 710.

understand how they were financed and what impact they had on the tenantry and workforce and how did this activity affect the family's traditional paternalistic approach? The thesis examines the policies affecting the workforce and tenantry, their evolving expectations, rights and welfare on the Buccleuch estates and secondly, the centrality of family and estate's reputation on its own strategy and decision making but also in terms of wider social expectations. It is important to answer the central question regarding industry, as this element of Buccleuch activity in Scotland ensured not only the estate's and family's survival for generations to come, but provided the platform for the Duke's approach to estate management, welfare and employment that lay at the heart of his resurgence and redefinition of paternalism.

These questions are all interlinked: the industrial operations, especially their financing, need to be unpacked to fully understand their impact on the tenantry and workforce, as increasing levels of ducal debt potentially impacted what support was available. This thesis analyses what happened when the financial underpinning of a traditional paternalistic approach was under pressure, financially but also ideologically, as the state expanded across the nineteenth century. The family and wider estate's reputation was, as this thesis will argue, an equally important aspect of the workings of the Buccleuch estates, and unpacking this across the Duke's lifetime against the backdrop of major societal change will fill an important gap in the historiography. Through a deeper understanding of the Duke's position during significant societal, religious and political change, this thesis will present a granular case study of the changing nature of aristocratic power, the challenges to and responses made of it, at a time when wider society was becoming increasingly volatile for the landed classes.

This thesis is the first to present an industrial history of the Buccleuch estates, and therefore contributes to a somewhat sparse and dated historiography of aristocratic industrial diversification and leadership.<sup>2</sup> It focuses on the crunch decade of the 1840s, a time when financial decisions made had wider implications than just the Buccleuch bank account. It

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<sup>2</sup> Eric Richards, *The Leviathan of Wealth, The Sutherland Fortune in the Industrial Revolution*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973); J.T. Ward, and R.G. Wilson, *Land and Industry: The Landed Estate and the Industrial Revolution: A Symposium*, (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1971).

illustrates how the Duke, a member of the ultra-wealthy aristocracy, was able to exploit his name and position to access levels of credit that would have otherwise been off limits due to his position as firstly Deputy-Governor and then latterly Governor of the Royal Bank of Scotland at this time.<sup>3</sup> This thesis is not solely an economic history; it is also a social history, specifically focused on the ideological underpinnings of the paternalistic approach taken by the Duke, at a time when paternalism generally was falling out of fashion or actively under attack by wider political and social processes. Those political processes are also analysed in this thesis, as it seeks to understand the Duke's role and motivations while a major player in the Conservative Party both at cabinet level and – more importantly – locally in Scotland via political management and patronage. Lastly, this thesis examines the Duke's religious views and actions, and the impact they had on estate policy.

This thesis unpicks the actual workings of landed political, social and economic power in industrialising Britain, an area currently underserved in the historiography. In doing so, it addresses the industrial management of and welfare provision for those who worked for the Duke through the guise of aristocratic paternalism. This enables the thesis to address topics including housing, education, trade unionism, wages and sick funds. All of these were intricately interlinked, both in the mind of the Duke and his tenantry and workforce, during a period the historiography tends to associate with *laissez-faire* rather than paternalism.<sup>4</sup> The research shows that although radical in terms of the diversification of the economic building blocks of the family's wealth, the Duke by no means abandoned all of the traditional aspects of aristocratic life. One of these was what he perceived to be his duties to the political life, specifically his party, the Conservatives. The Duke served in Peel's cabinet between 1842 and 1846, in practice representing the landed interest, although his controversial support for the repeal of the Corn Laws in 1846 undermined this reputation severely. However, although the repeal of the Corn Laws may have signified the end of his governmental career, it did not lead to the end of his political career overall. Moving from a national position to a local one, the Duke went on to effectively orchestrate the Conservative political machine in Scotland for decades, creating new tools for the party to help them face an ever-growing electorate

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<sup>3</sup> Richards, *Leviathan of Wealth*, p. xi

<sup>4</sup> David Roberts, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England*, (London: Croom Helm Ltd, 1979), p. 42.

and changing political apparatus. A key aspect of the Duke's regional and local activity came to focus on the religious controversies of the age, including the growth of the Catholic Church in Scotland and the establishment of the Free Church of Scotland in 1843, both of which he vehemently opposed. What caused his opposition to both of these denominations? Fear. He was fundamentally fearful of any change that was not on his terms, but was also fearful of an ever-changing society that was beginning to actively and effectively oppose the traditional controls and powers of landlords. This thesis examines the implications for this and the decision making surrounding it.

This thesis was structured as a Collaborative Doctoral Award (CDA) with Buccleuch Living Heritage Trust (BLHT). BLHT was established in 2010 to support the advancement of historic, artistic, architectural and aesthetic education. It came to be after two previous charities merged which had initially been established in the 1980s by the Buccleuch family with these being The Buccleuch Heritage Trust and The Living Landscape Trust. The creation of BLHT united land, art, history and buildings of major historic importance into one singular organisation. This has presented a number of additional opportunities, and suggested different perspectives, which have fed into the research for this thesis. A major component of this rests on extensive working with local communities and interest groups on the Buccleuch estates, bringing to the fore the somewhat neglected industrial, social and political histories of those places and people. My own position as a local to one of the estates (Dalkeith) has in addition allowed me to build relationships and networks more effectively, disseminating the results of this research and creating new projects specific to communities on the estates today. This more co-productive approach has led to a broadening of focus for BLHT, away from its traditional strengths on the art, architectural and collections of the family and estates, towards more social and community histories. This is particularly important at a time – echoing the nineteenth century challenges unpacked in this thesis – of intense debate about landownership models, concentration and reform. My positionality at the heart of BLHT has allowed me to observe the very contemporary challenges of a modern estate grappling with a deindustrialised heritage landscape that is changing to meet current societal and environmental pressures. Within that broad spectrum, the collaborative nature of this PhD has also given me insights into the role archives can play in these wider debates, particularly around increasing digital demands and

accessibility of archival material. This came very much into focus for myself throughout the research for this thesis (which began in October 2020), when due to the evolving restrictions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic, I had to re-think my approach and timescales fundamentally to account for the fact I was unable to access the archives, both those held privately by the family and those on deposit at the National Records of Scotland, for long periods of time. This began with regional protection levels being introduced in Scotland in November 2020, a national lockdown in January 2021 and non-essential travel only being re-introduced in April 2021 with physical distancing being removed in September 2021. For nearly a year archival research was almost impossible with the National Records of Scotland in particular not re-opening to visitors, and even then on a highly restricted basis, until much later than comparable UK repositories.<sup>5</sup> Despite these challenges, the opportunity to supplement archival research on themes still exercising the estate today, with hands on observation and experience, has significantly enriched my understanding of the historical legacies of the processes and changes analysed in this thesis.

This thesis sets out its analysis in five thematic chapters: industrial development, industrial management, paternalism, politics and religion, each of which have the Duke and his decision-making at their heart. This thesis is one of only a handful of studies to build a case study around the actual workings of a landed family in the industrial acceleration of the nineteenth century.<sup>6</sup> Chapter One sets out a clear analysis of the establishment and evolution of the major industrial investments and innovations undertaken by the Duke, as well as their on-going management. This is utilised through examination of the financial accounts of the Buccleuch estates and industrial endeavours particularly during the 1840s and the dense correspondence between the Duke and his management team working on the industrial endeavours in many capacities – legal, financial and technical. This first chapter is critical to understanding – in specific detail – how the Buccleuch estates evolved from being largely agricultural holdings to a diversified portfolio of industrial operations and agriculture. It illustrates that this was not the result of a planned strategy but was based on

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<sup>5</sup> See for example: <https://www.nrscotland.gov.uk/files//record-keeping/legislation/foi-202000108642-request-for-information-on-reopening-of-national-records-of-scotland-buildings.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> John Hassan, *The Development of the Coal Industry in Mid and West Lothian 1815-1873*, PhD Thesis, 1976, University of Strathclyde.

calculated opportunism. Although opportunistic, the Duke developed a variety of management approaches towards each industry, whether that was harbour building at Granton, mining expansion or railway development. This chapter explains why this was the case and the subsequent ramifications on the financial position of the estates and for the tenantry and employees of the Duke.

Chapter Two builds upon this analysis to examine the industrial management approaches taken by the Duke, as well as the associated welfare apparatus he constructed for his employees and his relationship with the burgeoning trade union movement. This enables us to see how the Duke operated not only as a traditional landlord but as a leading industrialist during a period where many of the landed aristocracy were attempting, with greater or lesser success, to diversify their estates.<sup>7</sup> As this chapter demonstrates, he was obliged to buy in managerial expertise due the size and scope of his operations but maintained close oversight and control of decisions both large and small.

Chapter Three focuses on the evolving and unique nature of the paternalistic approach developed by the Duke, rooted in the traditions of the agricultural estate and the reputation of his grandfather the 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke, taken in new directions by his grandson in the face of new kinds of tenants and workforces.<sup>8</sup> It also examines the central role that wariness towards reputational damage had upon the Duke and his estate management: in many cases, costs and donations would be paid for reputational rather than social or economic reasons, but this was understood to be part of the paternalistic duty of a 'good' landlord and employer.<sup>9</sup> The Duke took the same approach to his industrial workforces as he did his traditional tenants and agricultural labourers, coming into conflict with new forces of trade unionism and welfare legislation. The chapter utilises a case study based on the sederunt books for the Queensberry Estate to give a detailed account of how the Duke approached paternalism on a day to day basis across the sixty-four years he was Duke.

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<sup>7</sup> Graham Mee, *Aristocratic Enterprise*, (Glasgow: Blackie and Son Limited, 1975); H.J. Habakkuk and F.M.L. Thompson, *Landowners, Capitalists, and Entrepreneurs: Essays for Sir John Habakkuk*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

<sup>8</sup> Brian Bonnyman, *The Third Duke of Buccleuch and Adam Smith, Estate Management and Improvement in Enlightenment Scotland*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014).

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, p. 68.

Chapter Four examines the Duke's political career: – nationally, in Scotland and locally on his estates. Just like paternalism, political leadership and patronage was – well into the nineteenth century – still regarded as a central element of the duties expected of landed elites. There were many political challenges to face, not least attacks on the assumption of the centrality of landed power in national politics and the Duke struggled to accept the changing nature of political legitimacy across his lifetime, as this chapter shows. He attempted to balance – not always successfully – party loyalties and class interests.<sup>10</sup> Political correspondence alongside Hansard and contemporary newspaper reporting portray a man who externally seemed set in his beliefs but personally, was very conflicted on major decisions, including those around Corn Law repeal, the catastrophe of the Irish Famine and government responses to it, and electoral reform.

Finally, Chapter Five examines the role religion -- a central tenet of Victorian life and society in Scotland -- played in the life of the Duke and his wife, Duchess Charlotte Anne, and wider population on his estates. This final chapter analyses the ways in which the Duke felt that his social position was threatened by both the Disruption of 1843 and a growing Roman Catholic presence, exacerbated by the fact his wife converted to Catholicism in 1856. Through the Duke's own personal archive, as well as estate papers such as petitions from his tenantry and contemporary media and parliamentary reports, we can contrast the ways in which the Duke was happy to accept economic revolution, and lead it for his own benefit, but who struggled to accept any kind of social or religious change. The Duke's active religious intolerance drew a good deal of public and political criticism, damaging his carefully crafted paternalistic image.

## **Section 2: Sources and historiography**

### **Primary Sources**

This study utilises the archive of the Buccleuch family and estates, like many landed archives, it is voluminous and rich, but under-utilised by historians. The archive covers all aspects of estate life and management, including industrial diversification, agricultural management

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<sup>10</sup> Gary D. Hutchison, 'An 'Illegal Union of Lawyers, and Writers, and Political Baronets': the Conservative party and Scottish governance, 1832-1868' in James Gregory and Daniel Grey, *Union and Disunion in the Nineteenth Century*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019).

and the family's personal papers, which cover their activities and attitudes to politics, religion and family life. By examining not only the papers of the Duke but his estate management, lawyers and tenantry, a well-rounded idea of life on the estates can be created understanding the approach taken by the Duke but his estate management and his tenantry. In doing so, this enables the voices of many of those who are overlooked to be heard thus breaking the image of it only being the elite who are heard.<sup>11</sup> This enables this thesis to give a more rounded view of estate life during the lifetime of the Duke showing how his and his estate management's decision-making and actions truly impacted those connected with the estates.

The Buccleuch archival holdings are considerable. Spread out over several sites including Bowhill House in the Scottish Borders and Drumlanrig Castle on the Queensberry Estate in Dumfriesshire, with a major deposit at the National Records of Scotland (NRS) in Edinburgh under reference GD224. The Buccleuch collection in the NRS contains c.10,380 records making it one of the largest private deposits in the national archive of Scotland. This represents an exciting opportunity for the researcher, but the archives also present challenges. Although high level listing is available, they are uncatalogued to any detailed level, either in the NRS or in the properties. The latter records come under the reference of Bowhill House Archive or Drumlanrig Castle Archive with bundle numbers. The material held locally is largely estate management focused, created by and focused on the respective estate chamberlains for that estate. This gives a

However, these archives have also posed their own challenges to this project. Access was prohibited across Buccleuch and the NRS archives during the COVID pandemic with this prohibited access prolonged within the NRS. New ways of working had to be found when limited access was allowed. Photographing hundreds of items creating a bank of thousands of images which were transcribed has resulted in a digital bank of material which previously did not exist, but it created hundreds of thousands of words of digital transcripts which can be utilised by other researchers. COVID proved challenging when access in some cases was

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<sup>11</sup> Ewen A. Cameron, *Land for the People? The British Government and the Scottish Highlands, c.1880-1925*, (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2009); Annie Tindley, *Lord Dufferin, Ireland and the British Empire, c.1820-1900: Rule by the Best?*, (New York: Routledge, 2021).

provided in strict time slots meaning some aspects of research were unfortunately rushed while trying to maximise time given to access these invaluable resources. However, it was not only access which caused issues but the geographical spread with no digitised material created further challenges. With access limited in the post-COVID landscape, accessing resources spread out all over the southern half of Scotland proved a significant problem. Utilising time in the Buccleuch family archives through photography has enabled this thesis to access material which has previously never been examined.

Material relating to this thesis is held as mentioned within the National Records of Scotland in Edinburgh and in situ at the various properties including Drumlanrig Castle on the Queensberry Estate and Bowhill House on the Bowhill Estate. It is not necessarily the norm for estate papers to be housed in their original site however, this offering allows the researcher to fully understand their surroundings and consider the challenges the Duke and his management dealt with. These challenges will have varied from trying to travel between the estates with poor infrastructure not to mention the sheer challenges of lack of modern methods of communication delaying crucial decisions which impacted the tenants' lives. The fact that archival material is held at various estates and within Edinburgh allowed the researcher to fully appreciate the scale of the estate holdings that the Duke of Buccleuch oversaw while diversifying his estates but also playing a major role socially and politically to the life of Scotland. However, it also allows the researcher to witness the legacy of the Duke and Duchess and the impact their decisions had on the present-day Buccleuch Scottish estates. Within the archive, estate accounts present estates with varying economic conditions with credit playing a defining part in the industrial developments of the Buccleuch estates. However, the examination of the correspondence between the various individuals illustrates a period of profound change. While this profound and long-lasting change is taking place the archival material such as the sederunt books for requests for relief highlight how this change was not necessarily impacting the tenantry immediately. The fact that the estates overcame these challenges during the nineteenth century allows future research options to be created while examining material broader than the main research question.

Archivally the material does not fall into one specific dominant category. All items held within the NRS are held under reference GD224. Within this, the respective areas under the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke's life are categorised into aspects such as financial and estate management for example. However, this is not as clear cut as it would appear. Considerable amounts of other records that come under those given as examples are sometimes catalogued in miscellaneous bundles with no apparent reason for this. This can mean that items are easily overlooked especially when not all items are listed on the online catalogue in the NRS. Moreover, material at the respective Buccleuch properties in Scotland is not always catalogued creating a new series of problems trying to ensure as much material is examined as possible. These records come under the reference of Bowhill House Archive or Drumlanrig Castle Archive with bundle numbers. The material held here is largely estate management with the emphasis being on the respective estate chamberlain for that estate. This gives a solid grounding of what was taking place on that estate at the time. However, as with the NRS, material can appear in the most unlikely of places having previously been catalogued and placed in different locations which made sense at the time. No one set of papers whether this be financial, or estate management dominate the archival holdings under the Duke in question. There are vast quantities on all topics in the archive with varying degrees of detail.

This archival material, particularly letters on estate management between the respective chamberlains and the Duke provide a critically important lens through which to view the running of the estate. They show how many aspects of society - social, political and economic – overlapped, but also indicate a close relationship between the Duke and the respective individuals and their families.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, as noted by Liz Stanley, letters are perspectival.<sup>13</sup> The viewpoint of the individual changes depending on recipient and perspective with this evident in all letters in the Buccleuch archive with the Duke changing his tone and approach depending on who he is writing to and on what topic. This gives a well-rounded viewpoint of his approach to the topics that this thesis examines including industrial management and his style of paternalism.

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<sup>12</sup> For more on this see: Onni Gust, 'The perilous territory of not belonging: exile and empire in Sir James Mackintosh's letters from early nineteenth century Bombay,' *History Workshop Journal*, 86 (2018), p. 27.

<sup>13</sup> Liz Stanley, 'The epistolarium: on theorising letters and correspondences,' *Auto/biography*, 12(3), 2004, 202.

However, archival material can create challenges in regard to ascertaining what was taking place where and when but not all the material is catalogued or present. Many aspects of the archival material is spread out, for example not all the material relating to the developments at Granton is held at one place with some being held at the NRS in Edinburgh and some held at Bowhill House. This can make building up a consistent image of all the material challenging. Furthermore, when examining the material held at the NRS not all search terms will prove fruitful particularly when material is simply referenced under miscellaneous material. This can result in material being overlooked which could be critically important to the study. Likewise, material held at Buccleuch properties is not wholly catalogued. This lack of cataloguing can make research challenging with many letters simply not relevant to that sub-topic of say mine management. This mere fact that documents for the Buccleuch archive are held over several large sites poses one of the major headaches even with good organisation. It creates multiple crossovers and initial comparisons which upon further examination are not accurate, as the Duke may have treated an individual differently as is evident in his mine management. Moreover, the sheer volume of material is enormous. It would simply not be possible to examine every document relating to Buccleuch in a funded PhD programme. With the Duke's life as Duke covering over sixty years, there are thousands of letters and applications from management, tenantry and communities.

With regards to contemporary political reporting and media reports, *The Scotsman* for instance often quoted smaller local publications enabling the researcher to understand what was taking place in a national context. However, to what extent these were accurate and in-depth enough is open to questioning with political bias and bias of editors coming into play. This is not to discredit their value, rather newspapers as a historical resource for this study are critical in hearing voices from beyond the estates being examined. It has been remarked that despite their importance, newspapers have not featured in the history of modern Britain and it is vital in the study of estates as large as those belonging to Buccleuch that voices outwith the estates are heard.<sup>14</sup> The reason for this is largely due to the challenges of

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<sup>14</sup> Adrian Bingham, 'The Digitisation of Newspaper Archives: Opportunities and Challenges for Historians', *20<sup>th</sup> Century British History*, 21(2), 2010, p. 225, pp. 225-231.

searching physical copies of publications poses with the incredible amount of information on offer, however, digitisation has transformed this. Using digitised newspaper archive creates several issues, particularly through the search function where relying on the search function can mean articles are overlooked if they do not have a 'hit' in relation to what is being searched for.<sup>15</sup> However, in relation to this study, to search over sixty years' worth of national, local and periodical publications would cause major issues from the sheer volume of information thus meaning specific points such as the repeal of the Corn Laws or the opening of Granton Harbour have to be selected. Hansard was the primary political archival resource for this thesis with the British parliamentary archives not being fully catalogued and thus inaccessible. This inaccessibility was also hampered at the British Library in latter stages due to cyber-attack.

### **Literature Review**

This literature review will offer an analysis of some of the key historiographies that this thesis intersects with and makes an addition to. The field in which this thesis is most directly situated – the histories and landed enterprise, management and paternalism – is relatively small, particularly for Scottish case studies. By drawing on the wider historiography of the rise and fall of the aristocracy, politics and political reform at a local and national levels, financial management of the estates and industrial development and innovation, industrial welfare, trade unionism, religious histories and paternalistic ideologies, it can make a broader contribution and situate the primary research across a range of debates.

There is only one extant study which focuses on the Buccleuch estates specifically, albeit for an earlier period than that covered by this thesis.<sup>16</sup> Brian Bonnyman focused on the eighteenth-century Buccleuch estates, combining intellectual, economic and agrarian history to look at the life and career of the third Duke of Buccleuch (1746-1812) and his relationship with the philosopher Adam Smith. Bonnyman does project his findings into the nineteenth century, however, noting that 'paternalist strategies became even more central to estate management and public life under... 5<sup>th</sup> Duke, Walter Francis.'<sup>17</sup> Bonnyman argues that the

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<sup>15</sup> Maud Ehrmann, Estelle Bunout and Frederic Clavert, *Digitised Newspapers – a New Eldorado for Historians? Reflections on Tools, Methods and Epistemology*, (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2022), p. 3.

<sup>16</sup> Bonnyman, *The Third Duke of Buccleuch*.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, p. 195.

5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Buccleuch was heavily influenced by his late grandfather in terms of paternalism and estate management, with this most evident in his management of the Midlothian collieries. Bonnyman sets a scene for a tradition of paternalistic land and mining management which he acknowledges became 'an integral part of a paternalist strategy' which would 'continue into the very different circumstances of the later nineteenth century.'<sup>18</sup> Importantly for this thesis, he argues that the estate was not improved solely for financial gain but so it could be passed on 'to the next generation intact and, preferably, enhanced.'<sup>19</sup> Bonnyman presents a family that was keenly aware of their public duty and its preservation in the face of an increasingly interventionist state.

More broadly, the study of the landed aristocracy and their estates is still dominated by David Cannadine's landmark study, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*.<sup>20</sup> It explores several themes to construct an argument to explain the decline and fall of this class: the protracted agricultural depression of the later nineteenth century leading to reduced incomes and land sales; the rise of political reform locally and nationally which squeezed out the aristocracy and an increasing cultural meritocracy. Cannadine points to a decline in disposable income and a rise of crippling mortgages; a changing economic landscape which allowed new money to make an impact, specifically in industry with new and emerging industries such as mining. Finally, Cannadine argued that the changing nature of politics locally and nationally with both spheres becoming increasingly professional and no longer an amateur field or a birth right undercut aristocratic power: as he points out 'democracy and aristocracy do not cohabit easily.'<sup>21</sup>

Although highly influential, Cannadine's work is vulnerable to challenge on several grounds. One of these is the lack of in-depth primary case studies of individual families, or that 'the book rests on little archival research' as highlighted by David Spring.<sup>22</sup> The chronology can also be questioned: Cannadine's study begins in the 1880s, some fifty years after the

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<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, p. 197.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid*, p. 196.

<sup>20</sup> Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid*, p. 86.

<sup>22</sup> D. Spring, 'Reviewed Work: *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* by David Cannadine', *Victorian Studies*, 35(2), 1992, p. 239.

introduction of the Great Reform Act in 1832, and forty years before Corn Law repeal, both of which could arguably have been taken as the starting points for existential challenge and decline. It is this latter point which has also exercised historians since the book was published: as Arnstein has argued 'Cannadine's subject remains more ambiguous than he concedes' as although most historians agree that the aristocracy underwent significant decline, they have never truly fallen, as demonstrated very neatly by the Buccleuchs.<sup>23</sup>

Cannadine's work built on that of F.M.L. Thompson, who published his landmark study *English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century* some twenty five years in advance of Cannadine.<sup>24</sup> One of the major early empirical studies on the landed estates of Britain, Thompson completed a largely English-centric analysis and examines the nature of landed society including the institutions of the landed aristocracy; country society and culture; estate management; the highly influential role that the railways played in the everchanging estates and finally the decline of the landed interest. As a general study, this volume lacks the in-depth analysis of individual estates, and in addition, essentially ignores the Scottish and Irish cases, something which Terence Dooley, Olwen Purdue and Ciaran Reilly have addressed in their works on Irish estates.<sup>25</sup> Both Cannadine and Thompson tackled the key issue of aristocratic indebtedness in the nineteenth century, an area which this thesis also focuses on. David Spring and F.M.L. Thompson started the discussion in the 1950s, disagreeing on 'the origins, extent, and consequences of aristocratic indebtedness in nineteenth-century Britain.'<sup>26</sup> This sparked a longer running and heated debate, essentially around how far indebtedness was the most important factor in aristocratic decline, as argued by Spring, but rejected by Thompson, who saw debt as an inescapable part of aristocratic financial management but if carefully utilised could maximise aristocratic

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<sup>23</sup> W.L. Arnstein, 'Reviewed Work: *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* by David Cannadine', *Journal of Social History*, 26(3), 1993, p. 643.

<sup>24</sup> F.M.L. Thompson, *English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd, 1963).

<sup>25</sup> Terence Dooley, *The Decline of the Big House in Ireland*, (Dublin: Wolfhound Press, 2001); Terence Dooley, *The Big Houses and Landed Estates of Ireland, A Research Guide*, (Dublin: Four Courts Press Ltd, 2007); Olwen Purdue, *The Big House in the North of Ireland: Land, Power and Social Elites, 1878-1960*, (Dublin: University College Dublin, 2009); Ciaran Reilly, *Capard: An Irish Country House & Estate*, (Dublin: Irish Georgian Society, 2019).

<sup>26</sup> D. Cannadine, *Aspects of Aristocracy*, (London: Yale University Press, 1994), p.37.

leverage to create new revenue streams, as we shall see in the Buccleuch case.<sup>27</sup> Aristocratic leadership and management of industrial innovation and development is still relatively neglected in the wider literature. This omission makes it somewhat challenging to ascertain where Buccleuch fits into the wider nineteenth century picture, a gap this thesis aims to address. It draws specifically on Graham Mee's *Aristocratic Enterprise*, to ask 'how did a particular landowner approach the resulting managerial problems' of the development of major industrial enterprise alongside maintaining a traditional agricultural estate, in Mee's case, using the Fitzwilliam estates as his case study.<sup>28</sup> However, what Mee did not include was any detailed analysis of the economic and financial underpinnings and management of the Fitzwilliam operations. This thesis attempts to address both aspects.<sup>29</sup>

Although now quite dated, John Hassan's PhD thesis and resulting article on the coal industry and landed estates in Midlothian provides some valuable historiographical context for this thesis on both aristocratic industrial management and paternalism.<sup>30</sup> Hassan argued that the Lothian collier fitted into the model of a 'deferential traditionalist' that recognised 'the authentic leadership of a paternalistic elite and forming a closer attachment to his employer.'<sup>31</sup> However, there is a lack of evidence to support this in terms of the Buccleuch family and its industrial workforces, but Hassan's more general point that 'the social development of the entire Midlothian coalfield, particularly after 1840, was shaped by the paternalism of the fifth duke of Buccleuch' can be accepted, as will be shown in later chapters.<sup>32</sup>

The literature on paternalism, as both a theory and a practice, is much more developed, and this thesis draws on it in order to situate the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Buccleuch in this context. Huw

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<sup>27</sup> David Spring, 'English Landownership in the Nineteenth Century: A Critical Note', *The Economic History Review*, 9(3), 1957, pp. 472-484; Thompson, *English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century*, (1963).

<sup>28</sup> Graham Mee, *Aristocratic Enterprise*, p. xii.

<sup>29</sup> David Spring, 'Reviewed Work: *Aristocratic Enterprise: The Fitzwilliam Industrial Undertakings 1795-1857* by Graham Mee', *The Business History Review*, 50(2), 1976, p. 257.

<sup>30</sup> Hassan, *The Development of the Coal Industry*, PhD Thesis, 1976, University of Strathclyde; John A. Hassan, 'The Landed Estate, Paternalism and the Coal Industry in Midlothian, 1800-1880', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 59(167), 1980, pp. 73 – 91.

<sup>31</sup> Hassan, 'The landed estate, paternalism and the coal industry in Midlothian', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 59(167), 1980, p. 73.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid*, p. 75.

Beynon and Terry Austrin's landmark work *Masters and Servants* may now be dated, but it is still highly influential and effective in illustrating the kinds of deference evident on the Buccleuch estates, including the idea that only the Duke or his peers were in a position to protect those on his estates best.<sup>33</sup> Beynon and Austrin emphasise and reiterate the work of David Roberts showing that those in authority, property and of rank could assist those dependent upon them best but that society was ultimately 'organised around the *public* display of rights and obligations.'<sup>34</sup> This is applicable to those who requested assistance from the landed aristocracy but also to the landed aristocracy with many seeing it as their duty to help and guide.

David Roberts' authoritative text, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England* is still one of the foremost works on paternalism in Victorian society.<sup>35</sup> Roberts laid out four key assumptions about Victorian paternalists: that they had to be authoritarian, hierarchical and required an organic society and pluralism.<sup>36</sup> The notion of authoritarian Roberts argued 'followed naturally from the very word paternal', synonymous with sovereignty something closely associated with ownership of land and the aristocracy but was tempered by law.<sup>37</sup> Hierarchically, Roberts argues that the paternalist believed 'God had created a hierarchical society' but that this was 'necessary and beneficial.'<sup>38</sup> Developing this hierarchical notion of paternalism Roberts emphasises a clear component of estate life that 'without inequality of property' there would be no incentive for any group to advance themselves.<sup>39</sup> Moreover, the example of a landowner unable to build cottages without himself being wealthy is a clear example of the Victorian notion of landed aristocratic rule on estates. However, the notion that society is organic is not a clear assumption but accepted by the majority. This was not a term commonly used but rather 'the bonds of union' and 'old social bonds' with the fear that these bonds were dissolving was something that evidently scared the Duke as was clear in his actions to new religious denominations.<sup>40</sup> The notion that society was organic is

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<sup>33</sup> Huw Beynon and Terry Austrin, *Masters and Servants*, (London: Rivers Oram Press, 1994), p. 25.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> Roberts, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England*.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p.2 & 3.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 2.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

explained through the idea that everyone has their place in society with a function, protectors, duties obligations and ultimately, 'ties of dependency.'<sup>41</sup> This final aspect is a crucial defining element of paternalism that is evident on the Buccleuch estates. Finally, the notion of pluralism regarded the many different spheres in society with each having its own hierarchies as was evident with the aristocracy itself. However, Roberts argued that the pluralism that was evident in England was different from that on the continent. He argued that on the continent 'kings were the fathers and the governors of their subjects' whereas in England 'the fatherly authority was more often the squire.'<sup>42</sup> For those living on estates those in managerial positions were the authority, with the landlord acting as the head creating a governing structure, thus enabling the landlord to have an important source of authority. Roberts felt that one of the defining explanations for the resurgence of paternalism was that would-be paternalists 'feared violent disorders' such as the rise of the Chartist movement, or more localised but growing trade union organisation and resistance.<sup>43</sup> Perhaps more important for this study, which seeks to understand the practice and workings of paternalism is R.A. Houston's, *Peasant Petitions: Social Relations and Economic Life on Landed Estates, 1600-1850*.<sup>44</sup> Houston's work addresses one of the major gaps in the study of life on landed estates: the voices and perspectives from below, to lift the veil on how 'tenants saw their relationship with their lord and their peers.'<sup>45</sup> Through an examination of petitions from tenants to landowners, it is possible to unpack the two-way relationship between them, the sites of negotiation and flexibility as well as conflict and the actual granular workings of power dynamics on the ground. As Houston argues, many petitioners may have been deferential 'but they were far from powerless.'<sup>46</sup>

Unlike the previous historiographical areas discussed, political life in the nineteenth century benefits from a wealth of studies, although some are now quite dated. Norman Gash is still the authoritative figure on the life and politics of Sir Robert Peel. For this study his foundational publication *Politics in the Age of Peel* remains a useful text, not least in terms of

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid, p. 3 & 4.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, p. 58.

<sup>44</sup> R.A. Houston, *Peasant Petitions: Social Relations and Economic Life on Landed Estates, 1600-1850*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, p. 2.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid, p. 270.

tracking the historiographical debates that have flowed from it. He argued that the Reform Act 1832 in Scotland 'was not so much reform as enfranchisement' with specific consequences for Scottish constituencies and the major landowners – such as the Duke – who owned them.<sup>47</sup> Gash describes the Duke as a 'dominating figure in Scottish politics' due to 'territorial position alone' but did not unpack the actual workings of this power in a reformed context.<sup>48</sup> This has been undertaken more recently by Gordon Millar and Gary Hutchison, who examine the tactics and approaches of the Conservative party in Scotland, particularly in the Scottish Borders enabling a closer analysis of the actions of the Duke, which this thesis builds on and contextualises into his paternalistic industrial management.<sup>49</sup> Hutchison's work highlights a political evolution where the Duke slowly became unable to 'control the representation of the county in which he was the largest proprietor' part of a broader shift away from individual influence to party control.<sup>50</sup> Gordon Pentland has covered the debate on Scottish parliamentary reform from 1830 to 1832 emphasising that the majority of the wider historiography revolves around the issue of 'a decisive break with an aristocratic constitution or a carefully engineered adjustment' which in turn left a lot of the old system intact with the most obnoxious features in Scotland also intact.<sup>51</sup> Pentland also highlights the critical point applicable to the Duke that individuals like him could 'oppose reform as being materially against their own interests' and that they had 'little to gain from parliamentary reform.'<sup>52</sup> However, Pentland examines the reform movement in Scotland from a national level arguing that much has been studied in the local sphere but this omits the aspect that for an individual like the Duke, he owned and politically controlled more than just one constituencies but several granting him very considerable political power.

Religion was both an inescapable part of Victorian life, and a theme often underplayed in histories of the aristocracy. One exception is Rowan Strong's *Episcopalianism in Nineteenth-*

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid, p. 35.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid, p. 186.

<sup>49</sup> Gordon F. Millar, 'The Conservative Split in the Scottish Counties, 1846-1857', *Scottish Historical Review*, 80, 2011, p. 221.

Gary D. Hutchison, 'Party Principles' in Scottish Political Culture: Roxburghshire, 1832-1847', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 98(248), 2019, pp. 390-409.

<sup>50</sup> Hutchison, 'Party Principles', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 98(248), 2019, p. 409.

<sup>51</sup> Gordon Pentland, 'The Debate on Scottish Parliamentary Reform, 1830-1832', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 1(219), 2006, p. 101.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, pp. 105 & 106.

*Century Scotland* and his chapter on 'Aristocratic Episcopalianism'. Strong acknowledges that little has been examined 'of the religious lives and agendas of the Scottish landed classes', a critical gap given that at a local level, 'where their religious patronage was largely focused, they ruled supreme in rural Lowland Scotland.'<sup>53</sup> Strong highlights 'the powerful linkage between the church and the landed elites' which is certainly borne out by Buccleuch, who never shied away from admitting and utilising this power over the estates, a policy that brought him into conflict with his tenantry at times, as this thesis will show.<sup>54</sup>

Anti-Catholic sentiment is another theme this thesis grapples with and was prevalent in Scotland during the lifetime of the Duke. However, focus on anti-Catholic sentiment is largely restricted in the wider literature during this time period in relation to the growing levels of those emigrating from Ireland, with Martin Mitchell and others work reiterating this point.<sup>55</sup> Wider historiography has begun to address how this anti-Catholic sentiment was implemented in daily life and the work of Karly Kehoe demonstrates this through the establishment of Catholic schools.<sup>56</sup> However, very little wider historiography charts the anti-Catholic sentiment and its reasoning is from a landowning perspective. This is a major omission from the wider historiography and urgently needs addressing.<sup>57</sup>

Anti-Catholic sentiment was not the only major religious event during the lifetime of the Duke but so was the Great Disruption of 1843 creating seismic change.<sup>58</sup> Ryan Mallon's work on the Free Church is significant to this study as, by moving away from the comparison of Established and Free Church, Mallon highlights the change that took place in Lowland

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<sup>53</sup> Rowan Strong, *Episcopalianism in Nineteenth-Century Scotland*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 266 & 267.

<sup>54</sup> Callum G. Brown, 'Reviewed Work: Episcopalianism in Nineteenth-Century Scotland: Religious Responses to a Modernizing Society by Rowan Strong', *The Journal of Religion*, 86(4), 2006, p. 684.

<sup>55</sup> Martin J. Mitchell, 'Anti-Catholicism and the Scottish Middle Class, 1800-1914' in C. Gheeraert-Graffeuille, G. Vaughan (eds.), *Anti-Catholicism in Britain and Ireland, 1600-2000 Practices, Representations and Ideas*, (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan 2020); Sir T.M. Devine and Michael Rosie, 'The Rise and Fall of Anti-Catholicism in Scotland' in C. Gheeraert-Graffeuille, G. Vaughan (eds.), *Anti-Catholicism in Britain and Ireland, 1600-2000 Practices, Representations and Ideas*, Cham: Palgrave Macmillan 2020

<sup>56</sup> S. Karly Kehoe, *Creating a Scottish Church, Catholicism, gender and ethnicity in nineteenth-century Scotland*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010).

<sup>57</sup> Much work has been done on the religious landscape of the Highlands and Islands during the Victorian period with Allan W. MacColl's work being important in this field: Allan W. MacColl, *Land, Faith and the Crofting Community*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006); See also: James Hunter, *The Making of the Crofting Community*, (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers Ltd, 1976).

<sup>58</sup> Ryan Mallon, *Dissent After Disruption*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021).

Scotland particularly in the urban sphere. However, Mallon does not put any focus on the landowning section of society specifically their reasoning for refusal of sites and their wider general opposition to the Free Church leaving a vacuum that needs filled.<sup>59</sup> Nor does Mallon put any emphasis on why landlords like the Duke began in later years to soften their opposition to the Free Church. This thesis allows for the landowning classes' perspective to be examined and aims to show that there may have been hostility from this section, but their position did change and soften through flexibility in the face of the changing realities around them.

In summary, this thesis aims to make a contribution to these cognate historiographical fields, while also drawing them together into an in-depth case study of the Buccleuch estates. This allows for a testing of the general claims made in the literature, supporting a plea for specificity and localism across themes of national (and global) significance.

### **Section 3 – Contributions of the thesis**

This thesis has examined for the first time one of the largest landed estates in Britain, contextualising this study across critical historiographical questions around the industrial revolution, the changing role and powers of the landed aristocracy and the nature of a paternalistic approach in an industrialising and imperial framework. It contributes to the wider literature on land management and diversification during a period of immense change, when estates were moving away from purely agricultural operations to a mixed industrial economy.<sup>60</sup> It unpacks the ways in which one of Britain's largest landowners used his name and position to access credit to finance large scale industrial transformations such as harbour building, modernisation and expansion of mining operations and railway development. It describes the nature of the leadership, management and the finances of one opportunistic aristocrat who leveraged his personal and financial credit to harness the power of the industrial revolution and ensure the viability of his estates for generations to come. As such, the thesis contributes to our understanding of the central role that the aristocracy played in the industrial revolution through their unique access to finance and

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Lowri Ann Rees, Ciaran Reilly & Annie Tindley, *The Land Agent: 1700-1920*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018).

expectations of leadership and management.<sup>61</sup> It provides a new and nuanced case study of the workings of aristocratic paternalism, rooted in the rural and agricultural context, in the new industrialising age. The social and political power of paternalism was weakening during the lifetime of the Duke, as new labour and trade union movements pushed for electoral reform, but through ensuring that paternalistic support was consistently available during both economically prosperous and challenging times, the Duke maintained a distinctive paternalistic approach. Moreover, this thesis emphasises that although in the face of challenge and demands for change, the Duke typically put up strong resistance, he was flexible enough to modify his views in order to protect his position. This flexibility in adapting to the changing economic, social, political and religious landscape as well as the astute financial and business decisions he made contributed significantly to the family's successful survival into the present day. This thesis is one of a small handful which examines questions of economic diversification, the evolution of paternalism in a democratising society and aristocratic social, political and religious management.<sup>62</sup> In presenting a case study of one family, we can more fully understand how the landed aristocracy operated nationwide during a period of profound change.

For Buccleuch this change was concentrated into the 1840s, which saw the building of Granton harbour, the expansion and modernisation of the mining operations and the introduction of railways. It was this ten-year period which set up the fortunes of the family for many decades to come. This financial approach was underpinned by a paternalistic ideology which allowed the Duke to maintain, broadly unchallenged, the highly unequal power relations with his tenantry and workforces he had inherited, in the teeth of substantial political, social and economic challenges. This was not an easy or always successful approach, as the widespread public and political criticism of his refusal of sites for the new Free Church demonstrates. This also demonstrates that the Duke was not always confident that his and his class interests would always win through, and some of his decisions were motivated by fear of what he identified as existential challenges to the traditional fabric of society, which he did everything to prevent from influencing his estates.

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<sup>61</sup> Richards, *The Leviathan of Wealth*.

<sup>62</sup> Hassan, *The Development of the Coal Industry*, PhD Thesis, 1976, University of Strathclyde.

## **Chapter One: Industrial Development, c. 1835-1860 – ‘The finest spectacle ever seen here’<sup>1</sup>**

### **1.1: Introduction**

In terms of his industrial investments and activities, the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Buccleuch was an astute investor who transformed the basis of his income from one primarily based on agriculture to a highly diversified portfolio including a range of developing industries and infrastructure. He was one of those aristocrats who, in the words of David Cannadine, was able ‘to exploit the process of industrialisation to their own financial advantage.’<sup>2</sup> This chapter addresses this transformation, including the construction of Granton Harbour, the development of coal and lead mining on the estates and finally the coming of the railway and critically, how this transformation was financed. In the longer term, these developments helped secure the future of the estates and family; however, in the short term they challenged the financial capacities of the family with credit being heavily utilised to pay for the significant upfront capital costs of this diversification. Although challenging to get off the ground, the industrial developments undertaken by the Duke were instrumental to his long term solvency and capacity to finance other activities and schemes. Much of the credit required was supplied by the Royal Bank of Scotland, and this chapter will unpack the mechanics of that debt: the risks, benefits and challenges, and interrogate how – through the example of the Duke – the early industrial revolution was financed in lowland Scotland and the place of aristocratic capital and leadership in that process.

This chapter tracks these questions across the extensive correspondence between the Duke and his various managers and advisors who were involved in the industrial development of

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<sup>1</sup> Buccleuch Papers, Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 24, Letter from Mr J. Gibson to the Duke of Buccleuch, 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1838.

<sup>2</sup> D.N. Cannadine, ‘The Leviathan of Wealth: The Sutherland Fortune in the Industrial Revolution. By Eric Richards. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973, Pp. Xx + 316’, *The Historical Journal*, 18(2), 1975, pp. 431.

the estates. This included the central and defining role of Mr J. Gibson Esq, the Duke's Edinburgh solicitor, whose influence on the construction of Granton Harbour and guidance on all financial matters enabled the operation to keep control of its debt balance. Each estate had an estate chamberlain with this totalling three in Scotland and likewise each colliery had a colliery manager who was the linkage between the Duke and his mining enterprises. Coal and lead mining operated on two of the three estates, Queensberry and Dalkeith, with several collieries on each. The correspondence between the estate chamberlains over the 1840 – the crunch period for industrial development - were Robert Scott Moncrieff at Dalkeith, William Ogilvie at Bowhill and William Maxwell at the Queensberry Estate. Moreover, their subordinates, the men who were in day to day charge of the mines, allows us to understand not only the approach and views of the Duke when it came to diversification but also those of the individuals on the ground who were impacted by the decisions made by the landlord.

The historiography is central to understanding where the Duke and his estate management fit into the wider pattern of how the landed aristocracy were diversifying their activities during the industrial revolution. Bruce Lenman highlights that the famous economic theorist, Adam Smith, who was the 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke's tutor, argued that 'growth was a good thing and was best achieved by the individual pursuit of maximum economic reward' with this belief being highly evident in the actions of the Duke carrying on his grandfather's legacy of improvement.<sup>3</sup> The existing historiography is relatively small and sometimes quite dated on the question of the financial role of the aristocracy in the industrial revolution with little to no detailed discussion or case studies, particularly in Scotland with Eric Richards's study of the Sutherlands being the only one that addresses the linkage between aristocracy and industry in Scotland.<sup>4</sup> John Davies study of the Marquesses of Bute and their development of

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<sup>3</sup> Bruce Lenman, *An Economic History of Modern Scotland 1600-1976* (London: B.T. Batsford Ltd, 1977), p. 157; Brian Bonnyman, *The Third Duke of Buccleuch and Adam Smith, Estate Management and Improvement in Enlightenment Scotland*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014), p. 194.

<sup>4</sup> Although see: Catherine Bailey, *Black Diamonds: The Rise and Fall of an English Dynasty*, (London: Viking, 2008); Eric Richards, *Leviathan of Wealth: The Sutherland Fortune in the Industrial Revolution*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973); J.T. Ward, and R.G. Wilson, *Land and Industry: The Landed Estate and the Industrial Revolution: A Symposium*, (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1971); Andrew Adonis, 'Aristocracy, Agriculture and Liberalism: The Politics, Finances and Estates of the Third Lord Carrington', *The Historical Journal*, 31(4), 1988, pp. 871-897 for the best examples of examination of aristocratic families with intimate connections to industry.

Cardiff fills this gap and allows significant comparisons to be made between two landlords who were proactive in leveraging agricultural wealth to diversify into industrial opportunities.<sup>5</sup> Overall, the historiography is traditionally dominated by an examination of the role played by the merchant middle and professional classes, leaving the role of landed aristocrats to the side.<sup>6</sup> Eric Richards, who examined the industrial history of Sutherland estates, noted that the ‘capitalist could be greatly reassured if the landed interest were prepared to share the financial risk’ but the picture was more complex than this and the Buccleuch case demonstrates examples of more active aristocratic leadership and leverage to obtain higher levels of credit to support activities.<sup>7</sup> The historiography also points to an aristocracy retreating from direct involvement to arms-length leasing of operations to maintain a guaranteed income. Francois Crouzet argues this retreat began in the seventeenth century and became more pronounced as the decades went on. This chapter will place the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Buccleuch into that historiographical context and contribute a more nuanced understanding of how the industrial revolution was financed by the aristocracy in Scotland but also what the strategy was in a period of increasing demands on their resources.

This chapter is presented in three sections. Firstly, it addresses how projects such as Granton Harbour, the development of coal and lead mining operations and the railways were financed by Buccleuch. It illustrates how credit provided by the Royal Bank of Scotland was firstly obtained then efficiently harnessed to enable an ambitious (but potentially risky) expansion and diversification away from agricultural activities and low-level industrial operations. It will also explore the drivers that led the Duke to push forward these ventures, which – as noted above – was not altogether typical of his time and class. Secondly, this chapter will explore the strategies adopted by the Duke his managers and legal advisors, to understand where and to what level the Duke was personally driving these activities or his team. In some cases, the Duke effectively micro managed developments – for instance, the railways – while in others, key specialists were instrumental and the Duke contributed high

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<sup>5</sup> John Davies, *Cardiff and the Marquesses of Bute*, (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1981).

<sup>6</sup> Christopher A. Whatley, *The Industrial Revolution in Scotland* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).

<sup>7</sup> Richards, *Leviathan of Wealth*, p. xi; Iain Hutchison, *Industry, Reform and Empire, Scotland, 1790-1880* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), p. 14.

level approval only. This allows us to better understand the day-to-day managerial mechanisms put in place to deliver the industrial ambitions; essentially, to understand what the levers of power were and who's hands were on those levers. Finally, this chapter will assess the short- and longer-term success of the Duke's industrial expansion, and the strategies, costs and risks that underpinned it. The industrial developments undertaken by the Duke were a high-risk strategy, leading to periodic severe financial pressures on his personal finances and those of the wider estates creating tension between the various levels of management and suppliers of credit namely the Royal Bank.

Industrial developments undertaken by the Duke enabled an already immensely wealthy individual to further increase and secure his wealth by developing his estates further through diversifying into industry. The construction of Granton Harbour and the development of the railways allowed the Duke to maximise the opportunities presented to him and his estates for profit. This profit then enabled him to invest into the estates during economically prosperous periods prior to the crunch debt laden first half of the 1840s at a time when lenders such as the Royal Bank were willing to advance large sums of money for public projects and further develop the mineral interests on his land in the years after the debt reached a high in 1845. With effective management of credit, the Duke was able to undertake the majority of his industrial developments in the space of a decade. With the support of effective estate management and the financial and legal acumen of Mr J Gibson particularly, calls from the Royal Bank of Scotland for repayment were managed sympathetically allowing time for developments to begin providing returns. Over the longer term, the Buccleuch's industrial developments evolved into successful ventures, securing the future of the estates and tenantry beyond his lifetime.

## 1.2: Financing Industrial Development

To fully understand the Duke's existence in the nineteenth century and his industrial developments, the financial aspect of the diversification of his Scottish estates is crucial. This allows us to fully understand how Buccleuch has been able to maintain its position at the top of the aristocratic tree. The size and scale of the Duke of Buccleuch's industrial developments were enormous, and by contemporary regulations and expectations would be

classed as high risk. Risk in this period and in the early developments of most industries was overall, high, whether the pioneer was middle class or aristocratic. David Cannadine has highlighted the construction of a harbour or sinking of a mine as 'highly risky undertakings' requiring considerable sums of money with no guarantee of a return even if some of the grandest aristocrats were connected with these ventures, as the Duke of Buccleuch illustrates.<sup>8</sup> Of course, the reputation (and to some extent, the reality) of the Duke's wealth, made the wider public understanding of the risks taken somewhat unrealistic. In 1834 in *The Scotsman* commented on the 'long purse and unlimited credit' of the Duke, suggesting that 'every pecuniary difficulty would vanish' in relation to Granton's construction if he got involved.<sup>9</sup> *The Scotsman* viewed it as an opportunity for the Duke to 'no doubt... increase the value of his own property at Granton' and that if he did go ahead with the scheme 'the people of Edinburgh owe him thanks for bringing it forward.'<sup>10</sup>

Coal and lead mining had already been established by the Duke's forefathers, such as the colliery at Sheriffhall at the end of the seventeenth century, but initiatives such as Granton Harbour, the development of Barrow-in-Furness and the railways were all new industrial ventures where considerable levels of new capital had to be raised. They were simply too large as industrial endeavours to be solely financed from the family and estate's annual turnover, as significant as this was. The Duke's private diary highlights that between 1833 and 1837 total receipts for the estates amassed £223,624 5s 2d.<sup>11</sup> The years 1842, 1843 and 1844 saw projected remittances of £55,000, £60,000 and £65,000 with these years featuring some of the highest levels of debt incurred.<sup>12</sup> However, highlighting the fact that money had to be borrowed showed deficiency in these projections with the estate remittances for the years 1842, 1843 and 1844 only totalling £46,200, £48,000 and £49,092.<sup>13</sup> To set these figures into the longer context of the Duke's lifetime, by 1880 the income derived by the

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<sup>8</sup> David Cannadine, 'Aristocratic Indebtedness in the Nineteenth Century: The Case Re-Opened', *The Economic History Review*, 30(4), 1977, p. 644.

<sup>9</sup> "HIGH COURT OF JUSTICIARY: SATURDAY." *The Scotsman*, 23 Jul. 1834.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Duke of Buccleuch Private Diary, 1837, p. 2.

<sup>12</sup> NRS, GD224/514/13, Letter from J Gibson Esq to the Duke of Buccleuch, 19<sup>th</sup> May 1845.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

Duke was £232,000 from 460,108 acres.<sup>14</sup> By exploring the crucial period between 1835 and 1859, when the biggest outgoings were occurring across the Scottish estates, this section will explore the financial underpinnings of the industrial investments, including planning, returns and the relationship between credit and profit. The majority of Buccleuch industrial development took place on the back of credit from the Royal Bank of Scotland with only a small proportion coming from friends and family; without both, it is unlikely these developments would have succeeded, the smaller personal borrowings acting as underpinning for the bigger debts from RBS and to build their confidence in Buccleuch. Furthermore, it shall argue that savvy debt management was used as an effective means of business operations enabling wider Buccleuch industries to be tied together to ensure the future success of these industries for generations to come.

The Duke inherited several coal and lead mining operations upon succeeding to the dukedom including Sheriffhall Colliery in the vicinity of the Dalkeith estate and several others in the vicinity of the Queensberry estate including Sanquhar and Canonbie. However, significant industrial expansion began in May 1834 when the Duke 'gave instructions for the necessary estimates and reports to be prepared' by Robert Stevenson & Son around the land owned at Granton.<sup>15</sup> The beginning of the development of Granton was arguably the start of the consolidation of the family's strategy around industrial investments in an effort to futureproof the financial underpinning of the estates. A harbour at Granton would enable the Duke to sell his industrial products, such as coal, to a wider market whilst also providing a competing harbour to rival Leith, generating a new revenue stream. This undertaking was a major risk in terms of the future financial position of the Buccleuch estates as it required significant volumes of up-front capital expenditure. This period is crucial in understanding the overall financial picture of the Buccleuch duchy. Between 1833 and 1837, total receipts on the estates in Scotland enumerated £223,624 5s 2d however, the difference between receipts and expenditure came to £151,608 18s 2d creating a difference of £72,015 7s.<sup>16</sup> The Duke's advisors were confident that the risks would pay off: in November 1837 Gibson

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<sup>14</sup> David Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*, (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1990), p. 710.

<sup>15</sup> J.H. Hannay-Thompson, *History and Development of the Harbour of Granton* (Edinburgh: John Menzies, 1937), pp. 10 & 11.

<sup>16</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Duke of Buccleuch Private Diary, 1837, pp. 2 & 3.

stated to the Duke that he felt the immense risk was worth it not only to improving the maritime commercial position of Edinburgh but that if the Duke quailed, he would 'have had a serious cause of regret, had you allowed the opportunity to pass unimproved of bestowing so important a benefit on the public, & associating your name & family with one of the greatest boons ever conferred on the country by a private individual.'<sup>17</sup> This highlights a further point: that the investment would bring political and reputational benefits as well as financial ones, and that there was a social expectation that men of the Duke's resources would in fact lead this endeavours and carry the risk. The Duke bought into this vision of large-scale industrial transformation of his estates and current industrial portfolio at a time of wider industrialisation in Britain, including examples of led and financed by fellow aristocrats as can be seen with the Sutherland's and the railways, the development of Barrow-in-Furness by the Devonshires and the Butes.<sup>18</sup> Buccleuch was not alone in his developments with great landed aristocrats such as the Dukes of Devonshire investing in similar schemes, for example in the Furness Railway at Barrow and in sea walls, roads and speculative building at Eastbourne.<sup>19</sup>

This vision was established first through coal mining operations on the estates, which by the 1830s were in a stable and prosperous phase, with the Chamberlain at Dalkeith exclaiming to the Duke that 'the coal cannot be worked fast enough for the demand at present.'<sup>20</sup> Between November 1839 and July 1840 the average profit for each month was £1042 6s 9d.<sup>21</sup> Over the same period the average overall payments for the Dalkeith coal operations were £7296 7s 2d and total cost average £29,635 11s 10d.<sup>22</sup> On the Queensberry estate between December 1837 and January 1838 at the Canonbie Colliery, 22,200 loads amounting 20,000 tons were sold with profit in January 1839 totalling £512 12s 5d.<sup>23</sup> However, for all of this prosperity, debts began to appear more regularly in the Duke's

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<sup>17</sup> NRS, GD224/724/8, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from J Gibson, 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1837.

<sup>18</sup> Davies, *Cardiff and the Marquesses of Bute*; Richards, *The Leviathan of Wealth*; S.Pollard, 'Barrow-in-Furness and the Seventh Duke of Devonshire', *Economic History Review*, 8(2), 1955, pp. 213-221.

<sup>19</sup> David Cannadine, *Aspects of Aristocracy*, (Yale University Press: London, 1994), p. 171.

<sup>20</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Duke of Buccleuch Private Diary, Extract from Mr R. Scott Moncrieff, 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1839, p. 29.

<sup>21</sup> NRS, GD224/496/1, Cashiers' Abstract Accounts 1839-1840.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Duke of Buccleuch Private Diary, 16<sup>th</sup> January 1839, p. 16.

private diary in the late 1830s, and start to mount up.<sup>24</sup> This was principally due to modernisation works, for example at Canonbie Colliery, racking up £10,686 6d owed to RBS by 31 December 1838 with interest accounting for £103 2s 8d; however, confidence was high, as 'the demand [is] greater than the supply.'<sup>25</sup> In the five year period between 1833 and 1837 the difference between receipts and expenditure totalled £151,608 18s 2d.<sup>26</sup> In the year from Whitsunday 1836 to Whitsunday 1837 gross rental totalled £102,425 5s 2d creating a deficiency of £49,183 13s with rental arrears standing at £18,305 3s 7d.<sup>27</sup> Levels of debt across the estate management began to rise at the same time credit was required for the industrial developments with this being the turning point where expenditure began to outrun the returns from the estates.

This did not start any major alarm bells to start ringing for the Duke. In 1837, the Duke was informed by his lawyer J Gibson, that 'the Royal Bank seem quite willing to advance what may be required on our debts.'<sup>28</sup> However, in the same letter the Duke was warned that this would not always be the case 'as it cannot be expected that a Bank will allow such large advances to remain always as floating balancing.'<sup>29</sup> Secure in the knowledge that it was likely that the Royal Bank would enable borrowing to support future developments, the Duke would have felt some comfort knowing that the plans being built upon would be safe financially.<sup>30</sup> This was particularly the case when Gibson reiterated to the Duke that 'as soon as the pier is yielding a revenue' they would be able to renegotiate a better deal with the Royal Bank.<sup>31</sup>

The role and impact of landed and aristocratic debt has been a source of contention amongst historians: F.M.L. Thompson argued that debt could as 'easily indicate increasing prosperity as increasing adversity' and R.H. Campbell pointed to the importance of understanding the drivers in each specific case, noting that 'what lay behind the

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<sup>24</sup> Ibid, p. 30.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, 8<sup>th</sup> February 1839, p. 30.

<sup>26</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Duke of Buccleuch Private Diary, November 1837, p. 2.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid, p. 12.

<sup>28</sup> NRS, GD224/496/1, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from J. Gibson, 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1837.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> NRS, GD224/724/8, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from J Gibson Esq, 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1837.

<sup>31</sup> NRS, GD224/496/1, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from J. Gibson, 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1837.

accumulation of the debt varied.<sup>32</sup> In the Buccleuch case, the financial position would appear to be relatively secure at the start of the industrial transformation with rental returns in 1836-7 being £102,747 13s 7d with arrears of £18,305 3s 7d (i.e. 17% of total rental returns) with the Buccleuch wealth cushioning these arrears.<sup>33</sup> However, once the industrial expansion had begun the estate returns on the Scottish estates in 1842 were projected to only be £55,000 with total debt standing at £200,177 3s 10d.<sup>34</sup> This income, coming at the peak of the Duke's industrial endeavours at Granton coupled with coal mining modernisation illustrate that the estate remittances in Scotland were simply not enough to finance the industrial ambitions, reinforcing the vital role that the Royal Bank played in financing this change. This source of credit enabled the Duke to invest in industrial enterprises to ensure the future prosperity of his estates and wider portfolio, a strategy employed by some of his peers. Cannadine gives several examples of families introducing debt-inducing expenditure for the 'exploitation of non-agricultural estate resources' with the aim of profit contributing 'to the expansion of the nineteenth-century economy.'<sup>35</sup> Cannadine makes the crucial point that a degree of indebtedness was accepted by the aristocratic class and their creditors as a means of expanding and diversifying a business and estate portfolio.<sup>36</sup> Moreover, he is accurate in his statement that the total amount of debt was 'substantial' but crucially was 'probably on the increase for much of the time' during the nineteenth century particularly during the prosperous mid-century period of major investment for Buccleuch allowing us to situate Buccleuch in a similar position to their contemporaries.<sup>37</sup>

The construction of Granton harbour could only be undertaken by someone of the Duke's capital and means, as he could 'obtain and commit large sums of money', based on his landed property, used to leverage the required credit for a project of the scale of Granton.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> F.M.L Thompson, 'The End of a Great Estate', *Economic History Review*, 8(1), (1955), pp. 36-52; R.H. Campbell, 'Continuity and Challenge: The Perpetuation of the Landed Interest' in T.M. Devine (ed.), *Conflicted and Stability in Scottish Society 1700-1850*, (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers Ltd, 1990), p. 131.

<sup>33</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Duke of Buccleuch Private Diary, 1837, p. 16.

<sup>34</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Duke of Buccleuch, Private Diary, Letter from J Gibson Esq, 24<sup>th</sup> December 1841, p. 51; Bowhill House Archive, Duke of Buccleuch, Private Diary, Accounts with the Royal Bank, 31<sup>st</sup> December 1841.

<sup>35</sup> Cannadine, *Aspects of Aristocracy*, p. 49.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid*, p. 39

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*, p. 41.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, p. 49.

The Duke was exceptional even among the landed aristocracy and gentry in terms of the scale of those landholdings, which extended to 460,108 acres, generating in 1880 and income £232,000 with only the Duke of Westminster receiving more at £290,000.<sup>39</sup> The Duke of Sutherland held over 1.2 million acres, but the income was only around £70,000 due to the poorer quality of the land.<sup>40</sup>

Granton harbour was well underway by the end of the 1830s alongside coal mining operations of expansion and modernisation with further railway development taking place. All these industries were interlinked and mutually beneficial but came with different levels of cost and risk. In the space of one year debt levels increased rapidly. In the Duke's diary from 6<sup>th</sup> May 1839, debt stood over three accounts at £69,594 12s 4d.<sup>41</sup> Broken down these stood at on the Granton account at £49,454 14s 9d; Eskbank Railway £5897 5s 10d; Dalkeith Coal £14,242 11s 9d.<sup>42</sup> However, these levels of debt were broadly in proportion to that annual income from the estates, which stood at 102,425 5s 2d in 1837, reassuring both him and the Royal Bank.<sup>43</sup> The debt in May 1839 stood at £188,272 2s 11d with interest costing £7,337 5s 5d.<sup>44</sup> A year later the Duke noted in his diary an updated statement of debts that over the three accounts he held with the Royal Bank of Scotland, debt on the Granton account stood at £75,119 5s 2d; railway account at £6,848 18s 1d; the coal account at £31,402 12s 10d, with interest running at 5% accounting for £113,370 16 s 1d.<sup>45</sup> This created a total amount of debt held by the Duke at £301,642 19s. This figure was the highest level of debt held by the Duke in the intense decades of his estate and industrial diversification. Although ultimately manageable, debts of this scale put Gibson's confidence under pressure when he informed the Duke of his looking forward to 'the period when all these extraordinary expences shall cease' and when the investment will 'begin to reap the fruit of

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<sup>39</sup> Campbell, 'Continuity and Challenge' in Devine (ed.) *Conflicted and Stability in Scottish Society*, p. 127; Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*, p. 710.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 710.

<sup>41</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Duke of Buccleuch Private Diary, 6<sup>th</sup> May 1839, p. 18.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Duke of Buccleuch Private Diary, 1837, p. 16.

<sup>44</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Duke of Buccleuch Private Diary, 6<sup>th</sup> May 1839, p. 18.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

such great exertions.<sup>46</sup> Gibson believed that by January 1842 'all the expences connected with Granton, the Cowden coal will have ceased, and both concerns be flourishing.'<sup>47</sup> That the Royal Bank permitted debts of this level to be run up speaks to the confidence they had in the Duke to re-pay the capital but did not mean that no questions were asked, and there was a continuous pattern of negotiation and re-negotiation. Occasionally the Royal Bank wobbled. In 1839 it requested repayment from the Duke's general account which was overdrawn by £111,109 11s 4d, hinting that 'if possible a payment of £50,000 should be made' with a total £194,136 6s 11d being overdrawn across several accounts.<sup>48</sup> One response to this request was offered by Gibson who suggested, 'offering security on your Grace's unentailed property.'<sup>49</sup> The Duke in reply to the Royal Bank gave a breakdown of his four accounts showing that he was paying off the outstanding balance on his General Account; Granton Pier would require another £40,000-50,000 to complete the works but he was 'confident ... that the return will not only pay the interest ... but will also pay a respectable sum annually in the shape of a finishing fund to pay off the debt.'<sup>50</sup> His Dalkeith Railway account required no further advances and in justification for the expenses on the coal account he believed that this industry would provide him with 'a considerable revenue.'<sup>51</sup> The Royal Bank replied that the Duke could not carry on financially in the manner that he had been. Sir William Rae informed the Duke's lawyer that the Duke had been misinformed about the money being advanced by the Royal Bank, which had led the Duke to believe that the 'advances were convenient to the Bank, and that there were no limits to their amount.'<sup>52</sup> The Royal Bank was acutely aware of the standing and role the Duke had both externally but also within their organisation as Governor with Rae stating it would be 'unhandsome and unwise' for the Bank to force the Duke to acquire funds as 'Governor of this Bank connecting himself with some other establishment.'<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> NRS, GD224/513/5/35, Letter from J Gibson Esq to the Duke of Buccleuch, 27<sup>th</sup> December 1839.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> NRS, GD224/496/1, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from J. Gibson, 31<sup>st</sup> August 1839; NRS, GD224/513/5/35, Letter from John Thomson, Cashier RBS to the Duke of Buccleuch, 16<sup>th</sup> October 1839.

<sup>49</sup> NRS, GD224/496/1, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from J. Gibson, 31<sup>st</sup> August 1839.

<sup>50</sup> NRS, GD224/513/5, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to the Royal Bank, 18<sup>th</sup> October 1839.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Copy Letter from Sir William Rae to J Gibson Esq, 27<sup>th</sup> December 1839, Duke of Buccleuch's Private Diary, p. 25.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

Gibson defended the Duke by laying the blame at the door of the Royal Bank for encouraging customers to contract such significant levels of debt.<sup>54</sup> In a letter in the aftermath of the first of several visits by the Royal Bank, Gibson stated to the Duke that the money loaned was 'both convenient & useful for the Bank' and that he felt the Royal Bank 'could not have done better with their capital.'<sup>55</sup> The financial situation was evidently placing some strain on operations, as Gibson admitted to looking forward to the expence being over even if it would take longer than forecast, but it would result in great returns.<sup>56</sup> However, Gibson was accurate in his analysis. . Charles W. Munn has highlighted that the banks were not wholly innocent in allowing their customers to incur high and unsustainable levels of debt with the years between 1830 and 1860 a 'period of experimentation.'<sup>57</sup>

However, for all the pressure that the Royal Bank of Scotland was applying to the Duke to repay promptly, ultimately, they stood by him. It was emphasised that the Duke must understand that 'any single individual, however eminent and wealthy, must require some consideration'; the Duke received this consideration, along with reminders and warnings to re-pay loans, but they did not abandon him.<sup>58</sup> The real currency in question here was the name and reputation of the Duke: he held the position of Deputy Governor of the Royal Bank (1832 to 1838) and then Governor (1838 to 1884), positions that more than likely aided his ability to gain significant volumes of credit.<sup>59</sup> John Hassan has illustrated this point through his study of the financing of the ever-expanding coal industry in the Lothians, where he noted that 'many landed coal proprietors of the Lothians held influential positions in the banks' such as Sir John Hope who served as Director of the Royal Bank from 1821 until 1839.<sup>60</sup> Landowners leveraging their reputations to borrow was not uncommon with R.H. Campbell highlighting many landowners in Scotland used to 'tap the resources of the

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<sup>54</sup> NRS, GD224/513/5/35, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from J Gibson, 27<sup>th</sup> December 1839.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Charles W. Munn, 'Aspects of Bank Finance for Industry: Scotland 1845 – 1914' in *Economy and Society in Scotland and Ireland 1500-1939*, edited by Rosalind Mitchison and Peter Roebuck, (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers Ltd, 1988), p. 238.

<sup>58</sup> NRS, GD224/513/5/35, Letter from John Thomson, RBS Cashier to the Duke of Buccleuch, 16<sup>th</sup> October 1839.

<sup>59</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Copy Letter from Sir William Rae to J Gibson Esq, 27<sup>th</sup> December 1839, Duke of Buccleuch's Private Diary, p. 25.

<sup>60</sup> John Hassan, *The Development of the Coal Industry in Mid and West Lothian 1815-1873*, PhD Thesis, 1976, University of Strathclyde, p. 181.

closely-knit financial community of Edinburgh' for assistance.<sup>61</sup> The Duke's positioning was not an uncommon occurrence therefore and enabled several of his major industrial developments to be funded by credit. This complicates and creates an exception to the theory put forward by Carol Beardmore that during the first half of the nineteenth century the aristocracy, while accumulating large levels of debt to remain solvent 'the use of mortgages rose in popularity.'<sup>62</sup> This was not the case with the Duke as he was not raising credit to remain solvent but rather to diversify and to futureproof his estates for years to come. It also highlights the different approaches between the gentry and the aristocracy with the latter able to raise considerably larger sums due to the security on their land that the gentry, with typically much smaller estates, simply did not have access to. Sir William Rae stated his belief that an arrangement could be made in 1839 but that the bank was flexible 'to the actual situation of matters at the time' as the Duke was engaged in 'great works.'<sup>63</sup> Ultimately, the Royal Bank may have been pressing the Duke and Gibson for repayment reiterating the point that there was not unlimited credit, but they wanted to cooperate to ensure that these works would succeed with the real currency here being the Duke's name and position.

The beginning of the 1840s brought further industrial development across the Buccleuch estates including an increased presence of the railway enterprises, Granton harbour reaching the next stage of completion, coal mining operations increasing and looming over all these, the ever-pressing matter of debt levels. Going into 1840 the total debt carried by the Duke stood at £301,642 19s with interest running at 5% from 31 December 1839, and overall accounting for £113,370 16s 1d of the total debt.<sup>64</sup> At the same time £55,633 19s 4d of capital was paid back to the Royal Bank and it was proposed, 'to borrow £40,000 upon Heritable Security to keep down the Balance in favor [sic] of the Royal Bank, as the operations at Granton Pier & the Coal will amount to that sum or nearly so.'<sup>65</sup> £30,000 of this was required by mid-summer and a loan of £10,000 from Lord William Thynne, the

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<sup>61</sup> Campbell, 'Continuity and Challenge' in *Conflicted and Stability in Scottish Society*, Devine, p. 132.

<sup>62</sup> Carol Beardmore, *Financing the Landed Estate Power, Politics and People on the Marquis of Anglesey's Estate, 1812-1854*, (Springer eBooks, 2019), p. 27.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Duke of Buccleuch Private Diary, p. 34.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

Duke's brother-in-law.<sup>66</sup> The borrowing of money from individuals close to the Duke, whether related or not, was not a new tactic. Granton was a major contributor to the ever-volatile levels of debt, but returns were of a level where credit could be managed effectively so that economic fluctuations or covering the interest costs was never an existential concern.<sup>67</sup>

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This diversification was in stark contrast to other landed families such as the Lambtons in the north east of England whose whole fortune was invested in volatile coal markets, leading to a 'touch and go' cycle, when 'apprehensions [were] felt at every fluctuation of the coal trade.'<sup>68</sup> The Lambtons invested approximately £500,000 by 1843 into the coal markets, leaving them exposed when those markets were depressed.<sup>69</sup> For example, in 1847 their clear profits from their mining operations was only £11,695.<sup>70</sup> These ill fortunes were compounded by the debt the first Earl left in 1841, totalling £635,000, leaving his successors struggling to even cover the interest. The records demonstrate that Buccleuch faced similar challenges, but his industrial interests were both diversified enough and increasingly integrated to avoid the worst of the risks.

The 1840s saw the real spark of railway mania gain traction across the whole of the United Kingdom, with Francis Crouzet stating that 'prudence was cast to the winds.'<sup>71</sup> It was a risky context but also an opportunity for further growth alongside a major economic opportunity for the Duke, as with many of his contemporaries, even for those that were not working mineral deposits on their lands, but desired reliable transport links. This is evident with Lord Breadalbane who John McGregor has noted had a rural tenantry who desired easier access to markets seeking to escape 'dependence on water transport.'<sup>72</sup> For the landowning

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> F.M.L. Thompson, *English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971), p. 263.

<sup>68</sup> David Spring, 'The English Landed Estate in the Age of Coal and Iron: 1830-1880', *The Journal of Economic History*, 11(1), 1951, p.21.

<sup>69</sup> David Spring, 'The Earls of Durham and the Great Northern Coal Field, 1830-1880', *The Canadian Historical Review*, 33(3), 1952, p. 240.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, p. 251.

<sup>71</sup> Francois Crouzet, *The Victorian Economy*, (London: Methuen & Co Ltd, 1982), p. 285.

<sup>72</sup> John McGregor, *The New Railway, The Earliest Years of the West Highland Line*, (Stroud: Amberley Publishing, 2015), pp. 55 & 59.

aristocracy, it assisted their tenantry in accessing new markets but was just as much about ensuring they had a healthy financial return and exercised influence in ensuring that the railways developed in a way that suited them. Nowhere was this epitomised more than by the Sutherland family who Eric Richards has stated reaped the capital from land sales and ensured the line from Inverness to Wick was designed to suit them.<sup>73</sup>

While the railways steamed ahead, the ever-present Royal Bank was never far away from the Duke's affairs. 1841 witnessed another visit from the Royal Bank requesting a frank conversation about the financial situation, demanding an explanation on three points: firstly, how much more money the Duke would require, secondly, when and how the debt was going to be repaid and finally, what security the Bank could have as they could not continue on the 'general impression entertained by them personally of the wealth of their Debtor' as it was not a 'businesslike mode of proceeding.'<sup>74</sup> The Royal Bank stated that the Duke owed them at the end of 1839 the sum of £151,730 1s 1d.<sup>75</sup> They acknowledged that it was 'necessary for him to make large drafts in respect of the Public Works in which he was engaged' and that there was a 'good deal of uncertainty' to which it was 'deemed advisable for the sake of both parties that the extent of Credit during 1840 should be fixed.'<sup>76</sup> However, the Duke had not met the terms of the agreement between both parties where credit would not exceed £150,000 as by 1841 it amounted to £199,987 5s 3d.<sup>77</sup> Scathingly, the bank stated that the situation was 'not an agreeable state of matters for either party' although they still wished to ensure the Duke did not 'borrow from other quarters.'<sup>78</sup>

Keeping the Royal Bank at bay, the Duke answered their three questions. Firstly, the Duke would pay only 'the interest on the whole debt' so that he would not have to borrow from other creditors, something which would have been embarrassing for the Royal Bank.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>73</sup> Richards, *The Leviathan of Wealth*, p. 146.

<sup>74</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Copy of Draft Report by Committee of Royal Bank Directors on Duke of Buccleuch's Account, 11<sup>th</sup> January 1841, p. 37.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>79</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Duke of Buccleuch's Diary, Copy Memoranda Duke of Buccleuch and the Royal Bank of Scotland, 19<sup>th</sup> January 1841.

Regarding repayment, after 1842 the Duke would pay in 'each subsequent year at best £20,000 exclusive of the interest.'<sup>80</sup> Finally, the Duke noted that he was entitled to borrow on the security of the Harbour of Granton amounting to £80,000; his life insurance policies amounted to £70,000 and was in possession of £10,000 of Capital Stock of the Royal Bank giving an overall total security of £160,000.<sup>81</sup> The Duke stated that the money was to be spent 'completing the fitting of the large colliery at Dalkeith, building Colliers Houses, and in finishing the Granton Harbour.'<sup>82</sup> Gibson was keen to make sure that this financial plan was adhered to from the 1<sup>st</sup> January 1842 until the 1<sup>st</sup> March 1848.<sup>83</sup> Gibson believed paying off the debt was achievable but only possible 'by a rigid adherence to the expenditure' and that there would be 'dark periods coming when temporary loans will be indisputably necessary.'<sup>84</sup> By the end of 1841, one of the most important years in the financial history of the industrial diversification of the Buccleuch estates, the total amount owing to the Royal Bank including interest stood at £200,177 3s 10d.<sup>85</sup>

In February 1845 the Duke of Buccleuch wrote to William Ogilvie, his Bowhill Estate Chamberlain, stating his opinion 'that the NB [North British] Railway should undertake one half of the responsibilities or debt' and that 'a third is too small a share for the Railway Company to undertake.'<sup>86</sup> Financial compensation for lands either sold or impacted by the ongoing railway developments was a considerable source of income for the Buccleuch estates, with the Duke informing Ogilvie that the North British pay '£100 per acre for every acre of land occupied by the lines of Railway through my property.'<sup>87</sup> Francis Crouzet illustrates this point of financial concern through an analysis of the railway mania across Britain, when financial crisis and collapse occurred frequently first in the summer of 1845 and then in spring of 1847 with 1846 seeing thousands of miles of railway constructed and proposed absurd projects – which were never carried out – granted Parliamentary

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Duke of Buccleuch's Diary, Copy Letter from John Gibson Esq to the Duke of Buccleuch, 24<sup>th</sup> December 1841, p. 51.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Duke of Buccleuch's Diary, Account with the Royal Bank 31<sup>st</sup> December 1841, p. 51.

<sup>86</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 28, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 5<sup>th</sup> February 1845.

<sup>87</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle, 29, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 6<sup>th</sup> April 1846.

sanction.<sup>88</sup> Buccleuch was certainly impacted by this financial uncertainty, in an already strained situation with high levels of debt, as he outlined to William Ogilvie, identifying 'money panic' with one of these reasons being 'the construction of the new railways.'<sup>89</sup> Like many other proprietors trying to negotiate the railway mania, eventually the duke came to see the benefits: as Graham Mee highlights, it would eventually stand 'the family exchequer in good stead.'<sup>90</sup>

More concerning were the increasing lack of return and arrears from the estate's agricultural and tenancy operations, which should have cross-subsidised debt incurred elsewhere but which were not. In correspondence with the Duke, Gibson laid out his analysis of the precarious nature of the financial situation between 1842 and 1845.<sup>91</sup> He expected remittances from the Scottish estates to come to a total of £65,000 but they only achieved £49,092 in 1845, with the greatest deficiency coming from the Queensberry Estate.<sup>92</sup> In June 1845 the Duke informed his estate Chamberlains in Scotland of the situation regarding the returns from the estates and that it was now time to 'reduce the debt which I have been obliged to incur in the execution of those works.'<sup>93</sup> Gibson recommended three actions to control expenditure and ensure that money owing could be reduced: increasing the remittances on the Queensberry Estate, pausing the works at Granton and reducing expenditure at Dalkeith incurred through the day to day running of the estate.<sup>94</sup> This was well received by the Royal Bank in 1845 who 'made allusions to the state of the account and asked when it was likely to be reduced.'<sup>95</sup> This debt was clearly a greater cause for concern towards the latter years of the 1840s. In 1847, costs at Granton had spiralled and required an extra £70,000 with the Royal Bank then holding 'a mortgage over the Pier to the extent of £150,000.'<sup>96</sup> This was while the 'balance against the works in His Grace's own accounts is at

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<sup>88</sup> Crouzet, *The Victorian Economy*, p. 285.

<sup>89</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 29, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 24<sup>th</sup> May 1847.

<sup>90</sup> Spring, 'The English Landed Estate in the Age of Coal and Iron', *The Journal of Economic History*, 11(1), 1951; Graham Mee, *Aristocratic Enterprise*, (Glasgow: Blackie and Son Limited, 1975).

<sup>91</sup> NRS, GD224/514/13, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from J Gibson, 19<sup>th</sup> May 1845.

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>93</sup> NRS, GD224/514/13, Letter to estate Chamberlains from the Duke of Buccleuch, 26<sup>th</sup> June 1845.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>95</sup> NRS, GD224/514/13, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from J Gibson, 24<sup>th</sup> June 1845.

<sup>96</sup> NRS, GD224/ 514/13, Letter to RS Wilson, Cashier from J Gibson, 10<sup>th</sup> May 1847.

present £159,940.<sup>97</sup> However, emphasis was put upon the integration of industries, demonstrating the forward planning of the industrial portfolio. It was explained to the Royal Bank that returns would increase from the pier once the railways, which the Duke was a major investor in, were 'formed and in full operation' with pier dues then amounting to equal the interest at £150,000.<sup>98</sup> It was acknowledged that excluding Granton Pier, 'all His Grace's great works are now completed' and 'the total debt has gradually been diminishing during 1845 and 1846, and will ... now move off more rapidly.'<sup>99</sup> Granton had by this point been a heavy burden for a considerable period of time and to alleviate some of it the Duke sold the Granton & Burntisland Ferry to the Edinburgh and Northern Railway Company, receiving £40,000.<sup>100</sup> However, this was not seen by the Royal Bank as proactive enough in reducing the overall debts. They had no issue with the ever-expanding developments at Granton; what they did have issue with was a £250,000 deficit on the account held solely in the Duke's name however 'well secured.'<sup>101</sup> To combat these challenging times £25,000 was 'remitted from the English Estates in aid of the Scotch' with the belief that this 'will prove very satisfactory to the Directors.'<sup>102</sup>

The increasing urgency of the demands by the Royal Bank for repayment was not unusual in the contemporary context. This was a period when raising capital was becoming increasingly competitive and it has been noted by Vamplew and others that this challenge was 'exacerbated by competing demands for available investment funds as Scotland began its sustained economic growth.'<sup>103</sup> This was evident in the relationship between the Royal Bank and the Duke, as the Bank requested the speed in his repayments to be accelerated on at least some of those accounts with larger outstanding balances to allow the Royal Bank to invest in other customers and areas. Having too much credit tied up in one individual who was not necessarily repaying at an acceptable rate was too restrictive for their investment

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> NRS, GD224/ 514/13, Letter to RS Wilson, Cashier from J Gibson, 17<sup>th</sup> May 1847.

<sup>102</sup> NRS, GD224/514/13, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from Mr Gibson, 12<sup>th</sup> June 1847.

<sup>103</sup> Peter Fletcher, 'Railway Capital in Northern Scotland, 1844-1874', *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies*, 30(2), 2010, p. 148; Wray Vamplew, 'Sources of Scottish railway capital before 1860', *Scottish Journal of Political Economy*, 1970, pp. 425-40.

operations, particularly in the crunch period of the 1840s. The repayment pressures concerned J Gibson to an extent he told the Duke that he was 'anxiously alarmed for the future' when so much relied upon the 'ability of the Directors to continue their past accommodations' of borrowing.<sup>104</sup> Gibson had informed the Duke prior to the crunch period of the 1840s that something had to be done, informing the Duke on the 8<sup>th</sup> February 1839 that the amount due to the Royal Bank of Scotland in relation to Dalkeith Colliery on the 31<sup>st</sup> December 1838 amounted to £10,686 with interest accounting for £103 2s 8d.<sup>105</sup> This increased the following year to £14,551 14s 9d with the colliery receipts bringing in £6429 6s 10d.<sup>106</sup> The Royal Bank advanced £25,237 15s 3d to assist with operations illustrating an awareness that minerals would provide a good return for the capital they had ready to invest however, this could not continue.<sup>107</sup>

Going into the 1850s the Duke was likely to have breathed a sigh of relief. The major expenditure of the previous decade was no longer required, coal mining operations were making healthy returns along with the railways, where the mania had calmed down to workable but profitable levels. The gamble that the Duke had taken in investing in several large-scale industrial developments to tie together these industries for future proofing the estates having made 'a great exertion for a few years' while restricting the expenditure on the estates.<sup>108</sup> However, for all this prosperity, the issue of debt remained pressing as can be seen in the various correspondence from the Royal Bank regarding the matter of repayment up to 1857.<sup>109</sup> In 1849 the Duke owed £181,594 10s 1d to the Royal Bank with this fluctuating over the next two years from £192,392 8s 7d in 1850 and then down to £184,621 14s 4d in 1851.<sup>110</sup> In 1857, nearly twenty-five years after the industrial developments began, the Royal Bank paid another visit, once again due to a change in directorship at the bank,

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<sup>104</sup> NRS, GD224/514/13, Letter from J Gibson Esq to the Duke of Buccleuch, 17<sup>th</sup> May 1847.

<sup>105</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Duke of Buccleuch Private Diary, p. 27, no date.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>108</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Letter to William Ogilvie from the Duke of Buccleuch, 8<sup>th</sup> September 1845.

<sup>109</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Duke of Buccleuch Private Diary, Sir William Rae to J Gibson Esq, 27<sup>th</sup> December 1839, p. 25; Bowhill House Archive, Duke of Buccleuch Private Diary, Report by Committee of Royal Bank Directors on Duke of Buccleuch's Account, 11<sup>th</sup> January 1841, p. 37; Bowhill House Archive, Duke of Buccleuch Private Diary, Robert Lyon Wilson Esq to J Gibson Esq, 31<sup>st</sup> July 1845, p. 75; NRS, GD224/724/8, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from J Gibson, 28<sup>th</sup> May 1857.

<sup>110</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Duke of Buccleuch Private Diary, p104 – 105.

seeking reassurance that the Duke understood his position.<sup>111</sup> In his advice to the Duke, Mr Gibson stated that he did not think it 'advisable to ask them' to 'increase their advances.'<sup>112</sup> His reasoning for this was that the interest would cause them to have to cut back in other areas which would 'involve a great sacrifice.'<sup>113</sup>

Buccleuch faced a dilemma: should they disentail part of the estates and sell them to clear the debt? The solution put forward by Gibson of offering security on unentailed property was an interesting one. It was legally very difficult to sell entailed property at this time, and even if it was possible, it generated large legal costs.<sup>114</sup> Entailed property could not be mortgaged to raise capital, but as pointed out by Michael Moss 'loans could be raised secured against the rents.'<sup>115</sup> Unentailed property was free to sell, giving landed proprietors rich in acres but poor in cash some room for manoeuvre and they often sold in times of crisis.<sup>116</sup> Gibson certainly believed in disentailing Caroline Park at Granton arguing that in doing so it 'would enable you to borrow on the most favourable terms a sufficiently large sum to pay off every existing engagement.'<sup>117</sup> The urgency of the situation was not lost on Gibson as he felt that with the position of the family 'being so favourable at present, it would not be advisable to delay it.'<sup>118</sup> Gibson's reasoning was clear: in May 1857 there was still £232,878 owing to the Royal Bank with another £100,000 required to complete the works on railways and at Granton.<sup>119</sup> This vast sum was reduced slightly with the sale of lands for the North British Railway Company where a sale price of £12,984 was agreed in 1859.<sup>120</sup> This was the first of several payments from the railways which would amount to a total of £29,213/2/2.<sup>121</sup> This sum, coupled with estimated estate remittances, demonstrate that debt was reducing alongside returns from various other investments and industrial returns now successfully integrated.

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<sup>111</sup> NRS, GD224/724/8, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from J Gibson, 28<sup>th</sup> May 1857; NRS, GD224/724/8, Draft letter by His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch to the Cashier of the Royal Bank, June 1857.

<sup>112</sup> NRS, GD224/724/8, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from J Gibson, 28<sup>th</sup> May 1857.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>114</sup> Michael Moss, 'Culzean: what do the ledgers tell us?', *Archives and Records*, 40(1), 2019, p. 78.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*; It is unclear what the size of Caroline Park was at this point.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>120</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Conveyance in Favor of the North British Railway Company (Border Union Railway).

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*

Over the space of twenty-five years, the Duke led radical and long-lasting industrial developments and successfully integrated them for maximum economic benefit. He was only able to do so by drawing heavily on money borrowed from the Royal Bank of Scotland. This was not limitless or always easily obtained; it was acknowledged early on that the scale of risk was significant and that without the Royal Bank these industrial undertakings could not have taken place. Even with them, nerves and lack of confidence were recurrent issues. Without effective management of the debt by Gibson and increasing pressure on estate chamberlains for remittances, servicing the debt may have proven difficult. Buccleuch fits the model put forward by David Spring that heavy indebtedness was 'often to be found among the older landed families'; however, he already had the rental returns and other assets to secure the credit against.<sup>122</sup> Without the efficient debt management and strategic advice given of Gibson and their effective working relationship, the Buccleuch industries may not have come together in such a profitable and successful way. By fully understanding the financial position of the Buccleuch estates under the Duke in Victorian Scotland, it is evident that a large proportion of the projects were carried out on credit with a small amount coming from friends and family. This access to credit enabled Buccleuch to remain one of the top aristocrats in Victorian Britain.

### 1.3: Opportunism at Buccleuch

Successful industrial development required sound decision making and excellent project management: the Duke, like many of his landed contemporaries, had a strong team around him to advise on legal, business, and financial decisions, with many of them serving for considerable periods of time. This section will examine the Duke's strategic thinking, how well he was supported by his advisors across his portfolio, and the role he played individually in the key decisions and investments made. Due to the differing nature of the industrial enterprises, the section will examine each individually before bringing them together to assess how successful overall the Duke's strategy was across his lifetime and beyond. Each development was different with Granton teaching the Duke important lessons on industrial

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<sup>122</sup> D. Spring, 'The English Landed Estate in the Age of Coal and Iron', *The Journal of Economic History*, 11(1), 1951, p. 14.

development and man management that came to the fore in his dealings with railway promoters and developing his mining operations being one of the many landowners pointed out by Tindley, Reilly and Rees seeking to 'accelerate the commercial opportunities of their landed properties.'<sup>123</sup> The opportunism that was utilised by Buccleuch enabled different styles of approaches to the respective industrial development thus enabling the Duke to continue as a paternalistic landlord against a challenging financial landscape.

### 1.3.1: Granton Harbour

The construction of Granton Harbour allowed the Duke the opportunity to develop his land in a way that would assist in maximising the profitability of the other industries such as coal mining. Neighbouring Leith had 'inadequate facilities' at the harbour, impeding the opportunities for the city which in turn meant it was unable to 'supply Edinburgh's needs.'<sup>124</sup> In 1833, due to the city's financial difficulties, there was little 'prospect of improvement in those facilities.'<sup>125</sup> The Granton Bill was introduced in 1836 with Royal Assent being received in 1837.<sup>126</sup> The development at Granton saw the least personal input from the Duke. Why was the Duke so remote in his dealings with Granton, compared to the other industrial developments? There are a number of possibilities. Gibson wrote to the Duke in November 1837 justifying the risks, in the face of the Duke's apprehension at embarking on such a major project.<sup>127</sup> Gibson informed the Duke that this was the right decision with a 'new epoch in the history of navigation by the introduction of steam' and that if the Duke did not take the opportunity bestowed upon him by the titles of the estate he would have a 'serious cause of regret.'<sup>128</sup> Gibson went on to argue that it was an opportunity to bestow a great 'benefit on the public, & associating your name & family with one of the greatest boons ever conferred on the country by a private individual.'<sup>129</sup> F.M.L. Thompson has highlighted that even when great matters were at stake the 'ultimate decision always rested with the owner,'

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<sup>123</sup> Lowri Ann Rees, Ciaran Reilly & Annie Tindley (eds.), *The Land Agent: 1700-1920*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), p. 6.

<sup>124</sup> Hannay-Thompson, *History and Development of the Harbour of Granton*, p. 9.

<sup>125</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>127</sup> NRS, GD224/724/8, Letter from J Gibson to the Duke of Buccleuch, 23<sup>rd</sup> November 1837.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*

and this was very much the case at Granton.<sup>130</sup> In the case of Granton, however, the ‘final approval was little more than a formality’ with Gibson charged to deliver the construction of Granton harbour on behalf of the Duke.<sup>131</sup> It was evident that the Duke did not have the confidence in his own expertise in the area of major construction with major expense required for this, delegating to his senior management team coupled with significant periods of time out of the country in Europe.

The construction, opening and operations of Granton Harbour may have had the name of the Duke of Buccleuch attached to them but it was John Gibson who ran the show. Whilst running the developments and the day-to-day operations of Granton, Gibson was instrumental in keeping the Buccleuch empire on an even footing financially. With only remote involvement of the Duke during the construction and early years of operations due to his being in Europe with his family and his growing political career, Gibson deputised with considerable levels of autonomy.<sup>132</sup> The construction of Granton marked the turning point where an individual would have these levels of autonomy managing the industrial and financial affairs of the Duke. Granton served as an expensive but successful lesson for the Duke with Gibson being central to guiding him in his future endeavours as shall now be explored.

### 1.3.2: Mining – Coal and Lead

The Duke’s approach to the management of his mining interests was very different to that at Granton. The Duke inherited several coal mining operations, giving him an early start in the business and he focused on ‘maximising the income’ from the both the mining and agricultural portions of the estates.<sup>133</sup> The Scottish coal mining industry expanded greatly over the nineteenth century and came to be regarded as ‘one of the three or four staple industries of the country.’<sup>134</sup> The Buccleuch operations were part of that expansion and the Duke was involved in the majority of aspects of the business, including development,

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<sup>130</sup> Thompson, *English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 175.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Letter from J Gibson to the Duke of Buccleuch, 7<sup>th</sup> June 1838.

<sup>133</sup> Whatley, *The Industrial Revolution in Scotland*, p. 58.

<sup>134</sup> B.R. Mitchell, *Economic development of the British coal industry 1800-1914*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), p. 1.

expansion, industrial relations and welfare provision.<sup>135</sup> This was against the national trend but more usual in the Lothian coal fields where direct involvement from landowners remained.<sup>136</sup>

The Duke's role in the mining operations was a halfway house between remote management and micro-management. The Duke was active in the majority of the operations but during the crucial expansion phase relied heavily on the Dalkeith Colliery manager, Mr James Wright. Wright would appear to have been the Duke's preferred mine manager, particularly when compared to Edmund Gibsone, the manager at Canonbie Colliery during the critical decade of the 1840s. Gibson noted that Edmund Gibsone had an 'inferior general education' and although an 'excellent overseer' lacked the 'faculty of explaining his views to others' who did not have an understanding of coal mining.<sup>137</sup> Moreover, Wright had an advantageous position being geographically close to the main family home of Dalkeith Palace being based at Dalkeith Colliery in the Lothian coalfield of 'old traditions, and slow development.'<sup>138</sup> The coal mining strategy of the Buccleuch enterprises in 1839, was expansion, evident at Canonbie where 'a much large coal field will be laid open.'<sup>139</sup> The disparity in management impacted the strategic approach epitomised when James Wright, manager of the Dalkeith Colliery, was sent to Sanquhar to conduct a report into its state and future prospects instead of utilising Edmund Gibsone at the nearby Canonbie Colliery.<sup>140</sup>

The opportunistic nature of the Duke's approach was at its most evident in the lead mining operations which made up a considerable portion of the industrial portfolio of the Buccleuch industries, and was leased out. However, discussions started in 1842 to bring the mining back in house, with Gibson leading the charge with Wright heavily involved.<sup>141</sup> Gibson

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<sup>135</sup> Industrial relations and welfare issues are dealt with in the next chapter: Chapter 2: Industrial Management.

<sup>136</sup> Mitchell, *Economic development of the British coal industry*, p. 54; Whatley, *The Industrial Revolution in Scotland*, p. 58.

<sup>137</sup> NRS, GD224/724/8, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from Mr Gibson, 18<sup>th</sup> December 1839.

<sup>138</sup> Hassan, *The Development of the Coal Industry*, PhD Thesis, 1976, University of Strathclyde, p. 144.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>140</sup> NRS, GD224/514/13, Report regarding the present State and future prospects of Sanquhar Colliery, the property of His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch by James Wright, 12<sup>th</sup> April 1842; Sanquhar Colliery was subsequently after this recommendation brought back into the Duke's operation with projected profit of £1500 per annum.

<sup>141</sup> NRS, GD224/514/2, J Gibson Esq to the Duke of Buccleuch, January 1842.

reaffirmed the Duke's view that it would be 'right to take these [lead mines] for sometime into your own hands.'<sup>142</sup> However, this ultimately profitable industry required expert management and Gibson's letter makes it clear he was relying on Wright to recruit a 'suitable person' as the mine manager due to his formal training, something that Edmund Gibsone at nearby Sanquhar did not have.<sup>143</sup> While relying on Wright to ensure the correct individual was recruited, Gibson also consulted with the Queensberry estate management through the estate chamberlain, William Sutherland on whether this business decision would be correct.<sup>144</sup> Sutherland informed Gibson that bringing them back under the direct control of the Duke would put them 'into a proper & healthy state, in which they are not at present' but most importantly in terms of business 'the rent derived from them for some years has been so small as scarcely to deserve much consideration.'<sup>145</sup> A new strategy of working closely with his management had been adopted by the Duke by this point with each decision being made on a case by case basis where his previous involvement and experience in industry was utilised.

The decision to bring the lead mine back under direct estate control was a significant enough to gain attention in the national press with *The Scotsman* reporting that they were 'now wrought with spirit' with the further investment of new smelt mills, and a 'commodious school' and a 'handsome church' also gaining attention.<sup>146</sup> It highlighted that it 'proved beyond doubt' the 'mineral wealth of the dreary wilderness in which the mines of Wanlockhead' were situated could reap great rewards if the Duke was opportunistic and brought the lead mines back in house to generate an increased financial return, a factor of pressing importance given the overall financial strain on the estates at this time.<sup>147</sup> This strategy was in contrast to what many other landowners were doing, with T.C. Smout highlighting that this was 'the first time the landowner had done such a thing at Wanlockhead' compared to others especially when the future of lead mining seemed 'uncertain'; however, through careful administration 'he [the Duke] made a success of the

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<sup>142</sup> NRS, GD224/514/2, Letter from Mr J Gibson to the Duke of Buccleuch, January 1842.

<sup>143</sup> NRS, GD224/514/13, Letter from Mr Gibson to the Duke of Buccleuch, 14<sup>th</sup> May 1842.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid, William Sutherland to J Gibson Esq, 8<sup>th</sup> January 1842.

<sup>145</sup> Ibid.

<sup>146</sup> "Scotland." *The Scotsman*, Sep 19, 1846.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

venture.<sup>148</sup> Between the Duke, Gibson and Wright, the opportunistic and strategic decision making in mining worked effectively and by 1847 was firing on all cylinders. This mode of operations ensured that the industries being invested in worked well and allowed the Buccleuch coal mining to contribute to Scotland's record as the only area in Britain to record an increase in output every decade from 1830 to 1880, and of course, the Duke's profits creating long-lasting reward.<sup>149</sup>

However, the preference of one individual of mine management over another came to a head in 1859 when the colliery manager at Canonbie Colliery, Edmund Gibsone, was dismissed creating much uproar. In several letters from Mr Edmund Gibsone we are presented a very angry individual for being dismissed from a role that he held 'for nearly 23 years' where he felt he had 'managed these works with credit to myself.'<sup>150</sup> The specific reasoning for his dismissal is not clear and even once the correspondence between him and others has been examined it is still unclear. The favouritism by the Duke towards his mine management will no doubt have played a part with James Wright at Dalkeith being professionally trained being favoured over Edmund Gibsone. As part of his dismissal, Gibsone was insistent on receiving a settlement as he was entitled 'to one years salary and portion of value for the use date of dismissal.'<sup>151</sup> The Duke though in response to Gibsone's letter stated that 'Mr Gibsone will be paid whatever is legally due to him. The difference is the amount of salary from the first two years were given as a gratuity to Mr Gibsone by the Duke, & was not given as a sum due to Mr Gibsone. It is not the Duke's intention to add interest as none is due.'<sup>152</sup> This incident illustrates that even though Mr Gibsone had been dismissed from his post as Colliery Manager, the Duke still acknowledged that he had a responsibility to him even though there was a reason for his dismissal.

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<sup>148</sup> T.C. Smout, 'The Lead Mines at Wanlockhead', *Trans Dumfriesshire & Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society*, Vol.39, 1962, p. 156.

<sup>149</sup> Hutchison, *Industry, Reform and Empire*, p. 42.

<sup>150</sup> NRS, GD224/650/6, Letter from Mr Edmund Gibsone, 28<sup>th</sup> June 1859.

<sup>151</sup> *Ibid*, Letter from Mr Edmund Gibsone to Duke of Buccleuch, 20<sup>th</sup> September 1859.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid*.

### 1.3.3: Railways

The strategic approach taken by the Duke to railway developments was in contrast again to that for Granton or mining: no longer was he a remote presence or working closely through his management team but was instead personally micromanaging this new industry on his estates, epitomising an opportunistic approach. He aimed to understand every detail to work out the 'opportunities' available, ensuring that the tenantry also benefitted, or at least avoided 'public suffering'.<sup>153</sup> His analysis of the possibilities around compensation is a good example of this. There were three kinds of compensation: immediate damage for land required, collateral damage for the damage to adjacent land and finally, ultimate damage with the effect on the estates and the impact it had on farms.<sup>154</sup> Instead of the estate chamberlains being in negotiation with the railway companies, as was typical, or even Mr Gibson in Edinburgh negotiating with the railway promoters as was the case with shipping companies at Granton, it was the Duke who negotiated directly, ensuring that he gained the most he possibly could from it.<sup>155</sup>

This level of ducal scrutiny did not abate over time and the Duke informed William Maxwell that he had 'no intention of abating one farthing of the value put upon my land' and that if the railway did not proceed, then the promoters must provide compensation and 'be at the expense of doing so'.<sup>156</sup> This direct strategy did reap rewards as the promoters of the Glasgow Dumfries & Carlisle Railway Company ended up 'agreeing to my [the Duke's] stipulations & making a binding contract to fulfil them', as he informed Maxwell in March 1845.<sup>157</sup> Confident in his actions and his approach, the duke felt 'satisfied that I have acted prudently & rightly'.<sup>158</sup> After all this was a man who was determined to get the best deal possible, as he was 'not disposed to offer any opposition to the line' nor was would he

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<sup>153</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 28, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 26<sup>th</sup> April 1845.

<sup>154</sup> Bowhill House Archive, GD224/1032/4, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Maxwell, 15<sup>th</sup> January 1845; Thompson, *English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 157.

<sup>155</sup> John McGregor, 'The Factor and Railway Promotion in the Scottish Highlands: The West Highland Railway', in Lowri Ann Rees, Ciaran Reilly and Annie Tindley, (eds.), *The Land Agent 1700-1920*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018), p. 24; NRS, GD224/1126/239, Abstract of Imports and Exports of Granton Pier from 31 December 1841 to 1 January 1843 with Granton Pier Report 1842.

<sup>156</sup> Bowhill House Archive, GD224/1032/4, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Maxwell, 1<sup>st</sup> February 1845.

<sup>157</sup> Bowhill House Archive, GD224/1032/4, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Maxwell, 24<sup>th</sup> March 1845.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*

pledge 'that I may not object to the manner' in which the railway would cut across his land.<sup>159</sup>

Why was the Duke so keen to micromanage railway promotion across his estates? Arguably it was an opportunistic business allowing him to maximise land sales which could in turn be invested in other areas but also, the Duke was drawing on hard won experience in industrial expansion, something he lacked when he embarked upon the construction of Granton harbour. In April 1845 the Duke told William Ogilvie, chamberlain for the Bowhill Estate, that one his main conditions was a line from Canonbie to Gretna to join the main Dumfries line.<sup>160</sup> This would allow coal to be sold to a wider market and not only would the Duke be in receipt of compensation for land sold and damaged, he would also be provided with ease of access to markets for his coal products, thus maximising opportunity and profit.<sup>161</sup> This was at a time when the financial accounts were looking unstable, with a high level of credit. This strategy was not dissimilar to that of his contemporary the 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Fitzwilliam, who by leading local railway development ensured his 'coal mines would have access to the national rail network.'<sup>162</sup> This mindset was a common feature of the time amongst landowners like the Duke seeking to tie together non-contiguous areas of their estates so that not only did it 'unify the Scottish economy,' giving them returns and profit, but also 'linked that economy with England.'<sup>163</sup>

He could very well have allowed each respective estate chamberlain to manage the affairs of their area individually as some landlords did, and effectively be an absentee landlord, but he did not. Ensuring that he was in complete control of both the operations and the behind-the-scenes negotiations was of paramount importance to the Duke and it worked primarily in his favour. Thanks to the size and spread of the estates, the Duke had to deal with three 'belligerent railway companies' and create an 'amicable agreement.'<sup>164</sup> Instead of passing this sort of negotiation to either the respective chamberlain or his lawyer, he carried them

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<sup>159</sup> Bowhill House Archive, GD224/1032/3, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Maxwell, 9<sup>th</sup> February 1844.

<sup>160</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 28, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1845.

<sup>161</sup> "GLASGOW, DUMFRIES AND CARLISLE RAILWAY." *The Scotsman*, Jul 25, 1846.

<sup>162</sup> Mee, *Aristocratic Enterprise*, p. 39.

<sup>163</sup> Lenman, *An Economic History of Modern Scotland*, p. 166.

<sup>164</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 29, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 24<sup>th</sup> May 1847.

out himself. The Duke was very much the sort of landowner that 'needed no teaching at all that railways were good for him.'<sup>165</sup> Not only did he ensure considerable compensation for himself, but he also secured a good deal for the tenantry who were impacted, including a promise to 'rebuild in a convenient spot all such farm houses & outstandings' impacted.<sup>166</sup>

This active and visible approach was something the Duke shared with the 5<sup>th</sup> Earl of Fitzwilliam. The Earl of Fitzwilliam believed that landlords had to be active, and Graham Mee has highlighted how this translated into the view that a 'landlord had to contribute something' and not just live off the efforts of others.<sup>167</sup> The Duke shared this approach and while it is undeniable that he was looking to maximise opportunities and profits through diversification, he wanted to ensure that his tenantry and communities got a fair deal too, with this increasingly evident in his micromanagement of the railway promoters so that communities had access to new markets where produce could be sold. This increased their longevity and can be viewed as a success.

The financial strategy was equally driven between the Duke and Gibson with the latter superseding the chamberlains in seniority on the estates. Driven by financial pressures accrued from high levels of debt to the Royal Bank as well as a wider economic downturn, Gibson often had to remind the Duke of the need to increase the remittances from the estates with this particularly evident in May 1842 when remittances fell behind on the Queensberry Estate.<sup>168</sup> The other estates had all met their targets and this alarmed the Duke, who followed up.<sup>169</sup> In May 1847 Gibson wrote to the Duke stating the 'absolute necessity of avoiding any new works of an excessive description.'<sup>170</sup> This urgency was not new; in 1845 the Duke had written to William Maxwell, the Chamberlain of the Queensberry estate, urging that 'a fixed sum should be annually remitted' by him.<sup>171</sup> Gibson wrote directly to Maxwell also, to reinforce the message, stating that due to the industrial expansion

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<sup>165</sup> David Spring, 'English Landowners and Nineteenth-Century Industrialism', in J.T. Ward and R.G. Wilson, *Land and Industry: The Landed Estate and the Industrial Revolution: A Symposium*, (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1971), p. 25.

<sup>166</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 29, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 6<sup>th</sup> April 1846.

<sup>167</sup> Mee, *Aristocratic Enterprise*, p. 78.

<sup>168</sup> NRS, GD224/514/13, Letter from Mr Gibson to the Duke of Buccleuch, 14<sup>th</sup> May 1842.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>170</sup> NRS, GD224/514/13, Letter from Mr Gibson to the Duke of Buccleuch, 11<sup>th</sup> May 1847.

<sup>171</sup> NRS, GD224/1032/4, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Maxwell, 26<sup>th</sup> June 1845.

occurring elsewhere creating 'heavy engagements' he would 'do His Grace an essential service' if he could get his remittances back on track.<sup>172</sup> Tensions in estate managements were commonplace as estates diversified away from a purely agricultural business model towards more industrialised activities. Graham Mee has noted frustrations amongst the Wentworth estate management as industries grew and become more developed across coal and tar operations; increasingly the estate agents came into conflict with the mine managers as they 'developed particular specialisms.'<sup>173</sup> This sort of tension and lack of trust was increasingly evident during this period on the Buccleuch estates with Gibson taking on the role of general overseer, for instance in 1839 suggesting to the Duke that they should go through all of the accounts of the Chamberlains and Agents, item by item, and 'see what can be added to or saved from each.'<sup>174</sup> Although at risk of generating tensions in the estate management, employing men of Gibson's status and expertise was becoming increasingly common on large and diversifying estates in this period as both the scale and complexities increased.<sup>175</sup> This did not necessarily mean the men 'on the ground' had no autonomy – they certainly did to a considerable extent – but oversight and joined up management was on the rise.

Crucially, the Duke acted in a similar industrial manner when compared to the Sutherland estate acting 'directly and indirectly' depending on the industrial endeavour in question as an 'aristocratic entrepreneur in the Industrial Revolution.'<sup>176</sup> In doing so, the Duke then 'reaped substantial rewards' enabling these rewards to be invested in other estates across the country.<sup>177</sup> However, there were a number of differences when it came to the starting point between the Sutherland and Buccleuch dukedoms. The Sutherland family acted earlier investing in canals and subsequently moving to the railways with the latter proving to be the pivotal moment for Sutherland particularly between 1825 and 1845 whereas the 1840s was the critical decade for Buccleuch industrially.<sup>178</sup> With this in mind, the Buccleuch chamberlains did not have to contend with a new industry coming in and vying for new

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<sup>172</sup> NRS, GD224/1032/4, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Maxwell, 17<sup>th</sup> July 1845.

<sup>173</sup> Mee, *Aristocratic Enterprise*, p. 205.

<sup>174</sup> NRS, GD224/496/1, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from J Gibson, 31<sup>st</sup> August 1839.

<sup>175</sup> Richards, *The Leviathan of Wealth*.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid*, p. 37.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>178</sup> *Ibid*, p. 146.

finance which the Sutherland agent, whereas James Loch had to contend with a 'consistent policy of compromise.'<sup>179</sup> Gibson in this instance had a similar situation to Lock with compromise being a major factor in his employment through his persistent request for increased remittances from the estate chamberlains as has been evidenced. Like Loch on the Sutherland estate, Gibson was a central figure on the Scottish estates and crucial to the success of the industrial transformation on the Buccleuch estates. Gibson ultimately influenced the Duke's evolution and mindset as a landowner with this evident during the construction of Granton. When construction started the Duke was 31 and for a variety of reasons, allowed Gibson to lead on the day to day and strategic operations. However, there was a significant change in direction in terms of management after the Duke left Peel's government in 1846 and he became much more hands on from this point. The real turning point in this change was the coming of the railways. This was when the Duke took a more active and business-like role. In terms of the agricultural estates, the chamberlains were first and foremost employed to deliver the orders of the Duke and manage the estates but they had some autonomy, contributing to the success of the Duke's decision to diversify away from purely agricultural landholdings and investing in industry.

The Duke's micromanaging strategy in dealing with the expansion of the railways was in stark contrast to his more hands off approach in other industrial enterprises especially at Granton. With regular updates from his estate chamberlains and Gibson, the Duke ensured that nothing occurred without his express permission, particularly if related to finances due to his pressing need to manage and reduce the levels of debt incurred in the 1840s to support other developments. In doing so, this chapter highlights how the Duke remained one of the few members of the aristocracy who was able to ride out challenging financial periods with a strong management team around him.

#### 1.4: Conclusion

Having examined the various industrial developments and subsequent approaches to each, we now need to consider how far the Duke's strategies paid off in relation to increasing and diversifying the industrial enterprises on the Buccleuch estates. Firstly, if we judge success by the successful leveraging and management of debt burdens, we can suggest that the Duke's

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<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

strong relations with the Royal Bank ensured he was both able to get the credit he needed and put himself and his estates on a sound financial footing in both the short and long term. The Duke remained throughout one of the titans of Scottish landed aristocracy while transforming his estate holdings. He took several existing but rudimentary forms of industrialisation, specifically mining, turning them into professional operations while bringing them back under his own supervision at a time when many landed proprietors were doing the opposite and leasing out mines and other industrial assets. Compared to many of his contemporaries, Buccleuch also saw the possibilities that the railways could afford him not just financially through land sales and compensation but also through business opportunities for his industrial endeavours. This action to diversify and throw his hat into the race of industrialisation was not a unique action by the Duke as emphasised by David Cannadine, as more landowners than ever before were involved in the 'profitable exploitation of their estate' pointing to economic opportunism made possible by deep pockets.<sup>180</sup>

This is evident firstly, in that no land sales were required to fund the enterprises and the family remained the largest landowners in Scotland. However, using this as a measure of success only goes so far. Buccleuch, like many of his contemporaries was, as F.M.L. Thompson points out, 'simply joining in the race.'<sup>181</sup> Thompson also points out that there was 'no one, single, unchanging set of aristocratic values' when it came to developing industrial enterprises with each adopting their own approach.<sup>182</sup> This is true of Buccleuch and we can see his approach changing over time from a remote owner who merely signed actions off to one who was actively involved in the minutiae of the financial and industrial opportunities that came his way. However, this was not only a change over time but also a varying strategy depending on the strategy and the opportunities available. This is particularly noticeable when examining his approach to mine management and his dealings with railway promoters cutting across his lands whom he dealt with himself. They were not

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<sup>180</sup> Cannadine, *Aspects of Aristocracy*, p. 17.

<sup>181</sup> F.M.L. Thompson, *Gentrification and the Enterprise Culture: Britain 1780-1980*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 40.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid*, p. 43.

on-going concerns like his mining investments but short in duration, requiring intense periods of involvement.

One central pillar of the overall success was the management and legal team around the Duke.<sup>183</sup> The Duke's approach to the various industrial developments changed over time, but undoubtedly one individual more than others enabled success and that was John Gibson Esq. Gibson. It was Gibson who ensured that Granton Harbour was completed, but also managed the complex finance situation with the Royal Bank and the wider relationships required to finance such an enterprise. It could be argued that without Gibson's expert and steady hand, the outcome of the Granton endeavour could have been very different for the Duke. He did not have the capacity in the early years of Granton's development to lead its management. The Duke was young, inexperienced in industrial development, in the early years of his marriage to Duchess Charlotte Anne and much abroad in Europe with his family. His position was changing as he matured politically to take a more prominent role in the Conservative Party and Royal Court. All of these factors contributed to a remote landed industrialist who merely signed off on requests from his man on the ground who had the intricate knowledge of what was going on. This was something which undoubtedly contributed to the high levels of credit that at some points posed a risk to the future of not only Granton but the wider Buccleuch dukedom.

His approach to mining was different and a relationship of cooperation between the Duke, Gibson, and the estate and mine managers was an effective one and mirrors the point made by F.M.L. Thompson that it was 'very much a co-operative enterprise.'<sup>184</sup> He was more intricately involved in decision making, receiving guidance from the managers at the respective mines with a more cooperative style of management. However, not all managers were treated equally, with the Duke preferring to deal with James Wright at Dalkeith who was professionally trained, something Gibson liked to point out. In contrast, Edmund Gibsone was often side-lined with Wright being consulted instead even on mines that were not under his control. With the proximity of Wright's colliery at Dalkeith to the Duke's

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<sup>183</sup> Spring, 'English Landowners and Nineteenth-Century Industrialism', in Ward and Wilson, *Land and Industry*, p. 47.

<sup>184</sup> Thompson, *English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century*, p. 151.

primary residence, the two men with Gibson formed a formidable working relationship with the Duke involved in every aspect of coal mining.

This strategy in working with his mining management came to the fore when the decision to bring the lead mines of Wanlockhead back under the Duke's direct control was taken. This classic case of opportunism brought great financial returns for the Duke at a time of pressure to repay the Royal Bank, and was only possible with the advice and guidance of his aides. Wanlockhead went on to become a great success, garnering good publicity for the Duke at a time when many of his contemporaries were beginning to lease out their mining affairs to reduce risks and increase financial returns.

The micromanagement approach taken by the Duke towards the railways ensured that he got the deal he wanted at the expense of excluding his estate management from negotiations. By the time the railway negotiations peaked, the Duke was spending considerable time at his Scottish estates and crucially, he was much more experienced in industrial entrepreneurialism than the early days of Granton. His grasp of the opportunities presented by the railways was sound, and the size of his landholdings meant that he had the power to create real problems for railway promoters, something he skilfully used to get his own way, and price. The railways provided a crucial component to the wider industrial diversification programme on the estates; not only did they provide welcome cash injections during the debt laden years of the 1840s, but they also provided an opportunity for the expansion of other activities such as coal mining and agriculture with the reduction in distance of new markets for the sale of these goods.

However, the Duke and his closest managers did face frustrations which could have caused real struggles, especially financially. The consistently poor returns from the estates during the crunch years of 1839 to 1846 came to head in January 1844 with Gibson agreeing with the Duke that an annual meeting with chamberlains and agents would be beneficial to 'prevent any misunderstanding or disappointment in remittances.'<sup>185</sup> This frustration reappeared again in June 1845 when the remittances still were not enough to meet the

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<sup>185</sup> NRS, GD224/514/13, Letter from J Gibson Esq to the Duke of Buccleuch, 24<sup>th</sup> January 1844.

'heavy demands' in which the Duke was engaged.<sup>186</sup> However, for all of the pressures coming from lack of remittances, the Duke successfully reduced the debt burden with support from individuals such as Gibson.

The Duke also avoided another common pitfall of his peers: over expansion. He had the backing of one of the biggest financial providers in Scotland, the Royal Bank of Scotland, where he also held senior positions in the organisation. The Royal Bank, despite having a reputation which was, 'not specially noted for a liberal lending policy,' supported the Duke's ambitions, and he further benefitted from a management team that was competent in their dealings.<sup>187</sup> Perhaps most important was the partnership between the Duke and Gibson, which delivered successful financial management during a period of risky expansion to maximise opportunities that ultimately secured the family fortunes for generations to come.<sup>188</sup> The levels of debt were periodically high, but they never over-stretched the family, helped by manageable interest rates, and the diversity of the wider portfolio, which meant the family were not at the mercy of fluctuations in one market. What these increasing levels of debt can highlight is that even though the Duke may have been able to guarantee lenders the underpinning of the estates, his main currency for borrowing was his name and position.<sup>189</sup>

The Duke may have pushed his personal and estate finances to their maximum during times of prolonged expenditure however, they always managed to come back from the brink. His actions in constructing Granton Harbour and tying the railways into contracts ensured he received a considerable portion of compensation relieving some of the financial pressures on him allowed him to tie his industrial developments together to maximise potential. His successes brought returns for the estates but also for the communities in which he operated in as the returns allowed him to invest in his landed estates.

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<sup>186</sup> Ibid, Letter to estate Chamberlains from the Duke of Buccleuch, 26<sup>th</sup> June 1845.

<sup>187</sup> T.R. Gourvish and M.C. Reed, 'The financing of Scottish railways before 1860 – a comment,' *Scottish Journal of Political Economy*, 18, 1971, p. 217.

<sup>188</sup> Spring, 'English Landowners and Nineteenth-Century Industrialism' in *Land and Industry*, (eds.), Ward and Wilson, p. 48.

<sup>189</sup> Cannadine, *Aspects of Aristocracy*, p. 49.

## **Chapter 2: – ‘Upon no account to raise their wages’: Industrial Management and Welfare<sup>1</sup>**

### **2.1: Introduction**

The industrial expansion and transformation of the Duke of Buccleuch’s Scottish estates brought with it new challenges, specifically related to the management of these new industrial endeavours, including that of the welfare of the new workforces created. This chapter is split into three sections. Firstly, the people who worked on the estates. This examines the role of the estate chamberlains, conditions for working people on the estates and the exclusion of women and children from the coal mines prior to government legislation enforcing this in 1842. Secondly, industrial relations will be examined through an analysis of wages and the emergence and growth of trade union activity. Finally, the welfare provision of those in the employment of the Duke will be discussed, through an examination of education, housing and sick funds. Central to understanding the approach to the industrial management and welfare of the Duke of Buccleuch’s Scottish estates is an examination from the micro level by understanding how he treated those who worked for him. This approach reinforces the picture of an individual who believed in helping people as a paternalist but was also willing to crush any form of dissent or insubordination on the part of his employees or tenantry.

This chapter contributes to a wide range of historiography including that on estate managers, the development of a new industrial working class, including the employment of women and children in coal mining, wages, the emergence and subsequent dealing with trade unions, educational provision, housing and finally the operation of the sick funds. Work has recently begun to give a new understanding of the role played by land agents in this period of fundamental estate re-organisations. One of the most notable recent publications has been compiled by Annie Tindley, Lowri Ann Rees and Ciaran Reilly examining the land agent from 1700-1920.<sup>2</sup> They highlight that Scottish historiography in

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<sup>1</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, Uncatalogued, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to Mr Osborne, 30<sup>th</sup> November 1845.

<sup>2</sup> Lowri Ann Rees, Ciaran Reilly and Annie Tindley (eds), *The Land Agent: 1700-1920*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2018).

particular focusses on landlord-tenant relations and protest creating a 'polarised view of rural Scotland.'<sup>3</sup> However, this publication makes a valiant effort to try and dispel this polarised view of the land agent in Scotland but omits the role of the land agent in lowland Scotland which also underwent significant change in the 19<sup>th</sup> century with increasing industrialisation. This chapter aims to begin to highlight the role the land agent had during a tumultuous time for one of the most notable lowland landed aristocrats in Scotland. It puts the Buccleuch experience into a wider British context, utilising a number of focussed studies such as those by Carol A. Beardmore on the Marquess of Anglesey's estate management.<sup>4</sup> These studies emphasise the unenviable task of the evolving role of the land agent in an increasingly professionalised role where the demands of both landlord and tenant became greater, generating an increasingly 'responsible position' for the agent.<sup>5</sup> Beardmore highlights – as this thesis does also - that land agents in this period were 'the managers of some of the largest business enterprises of in the country.'<sup>6</sup> In many ways, this drove the professionalisation of agents, as the required financial, legal and business skills and experience they required increased exponentially as their employers diversified into the opportunities of the industrial revolution.

This chapter will examine the conditions of the growing number of working people on the estates, utilising a case study of weavers in order to demonstrate the profound change they faced with industrialisation from the top of the artisanal pyramid to the bottom, and Buccleuch's responses. Much has been published on the plight of weavers, with Ian Levitt and Christopher Smout's *The State of the Scottish Working Class in 1843* remaining of great importance, and illustrating the plight of this group, who were in receipt of support from the Duke.<sup>7</sup> However, Levitt and Smout's publication does not address fully the role that landlords continued to play, even after several governmental investigations into the plight of

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Carol A. Beardmore, 'The Rural Estate through the Eyes of the Land Agent: A Community in Microcosm c.1812-1844', *Family & Community History*, 2016, 19(1), pp. 17-33; Carol Beardmore, 'The Marquis of Anglesey: working and social relationships on a Dorset estate (c.1812 – 1844)' *Rural History*, 31, 2020, pp. 135-150.

<sup>5</sup> Robert E. Brown, *The Book of the Landed Estate containing directions for the Management and Development of the resources of Landed Property*, (Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1869), p. 12.

<sup>6</sup> Beardmore, 'The Rural Estate through the Eyes of the Land Agent', *Family & Community History*, 19(1), 2016, p. 21.

<sup>7</sup> Ian Levitt and Christopher Smout, *The State of the Scottish Working-Class in 1843*, (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1979).

weavers.<sup>8</sup> Norman Murray's publication did not do this citing a lack of evidence making it challenging to estimate the success of occasional relief.<sup>9</sup> Buccleuch archival material allows for a critical examination to be carried out looking at whether or not assistance was provided and if so, was sufficient.

The notorious working conditions faced by miners in this period cannot be ignored, and concerns surrounding them came to a head in 1842 with the introduction of the Coal Mines Act of 1842, which – among other measures – prevented children from working underground in coal mines. Alan Heesom has written extensively on this piece of legislation, with an emphasis on education reinforcing the notion of social control, something which was the case with the Duke.<sup>10</sup> The 1842 Act brought with it considerable attention to the mining practices of individuals like the Duke. However, the Duke's mining practices were cited for his moral standing, something examined by Roy Church and John Hassan.<sup>11</sup> Hassan's examination of the Lothian Coalfield has a major omission in that it does not examine the influence on a landlord who operated in multiple coalfields and the subsequent impact this could have on their working.<sup>12</sup> Examination of the role of women's labour in coal and lead mining from a feminist perspective is critical to understanding this major legislative change with Barbara Harrison arguing that in lead mining, an area which the Duke had an active investment, when state intervention occurred it was not necessarily for the benefit of the workforce but patriarchal interests at work reinforcing this notion of social control, as the state often did not challenge the capitalist interest.<sup>13</sup> However, this patriarchal interest

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<sup>8</sup> For example: Great Britain, Parliamentary papers, *Final Report of the Royal Commission on Handloom Weaver*, 1841.

<sup>9</sup> Norman Murray, *The Scottish Hand Loom Weavers 1790-1850: A Social History*, (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers Ltd, 1978), p. 140.

<sup>10</sup> A. Heesom, 'The Coal Mines Act of 1842, Social Reform, and Social Control', *The Historical Journal*, 24(1), 1981, pp. 69-88.

<sup>11</sup> Roy Church, *The History of the British Coal Industry*, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986; John A. Hassan, 'The Landed Estate, Paternalism and the Coal Industry in Midlothian, 1800-1880', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 59(167), 1980, pp. 73-91.

<sup>12</sup> Hassan, 'The Landed Estate, Paternalism and the Coal Industry in Midlothian', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 59(167), 1980, pp. 73-91.

<sup>13</sup> Jane Humphries, 'Protective Legislation, the Capitalist State, and Working Class Men: The Case of the 1842 Mines Regulation Act', *Feminist Review*, 7, 1981, p. 7; Jane Mark-Lawson & Anne Witz, 'From 'family labour' to 'family wage'? The case of women's labour in nineteenth-century coalmining', *Social History*, 13(2), 1988, p. 164; Barbara Harrison, 'Some of Them Gets Lead Poisoned': Occupational Lead Exposure in Women, 1880-1914', *Social History of Medicine*, 2(2), 1989, pp. 171-195.

was not necessarily the form of paternalism that the Duke championed, but rather was the sort that excluded women workers for the advantage of the men preserving their employment and higher pay, a point made by Harrison.<sup>14</sup> It is crucial to understand not only the standpoint of the Duke on these issues, but also that of the estate management who were advising him and were aware of conditions on the ground, which this chapter will address.

The question of wages paid to those employed in industries associated with the Duke is vital to understanding the approach taken by the Duke and his estate management. It is challenging to ascertain wages paid to workers, particularly in the first half of the nineteenth century, with considerable amounts of the historiography being dated.<sup>15</sup> There is literature on this topic, but it is limited by a tendency to focus on individual industries and not provide much comparative analysis. An exception to this is the work of Levitt and Smout: they show that the industrial revolution had not impacted a significant portion of Scotland by 1840 and the distinction between Highland and Lowland Scotland was considerable with this distinction being further exacerbated within the respective regions.<sup>16</sup> Putting to one side the dated nature of this work, it provides useful context for the Buccleuch estates. Agricultural wages are better understood, with T.M. Devine's work leading here; however, the focus in the literature is on the agricultural revolution leaving the questions from the time period of this study unanswered.<sup>17</sup>

Wage levels and industrial action were tightly linked, and this chapter will also analyse industrial relations on the Buccleuch estates. These were often difficult, and the Duke himself was highly intolerant of trade unions and collective bargaining on principle. However, the literature on the emergence and operation of Scottish trade unionism is sparse

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid, p. 192.

<sup>15</sup> Dov Friedlander, 'Occupation Structure, Wages, and Migration in Late Nineteenth-Century England and Wales', *Economic Development and Cultural Change*, 40(2), 1992, pp. 295-318; Jeffrey G. Williamson, 'Earnings Inequality in Nineteenth-Century Britain', *The Journal of Economic History*, 40(3), pp. 457-475; E.J. Hobsbawm, 'Custom, Wages, and Work-Load in Nineteenth-Century Industry' in *Essays in Labour History* by Asa Briggs, (London: Macmillan, 1960), p. 113-139; Levitt and Smout, *The State of the Scottish Working-Class in 1843*.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> T.M. Devine, C.H. Lee and G.C. Peden, *The Transformation of Scotland: The Economy since 1700*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2005).

in relation to the first half of the nineteenth century with an emphasis on the latter half with this being considerable dated.<sup>18</sup> This point is further reiterated in relation to trade union studies in connection with landed estates involved in industry.<sup>19</sup> A. Campbell has highlighted how trade unions did operate in a rudimentary form at a national level but were more apparent through short-lived federations at a local level, which was the case on the Buccleuch coal fields.<sup>20</sup> The national relationship between trade unionism and Chartism in the first half of the nineteenth century is emphasised by Keith Laybourn, but the latter was not a major factor in industrial relations on the Buccleuch estates.<sup>21</sup> T.M. Devine notes that Scottish trade unions had a challenging time during the Victorian period with several defeats breaking any momentum in the movement.<sup>22</sup> This lack of momentum is evident on the estates, particularly in coal mining with several consecutive defeats in close succession hampering workers' progress to the benefit of the Duke. W.W. Knox's work is crucial to understanding the trade unionism that was most prevalent on the Buccleuch estates in the Victorian period.<sup>23</sup> Knox emphasises that the trade unions were not representative of Scottish workers with individual bargaining being the feature of industrial relationships, something that is true in the Buccleuch industries. However, A.J. Youngson Brown emphasises that trade union activity originated around the role of wages with this aligning with the emergence of trade unions connected with Buccleuch industries especially in mining.<sup>24</sup> A better understanding of how the landed aristocracy with industrial investments dealt with trade unions is crucial to having a more rounded understanding of how those helping further their wealth were treated. This chapter aims to partially address this gap for lowland Scotland.

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<sup>18</sup> A. Campbell, 'From Independent Collier to Militant Miner: Tradition and Change in the Trade Union Consciousness of the Scottish Miners 1874-1929', *Scottish Labour History*, 24, 1989, pp. 8-23; A.J. Youngson Brown, 'Trade Union Policy in the Scots Coalfields, 1855-1885', *The Economic History Review*, 6(1), 1953, pp. 35-50.

<sup>19</sup> John Hassan, *The Development of the Coal Industry in Mid and West Lothian 1815-1873*, PhD Thesis, 1976, University of Strathclyde.

<sup>20</sup> Campbell, 'From Independent Collier to Militant Miner', *Scottish Labour History*, 24, 1989, pp. 8-23.

<sup>21</sup> Keith Laybourn, *A History of British Trade Unionism c.1770-1990*, (Stroud: Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd, 1992).

<sup>22</sup> Devine, Lee and Peden, *The Transformation of Scotland*.

<sup>23</sup> W.W.Knox, *Industrial Nation: Work, Culture and Society in Scotland, 1800-present*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1999).

<sup>24</sup> Youngson Brown, 'Trade Union Policy in the Scots Coalfields', *The Economic History Review*, 6(1), 1953, pp. 35-50.

The history of education provision in Scotland is well covered in Scottish historiography; however, detail of provision on landed estates is somewhat less well covered.<sup>25</sup>The Duke took an active interest in parochial education on his estates in Scotland with Cameron's work echoing that if the relationship with the landowner was strong, it could be a force for good in the community educationally.<sup>26</sup> This study will strengthen and illustrate how the relationship between landowner and the school was not necessarily just one of social control but a moral one with religion influencing this.<sup>27</sup> However, the philanthropic nature of education led by landowners prior to the 1872 Act shall be reaffirmed with this being an essential feature of Scottish education.<sup>28</sup>

The question of housing provision is critical to understanding a multitude of aspects of estate life with it having been addressed from multiple perspectives.<sup>29</sup> These perspectives include the industrialisation, migration and growth of disease during the Victorian era but that when house building did occur it was not for the benefit of the tenantry but the landowner to make an estate more appealing to look at.<sup>30</sup> However, a large amount of these publications do not examine rural Lowland Scotland thus limiting their impact. This major omission does not address the issues faced by Buccleuch when it came to housing during a time of a growing population and changing standards. When house building did take place, it begs the question in the case of the Duke was it for the benefit of the tenantry in raising their moral standards, paternalistic action or was it to try and portray themselves as a proactive landlord? This is something this chapter shall address alongside why the Duke partook in incentives for industrial workers keeping homes clean and tidy drawing upon the

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<sup>25</sup> Iain Hutchison, *Industry, Reform and Empire, Scotland, 1790-1880*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), p. 53; Ewen A. Cameron, 'Education in Rural Scotland, 1696 – 1872,' in Robert Anderson, Mark Freeman and Lindsay Paterson (eds), *The Edinburgh History of Education in Scotland*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2015).

<sup>26</sup> Cameron, 'Education in Rural Scotland' in Anderson, Freeman and Paterson (eds), *The Edinburgh History of Education in Scotland*, p. 160.

<sup>27</sup> E. Patricia Dennison, *The Evolution of Scotland's Towns, Creation growth and Fragmentation*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017); Jane McDermid, 'Catholic women teachers and Scottish education in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries', *History of Education*, 38(5), 2009, pp. 605-620.

<sup>28</sup> Olive Checkland, *Philanthropy in Victorian Scotland: Social Welfare and the Voluntary Principle*, (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers: 1980), p. 130.

<sup>29</sup> Dennison, *The Evolution of Scotland's Towns*; Checkland, *Philanthropy in Victorian Scotland*.

<sup>30</sup> Enid Gaudie, *Cruel Habitations, A History of Working Class Housing 1780-1918*, (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd, 1974); Hutchison, *Industry, Reform and Empire*.

moral aspect of housing.<sup>31</sup> Something that the literature doesn't touch upon however they emphasise that landlords felt a moral sense of duty for providing good accommodation with incentives for keeping it clean and tidy.

Sick funds were present in the mining operations of the Duke of Buccleuch but were unique to these industries begging the question why and one that critically needs answered. This paternalistic action of looking after employees did also extend to cover dependents. The wider historiography on this topic exists but looks at how those with injuries were looked after as is the case with Daniel Blackie and David M. Turner's work.<sup>32</sup> However, this work omits the role of the landowner turned industrialist in providing this care when they were injured in their employment. Robert Gray has addressed the period prior to 1850 through their examination of medical provision but it does not address the mining industry, nor does it address the role of the landowner.<sup>33</sup>

This chapter will provide an insight into the operations of those employed by the Duke – his managers, tenants and employees – and will also address the evolving aspects of industrial relations, the emergence of trade unions and critically the welfare provision established by the Duke, a landed aristocrat turned industrialist who believed in paternalism both as a duty and a public image. This was reinforced by fear of reputational damage while still ensuring social control, as evidenced by his creation of tied housing and sick funds. The security of the estates may have been one of the Duke's driving forces but the conditions in which those who worked for him or were connected with him were always present even when times became financially challenging.

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<sup>31</sup> Hassan, 'The Landed Estate, Paternalism and the Coal Industry in Midlothian', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 59(167), 1980, pp. 73 – 91.

<sup>32</sup> Daniel Blackie & David M. Turner, *Disability in the Industrial Revolution, Physical impairment in British coalmining, 1780-1880*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2018).

<sup>33</sup> Robert Gray, 'Medical Men, Industrial Labour and the State in Britain, 1830-50', *Social History*, 16(1), 1991, pp. 19-43.

## 2.2: People

### 2.2.1: The Role of Estate Chamberlains

The people on the estates were crucial to the development of the estates but also ensuring that the Duke remained a paternalist and his actions were not solely for his own gain. It illustrates that the major change that took place on the estates brought closer attention to the Scottish Buccleuch estates putting them under greater scrutiny, something which allows us to place the Duke into the wider context of aristocrats in Scotland. The estate chamberlains were the eyes and ears of the Duke on his estates, controlling and running the day-to-day business when he was not present. Their sphere of influence went further than just the estates proper, but also included the nearby towns and villages, farms and industrial endeavours. Correspondence between the Duke and Duchess and the chamberlains are crucial to understanding the Duke's approach to industrial and estate management and his paternalistic philosophy. This section identifies how critical these individuals were to the smooth running and transformation that ensured the estates were not only operating efficiently on a day-to-day basis but were safe for future generations. It will also emphasise that the Duke may have had the final say but considerable levels of autonomy were given to these individuals. It was a partnership operation which enabled a smooth running estate machine, epitomising the point made by F.M.L. Thompson that it would be misleading to say that all agents did was execute orders with the decision making being done by the owners.<sup>34</sup> Those involved in the running of estates during this time period have left behind a fascinating and incredibly valuable resource for the historian to understand the myriad goings on of the estates and their evolution.<sup>35</sup>

The Buccleuch estates were not typical. They covered large areas of Scotland with a diverse portfolio of agriculture and industry. Most members of the landed aristocracy did not own several non-contiguous estates like the Duke of Buccleuch, meaning that instead of one agent or chamberlain, the Duke had a chamberlain for each of the estates. In Scotland there were three at the respective estates; they had considerable freedom, but their employer

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<sup>34</sup> F.M.L. Thompson, *English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul), 1963, p. 151.

<sup>35</sup> Beardmore, 'The Rural Estate through the Eyes of the Land Agent', *Family & Community History*, 2016, 19(1).

knew the minute details on his estates, and they would always defer to him. The estate chamberlains employed by the Duke epitomised a point made by Robert E. Brown in 1869, that those individuals entrusted with running the estate had to 'exercise a large share of the power of his employer and is his representative in most respects when absent.'<sup>36</sup> This was a position of great power and has led to an overwhelmingly negative portrayal of land agents in the historiography. Ewen Cameron highlights a 'rich anti-landlord literature' where a select few agents such as Patrick Sellar (Sutherland estates) or Donald Munro (Seaforth estates) have been examined in extensive detail, as 'special cases' where they are presented as notoriously cruel or corrupt individuals who disregarded the welfare of the estate tenantry in order to push the interests of their employers.<sup>37</sup> Cases such as Sellar have dominated the literature and his peers in the Scottish lowlands have been relatively ignored. This section will provide an alternative insight into their central role in managing the estates of one of the great landed aristocrats of the nineteenth century. It also fills a considerable gap in the wider literature and challenges the notion that factors were often 'an unpopular personage.'<sup>38</sup> With this examination of how the chamberlains operated with the Duke in his industrial management, we are now able to provide a lowland perspective at a time of profound change and challenge the wider held perceptions. This reaffirms the point made by Rachel Murphy that estate agency varied according to the size and location of each estate, and the financial situation of the landlord.<sup>39</sup> The historiography has created a 'polarised view of rural Scotland' where a tiny elite such as the Duke were on one side and a 'poverty stricken small tenantry on the other.'<sup>40</sup> What this study provides is a more nuanced and richer view of the layered rural society that was in existence during the lifetime of the Duke. This layered rural society which included the Duke and the tenantry but also a middle class of larger farmers, merchants and land agents is visible through the sederunt books at Drumlanrig Castle.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Brown, *The Book of the Landed Estate*, p. 12.

<sup>37</sup> Ewen A. Cameron, 'Not a popular personage': The Factor in Scottish Property Relations c.1870-1920' in Rees, Reilly & Tindley (eds.), *The Land Agent*, p. 55.

<sup>38</sup> Rees, Reilly & Tindley (eds.), *The Land Agent*, p. 4.

<sup>39</sup> Rachel Murphy, 'The Courtown Land Agents and Transnational Estate Management, 1850-1900' in Rees, Reilly & Tindley (eds.), *The Land Agent*, p. 93.

<sup>40</sup> Rees, Reilly & Tindley (eds.), *The Land Agent*, p. 5.

<sup>41</sup> For more on this see Chapter 4 on paternalism where a breakdown of assistance is given.

The work of the chamberlains allows us to understand the financial and social operation underpinning the estates during a time of profound societal and economic change and when large estates were beginning to struggle with the realities of a changing Britain. This highlights the pressures upon the estates to contribute to the increasingly dominant industrial portfolio, but also illuminates the role of the Duke in pressuring the chamberlains to increase productivity and find efficiency savings at a time when they also had to be 'the great promoter of improvement on the estate under his charge.'<sup>42</sup> In 1845, the Duke informed Ogilvie that 'it is necessary that a great exertion should be made for a few years, when all things will come straight,' referring to the financial pressures being generated by the Granton enterprise.<sup>43</sup> In September 1845 the Duke wrote to his Bowhill chamberlain asking if he expected to make any further remittances before the end of the next month due to these financial pressures, reminding him that his main focus was to 'ensure estate profitability' and to be a 'pragmatic businessman.'<sup>44</sup> This sometimes came at the price of reducing opportunities for the population on the estates. In the same letter, the Duke stated that he believed there would 'be a great demand for labourers for the various railways & other works going on in the country, so that it [need] not be necessary to employ extra hands for the sake of giving them the means of subsistence.'<sup>45</sup> The Duke understood the difficult position he was putting his chamberlains in, as the estate was often the major employer in the area, but financially they were not in a position to sustain the normal levels of employment. The level of expenditure had to be reduced and this reduction fell onto the chamberlains to enact. This reduction was intended to protect and prioritise the industrial developments, which would in turn secure the wider operations and drum up funds for the future, so the Duke would be in a position to invest and 'enter upon extended improvement upon the Estates.'<sup>46</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Brown, *The Book of the Landed Estate*, p. 18; For more on this see Chapter 1 on industrial development where the financial situation of the Buccleuch estates is looked at in depth.

<sup>43</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 28, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 26<sup>th</sup> June 1845.

<sup>44</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 28, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 8<sup>th</sup> September 1845; Beardmore, 'The Rural Estate through the Eyes of the Land Agent, *Family & Community History*, 2016, 19(1), p. 20 & 21.

<sup>45</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 28, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 8<sup>th</sup> September 1845.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*

This level of micromanagement was part of the Duke's approach to his operations and relations with his chamberlains. He kept a particularly careful eye on finances, for example in 1847, when on examining the estate accounts, he uncovered expenditure showing an increase of £1000 on the previous year. Coming in challenging economic times due to the high levels of debt servicing the industrial enterprises required at this point, the Duke demanded an explanation from Ogilvie as to why this had occurred as he wanted to 'keep my expenses as low as possible.'<sup>47</sup> The Duke micromanaged aspects of the estates such as financial and welfare matters giving the estate chamberlains considerable autonomy on the remainder of matters such as agricultural management but this autonomy only went so far.

In the 1840s, the Duke incurred vast levels of debt, and this ultimately fed down to his estate chamberlains, restricting their autonomy, a pattern which established itself more or less permanently. In 1857 Gibson, the Duke's solicitor, informed him that the Royal Bank had continued to give readily what he needed but that the 'remittances from the chamberlains have been unusually small in 1856.'<sup>48</sup> They were as follows: Mr Ogilvie (Bowhill) £7,000, Mr Maxwell (Queensberry) £14,338 and Mr Connell (Dalkeith) £20,000 giving a total of £41,338.<sup>49</sup> Gibson wanted to increase the rental income by £10,000 the following year. The financial positioning of the estates was ultimately the responsibility of the chamberlains and what the correspondence illustrates is that they had become complacent in their financial dealings with a lack of awareness and urgency into how they were feeding into the bigger picture. Carol Beardmore has highlighted how ultimately the function of land agent was to 'ensure estate profitability' but at Buccleuch they required regular reminders at times of economic challenge, as illustrated here.<sup>50</sup>

The Buccleuch estate chamberlains had an unenviable task. They were employed by one of the grandest landed aristocrats with one of the biggest estate holdings in Britain during a period of large change socially and economically especially during the crunch decade of the 1840s. With considerable autonomy to operate their respective estate affairs, it is arguable

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<sup>47</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 30, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 26<sup>th</sup> August 1847.

<sup>48</sup> NRS, GD224/724/8, Letter from J Gibson to the Duke of Buccleuch, 21<sup>st</sup> January 1857.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>50</sup> Beardmore, 'The Rural Estate through the Eyes of the Land Agent', *Family & Community History*, 19(1), 2016, p. 20.

each chamberlain became complacent economically when remittances were not sufficient to sustain the economic change that the Duke wanted to enact. However, this autonomy only went so far. The Duke had a profound understanding of what was occurring on his land and made the final decision leaving, in many cases the challenging aspects to the estate chamberlains as can be seen with the reduction of expenditure having a knock on effect for many who looked upon the estates for their source of employment. Critically, this team of individuals were the Duke's eyes and ears on the ground on the estates and informed him of the conditions of the not only the tenantry but the wider communities in the vicinity of these large estates similarly to many of their contemporaries of the time. This partnership, for all of its shortfalls, generally worked effectively with a landlord who spent considerable time away from his Scottish estates in London who required effective estate chamberlains to manage his affairs on the ground when absent ensuring that the tenants were looked after while other pressures were in existence.

### 2.2.2: Employment of Women and Children in Coal Mines

A report by a Royal Commission in 1842 exposed a 'social evil' at the degradation that was taking place underground in the extraction of coal and 'shocked contemporary society.'<sup>51</sup> The Mines and Collieries Bill 1842 was the main result of the commission and was a pivotal moment in coal mining operations in Britain. It prohibited all underground work for women and girls, and for boys under the age of 10. Lord Ashley introduced the Coal Mines Bill was 'only incidentally to remove a social evil, to lessen hardships, or to prevent indecency' but his core argument was to ensure that children were able to benefit from some degree of education.<sup>52</sup> There were two major elements at play with the 1842 Act. Firstly, as Roy Church has highlighted, the 'contemporary movement for social reform' and secondly, the desire for 'moral and religious education' which was believed would 'civilize the labouring population.'<sup>53</sup> The Commissioners estimated that in the east of Scotland as many as 338 women were employed per 1,000 men, although none of these were in the Buccleuch

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<sup>51</sup> Heesom, 'The Coal Mines Act of 1842', *The Historical Journal*, 24(1), 1981, p. 71; R.H. Franks, *Children's Employment Commission 1842*.

<sup>52</sup> A. Heesom, 'The Coal Mines Act of 1842, Social Reform, and Social Control', *The Historical Journal*, 24(1), 1981, p. 81

<sup>53</sup> Church, *The History of the British Coal Industry*, p. 192.

operations, with the Dundas collieries also voluntarily excluding women.<sup>54</sup> This begs the question why was the Duke of Buccleuch ahead of the curve regarding the employment of women and children underground in his coal mining operations?<sup>55</sup> The answer to this question is not simple nor is it readily apparent through the archival material available. However, this piece of legislation and the actions of the Duke are a crucial example to understanding a non-financial aspect of the industrial change that took place on the Buccleuch Scottish estates. It highlights a very real element of a desire for societal improvement stemming from the Duke directly, something which not all of his contemporaries did.

The Duke did not give evidence to the Royal Commission's enquiry into the employment of women and children, but his preferred colliery manager, James Wright of the Dalkeith Colliery did so instead. In his verbal evidence to the commission, Wright stated his view that employing women and children was disadvantageous because, 'the employment of women induces early marriages' and that 'females are wrought only where no men can be induced to draw or work' highlighting that 'since young children and females have been excluded from his Grace's mines, we have never had occasion to increase the price of coal.'<sup>56</sup> Wright's evidence would indicate that it was both a moral and an economic decision to exclude the employment of women and children from the coal mining operations to avoid early marriages to ensure men kept working. It was also believed by Wright and subsequently by the Commissioners that the forced exclusion of women in coal mines would improve working conditions as with only men underground it would ensure the mines were better ventilated and roadways improved.<sup>57</sup>

It was not only at Dalkeith Colliery where evidence was given, but also Canonbie Colliery. Indicating that there was apprehension about the commission and the impact it could have on reputation of not only the Duke but his mine managers, the Duke's Parliamentary Private

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<sup>54</sup> Humphries, 'Protective Legislation, the Capitalist State, and Working Class Men', *Feminist Review*, 7, 1981, p. 7; Mark-Lawson & Witz, 'From 'family labour' to 'family wage'?', *Social History*, 13(2), 1988, p. 164.

<sup>55</sup> David Milne, *Memoir on the Mid-Lothian and East-Lothian Coalfields*, Edinburgh: William Blackwood and Sons, 1839.

<sup>56</sup> National Mining Museum Scotland, Dalkeith Colliery Material.

<sup>57</sup> Mark-Lawson & Witz, 'From 'family labour' to 'family wage'?', *Social History*, 13(2), 1988, p. 165.

Secretary, Gilbert Talbot wrote a questionnaire for the Canonbie Colliery in preparation for the sittings asking:

1<sup>st</sup> The age at which children are employed? From 14 to 18 years of age.

2<sup>nd</sup> The sex of such children? Boys no girl or Women allowed to work at the colliery.

3<sup>rd</sup> The number of boys & girls? Eleven boys

4<sup>th</sup> The nature of their employment? All colliers, supporting their fathers, except one who works at the winding engine.

5<sup>th</sup> The looms of work in the mines, specifying the time allowed for meals? From 5 o'clock am to 10 o'clock am, or 4pm depending upon the state of Trade. No stop made by the winding engine, but the people have a good deal of time for their meals, these are principally taken when they get home and cleaned.

6<sup>th</sup> The wages of such children? Young boys allowed one quarter of a mans out put, at 16 years one half, at fourteen years three quarters, and part eighteen full work.

NB These regulations were made by the manager and me, and not from any custom of the work men.

7<sup>th</sup> Also the number of adults, their average wages, and the number of hours during which they work? 56 Colliers drawing their own coals. 6 underground labourers including overs man, 19 above ground [...]

The underground labourers and Banksmen working hours are on the principal that the faster they work the sooner their work is over, when the colliery is very busy, there are nearly 100 men & boys employed above & below ground in all.<sup>58</sup>

Prior to Lord Ashley introducing the Act, it was revealed that female employment in coal mining was largely found in the east of Scotland where Roy Church stated that 'every fourth underground employee was female.'<sup>59</sup> However, the Duke was not one of these mine owners partaking in this employment. It came to the notice of a John Loudon who in May 1842

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<sup>58</sup> NRS, GD224/511/6, Letter from AH Maxwell to Gilbert C Talbot Esq, 12<sup>th</sup> May 1845,

<sup>59</sup> Church, *The History of the British Coal Industry*, p. 191.

wrote to the Duke upon finding out that he had 'abolished the employment of women & children in your collieries' believing he should use his position of power to 'bring in a bill to prevent the employment of women & children in collieries.'<sup>60</sup> Believing so passionately about this topic, Loudon stated that if the Duke could not do what he suggested for whatever reason, should direct 'the attention of some person in portion matter to the subject.'<sup>61</sup>

Archival evidence does not point to any specific reasons as to why the Duke did not employ women and children in his coal mining operations; however, there was an emphasis on the moral aspect rather than the economics of the question in the evidence of his managers. Alan Heesom has argued that the Act was utilised not necessarily for the protection of children and their education as intended by Lord Ashley, but rather 'the governing classes feared that their control over society was breaking' and that it subsequently needed re-imposed' and one of the ways of doing this was to make education compulsory for children of miners.<sup>62</sup> However, the Duke was heavily influenced not only by his grandfather, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Buccleuch but by Adam Smith, his grandfather's tutor. Smith believed that 'an instructed and intelligent people are always more decent and orderly than an ignorant and stupid one.'<sup>63</sup> Prior to the Act the Duke already subsidised colliery education, providing 'school-houses, paying teachers and not deducting the full cost of schooling from wages' as he wanted to promote the general welfare of those in his employment, moving away from a more laissez-faire approach.<sup>64</sup> This investment was typical of other paternalistic landowners, however, and as John Hassan points out, the Duke was by 'no means exceptional.'<sup>65</sup> Arguably though, it did allow him to create a 'pliable work force' where control could be exercised under the guise of a paternalistic industrial landlord carefully constructing a positive image and reputation, as judged by the standards of the 1840s.<sup>66</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> NRS, GD224/511/6, Letter from J Loudon Esq to the Duke of Buccleuch, 5<sup>th</sup> May 1842.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> Heesom, 'The Coal Mines Act of 1842', *The Historical Journal*, 24(1), 1981, pp. 81 & 82.

<sup>63</sup> Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, (London: J.M. Dent, 1910), p. 788.

<sup>64</sup> Hassan, 'The Landed Estate, Paternalism and the Coal Industry in Midlothian', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 59(167), 1980, pp. 87 & 88.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

For many the Act was seen as part of an ever increasing 'programme of intervention in the industrial life of early Victorian Britain' balanced out against what Barbara Harrison has identified as legislation that helped 'those unable to protect themselves from the ravages of industrial employment.'<sup>67</sup> In the Buccleuch context, the Act merely reaffirmed the actions the Duke had already undertaken: excluding the employment of women and children in his coal mining operations and promoting their education. It has been contended by Church that the effect of the Act was 'negligible': most found the changes did not cause 'the ruin of colliery proprietors' and that rather it was 'to their advantage' as is evident in the outcomes for the Duke of Buccleuch.<sup>68</sup>

## 2.3: Industrial Relations

### 2.3.1: Wages

The Duke of Buccleuch presented himself as a proactive and caring paternalistic landlord. This was not wholly inaccurate, but as the estates diversified, his labour and wages costs increased, and he took an increasing interest in this area in the early 1840s. In addition, at this time the Duke was serving in Peel's cabinet the backdrop of growing Chartist unrest and a general strike, the 'Plug Plot Riots' originating in Staffordshire.<sup>69</sup> These events brought to the fore a clear worry from the Duke that unrest may occur on his estates with this section illustrating how he was becoming more proactive to stem any unrest from occurring on his estates in Scotland. It highlights how the Duke even in close working with the estate chamberlains could not afford to be complacent about such a crucially important aspect of life on the estates.

In May 1842 the Duke instructed his Parliamentary Private Secretary, Gilbert Talbot to write to William Ogilvie to ascertain 'what is the average rate of wages now paid to a common Labourer in Roxburghshire, Selkirkshire, Berwickshire and adjoining counties stating at the same time whether such rate has of late been increasing or decreasing.'<sup>70</sup> This was the start

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<sup>67</sup> Heesom, 'The Coal Mines Act of 1842', *The Historical Journal*, 24(1), 1981, p. 87; Harrison, 'Some of Them Gets Lead Poisoned', *Social History of Medicine*, 2(2), 1989, p. 172.

<sup>68</sup> Church, *The History of the British Coal Industry*, p. 198; Robert Nelson Boyd, *Coal Pits and Pitmen: A Short History of the Coal Trade and the Legislation Affecting It*, (London: Whittaker & Co, 1892), p. 77.

<sup>69</sup> Laybourn, *A History of British Trade Unionism*, (Stroud: Alan Sutton Publishing Ltd, 1992), p. 33.

<sup>70</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 25, Letter from Gilbert Talbot to Mr Ogilvie, 26<sup>th</sup> May 1842.

of the Duke's estate-wide investigation into the levels of wages being paid on and in the vicinity of his Scottish estates, and similar instructions were sent to the Dalkeith Estate Chamberlain, Robert Scott Moncrieff for Midlothian and the Queensberry Estate Chamberlain, Alexander Harley Maxwell.

William Ogilvie responded to Talbot's request by stating that the average wage paid to the common labourer was 1s 8d per day with this reducing to 1s 6d in winter and increasing to 2s in summer.<sup>71</sup> He went on to report that 'women, or stout lads on Boys wages will average about 5/6 per week.'<sup>72</sup> At Dalkeith, Robert Scott Moncrieff informed the Duke that a common labourer in Midlothian would be paid on average 10s a week, but 'good picked hands will get 11/- while inferior workmen will not obtain more than 9/-.'<sup>73</sup> Moncrieff was aware that these figures had to be placed into a wider context for the Duke to understand what his pay rates were like relative to others'. Moncrieff estimated that the rate paid seems 'to be much the same in adjoining counties' with small amounts of fluctuation, most profoundly in winter when wages 'fall from 1/- to 2/-'.<sup>74</sup> While these figures were presented to the Duke, a forecast of a fall in wages was also presented with it predicted that wages paid would be lower in the summer of 1842 than in the previous year due to fewer people being employed on the 'works of the Edinburgh & Glasgow Railway' and due to a 'fall in the price of provisions'.<sup>75</sup>

Wage rates were broadly similar between the Midlothian and Queensberry estates: Alexander Harley Maxwell stated that common labourers on the latter estate were on average 1s 6d per day and during winter these rates lower to 1s 3d or 1s 4d.<sup>76</sup> Depending on their qualifications and demand for labour, during harvest and peat time these rose to 2s to 2s 6d a day.<sup>77</sup> As a useful point of comparison, a further enquiry took place in 1856, with the economic context having worsened, especially around employment security. It was found that in the vicinity of the Queensberry estate, male farm servants and labourers could not

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

<sup>73</sup> NRS, GD224/511/6, Letter from Robert Scott Moncrieff Esq to the Duke of Buccleuch, 28<sup>th</sup> May 1842.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> NRS, GD224/511/6, Letter from A.H. Maxwell to The Honourable Gilbert Talbot, 1<sup>st</sup> June 1842.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

‘reckon on constant employment’ with ‘average earnings of the able bodied and experienced’ not exceeding £18 per annum with this equating to 7s 6d weekly.<sup>78</sup> However there was some positivity during harvest ‘the rate of wages is considerably higher’ but was dependent on the ‘weather and state of the crops.’<sup>79</sup> This positive news was not as positive as first thought as it was stated that there had been little variation in wages for some 20 years previously with the availability of work becoming greater ‘during the last five years’ which was put down to the ‘bad seasons we have had since 1836.’<sup>80</sup>

It is likely that the Duke was investigating wage rates to understand how generous (or not) he was as an employer, in a rapidly changing employment context. It is also likely that he undertook this investigation as preparation in the event of future hardship due to likely cycles of economic depression, where he would be expected to be proactive and ameliorate any major impact on his employees and tenantry. However, wages were an area of contention with the Duke in other ways, as the establishment and growth of trade union activities in his operations began to bite by the 1840s. By having a full understanding of the wages on estates, the Duke could fully understand if he believed any unrest on the estates would take place against in an ever hostile atmosphere to the aristocracy. This action illustrates a proactive landlord who wanted to try and foresee future challenges.

### 2.3.2: Trade Unionism and Industrial Relations

Trade unionism had a challenging genesis especially in Scotland during the crucial investment years of the Buccleuch estates under the Duke with it being rarely visible. Sidney Webb and Beatrice Webb highlight how prior to 1824 the trade union movement experienced ‘unmitigated persecution and continuous repression’ with this not changing on the Buccleuch estates due to an ardent anti-trade union landlord.<sup>81</sup> Keith Laybourn has emphasised that the organisation of workers into trade unions began well before the occurrence of the rising pace of industrial development of the late eighteenth and early

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<sup>78</sup> NRS, GD224/511/6, Statement of Wages given to Farm Servants & Labourers in Nithsdale, Annandale & Galloway, 1856.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

<sup>81</sup> Beatrice Webb and Sidney Webb, *The History of Trade Unionism, 1666-1920*, Project Gutenberg, p. 64, web, Accessed: Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2024.

nineteenth centuries.<sup>82</sup> Prior to 1842 trade unionism on the estates of the Duke of Buccleuch was rarely visible with little archival material indicating to its existence; however, the rise of Chartism created limited unrest in the Duke of Buccleuch's coal mines even if the 1830s had seen the rise of the notion of national trade unionism.<sup>83</sup> John Hassan has examined this in great detail emphasising that in 1842 there was 'only superficial contact between colliers and chartists' where those involved in Chartism were singled out as scapegoats by coalmasters like the Duke.<sup>84</sup> There was little evidence of active Chartism on the Buccleuch estates, and although the Duke may have been very concerned about the national picture of growing political unrest, it seems he had few concerns for his own property. Indeed, he was confident enough of his own position to start introducing his own sets of regulations for his collieries in 1842.<sup>85</sup> These regulations caused the first episode of major industrial unrest on the Buccleuch estates and illustrates the ardent anti-trade union feelings he harboured. The new regulations stipulated that colliers, workmen and labourers were subject to the regulations until either party whether this be the manager or themselves, 'be quit and free from their engagement.'<sup>86</sup> When this engagement was decided to be terminated, the party intending to do so would give notice in writing of at least a fortnight. Once all engagements were expired the individual must remove their family and dependents from the tied house belonging to the proprietor. These new regulations induced some miners to walk out on strike due to the new two-week stipulation. This open rejection of the new regulations hardened the Duke's attitude, so that Wright confirmed that those whom he 'did not wish to retain, or who might be unwilling to agree to the regulation' would be informed their engagement at Dalkeith Colliery would be over.<sup>87</sup> The Duke approved these measures on the 9<sup>th</sup> November 1842 and they introduced on the 5<sup>th</sup>

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<sup>82</sup> Laybourn, *A History of British Trade Unionism*, p. 9.

<sup>83</sup> Raymond Challinor and Brian Ripley, *The Miners' Association, A Trade Union in the Age of the Chartists*, (Whitley Bay: Bewick Press, 1990), p. 7.

<sup>84</sup> Hassan, 'The Landed Estate, Paternalism and the Coal Industry in Midlothian', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 59(167), 1980, p. 80.

<sup>85</sup> NRS, GD224/649/7, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from James Wright, 7<sup>th</sup> November 1842.

<sup>86</sup> NRS, GD224/582/11, Copy of the Regulations for all colliers and other workmen employed at Dalkeith Colliery.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

December 1842.<sup>88</sup> This hard line approach generated major ramifications at Dalkeith Colliery, and attempts to negotiate on the part of the colliers was denied.<sup>89</sup>

Instead, Wright enquired whether or not the men sent in to negotiate had been organised by a committee assembled in Dalkeith or if they had been sent by the colliers employed at Dalkeith Colliery before the strike, and whether were they going to 'act for themselves without reference to any committee.'<sup>90</sup> Negotiating with, or petitioning a landlord or in was, 'at the heart of management on many estates' and this episode was no different.<sup>91</sup> This petitioning of workers to the management was the crucial means of communication and bargaining between workers and management when a grievance occurred. It has also been noted by Steven King, Peter Jones and R.A. Houston that the language used, as was the case at Dalkeith and other collieries, was 'exclusively in the form of highly stylized petitions.'<sup>92</sup> As was common in negotiations at this time, firstly, the deputation asked for forgiveness and confessed to having 'acted improperly in leaving their work without the ordinary warning and keeping possession of their houses' against the wishes of the Duke, something which the new regulations explicitly stated they would lose upon leaving their work.<sup>93</sup> Wright replied that the Duke's wish was that they should 'either leave their houses, or like reasonable men work their warning on the old terms.'<sup>94</sup> In his report, Wright was pleased to see that the men were 'now much subdued' and felt that it was 'hopeless to contend longer with the proprietors.'<sup>95</sup> Some issues were recognised as a result; the wages paid to those who had resumed work was 5d per ton, but this would have to increase, as Wright, fearful the colliers at Dalkeith may move to neighbouring mines, recognised that they could not 'expect the Colliers at Dalkeith to work at a rate below their neighbours.'<sup>96</sup> Pressure was

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<sup>88</sup> NRS, GD224/1126/63, Regulations for all colliers and other workmen employed at Dalkeith Colliery, October 1842.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid; NRS, GD224/1126/63, Letter from James Wright to the Duke of Buccleuch from correspondence between His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch and James Wright, 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1842.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> R.A. Houston, *Peasant Petitions*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p. 54.

<sup>92</sup> Peter Jones and Steven King, 'Voices from the Far North: Pauper letters and the Provision of Welfare in Sutherland, 1845-1900', *Journal of British Studies*, 55, 2016, p. 87.

<sup>93</sup> NRS, GD224/1126/63, Letter from James Wright to the Duke of Buccleuch from correspondence between His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch and James Wright, 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1842.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> NRS, GD224/1126/63, Correspondence between His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch and James Wright, 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1842.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

being put upon the Duke to raise wages to bring them into line with other collieries in the vicinity with James Wright stating that his belief that 'the present state of the Mid-Lothian coal trade, the proprietors can ill afford to raise the colliers' wages' but did state that he did not see how they could 'escape giving the rise of 4d per ton.'<sup>97</sup> Wright had raised the issue that Sir John Hope had given a rise of 5d per ton which was similar to those at nearby Whitehill.<sup>98</sup> He argued that if nearby collieries received an increase of wages it would be 'very likely the best of them [colliers] will leave your Grace's employment.'<sup>99</sup> It was acknowledged that even with the proposed 4d rise, colliers in the Duke's employ would 'not make more than... 3/4 to 3/6 per day.'<sup>100</sup>

The Duke stressed that prior to entering into any agreement with the colliers on wages he wanted it to be 'distinctly understood by them that it is with them alone that you can communicate' and that he would 'not suffer the interference of any committee of Colliers, or of any persons not connected with my Colliery.'<sup>101</sup> This included any 'other body of Colliers.'<sup>102</sup> The most important factor for the Duke was to stymie or avoid any recognition of a combination or union in the negotiations, and he framed this in paternalistic language, stating that the action taken by the men had meant that they had removed 'all confidence' he had in them.<sup>103</sup> Adding pressure on those involved in the dispute, he reiterated his view that 'the industrious Collier can regularly work, and the idle man must either allow his mode of life and work regularly, or else lose the opportunity.'<sup>104</sup> Despite Wright's best efforts, the Duke would 'not enter into any promise or agreement to raise their wages' and that if they do not return to work 'they must quit their houses' which upon 'no account' would he allow these men to be employed in his Colliery again.<sup>105</sup> Regarding those who would not leave their tied houses, they had 'commenced legal proceedings' to ensure the 'ejectment of the

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<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> NRS, GD224/1126/63, Correspondence between His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch and James Wright, 5<sup>th</sup> November 1842.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

recreants from their homes.<sup>106</sup> However, two days later the Duke sent a follow up letter stating that he would raise wages but on the condition the colliers and other workmen were willing to 'make a new arrangement with me.'<sup>107</sup> He also instructed Wright to inform the neighbouring Collieries of the events that had taken place, so that they may not suffer the 'great inconvenience and suffer loss' that he had endured with his.<sup>108</sup>

Trade unionism in Midlothian in the mid nineteenth century developed along different lines to other coal regions in the country, with less of a centralised focus and instead 'a succession of short-lived federations of local unions.'<sup>109</sup> Hassan argued that the power of a paternalistic coalmaster such as the Duke allowed him to exert considerable influence to break trade unions that were formed. The Duke manipulated the fact that the Lothian coalfield strikes 'were spontaneous reactions to economic distress' with unions themselves being short-lived.<sup>110</sup> The Duke exercised social control through the provision of tied housing which was noted for its good quality, education provision and the sick fund, offering a standard of living that was then 'imitated by other coal masters.'<sup>111</sup> This power allowed him to leverage a solution that favoured his interests while maintaining his position and reputation. Hassan has argued that after the industrial dispute of 1842, there was no 'radical changes in Midlothian colliers' consciousness.'<sup>112</sup> This allowed the Duke to control a working environment that froze out trade unions, emphasising that 'militant trade unionism did not develop so long as conditions enabled the landowners to retain immense local influence' with deferential workers.<sup>113</sup> Hassan argues that Lothian coalmasters like the Duke and the neighbouring Marquis of Lothian, saw the mining community change from one of servitude to one of paternalistic deference in the 1840s. This was in part due to structural changes including 'low wages, regular working behaviour, and subtle methods of social control' where the economic role of the landed coal proprietor declined, and paternalistic activities

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<sup>106</sup> NRS, GD224/649/7, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from J Talbot, 10<sup>th</sup> November 1842.

<sup>107</sup> NRS, GD224/1126/63, Correspondence between His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch and James Wright, 5<sup>th</sup> November 1842.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid.

<sup>109</sup> Campbell, 'From Independent Collier to Militant Miner', *Scottish Labour History*, 24, 1989, p. 11.

<sup>110</sup> Hassan, 'The Landed Estate, Paternalism and the Coal Industry in Midlothian', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 59(167), 1980, p. 79.

<sup>111</sup> Ibid, p. 75.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid, p. 80.

<sup>113</sup> Campbell, 'From Independent Collier to Militant Miner', *Scottish Labour History*, 24, 1989, p. 73.

increased.<sup>114</sup> It can be argued that this was a contributing factor as to why the Duke opposed trade unionism so vehemently. However, the argument put forward by Knox that trade unions were weakened in Scottish coalmining due to the 'prevalence of temporary overseas emigration' does not stand. There is no record of significant levels of in-migration of workers having an impact on the Buccleuch industries or in the trade unionism within the Duke's coal mining operations, surprising considering their proximity to Edinburgh, which was then 'proportionately the second most Irish city in Scotland in 1851' with a considerable number of Irish railway navvies working within the Midlothian coalfield in the 1840s.<sup>115</sup>

Youngson Brown argues that in this period 'the great bulk of trade union activity sprang from the question of wages.'<sup>116</sup> In 1845 at Canonbie Colliery a strike took place demanding an 'advance of wages.'<sup>117</sup> The men had been offered four pence per tub of 5 centum weight (CWT) instead of threepence, making 3/2d per day even though Edmund Gibsone, the colliery manager admitted they 'had to work pretty hard for it.'<sup>118</sup> The Duke replied the next day giving the most 'distinct orders upon no account to raise their wages' going on to 'prohibit ... any indulgence whatever, until upon your reporting to me to this work and duty.'<sup>119</sup> In a similar manner to those who had struck at Dalkeith, the Duke informed Gibsone that those who were the ringleaders would not be taken 'into my employment ... until you have applied for and obtained my permission.'<sup>120</sup> As at Dalkeith the Duke was willing to give 'immediate work to those who are willing to come back to this work.'<sup>121</sup> The strike at Canonbie only lasted seven days with the Duke receiving a petition from those who had been on strike expressing their 'sorrow and regret at having disgracefully and unadvisedly ... struck work.'<sup>122</sup> They hoped that the Duke would be good enough to forget the incident and

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<sup>114</sup> Hassan, *The Development of the Coal Industry in Mid and West Lothian 1815-1873*, PhD Thesis, 1976, University of Strathclyde, p. viii.

<sup>115</sup> Hassan, 'The Landed Estate, Paternalism and the Coal Industry in Midlothian', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 59(167), 1980, p. 84.

<sup>116</sup> Youngson Brown, 'Trade Union Policy in the Scots Coalfields', *The Economic History Review*, 6(1), 1953, p. 35.

<sup>117</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, Uncatalogued, Letter from Edmund Gibsone to Duke of Buccleuch, 29<sup>th</sup> November 1845.

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid*; Centum weight is 112 pounds.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>122</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, Uncatalogued, Petition from striking miners at Canonbie Colliery, 6<sup>th</sup> December 1845.

that 'kindness and good feeling which Your Grace has always shown [sic] to poor Workmen will not be with drawn.'<sup>123</sup> This language reaffirms the deferential and absolute control the Duke had over those in his employ a point noted by Carl Griffin when examining the Swing riots. Griffin highlights that for those petitioning, if they remained 'respectable' through careful use of language as was the case here with those petitioning the Duke, they were more likely to get an outcome acceptable to their desire.<sup>124</sup> There are clear similarities in the language used by rural tenants and agricultural labourers when compared to the striking miners with the deferential or arguably faux deferential language used. R.A. Houston has shown that 'deference existed within a set of relationships structured by inequalities in access to resources' with this evident particularly at Canonbie for an advance of wages where the men were ultimately powerless to enact this.<sup>125</sup>

The Duke's hard line towards trade unions was very much in line with his peers, including his neighbour the Marquis of Lothian, and collectively they 'tolerated little opposition to their authority' and when this was challenged, those involved were 'dismissed' subsequently losing their home, healthcare and education for their children.<sup>126</sup> The Duke understood his position not only as a territorial magnate but as an industrialist, and his approach was to integrate management approaches to the two areas. This is exemplified in his statement informing Mr Wright that he 'ought to inform the managers of the Newbattle, Arniston and Whitehall Collieries of what has taken place with my Colliers, and what is intended to do in consequence.'<sup>127</sup> Reiterating that he could tell them what was 'intended to do in consequence', they could 'be prepared with their own arrangements' but that he would do what he saw fit and in this instance it would be to 'not engage or retain in my employment a dissipated man.'<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Carl Griffin, 'Affecting violence: language, gesture and performance in early nineteenth-century English popular protest', *Historical Geography*, 36, 2008, p. 150.

<sup>125</sup> Houston, *Peasant Petitions*, p. 270.

<sup>126</sup> Hassan, 'The Landed Estate, Paternalism and the Coal Industry in Midlothian', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 59(167), 1980, p. 89.

<sup>127</sup> NRS, GD224/1126/63, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to Mr James Wright, 5<sup>th</sup> November 1842.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

His direct and intimate approach to running his mines meant the collier had a 'fairly direct relationship' with the Duke with the only intermediary being the colliery manager.<sup>129</sup> His vehement opposition to trade unions did not diminish over time, and he never let go of his paternalistic approach to both estate and industrial management, believing that it was better for the men to accept his paternalistic provision than joining a trade union. The investment this required from him was repaid in his view by strengthening his 'paternal standing in the local community' and effectively allowing him to exercise significant social control over a 'malleable' workforce.<sup>130</sup> However, the limits to his tolerance could only go so far.

The Duke took a slightly different approach to the lead mines on his estate, and the management of industrial relations. Even with the mines being under the direct control of the Duke, there is no indication as to why there was more tolerance of industrial action here. In May 1845, five miners stopped their work and submitted a petition to the Duke, demanding changes around rates of pay and disagreements with the mine manager, Mr James Stewart.<sup>131</sup> They instantly lost their income and so in their petition, asked the Duke for work 'so as to enable them to support themselves and families.'<sup>132</sup> The Duke informed Mr Stewart that the he felt they had been 'sufficiently punished' and if they will 'express their regret for what happened, and promise to conduct themselves peaceably' they should then be employed again and given a 'fair and equal chance.'<sup>133</sup> This approach was unique in the Duke's career as a manager; typically, he did not tolerate any 'insubordination or misconduct of any kind' with this being something Mr Gibson reiterated to Mr Stewart.<sup>134</sup> It did also not last long: in a later communication in July 1846 the Duke stated that if the miners were still not satisfied they 'are at perfect liberty to leave my service' and must then leave Wanlockhead.<sup>135</sup> Reaffirming his intolerant view, the Duke stated that 'unless care is taken a

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<sup>129</sup> John A. Hassan, 'The Landed Estate, Paternalism and the Coal Industry in Midlothian, 1800-1880', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 59(167), 1980, p. 75.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 85 & 89.

<sup>131</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, GD224/506/6, Petition of William Lorimer, Charles Harkness, Hugh Nichol, William Murray and James Moffat, Miners Wanlockhead, 15<sup>th</sup> May 1845.

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>133</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, GD224/506/6, Letter from Mr Gibson to Mr James Stewart, 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1845.

<sup>134</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, GD224/506/6, Letter from Mr Gibson to Mr James Stewart, 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1845.

<sup>135</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, GD224/506/6, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to Mr J Gibson, 29<sup>th</sup> July 1846.

population will be created there who do not work in the mines' and this was something he had no desire to see happen.<sup>136</sup>

Trade unionism was not tolerated by the Duke of Buccleuch, and he worked against it wherever it appeared in his enterprises. It went directly against the style of operation he tried to replicate from his landed estates, where the relationship between employer and employee was one where the employer paternalistically looked after those who worked for them. Once this relationship had broken the Duke had no interest in trying to repair it. Having invested considerable sums into his mining operations so that many aspects of the job were linked to continuing deferential employment such as education, housing and forms of healthcare, he ensured a compliant workforce was in operation. Upon leaving the employment of the Duke these were removed emphasising not only the precarious nature of the employment but also the wider social and economic power and control that could be exerted by the Duke.

## 2.4: Welfare

### 2.4.1: Education

During the Duke's lifetime Scottish education underwent major reform and expansion, a trend which the Duke had mixed feelings about; however, his passion for providing education for those who lived and worked on the estates and industries as his paternalistic duty never diminished. It articulated his position as a paternalist landlord, particularly where the parochial system operated most effectively in the lowlands, the bastion of the Buccleuch and Queensberry dukedom but this is also where it is noted that the Scottish education system was at its best.<sup>137</sup> Key to the Duke's control over education provision was the central role that landlords had in the appointment of teachers (in the same way that they appointed ministers), a point R.D. Anderson's examination of Scottish education provision in nineteenth

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> E.G. West, *Education and the Industrial Revolution*, (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1975), p. 89; Cameron, 'Education in Rural Scotland' in Anderson, Freeman and Paterson (eds.), *The Edinburgh History of Education in Scotland*, p. 153

century Scotland skips.<sup>138</sup> This omission is puzzling, given how important the control of appointments were in the exercise of social control and the authoritarian nature of this relationship.<sup>139</sup> Education was provided for those living on the estates and for those employed by the industrial enterprises. This was a common approach amongst Scottish landowners, becoming a defining feature of nineteenth century education in Scotland.<sup>140</sup> Even after the 1872 Education Act, demarcating the point when the state began to lead educational provision, the Duke maintained his philanthropic approach in providing charitable donations to local schools. The influence of Adam Smith's argument of using it as a means of social control is evident in the Duke's approach.<sup>141</sup> For him, the provision of education on his estates was a balance between a genuine belief that education could change society permanently for the better, and concern that it could lead to growing and direct challenge to landed power, such as his, something he was overtly keen to avoid. The historiography of Scottish education was rooted in a long-standing belief that Scotland had an education system which was 'immensely superior to England.'<sup>142</sup> Ewen Cameron has highlighted that rural Scotland played a central role in the parochial education system which operated between 1696 and the introduction of compulsory education in 1872 prior to Scotland becoming an urbanised industrial country but this was a system which had been inadequate for a considerable period, a point highlighted by Olive Checkland.<sup>143</sup> The Education Act (Scotland) 1872 introduced school boards which had rate collecting authority, but more importantly made education compulsory for children from 5-13 years of age creating an 'efficient, uniform and generally available system of elementary education.'<sup>144</sup> However, Cameron argues that too much emphasis has been put on the 'overwhelming power of the landowner and the authoritarian nature of social relations' in education, a point nuanced in this thesis through the example of the Duke of Buccleuch who was one of

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<sup>138</sup> R.D. Anderson, 'Education and the State in Nineteenth-Century Scotland', *The Economic History Review*, 36(4), 1983, pp. 518-534.

<sup>139</sup> Cameron, 'Education in Rural Scotland', in Anderson, Freeman and Paterson (eds.), *The Edinburgh History of Education in Scotland*, p. 154.

<sup>140</sup> Checkland, *Philanthropy in Victorian Scotland*.

<sup>141</sup> Beardmore, 'The Rural Estate through the Eyes of the Land Agent', *Family & Community History*, 2016, 19(1).

<sup>142</sup> Hutchison, *Industry, Reform and Empire*, p. 53.

<sup>143</sup> Cameron, 'Education in Rural Scotland' in Anderson, Freeman and Paterson (eds.), *The Edinburgh History of Education in Scotland*, p. 153; Checkland, *Philanthropy in Victorian Scotland*, p. 104.

<sup>144</sup> Checkland, *Philanthropy in Victorian Scotland*, pp. 112 & 114.

many landlords who believed passionately in education.<sup>145</sup> The Lowlands of Scotland had some of the highest levels of literacy in Scotland in the 1860s with a diverse schooling provision, although questions have been raised over using this as the sole measure of a successful education system.<sup>146</sup> It has been contended that many members of the aristocracy held the belief that educating the labouring classes would increase social problems but this is not the case with the Duke of Buccleuch who evidently felt the opposite as shall be shown throughout through his benevolent approach to education.<sup>147</sup> It was not just primary education that the Duke supported, but infant schools also, to which he regularly donated on request.<sup>148</sup> In 1842 the Duke received a request from Lockerbie Infant School for a donation or subscription.<sup>149</sup> This was during a period of immense financial pressure upon the estates with industrial expansion putting pressure on the Duke's credit. The Duke responded that he could not 'undertake to give a large subscription' but would give £1 or £2 which he felt was sufficient.<sup>150</sup> His reasoning for supporting this application was that he approved of infant schools generally and that 'they do much good if well managed.'<sup>151</sup> However, this school was not to be long lasting. In May 1848 the Duke received further news from the schoolteacher, Miss Stewart, stating that it had been decided it was 'deemed expedient instead of supporting the School on the Infant System' to apply the funds raised through annual subscription which totalled £15 to the purpose of placing 'children whose parents are too poor or too careless to afford them the benefit of any school' while still accepting the £1 donation from the Duke.<sup>152</sup> Again, the Duke reiterated his support, responding that he would be 'happy to give subscription to both modes of educating the poor & indigent', illustrating his belief in education and was willing to assist in

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid, p. 130; Cameron, 'Education in Rural Scotland', in Anderson, Freeman and Paterson (eds.), *The Edinburgh History of Education in Scotland*, p. 154.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid, p. 158; For more on the literacy rates see: R.A. Houston, *Scottish Literacy and the Scottish Identity: Illiteracy and Society in Scotland and Northern England, 1600-1800*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).

<sup>147</sup> Beardmore, 'The Rural Estate through the Eyes of the Land Agent', *Family & Community History*, 2016, 19(1), p. 27.

<sup>148</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, Inventory of Petitions submitted to the Consideration of His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch & Queensberry at Drumlanrig Castle 1<sup>st</sup> November 1858.

<sup>149</sup> Bowhill House Archive, GD224/1032/1, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Maxwell, 21<sup>st</sup> April 1842.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, Inventory of Petitions submitted to the consideration of His Grace The Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry at London the 13<sup>th</sup> day of May 1848.

whatever way most desirable.<sup>153</sup> This support was not all about social control, but came at least in part from a genuine belief in the value of education.

The Duke took an active interest in regular updates on not only how schooling was taking place across the estates but the construction and proposed methods of education along with how the teacher was doing in their role. In November 1846 the Duke had enlisted the support of a Mr John Gordon Esq to help with his 'plans of benevolence' in the construction of a new school in Wanlockhead.<sup>154</sup> Wanlockhead was one of Scotland's most remote villages where lead mining provided employment for the majority of the village.<sup>155</sup> Without the assistance and support of the Duke, Wanlockhead was vulnerable to falling into destitution and being unable to recruit a teacher or provide education. Mr Gordon oversaw the construction of a school there, and instituted what he was the best educational methods: the 'method of instruction will be what is called the Mixed Method, partly monitorial and partly simultaneous, - which is the most prevalent of any in Scotland.'<sup>156</sup> In May 1852 the Duke received a letter from Mr John Gordon on the progress of the school where he informed the Duke that it was answering its 'purpose very well.'<sup>157</sup> Illustrating his passion for education and wanting to be involved in ensuring it served its purpose as well as it could, he was informed that the 'Master is one of superior ability, devoted to his duty, and highly considered by the people among whom he labours.'<sup>158</sup> This reporting on not only the school building and progress being made but the ability and the dedication of the teacher exemplifies the value that the Duke placed on education.

However, there were limitations on the Duke's views around education, principally due to the relationship it had with religious denominations, especially before 1872. The Duke was a staunch opponent of the Free Church of Scotland from its establishment in 1843, and this opposition materialised around educational provision on his estates as well as sites for new

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<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> NRS, GD224/649/6, Letter to William Maxwell from Mr John Gordon Esq, 18<sup>th</sup> November 1846.

Within this letter to William Maxwell, John Gordon states his plans for the school and how they should be divided with boys and girls. There is no record as to who John Gordon is or why he was chosen for this role.

<sup>155</sup> T.C. Smout, 'The Lead Mines at Wanlockhead', *Trans Dumfriesshire & Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society*, 39, 1962, p. 157.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> NRS, GD224/649/6, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from Mr John Gordon, 8<sup>th</sup> May 1852.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

churches.<sup>159</sup> In October 1843 the Duke received a request that a James Stewart, the parochial schoolmaster in Durrisddeer who had left the established church to join the new Free Church, 'may be permitted to continue,' In post.<sup>160</sup> Having already gained considerable attention for his opposition to the Free Church, the Duke responded that this request would be 'impossible' and that he was 'astonished' that such a request 'should ever have been made,'<sup>161</sup> emphasising Cameron's point on the 'authoritarian nature of social relations' Expressed through control of education provision.<sup>162</sup>

The Duke opposed not only the Free Church but also Roman Catholicism and could be markedly anti-Catholic. Despite this he did construct schools for Catholic children on the estates, with certain provisos and limitations. In 1860 for instance (four years after Duchess Charlotte Anne converted to Catholicism), he had made provisions for the Catholic community in Hawick, while warning Ogilvie that he thought 'it is best to keep the RC Chapel & School together in one place, & not to have two separate establishments over at each end of the Town.'<sup>163</sup> This was during a time when children at Catholic schools were receiving an 'elementary education at best' and 'attendance was poor' with Patricia Dennison highlighting that even in a major city like Glasgow, 'only about one-third of the children [were] at school by 1861.'<sup>164</sup> Dennison further notes that the quality of education was often inadequate due to Roman Catholic teachers receiving 'only four to six months training.'<sup>165</sup> When a national system of education was established after the passing of the 1872 Education (Scotland) Act, the Catholic Church did not transfer its schools to the boards established by this Act, which meant they could not receive 'building grants, no aid from the rates and no exemption from them.'<sup>166</sup> Because of this decision it meant they struggled to keep pace with the educational 'advances of the rate-funded board schools' increasing their

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<sup>159</sup> For more on this see Chapter 5 on religion where this opposition is explored further.

<sup>160</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, Inventory of Petitions & Memorials Submitted for the consideration of His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch & Queensberry at Drumlanrig Castle the 21<sup>st</sup> day of October 1843.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Cameron, 'Education in Rural Scotland', in Anderson, Freeman and Paterson (eds.), *The Edinburgh History of Education in Scotland*, p. 154.

<sup>163</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 40, Letter from Duke of Buccleuch to Ogilvie, 20<sup>th</sup> October 1860.

<sup>164</sup> Dennison, *The Evolution of Scotland's*, pp. 227 & 228.

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> McDermid, 'Catholic women teachers', *History of Education*, 38(5), 2009, p. 607.

reliance on donations.<sup>167</sup> Without the funding and permissions from the Duke, there would have been an increasingly bleak situation for Catholics on the Buccleuch estates, but they benefitted from another champion in Duchess Charlotte Anne, who argued successfully for their fair treatment.<sup>168</sup>

This paternalistic attitude towards education was something that remained a defining feature of the Duke's management as further illustrated by his decision to subsidise colliery education and not deduct the full cost from the wages of the parents of those children in receipt of education.<sup>169</sup> He saw education as a tool for people to help themselves if he provided the essential foundations. Another example, but this time indicative of his differentiation of education for women, was in his assistance to the Ettrick School Board in February 1879 where he recommended that 'it would be much for the advantage of the children if a sewing class could be formed & properly taught' as it would enable them to have a source of income upon leaving education.<sup>170</sup> As Ewen Cameron has argued, in providing this sort of education, landlords were seeking to enable 'not only a domestic virtue but also a potential source of income for women.'<sup>171</sup>

The Duke was a staunch believer in education as part of his paternalistic leadership. It was a constant across his lifetime and despite conflict around denominational provision, providing support for education was one of the few basic expectations of a proactive paternalist landlord alongside housing during a transformative period in Scotland regardless of income or location.<sup>172</sup> The provision of education on the estates of the Duke enables us to witness how the Duke saw it not only as a way of assisting people but his true belief in the power of education.

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<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Duke of Buccleuch Private Diary, Letter to William Ogilvie, 15<sup>th</sup> October 1860.

<sup>169</sup> Hassan, 'The Landed Estate, Paternalism and the Coal Industry in Midlothian', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 59(167), 1980, p. 87.

<sup>170</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Sederunt Book, Memoranda of Estate Business Transacted at Bowhill House, 28<sup>th</sup> February 1879.

<sup>171</sup> Cameron, 'Education in Rural Scotland', in Anderson, Freeman and Paterson (eds.), *The Edinburgh History of Education in Scotland*, p. 160.

<sup>172</sup> Hassan, 'The Landed Estate, Paternalism and the Coal Industry in Midlothian', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 59(167), 1980, p. 87.

## 2.4.2: Housing

Housing in nineteenth century Scotland was of notoriously poor quality, both in the rural and the urban and industrial contexts. It was also a key plank of the paternalistic suite of landlord responsibilities, to provide suitable housing for their agricultural tenants and labourers, and employees working in the new and expanding industries. The tied nature of that housing added an additional set of expectations and landlord control, and area which has been relatively neglected in the historiography which this study aims to begin to fill. Instead, historians have focused on the reasons why housing standards were exceptionally poor in Scotland, identifying the enormous population boom from the 1830s as critical, especially in an urban context.<sup>173</sup> Gauldie's work does highlight the vital area of housing for the rural poor, arguing that house building did take place but it was 'seldom where it was needed by the agricultural population,' and as often to 'improve the appearance of their estates' as the standards of living for the population.<sup>174</sup>

The notion that housing 'intimately' exacerbated the issue of poor health was highlighted by Iain Hutchison, with overcrowding and poor conditions the chief culprits.<sup>175</sup> Hutchison also illustrates the precarity of housing for those who lived on the Buccleuch estates, vulnerable to any economic downturn and the possibility of losing the housing they had.<sup>176</sup> This was especially apparent for the very poorest, where housing came from a variety of sources, with charitable and landowner provision making up a considerable proportion.<sup>177</sup>

Tied housing was especially common in industrial, including as we have seen at Dalkeith Colliery, a power relation exploited by the Duke, who would not hesitate to remove rebellious colliers from both their employment and their houses.<sup>178</sup> John Hassan has highlighted that neither the Duke, nor his neighbour the Marquis of Lothian, started to build better houses until about 1840, when both the expansion of the industrial enterprises began

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<sup>173</sup> Ibid, p. 211.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid, p. 28.

<sup>175</sup> Hutchison, *Industry, Reform and Empire*, p. 97.

<sup>176</sup> Ibid, p. 107.

<sup>177</sup> John Agnew, 'Cottages for farm labouring families: plans, exhortations and realities (1825-50)', *Rural History*, 33, 2022, p. 159.

<sup>178</sup> Gauldie, *Cruel Habitations*, p. 191.

and when a paternalist approach was fully implemented, with housing becoming one of the most 'important areas of the paternalistic regime' imposed by the Duke.<sup>179</sup> This housing would conform to the 'paternally organised settlements' that Gauldie identified.<sup>180</sup> At Dalkeith Colliery for example, housing came with a strict set of rules and regulations with 'every house [being] examined once a month' with the 'expenche deducted from the wages of the occupant' if any damage had taken place between inspections.<sup>181</sup> The rules set out that alterations could be made on condition that 'a competent person will be sent to make it' but the men under 'no account... be allowed to alter the arrangements of the houses themselves.'<sup>182</sup> Upon ceasing to be employed by the Duke, the individual and their family had to vacate the property and if any damage had been incurred 'the expence [will be] charged against him as debt.'<sup>183</sup> There was an incentive to keep houses at the highest standard of cleanliness and furnishings with the two best homes per year receiving 'fifteen shillings each.'<sup>184</sup> Behind this incentive of charitable means of ensuring their homes stayed in the best possible condition, the Duke and his management were trying to 'improve the lot of working people' through the 'raising of their moral standards' with good housing being central to this change.<sup>185</sup>

In 1849 a Parliamentary Commissioner on housing reported that there were 'some excellent specimens on the property of the Duke of Buccleuch' where 'the houses are occasionally inspected, and those families who neglect the opportunity of living in decency and cleanliness are threatened with dismissal from the works.'<sup>186</sup> The Commissioner went on to state that: 'No employers of labour in industrial Scotland have done more for the housing of their workers than the coalowners have done during the past sixty years, and in no mining area in the country has more been done than in Mid and East Lothian.'<sup>187</sup> However, the

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<sup>179</sup> Hassan, 'The Landed Estate, Paternalism and the Coal Industry in Midlothian', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 59(167), 1980, pp. 79 & 87; This time period was also one where sanitary campaigns began to highlight the squalid conditions many were living in and gave the impetus to landlords to improve the standard of housing.

<sup>180</sup> Gauldie, *Cruel Habitations*, p. 58.

<sup>181</sup> NRS, GD224/511/6, "Rules to be observed for encouraging cleanliness and order in the workmens houses at Dalkeith Colliery" by James Wright, 29<sup>th</sup> April 1841.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>183</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>185</sup> Gauldie, *Cruel Habitations*, p. 61 & 63.

<sup>186</sup> Andrew S. Cunningham, *Mining in Mid and East Lothian*, (Edinburgh, 1925), p. 64.

<sup>187</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 67.

impetus for this improvement in standards of housing came from a paternalistic system aiming to manage a subdued and docile workforce, where the threat of losing one's home through termination of employment hung over the head of the employee.

The perilous nature of tied housing was actively used to impose control of employees and the wider population. In 1862 Alexander Gordon, then manager at Dalkeith Colliery used legal action against those who refused to leave their tied houses on having their employment terminated. As he wrote to Mr Sutherland Esq, 'there is no legal difficulty in removing the men from the houses at the termination of their fortnightly engagements' when an application was made to the sheriff which compelled them to leave.<sup>188</sup> Highlighting the fear that this induced he went on to state that when this sort of arrangement to remove people from the housing occurred 'the delinquents bolted and did not appear in court.'<sup>189</sup> Industrial action such as that taken in 1842 could therefore be 'easily broken by the threat of eviction' from their homes.<sup>190</sup>

The power did not necessarily lie entirely in the hands of the landlord, however. . In August 1853 Mr Stewart from Wanlockhead lead mine sent a letter to Gibson, the Duke's solicitor in Edinburgh, stating that men were leaving Wanlockhead but leaving their 'mothers and sisters behind, and in possession of the houses.'<sup>191</sup> This was not acceptable to the estate, with Gibson noting that 'houses are only intended for the work people at the Mines.'<sup>192</sup> Gibson instructed that the village be reminded of the regulation and that if they were not willing to accept it then 'they should be required to make arrangements for the removal of their female relatives.'<sup>193</sup> This is a classic example of the nature of landlord power over

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<sup>188</sup> NRS, GD224/649/8, Letter to Mr Sutherland Esq from Alexander Gordon, 14<sup>th</sup> November 1862. Free housing for colliers was provided until 1874 and shortly after this the Duke ended direct working of Dalkeith Colliery.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> Gaudie, *Cruel Habitations*, p. 63.

<sup>191</sup> NRS, GD224/649/6, Extract Letter including answer of Mr Stewart, Wanlockhead to Mr Gibson, 4<sup>th</sup> August 1853; Even in 1894 when James Russell published *Reminiscences of Yarrow*, the then 6<sup>th</sup> Duke was carrying on the legacy of his late father as he 'provided liberally for the accommodation of the peasantry on their estates.'; James Russell, *Reminiscences of Yarrow*, (Selkirk: George Lewis & Son, 1894), p. 65.

<sup>192</sup> NRS, GD224/649/6, Extract Letter including answer of Mr Stewart, Wanlockhead to Mr Gibson, 11<sup>th</sup> August 1853.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

employees, especially in isolated areas where a new industrial workforce was situated, as at Wanlockhead.<sup>194</sup>

Tied housing was not new; in fact, it was a model taken from the agricultural portions of the Buccleuch operations. It did impose some heavy financial costs on the estate however. In June 1848, at the peak of the industrial developments across the Scottish estates, the Duke informed one of his estate chamberlains, William Ogilvie, that he was aware the 'buildings upon the Estates will doubtless this year be very expensive.'<sup>195</sup> However, acutely aware of the need for good housing for those living in remote areas, the Duke stated that he was 'always much in favor [sic] of a Porch to the door of houses in a high country with the door on one side as at Carterhaugh.'<sup>196</sup> Going on, he stated that he always found that this added 'immensely to the warmth & comfort of the houses' and that his experience of trying this at Drumlanrig brought 'great delight & great increases of comfort.'<sup>197</sup> In 1846 the Duke informed William Ogilvie that he wished 'to get rid of the box beds altogether in every cottage.'<sup>198</sup> This reaffirms the point made that 'poverty and inadequate housing allied to social problems' with the Duke and Duchess both being highly aware of this and wishing to ensure that for those on their estates this was not the case.<sup>199</sup> This is driven partially by their notion of paternalistic duty but also of the fear of reputational damage if housing was known to be notoriously poor and inadequate. As highlighted by Anne Mitson and Barrie Cox when examining the Yarborough Estate in Lincolnshire, the period between 1840 and 1860 saw intense interest in the design and provision of homes with a marked increase in articles on this topic.<sup>200</sup>

It was not only the Duke who took an active role in improving standards of property for those living on the estates, but his wife Duchess Charlotte Anne who strongly encouraged her husband in the programme of improvements for the tenantry. In 1846 she wrote to her husband in horror that she had been in a cottage and 'was sorry to see it had a mud floor'

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<sup>194</sup> Gaudie, *Cruel Habitations*, p. 191.

<sup>195</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 30, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 3<sup>rd</sup> June 1848.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>198</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 29, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 18<sup>th</sup> January 1846.

<sup>199</sup> Dennison, *The Evolution of Scotland's Towns*, p. 215.

<sup>200</sup> Anne Mitson and Barrie Cox, 'Victorian Estate Housing on the Yarborough Estate, Lincolnshire', *Rural History*, 6(1), 1995, p. 30.

and that she wanted it ‘remedied’ even though ‘the woman kept it so clean that I hardly thought it was mud.’<sup>201</sup> In describing the house and its occupant in this way, the Duchess was highlighting that this woman was of the ‘deserving poor’, and therefore should be in receipt of their charity.<sup>202</sup>

Housing became a focal point for those interested in the sanitary conditions for the population of Britain during the Victorian period with the 1840s becoming the decade for change. It inspired many landowners such as the Duke of Buccleuch to improve their housing for those living on their lands but also for those employed in their industrial operations such as coal mining at Dalkeith. However, it reinforced and expanded for many a dangerous situation where their housing was tied to their employment, giving their landlord and employer significant leverage over their freedoms creating a precarious nature over a basic commodity. The Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch believed in providing good housing for those in their employ offering incentives to keep their housing in good order to raise their moral standards through a paternalistic ethos. However, the risk of losing their home was ever present upon termination of their employment amongst other benefits such as access to sick funds, into a society where housing was of a notoriously poor standard exacerbating the risk of illness and disease.

### 2.4.3: Sick Funds

Healthcare came in a variety of formats on the Buccleuch estates in the nineteenth century in a national context where mineworkers accessed healthcare in a mixed economy of medicine.<sup>203</sup> This section will primarily focus on the healthcare offering for those involved in the industrial endeavours of the Duke particularly mining, contextualised by the wider provision on the estates. The most common healthcare provision came in the format of sick funds established for specific social and employment groups, which brought some benefits but which – as with tied housing – left those outwith the Duke’s employment highly vulnerable.<sup>204</sup> This provision like housing left the Duke with considerable leverage and

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<sup>201</sup> Boughton House Archive, Letter from Duchess Charlotte Anne to the Duke of Buccleuch, 6<sup>th</sup> January 1846.

<sup>202</sup> Gaudie, *Cruel Habitations*, p. 48.

<sup>203</sup> Blackie & Turner, *Disability in the Industrial Revolution*, p. 64.

<sup>204</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, Regulations and Rules of Canonbie Colliery Workmens Sick Fund.

enabled him from the outside to appear paternalistic but was quickly taken away when the employee lost their employment.

There is a good historiography on the provision of mining healthcare in the later nineteenth century but much less which examines the period before 1850, when the Duke's had already been in operation for some time. Robert Gray has examined the role of medical men in industry between 1830 and 1850, but his focus was on professional organisation and political affiliation, not the relationship with the land or industry owner.<sup>205</sup> Daniel Blackie and David Turner have provided one of the only notable studies done into the provision of healthcare for miners with a primary focus on disability in coal mining.<sup>206</sup> A further perspective has been relatively neglected, as emphasised by Barbara Harrison, which is that of women's experiences, considering the considerable numbers of women were employed in a variety of roles in mining even after the passing of the 1842 Act. The omission of the role played by the landlord turned industrial owner is a major gap in this field, something which this section shall attempt to address, through an examination the provision of sick funds provided for the Duke's miners

Access to some form of healthcare by his employees was seen as of paramount importance to the Duke and was primarily obtained through employment, which created a tied system of healthcare which extended to the employee's family for a small additional fee. However, this created a precarious situation for those employees, as when their employment ended, their healthcare ended, emphasising the inherent power imbalance between them and the Duke.

These industrial sick funds which were provided in the Duke's industries, largely restricted to those employed in mining, and the earliest records of their existence would indicate that they began in 1846 on the Buccleuch operations, although workplace sick clubs had been established nationally under the 1831 Truck Act.<sup>207</sup> This evidence reaffirms the point made

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<sup>205</sup> Gray, 'Medical Men', *Social History*, 16(1), 1991, pp. 19-43.

<sup>206</sup> Blackie & Turner, *Disability in the Industrial Revolution*, p. 64.

<sup>207</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, Letter from Mr Edmund Gibsone to the Duke of Buccleuch, 18<sup>th</sup> June 1846; Blackie & Turner, *Disability in the Industrial Revolution*, p. 66.

by Blackie and Turner that Buccleuch mineworkers, alongside other miners were 'one of the first sections of the British working class to become accustomed to the services of physicians and surgeons' with coal owners such as the Duke being a major employer of doctors when the 'profession was still trying to establish itself.'<sup>208</sup> As mentioned, healthcare provision was not limited only to the mineworkers but was available to their families as well. Members of the Canonbie Colliery sick fund paid 'once every two weeks three pence, for the Surgeon attending himself and family.' The Duke also contributed towards the fund 'paying twenty pounds yearly to assist the Surgeons Fees, for every hundred men employed.'<sup>209</sup> At Canonbie Colliery, the fund regulations included the workmen electing four committee members half yearly to assist the Colliery Manager to distribute the funds with rules produced to manage access to the fund. To claim relief workmen had to produce a Surgeon's certificate and if a workman died, the committee required a majority vote before his 'Widow, children or relatives, [would receive] any amount not exceeding three pounds.'<sup>210</sup>

The colliery at Dalkeith also offered healthcare as part of the job for the miners. In 1848 the Duke was informed by his colliery manager, James Wright, that a new medical attendant was required after the departure of a Dr Hunter.<sup>211</sup> Wright was open to allowing the men of the colliery to choose their next medical attendant by fielding three candidates: Dr Lewis, Dr Thomson and Dr Steele, and letting the men vote on the basis of whom they felt most comfortable with.<sup>212</sup> The subsequent vote gave 94 votes to Dr Steele, 3 for Thomson and none for Lewis: a clear majority.<sup>213</sup> Wright took the liberty to remind the Duke of the previous arrangement at Dalkeith Colliery where the medical attendant was given a salary of £20 for the first 100 men employed with this to then include £5 for any additional 50 men.<sup>214</sup> Wright felt that this would never exceed £40 under the existing numbers. The medical cover was not limited to those employed at the colliery but as was the arrangement at Canonbie, also to their families. The previous surgeon, Dr Hunter, received 2d a week from the men who 'preferred them for their families, which was retained from their pay'

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<sup>208</sup> Blackie & Turner, *Disability in the Industrial Revolution*, p. 65.

<sup>209</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, Letter from Mr Edmund Gibsone to the Duke of Buccleuch, 18<sup>th</sup> June 1846.

<sup>210</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>211</sup> NRS, GD224/582/11, Letter from James Wright to the Duke of Buccleuch, 25<sup>th</sup> February 1848.

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*

enabling all those connected to have some form of healthcare provided if they opted to do so.<sup>215</sup> Wright recommended to the Duke that a salary of £35 or £40 should be paid basing his recommendation on how much other medical attendants at nearby mines were paid. At Whitehill Colliery in nearby Rosewell, a Dr Smith was paid £30 and Sir John Hope paid a Dr Steele £50 at Craighall.<sup>216</sup> Wright felt that with the number of men employed at Dalkeith, £40 would be 'fully equal to either of these.'<sup>217</sup> At the end of the day, it would be the Duke who would 'determine who is to be appointed, and the amount of salary to be paid' demonstrating that though the men had a say, it was the Duke who made the final decision.<sup>218</sup> However, this discussion illustrates the impact and influence of neighbouring coal mining operations on the Duke. Of course, the services of these medical professionals were for those in the employment of the mines. The Scottish Poor Law both before and after reform in 1845 did not in principle allow relief to the able bodied.<sup>219</sup> By way of a medical test, parochial medical staff had to determine whether or not an individual was fit for work and if they were, relief was denied.<sup>220</sup> The miner's medical clubs were therefore a lifeline and enabled the Duke and his management to exert significant control over a malleable workforce.

The introduction of sick and medical clubs for mine workers was the norm by the middle of the nineteenth century, as pointed out by Blackie and Turner, 'miners across Britain were accustomed to paying into workplace schemes that provided access to a surgeon.'<sup>221</sup> It also demonstrated the relationship between worker and employer as a paternalistic one. It also reaffirmed the control of the employer as 'extending the employers' control over their employees, both by obliging them to subscribe to a compulsory fund and in determining their entitlement to care.'<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

<sup>216</sup> Ibid.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> John Stewart, 'The Provision and Control of Medical Relief' in *Medicine, Law and Public Policy in Scotland c.1850-1990: Essays Presented to Anne Crowther*, edited by Mark Freeman, Eleanor Gordon and Krista Maglen, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), p. 10.

<sup>220</sup> Ibid.

<sup>221</sup> Blackie & Turner, *Disability in the Industrial Revolution*, p. 67.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

In addition, the Duke took an active role in the selection of the medical professional for the villages over which he was landlord too, for example in Wanlockhead in 1872 upon the need for a new Medical Officer. The Duke received an application from a Dr Wilson for the position however, the Duke felt he was not 'superior as a medical man.' This was not due to his inferior knowledge of all things medical but rather he only had one hand with the Duke concerned that this 'may cause apprehension in the minds of some.' The Duke, acutely aware of the issues this may cause, was adamant that he would 'obtain the services of the best man that can be induced to settle in such a remote region.' This incident illustrates that the Duke was not willing to allow someone whom he deemed unsuitable for the post to be employed to look after those who relied on him for such a crucial provision such as healthcare.

They also emphasised the safety net provided through the Duke's employment and the risks upon departing his employment. In this sense, the sick and medical clubs served a political purpose by encouraging workers to remain loyal to their employer, something the Duke was keen to ensure in the deferential community of the Lothian coalfield.<sup>223</sup> This belief was not unfounded. During strike action in 1842 the Duke's actions reiterated the perilous nature of employment in the coal mining industry and its links to housing and health. This approach by mine owners was not uncommon in the Lothian coalfield and in a dangerous industry, healthcare was a bargaining chip.

However, the Duke was also a genuine believer in healthcare being provided for those who worked for him and lived on his estates. In this, he was very much part of a wider national debate, with health and sanitation being a major recurring theme in Victorian political and policy discussion with multiple commissions, enquiries and reports urging reform in urban areas but also on estates.<sup>224</sup> Through charitable means the Duke donated money to support these endeavours, for example making donations to appeals for new infirmaries such as the one at Hawick in 1846, reinforcing his image and reputation as a paternalist who truly cared. This act of benevolence was something the Duke was 'most willing to contribute towards' as

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<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> Dennison, *The Evolution of Scotland's Towns*; Stewart, 'The Provision and Control of Medical Relief' in *Medicine, Law and Public Policy in Scotland*, edited by Freeman, Gordon and Maglen, p. 10.

it had 'long been required', and he subsequently donated £20.<sup>225</sup> This kind of charitable action was completely separate from that carried out in an industrial setting. These charitable actions were common and an almost expected part of the duty of a landed aristocrat as highlighted by Keir Waddington in relation to hospitals as the 'bastions of the Victorian charitable ethos' due to the way they 'transcended political, social and class boundaries.'<sup>226</sup> Healthcare provision was often discussed by the Duke but not necessarily in relation to those who were employed by him industrially but more generally with regards to his tenantry with a very paternalistic philanthropic approach, which will be discussed further in the chapter on paternalism.<sup>227</sup>

## 2.5: Conclusion

The industrial management and welfare provided by the Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch was at times forward thinking and progressive in intention. The paternalism that they exemplified was put on display to the country during a time of profound political and economic change and on the Buccleuch estates, a time of diversification away from agricultural business to heavy industry, with mining playing a major role. This caring image was also blended with firstly, awareness of the power of reputation in a society where the spotlight was turning ever more intensely on the landed aristocracy and secondly, a utilisation of new forms of social control over his workforce in the shape of sick clubs and housing. This chapter has examined several intertwined aspects of this developing form of control, through the role of estate chamberlains, wages manipulation, responses to trade union activity, and the provision of education, housing and finally the role and operation of sick funds. All of these aspects worked hand in hand and were intricately connected. The estate chamberlains had the sometimes-unenviable task of working for the Duke of Buccleuch. They were at the vanguard of ever-changing set of enterprises, moving the estates from a primarily agricultural landholding to one domination – at least in financial terms – of heavy industry. These men had considerable levels of autonomy, allowing them to run their respective estates in the fashion they saw fit. However, there were limitations. The

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<sup>225</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 30, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 10<sup>th</sup> January 1846.

<sup>226</sup> Keir Waddington, 'Subscribing to a Democracy? Management and the Voluntary Ideology of the London Hospitals, 1850-1900', *The English Historical Review*, 118(476), 2003, p. 359.

<sup>227</sup> For more on paternalism and the Duke of Buccleuch see Chapter 3 on paternalism.

Duke had the final say on any major decision creating a system of working in partnership, which brought with it challenges, especially when estate remittances were deemed insufficient. These men however, ensured that the estates operated efficiently and communicated the Duke's wishes and orders to the tenantry and surrounding communities often having to strike a careful balance between the desire of the Duke and the tenantry.

Interest in wages and condition of the people's employment, was balanced more towards the Duke's managers, and together they took some steps in advance of legislation, allowing him to present an image of responsible paternalism and morality. The relationship that emerges from these interactions is a nuanced one, and one based on complex power negotiations between the Duke and his managers and the workforce and tenantry. Although this relation was inherently unequal, the Duke recognised that he could not simply domineer, but instead had to fulfil a relatively fixed set of obligations and expectations to ensure his reputation as a 'good' landlord was maintained, an outcome of value to him politically and socially.

The hostile approach taken by the Duke towards trade unions was overall typical of the time for men of his class and position. Trade union activity was not tolerated on any grounds: the Duke's view was that his men should deal directly with him and the management and not as a collective group in the form of a trade union. His dealings with trade unions illustrate that he used the leverage of tied housing, education, and sick funds as a way to threaten destitution, and that to prevent this they needed to work on his terms. To go against the Duke risked making life ever more challenging.

Education was a defining feature of the life and work of both the Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch. The provision of education was always a high priority and invested in across the estates, and the Duke was highly interventionist in the appointment of teachers, mainly on denominational grounds, but also for quality. This neatly demonstrates the important role played by landlords in Scottish education prior to the 1872 Act, and afterwards, particularly for denominations excluded by that Act. Education did enable the Duke to attempt to create a malleable tenantry; however, in this case, there is clear evidence that the Duke truly believed in the power of education and that it was his duty to support and enact that. On a

similar note, it is evident in the provision of housing and sick funds in coal mining areas that the Duke believed that by providing good quality housing with the incentive of awards for cleanliness and tidiness he would be in turn able to raise the moral standing of his workforce. Tied housing then gave the Duke the power to evict people who broke rules or went against his orders with the threat of legal action if they still refused to leave; it also gave him leverage over their healthcare. However, the Buccleuch estates were forward thinking in their housing provisions with the Duke and Duchess taking an active involvement in their design and maintenance, and the medical professional hired through the sick funds did provide a good service and were trusted by the miners. This paternalistic attitude was not always in evidence amongst their landed contemporaries.

The industrial management and welfare of the Duke of Buccleuch's Scottish estates was a complex and intense affair. He relied heavily on his estate chamberlains to ensure the smooth running not only of the estates but the associated industries in a style of partnership that worked effectively for him. The Duke may not have tolerated trade unionism or any form of dissent and insubordination on his estates but it did not mean that he did not care. He passionately cared for his tenantry and those involved in his industrial operations providing welfare but strictly on his terms. A driving tenet of his mode of operation was that of being a paternalistic landlord however, to what extent he did so due to his fear of his reputation is something that shall be explored in the next chapter.

## **Chapter Three: Paternalism– ‘I care not for canaries’<sup>1</sup>**

### **3.1: Introduction**

Paternalism underwent both a resurgence and a redefinition from the 1840s. There are a number of possible definitions of paternalism in this period but for the purposes of this study, paternalism can be determined as ‘the interference of a state or an individual with another person, against their will, and defended or motivated by a claim that the person interfered with will be better off or protected from harm.’<sup>2</sup> The landed aristocracy often preferred their own various styles of paternalism as the state increased its involvement in daily life. As government took power away from the localities and thus the relevant local landlords, power became increasingly centralised. This came to define local government and politics during the second half of the nineteenth century challenging the traditional power politics where the landlord dominated almost every aspect of life. However, this change, which was resisted at first due to its challenge to the established system, came to be assimilated by them. They embodied this new style of paternalism by working in partnership with the state and creating a new tradition within their families. Many preferred to operate within a traditional form of paternalism to prevent an increasingly central government interfering in the day to day running of their spheres of influence. Buccleuch conformed to this style of paternalism, where the Duke imposed his own rules around the edges of state institutions. Paternalism was never a one size fits all model of rudimentary welfare and many landed aristocrats were selective about what elements they welcomed and what they chose to deprioritise or ignore. Most saw it as primarily a moral duty to support the welfare of their tenantry and workforce, in the absence of a state provision, but also at least in part by wishing to avoid notoriety as an unkind and remote aristocrat in a slowly democratising

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<sup>1</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, Sederunt Book, Volume 94, March 1880: Duke in response to the Dumfries and Galloway Ornithological Society who had written requesting a subscription.

<sup>2</sup> G. Dworkin, Paternalism, *The Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy*, 2020, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/paternalism/>, accessed on: Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> October 2022.

society. This chapter will explore what the concept of paternalism meant for the Duke and wider Buccleuch family at a time of profound social and economic change, including across his own interests, as they diversified from the traditional agricultural structures into industrial operations. How did paternalism impact on relations between the Duke, his tenants and workers and how did paternalism work on a practical level? Lastly, this chapter will consider the reputational drivers of paternalism on the Buccleuch estates, including at both local and national circles such as the Royal court and Westminster. This chapter will be broken down into a number of sub-sections: firstly, it will establish the parameters of the Buccleuch family's perceptions and understanding of paternalism. Secondly, it will examine the Duke's response to major emergencies such as potato blight or cholera outbreaks, and how paternalistic instincts were brought to bear on these. Thirdly, it will examine landlord-tenant relations through the Duke's paternalistic lens, using the Queensberry estate as a case study. The rich archive of sederunt books retained for this estate gives a detailed understanding of the Duke's paternalistic approach, and in the final section of the chapter, we can see how he championed that in his social and political circles. This material illustrates the evolving views of the Duke towards his tenantry and their requests for assistance or charity. The recorded responses are from the Duke alone, illustrating the thought process and approach, a rare insight into the practical workings of mid-nineteenth century paternalism.

The historiography around paternalism is closely linked to that of class and class relations, in this period under challenge with the growth of industry and urbanisation. The traditional view was that society could be 'best managed and social evils best mitigated by men of authority, property and rank performing their respective duties towards those in their community who are bound to them.'<sup>3</sup> F.M.L. Thompson developed this idea further by showing that industrialisation was used as a tool to 'strengthen the bonds of deference' due to the undercurrent of fear of social revolution with the newly wealthy looking to traditional authorities such as the landed aristocracy to be the guardians of 'order and property.'<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Huw Beynon and Terry Austrin, *Masters and Servants*, (London: River Oram Press, 1994), p. 25; David Roberts, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England*, (Croom Helm: London, 1979), p. 8.

<sup>4</sup> F.M.L. Thompson, *English Landed Society in the Nineteenth Century*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1963), p. 185.

David Roberts has noted, however, that ‘little has been said about its practice’ in regards to Tory paternalism, of which Buccleuch was a leader.<sup>5</sup> Roberts further notes that the ‘economic and social changes of the early nineteenth-century’ had a major impact, leading ‘directly to the revival and invigoration of paternalist ideas.’<sup>6</sup> When coupled with the work of Brian Bonnyman, which examines the 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke of Buccleuch’s career and the influences that Adam Smith had upon him, it becomes apparent that this study shows his grandson and a wider family as typical of the paternalistic revival that took place in the nineteenth century and were acutely aware of their position and role in society.<sup>7</sup> This chapter aims to demonstrate that the Duke was heavily influenced by his grandfather, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke, and especially heavily influenced the family perception of paternalism, including that of Duchess Charlotte Anne, who brought a gendered approach to charity and duty. It Pocock illustrated the relationship dynamic on the Buccleuch estates by talking about an elite and a nonelite.<sup>8</sup> Knox makes a similar point regarding paternalism when exploring the work of Newby who observed that paternalism, particularly in landed society, ‘legitimised the right of the person embodying it’ with this power dynamic creating an acceptance from the subordinate class, that is, the tenantry.<sup>9</sup> Newby illustrates that the Duke, as a member of the landowning aristocracy, had a commitment as the actor of paternalistic behaviour to his tenantry, and this chapter will examine to what degree this commitment was genuine or more in his own interests.<sup>10</sup> This together with the move away from a state-led *laissez-faire* approach was perhaps ‘the most sophisticated method of establishing direct control over the workforce.’<sup>11</sup> Bonnyman has highlighted that the deferential relationship under the Buccleuch presented a very much a ‘two-way reciprocal system’ relationship where it was expected that both parties would fulfil their roles, and with this very evident in the case of the Duke reinforcing the legacy of his grandfather.<sup>12</sup> This is central to understanding of the relationship of

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<sup>5</sup> Roberts, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England*; David Roberts, ‘Tory Paternalism and Social Reform in Early Victorian England’, *The American Historical Review*, 63(2), 1958, p. 323.

<sup>6</sup> Roberts, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England*, p. 57.

<sup>7</sup> Brian Bonnyman, *The Third Duke of Buccleuch and Adam Smith, Estate Management and Improvement in Enlightenment Scotland*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2014).

<sup>8</sup> Ibid; J.G.A Pocock, ‘The Classical Theory of Deference’, *The American Historical Review*, 81(3), 1976, p. 516.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, p. 107.

<sup>10</sup> Howard Newby, *The Deferential Worker*, (London: Allen Lane, 1977), p.111; Howard Newby, Colin Bell, David Rose and Peter Saunders, *Property, Paternalism and Power*, (London: Hutchinson & Co, 1978), p. 29.

<sup>11</sup> W.W. Knox, *Industrial Nation: Work, Culture and Society in Scotland, 1800 – present*, (Edinburgh University Press: Edinburgh, 1999), p. 106.

<sup>12</sup> Bonnyman, *The Third Duke of Buccleuch and Adam Smith*, p. 150.

paternalism between landlord and tenant/worker but also the understanding of paternalism Buccleuch championed.

Any discussion of welfare paternalism needs to be contextualised against the major legislative reforms being introduced by the state at this time, the 1845 Poor Law Amendment (Scotland) Act being one of the most important. The historiography of welfare in Britain has developed rapidly but 'unevenly' in the words of Peter Jones and Steven King, who argue that England has been 'particularly well served' but Scotland has not.<sup>13</sup> They illustrate that Scottish welfare historiography follows a 'descriptive approach' lacking in granular studies of its application, reception and resistance. This chapter seeks to provide one case study of this, following the work of R.A. Houston.<sup>14</sup> Houston takes the view that 'lords in fact remained central to social and material existence into the nineteenth century' with this being largely due to the 'imbalance in wealth and power between lord and tenant.'<sup>15</sup> He nuances this point to say that the 'dominance of the aristocracy was, however, won rather than merely taken for granted' with the tenantry far from powerless to challenge the landowner.<sup>16</sup> With poor law reform, the position of the landlord became one of increased importance particularly in a deferential relationship implying that lord and tenant were 'bound together in a joint-stock enterprise.'<sup>17</sup> This relationship could be vital during economically and socially challenging times such as the 1840s, with potato blight and famine devastating Ireland, bringing an influx of refugees but also during localised public health crises such as cholera outbreaks on the estates. He insisted that his tenants and workers actively presented evidence of attempts to help themselves before receiving assistance from him, a notion central to the concept of the 'deserving poor', where those who applied for assistance were able to illustrate what they were doing to help themselves. This chapter illustrates a man whose paternalistic approach and ethos evolved over time in order to ensure the survival and position of the Buccleuch and Queensberry dukedom, economically and politically.

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<sup>13</sup> Peter Jones and Steven King, 'Voices from the Far North: Pauper letters and the Provision of Welfare in Sutherland, 1845-1900', *Journal of British Studies*, 55(1), 2016, p. 76.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, p. 77.

<sup>15</sup> R.A. Houston, *Peasant Petitions: Social Relations and Economic Life on Landed Estates, 1650-1850*, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p. 269.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, p. 270.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, p. 15.

### 3.2: Paternalism – family perceptions and understanding

Paternalism was a defining feature of the operation of the Buccleuch enterprises, whether agricultural or industrial: the Duke understood himself to be a ‘rational capitalist’ and a man ‘occupying a position of honour and respect within a society organised around the public display of rights and obligations.’<sup>18</sup> Duchess Charlotte Anne, guided by her religious beliefs often reminded the Duke in their correspondence of their fortunate position with ‘great and numberless Blessings to be grateful for’ and their joint duty to help those in genuine need.<sup>19</sup> This reminder was a major driver in influencing the Duke and his perception and style of paternalism, something which due to the size of his estates enabled a unique take on paternalism to occur.

Contemporary perceptions of paternalism were often defined by examples of what were identified as unpaternalistic, both in the factories of industry magnates and on the estates of traditional landowners. Houston emphasises that ‘the other side of the historiography of landed estates is a pessimistic approach ... with thoughtless owners oppressing their tenants across Britain and Ireland.’<sup>20</sup> Probably the most (in)famous example of the latter took place on the estates of the Dukes of Sutherland, when they instituted clearances on their northern estates in an effort to re-organise their economic structure but which generated an almost immediate outcry which permanently damaged their reputation. By moving families off the land to make way for commercial sheep farming, the reputation of the Sutherland family and in particular their agent, Patrick Sellar, highlighted an episode where profit was put before people, reaffirming Houston’s pessimistic approach. This episode, and the wider Highland clearances of which they were a part, has skewed the perception of the landlord-tenant relationship in Scottish historiography. This study seeks to nuance the picture by understanding the operations of the owner of a diversified lowland estate.

The Duke was very much aware of his position and its attendant reputational dangers, and it is evident that his paternalistic approach was influenced by his grandfather, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke’s approach, who was mentored by the famous economist and theorist Adam Smith.<sup>21</sup> Smith

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<sup>18</sup> Beynon and Austrin, *Masters and Servants*, p. 25.

<sup>19</sup> Boughton House Archive, Duchess Charlotte Anne to the Duke of Buccleuch, 13<sup>th</sup> August 1869.

<sup>20</sup> Houston, *Peasant Petitions*, p. 12.

<sup>21</sup> Bonnyman, *The Third Duke of Buccleuch and Adam Smith*.

instilled in the young 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke as a certainty that the interests of the landowning classes ‘were the same as those of society in general’ but more importantly, that ‘his and the nation’s interests coincided in the improvement of his estates.’<sup>22</sup> This extended into a concern for ‘public order, social stability, and economic developments’ and this influenced how he managed his estates, which his grandson the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke also maintained.<sup>23</sup> Bonnyman argues that for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke – and we can add the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke to this analysis - his ‘public life and wider interests become an important element in understanding the overall ideology.’<sup>24</sup> The Duke had a profound belief and a well-founded understanding that part of his role as one of the leading aristocrats in Britain was to assist people, although not before they had attempted to assist themselves. Not only did the individual have to be deserving, but they had to conform to the Duke’s own social, religious and political. The Duke was not willing to support those whom he perceived as a threat to his position or interests such as those in the Free or Catholic Churches, with this evident in his refusal of applications for new sites of worship.<sup>25</sup> This approach illustrates the influence of his grandfather: Bonnyman has shown how during the early years of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke’s succession, paternalism was regarded as a ‘benevolent, one-sided relationship’ which did not benefit all of the parties involved, especially the Duke.<sup>26</sup> However, this approach altered to become a ‘two-way reciprocal system’ allowing both grandfather and grandson to ‘reinforce the existing social and political hierarchy’ with this becoming a defining feature of the Duke’s life.<sup>27</sup> Bonnyman argues that even though the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Dukes were both ardent paternalists, ‘paternalist strategies became even more central to estate management and public life under his son, the arch-Tory 5<sup>th</sup> Duke.’<sup>28</sup> Bonnyman suggests this is evident in the way he adopted and created a ‘paternalist regime’ in the management of his Midlothian collieries.<sup>29</sup> This legacy of family and the impact it can have is even more evident when, as Bonnyman argues ‘he continued the ‘benevolent’ leasing arrangements established under the 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke’ with regards to coal mining.

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid, p. 68.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid, p. 151.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> For more on the Duke of Buccleuch’s approach to religion, see Chapter 5.

<sup>26</sup> Bonnyman, *The Third Duke of Buccleuch and Adam Smith*, pp. 150 & 151.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, p. 195.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

This approach was linked to 'landowner influence, social stability, and political loyalty'.<sup>30</sup> Whereas the 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke's overseer of improvements, William Keir led 'unfettered commercialisation' and 'economic goals' as requiring a balance of benevolence to protect the tenantry and workforce, the Duke did not always see paternalism in protectionist terms. At times he believed that an employment or social group should prepare to change for the future if required, as illustrated by his attitude to the travails of weavers on his estates.<sup>31</sup> T.C. Smout argued that any support given was more about reinforcing the aristocracy's own 'sense of power'.<sup>32</sup> Overall, the Duke fits this characterisation.<sup>33</sup> Knowing his investments would provide healthy financial returns in the long run, Buccleuch knew that industrial diversification would benefit his social and political standing both on his estates but in the national political context, supporting a carefully orchestrated image as a heavyweight politician who truly cared about those who relied upon him.<sup>34</sup>

The evolution of the approach to paternalism is evident in the Duke's actions across his lifetime, with evidence of increased tolerance as he got older. This was in part due to the influence of wider social change but also that those forces which he had previously pushed back against no longer posed the risk that he once associated them with.<sup>35</sup> This shifting form of paternalism was not unique to Buccleuch, with F.M.L. Thompson highlighting how 'country house paternalism was not immune from change' particularly during the nineteenth century, when it had to adapt to fluctuations in 'changing market conditions' not just economically, but societally.<sup>36</sup> As he got older, the Duke adapted to those whom he viewed as deserving of paternalistic support with this evident in his dealings with the Free Church. In 1875 the Duke bought the Free Church schools for £300 in Dalkeith and presented them to the burgh and if the ground attached to the Free Church Schools was deemed too

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid, p. 192.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> T.C. Smout, 'Scottish Landowners and Economic Growth, 1650 – 1850', *Scottish Journal of Political Economy*, 11(3), 1964, p. 231.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Smout, 'Scottish Landowners and Economic Growth', *Scottish Journal of Political Economy*, 11(3), 1964, p. 231.

<sup>35</sup> Examples of this can be seen in Chapter 5 on religion with the opposition the duke had towards the Free Church and the Roman Catholic Church.

<sup>36</sup> Thompson, *English Landed Society*, p. 185.

small, he offered to sell a small piece of ground to remedy this.<sup>37</sup> This sort of action would have been unimaginable in 1843 and in the immediate years following the Disruption, when the Duke made his vehement opposition to the new kirk publicly clear.<sup>38</sup> The Duke did not address this evolution directly in his correspondence but we can see a clear shift, influenced by the changes he experienced over his lifetime, from the industrial developments, religious changes and political realities.

One constant was his adherence to the principle of preventing excessive or unnecessary support being given towards his tenantry, ensuring that only those who needed assistance got the help they deserved and reinforcing the Victorian notion of deserving poor. Rachel Vorspan has noted a definition of the 'deserving poor' which is particularly applicable to the Duke, as those who exhibited the virtues of thrift, sobriety, industry, piety and were 'polite'.<sup>39</sup> These were criteria the Duke actively sought for in those seeking assistance from him: in the words of David Roberts, they should be 'self-reliant, should stand on their own two feet, and should not be dependent on government'.<sup>40</sup> This reinforces the point made by Anne Hattersley around the importance of the 'moral character of poverty' and that the deserving poor were grateful.<sup>41</sup>

When the Duke succeeded in 1819, the Queensberry Estate was in a poor state due to the chronic mismanagement of the 4<sup>th</sup> Duke. This meant almost every aspect of the estate required major financial investment with a total of £172,881 4s 1d being expended upon improvements between Whitsunday 1822 and 1<sup>st</sup> November 1837.<sup>42</sup> Over this fifteen-year period, money was spent on improving all aspects of the estate ranging from buildings, drainage, fencing, roads and tenant's houses. In February 1844 the Duke wrote to his Queensberry estate chamberlain that 'immense sums have been expended upon it by the

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<sup>37</sup> NRS, GD224/106/1, Burgh School Board Correspondence at Application for site at Dicks Park, Transference of Dalkeith Free Church School to School Board, Use of Buccleuch School and Memorial School, these Schools were let to School Board, 1873-1877.

<sup>38</sup> For more on the Duke's behaviour towards the Free Church see Chapter 5 on religion.

<sup>39</sup> Rachel Vorspan, 'Vagrancy and the New Poor Law in Late-Victorian and Edwardian England', *The English Historical Review*, 92(362), 1977, p. 65.

<sup>40</sup> Roberts, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England*, p. 42.

<sup>41</sup> Anne Hattersley, 'Paternalism and Education on Landed Estates in Rural Northumberland, 1850-1900', *Northern History*, 44(1), 2007, pp. 111 & 112.

<sup>42</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Duke of Buccleuch's Private Diary, page 12, no date.

Proprietor' as it had been in the 'most wretched state'; he also recognised that so far, there had been but a small return, acknowledging that the tenantry had also spent money but 'reaped the profit', whereas he had not as yet.<sup>43</sup> His frustration was not aimed at his tenantry, whom he accepted were also investing and working on improving their lot. Rather, the Duke was frustrated with the high levels of investment he was having to make into the Queensberry estate for small returns, while other areas of his operations – agricultural and industrial – were crying out for investment in the 1840s. . Despite his frustration, and the fact he could have held back that investment and put it into more lucrative opportunities, his paternalistic approach led him to make different decisions. It illustrates a proactive and ever-present landlord who cared about his estate, wanting to enable those who lived on his land to provide for themselves, with the assistance of their landlord. He was neither willing to lose money nor make excessive profits on the estates, but was instead motivated by the knowledge that he had to look after not only the present tenantry, but future generations by investing money to ensure their security. He was also motivated by his political position as a Peelite, foregrounding the notion that property had 'its rights and its duties' and this meant ensuring not only his tenants' present security and prosperity but also their future.<sup>44</sup>

Perceptions and understanding of paternalism as both an idea and a practice played a critical and central role for the Duke and his wider family, especially his wife, Duchess Charlotte Anne. The family understood its fortunate position and the role they should play, for not only their tenantry but wider society at a time of major change. The legacy of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke as a paternalistic improver was evident in his grandson's approach and the Duke recognised the long-lasting power of a good political and social reputation – and the damage a poor reputation could do – and sought to embed that into his own actions with many of the topics of the day driving this. However, the paternalistic actions and image of the Duke were carefully orchestrated with wider events highlighting how weak these truly were.

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<sup>43</sup> Bowhill House Archive, GD224/1032/3, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Maxwell, 24<sup>th</sup> February 1844.

<sup>44</sup> Roberts, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England*, p. 219.

### 3.3: Paternalism in crisis – Potato Famine and Cholera

Between 1845 and 1852 Ireland suffered the Great Famine, nineteenth century Europe's worst peacetime disaster, with hundreds of thousands facing starvation, disease and emigration. The failure of the potato crop in 1846, which it is estimated almost one half of Ireland's population was dependent upon, precipitated a national and imperial human crisis.<sup>45</sup> Due to the situation being unprecedented and unforeseen, at first the scale of the disaster was outside the imagination of the government and its officials so that as Peter Gray states, 'the full consequences were thus not initially realized in England.'<sup>46</sup> As the full seriousness of the situation dawned on Sir Robert Peel in the 1846 session he informed the landed interest, one of whom was the Duke of Buccleuch, of the potential benefits of free trade and what it could do for them, beginning the discussion on the repeal of the Corn Laws.<sup>47</sup> Peel purchased Indian corn from the United States to assist in keeping food supplies for Ireland at the 'cheapest rate' stating it was 'purely a temporary measure' partially rejecting the notion of *laissez-faire* in contrast to Lord John Russell's government.<sup>48</sup> Public work projects were the preferred method of support and used to try to keep unemployment down but achieved little due to the fundamentally *laissez-faire* approach.

Irish landowners have become cast as the villains of the Famine years largely due to both a lack of action or for undertaking 'brutal clearances and evictions.'<sup>49</sup> Ciaran Reilly has argued that landlords and their agents were 'too far removed from the lower orders' preventing them from fully understanding the assistance that was required, perhaps unsurprising when roughly a third were absentees.<sup>50</sup> However, it was not just from the tenantry that the landlords received anger but also British politicians, administrators and the press who were appalled at the callousness shown towards the tenantry, something Enda Delaney has

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<sup>45</sup> Thomas P. O'Neill, 'The Organisation and Administration of Relief, 1845-52' in R. Dudley Edwards and T. Desmond Williams (eds.), *The Great Famine, Studies in Irish History 1845-52*, (Dublin: The Lilliput Press Ltd, 1994).

<sup>46</sup> Peter Gray, *Famine, Land and Politics, British Government and Irish Society 1843-1850*, (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1999), p. 228.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid*, p. 108; The repeal of the Corn Laws is covered extensively in Chapter 4 on the Political life of the Duke of Buccleuch where his role in its repeal was influential.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 108 & 124.

<sup>49</sup> Enda Delaney, *The Curse of Reason, The Great Irish Famine*, (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan, 2012), p. 167.

<sup>50</sup> Ciaran Reilly, *The Irish Land Agent, 1830-60*, (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2014), p. 99; Delaney, *The Curse of Reason, The Great Irish Famine*, p. 167.

emphasised.<sup>51</sup> Delaney has highlighted the critical role that a landlord in times of distress were expected to play, along paternalistic lines and above a mere economic transaction.<sup>52</sup>

The Great Famine and its tragic impact in Ireland stoked fears of the possible impact of potato blight in Britain. Britain did not escape the disease, with the potato crop failing across the Scottish Highlands and Islands in 1846 generating widespread destitution in what became known as the Great Highland Famine.<sup>53</sup> The Highlands were vulnerable as being highly dependent on the potato, but the lowlands were not spared either, including the Buccleuch estates. The Duke's response provides a fascinating example of how he perceived his role as a paternalistic landowner in assisting his tenantry to avoid acute economic crisis and destitution with this showing a stark difference to many of his contemporaries. This response was very much in keeping with his usual practice during times of crisis and suffering: whether it be agricultural failure or industrial downturns the Duke was willing to step in to provide immediate assistance until the economic context improved or alternative solutions could be found.<sup>54</sup> This stance does reiterate that he was very mindful of his reputation, with plenty of negative Irish examples to sharpen his mind such as the Marquis of Sligo and Colonel Vandeleur in Ireland, but also Lord Fitzwilliam who even as a paternalist was not scared to use eviction as a means of ensuring arrears were kept to a minimum.<sup>55</sup>

His approach to dealing with the symptoms of a crop failure on his estates was in stark contrast to the image portrayed of negligent Irish landlords.<sup>56</sup> Reinforcing this difference, the Duke took a proactive approach, aware that his reputation was of equal importance as his finances, particularly at a time when the working classes were becoming increasingly vocal and were not willing to accept the status quo. Their ire was of great concern to the Duke and

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<sup>51</sup> Delaney, *The Curse of Reason*, p. 167.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 166.

<sup>54</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, Sederunt Book, Inventory of Petitions submitted to the consideration of His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch & Queensberry, 7<sup>th</sup> February 1848; For examples on this see Section 1: Conditions of working people on the estates excluding coal mining in Chapter 2: Industrial Management.

<sup>55</sup> W.E. Vaughan, *Landlords & Tenants in Mid-Victorian Ireland*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), p. 30;

C.O. Grada, *Black '47 and Beyond: The Great Irish Famine in History, Economy, and Memory*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1999), p. 45.

<sup>56</sup> Delaney, *The Curse of Reason*, p. 167.

his contemporaries, who were beginning to fear 'violent disorders.'<sup>57</sup> Across the estates the Duke began daily enquiries as to the state of the potato crop and insisting that the chamberlains developed plans in case the blight hit.<sup>58</sup> He also used his political position to ensure that the latest information was available to inform planning, asking his parliamentary private secretary Gilbert Talbot to 'have the Reports of the Irish Commissioners respecting the Potato Disease printed & distributed' to his chamberlains and 'to recommend those who may have pitted their Potatoes, to open the Pits in fine weather, & to take out the bad Potatoes.'<sup>59</sup> This proactive approach is similar to that of the Earl of Portarlington: as Ciaran Reilly illustrates, he urged his agent to promote better agricultural practices to relieve distress.<sup>60</sup> This illustrates an acute awareness of how the actions of the landlord could have a direct impact on the tenantry. Similarly to the Earl of Portarlington, the Duke was aware of the small actions that he could take that would help the tenantry in the long run if and when potato blight reached the estates. Through effective communication with the estate chamberlains and subsequently those growing potatoes, the latest advice enabled the avoidance of large-scale destitution. However, driving this response was an awareness of the reputational damage that a lack of action had wrecked on Irish landlords. Simply doing nothing and letting others provide assistance was not an option that the Duke could entertain, as being against his paternalistic instincts and political interests.

In March 1846, Moncrieff, chamberlain for the Dalkeith Estate wrote, to the Duke to report that the accounts of the blight 'were very various.'<sup>61</sup> Happily, he could not find anyone 'who had suffered to any thing like the same extent as many farmers are said to have done in other parts of the country.'<sup>62</sup> Crucially, he did not believe 'the poor will be subjected to any want or suffering from the deficiency of the supply' because even though prices were high, 'wages are proportionally as high' and that they had had a spell of good weather.<sup>63</sup> His view

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<sup>57</sup> Roberts, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England*, p. 58.

<sup>58</sup> NRS, GD224/511/12, Letters and reports by Buccleuch chamberlains on the state of the potato crop, with copy report for the Lord Advocate on the Nithsdale crop, 1846.

<sup>59</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 28, Letter from The Honourable Gilbert Talbot to William Ogilvie, 5<sup>th</sup> November 1845.

<sup>60</sup> Reilly, *The Irish Land Agent*, p.111.

<sup>61</sup> NRS, GD224/511/12, Letter from Robert Scott Moncrieff to the Duke of Buccleuch, 12<sup>th</sup> March 1846.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

on prevention was 'to keep the potato, dry and well ventilated.'<sup>64</sup> In Roxburghshire the situation was somewhat different, according to the chamberlain William Ogilvie. He had received reports from the farmers that were 'very conflicting.'<sup>65</sup> However, unlike at Dalkeith, Ogilvie was concerned about the situation for the 'Hynds, Cottars, and Poor people have certainly suffered great privation' as they had only been able to preserve a bushel or two for seed.<sup>66</sup> He was of the view that the cause of the poor crop was heavily influenced by 'climate & soil.'<sup>67</sup> In Dumfriesshire, A.H. Maxwell painted a different situation again with the disease progressing up to the end of November but 'since then it has generally been arrested.'<sup>68</sup> From his enquiries some areas and their crop 'have been nearly free of the disease' with no concerns about his district being 'able to provide sufficient for seed for this years [sic] planting.'<sup>69</sup> However, there were pressures on the poor, and he took 'steps for getting a supply [of food] for distribution amongst the poor people of this district'<sup>70</sup> This concern for the poor was echoed by one of the Duke's employees at Bowhill, Thomas Stewart, who was worried about exorbitant prices and acknowledging it 'will be very hard upon the poor people.'<sup>71</sup> Prices were rising due to the dire situation in Ireland, and this put increased demand on the Duke to alleviate the worst of the impact on his tenantry, as in Scotland, as in Ireland, the 'British government sought to play a secondary role to landlords in the provision of relief' something that the Duke firmly believed in as a paternalist.<sup>72</sup> However, the Duke was interested in more than just his own estates and was keen to understand the actions of his contemporaries. At the time of the potato blight, the Duke was a member of Peel's cabinet, in part due to his extensive landholdings and wealth and in part due to his reputation as a paternalist. By understanding what was going on he could ensure the actions he took on the estates were in line with societal and political expectations. Influential on the Duke's thinking was his relationship with Sir James Graham, a notable landowning agricultural improver and Home Secretary in Peel's cabinet. For the Duke, the spectre of absentee and cruel Irish landowners was forefront in his mind as how not to conduct

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> NRS, GD224/511/12, Letter from William Ogilvie to the Duke of Buccleuch, 16<sup>th</sup> March 1846.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid.

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

<sup>68</sup> NRS, GD224/511/12, Letter from AH Maxwell to The Right Honourable Gilbert Talbot, 20<sup>th</sup> March 1846.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

<sup>71</sup> NRS, GD224/511/12, Letter from Mr Thomas Stewart to the William Ogilvie, 16<sup>th</sup> March 1846.

<sup>72</sup> Christine Kinealy, *A Death-Dealing Famine, the Great Hunger in Ireland*, (London: Pluto Press, 1997), p. 88.

himself. The correspondence between the Duke and Graham illustrates how many landowners were sharing news and approaches. The Duke shared his agent's letters with Graham, and was informed by him that it was accurate in stating that 'the Potato Crop is generally and rapidly decaying'.<sup>73</sup> Graham went on to state his opinion that 'Indian wheat must be the substitute for Potatoes in the meantime districts, but also predicted that 'the Government will have immense difficulty in Ireland in this approaching Winter.'<sup>74</sup> This correspondence reaffirms how intricately connected the landowning and political classes were. Sir James's comment on difficulties in Ireland is vital in understanding that the authorities in London knew they had a difficult situation to deal with, enhancing their frustration with a landowning class where considerable numbers were either absent and not proactive in relieving distress or using the crisis to impose mass evictions.

What becomes quickly apparent is the sense of paternalistic duty that the Duke demonstrated towards his tenantry, which enabled the Scottish estates to ride out the worst of the storm and avoid certain destitution for communities across the Lowlands. His approach was in stark contrast to many of his Highland contemporaries, where some such as the 8<sup>th</sup> Duke of Argyll 'used the opportunity to encourage emigration,' to reduce the poorest population of his extensive estates.<sup>75</sup> The Duke of Argyll, in a later published reflection, stated that a 'large sum was spent in providing meal' for people but another large sum was also spent in 'assisting as many as were willing to emigrate to Canada' with this scheme eventually seeing over a thousand people leave.<sup>76</sup> The Duke of Argyll believed that emigration was not the only 'remedy' but also provided local employment in draining, road building and other agricultural improvements, for which he had to borrow to pay for, as the outlay could not be funded purely from rental, something which Buccleuch was not reliant on in the case of relief.<sup>77</sup> A second crucial difference between the Dukes of Buccleuch and Argyll was the average size of tenanted landholdings on their estates. Argyll wanted to avoid the term 'clearance' but was operating an estate made up of a considerable number of

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<sup>73</sup> NRS, GD224/511/12, Letter from Sir James Graham to the Duke of Buccleuch, 11<sup>th</sup> August 1846.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>75</sup> Annie Tindley, "Actual pinching and suffering': Estate Responses to Poverty in Sutherland, 1845-86", *The Scottish Historical Review*, 90(2), 2011, p. 238.

<sup>76</sup> The Duke of Argyll, *Crofts and Farms in the Hebrides being an Account of the Management of an Island Estate for 130 years*, (Edinburgh: David Douglas, 1883), p. 20.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 20 & 21.

crofts where, he argued, rapidly increasing population levels created 'increasing poverty' and 'low standard of living.'<sup>78</sup> Argyll was convinced of the process of 'consolidation of the crofts' to make viable farms, and he had fronted the investment to do so.<sup>79</sup> This sort of structural action was not required on the Buccleuch estates; large scale agricultural improvement had been completed under his grandfather, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Duke, meaning he did not find himself in the unenviable position of dealing with famine, population issues and agricultural improvement during challenging economic times. Both dukes may have experienced potato blight on their estates but the marked differences in legacy and approaches to the disaster would have significant implications for the reputations of their families.

The impact of the famine greatly exercised the Duchess also, and she found herself at the receiving end of correspondence from desperate Irish famine victims requesting assistance, which had a strong impact on her: as she wrote to the Duke 'it is heart breaking to think of the misery that is now endured by so many of our fellow creatures.'<sup>80</sup> Although Peter Gray has rightly highlighted that Peel believed there was 'little private sympathy in Great Britain for the Irish' making 'no efforts to stimulate charitable activity outside Ireland', it is clear that there was private sympathy evident.<sup>81</sup>

The Duke and Duchess's understanding of paternalism was heavily influenced by a concern for the family reputation, both social and political. They wished to avoid the dangerous decline of Irish landed reputations both before and then during the Famine, as seen in the conclusions of the Devon Commission, which in 1843 formally identified Irish landlords 'as a cause of Ireland's economic backwardness' and as the catastrophe of the Famine exploded, this only worsened.<sup>82</sup> The Duke was actively pursued a course of action where assistance would be provided, if need be, having witnessed the tragic ramifications of not acting both on the people of Ireland and the public and political image of the landed classes.<sup>83</sup> By 1847,

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<sup>78</sup> Ibid, p. 23.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid, p. 25.

<sup>80</sup> Boughton House Archive, Letter from Duchess Charlotte Anne to Duke of Buccleuch, 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1847.

<sup>81</sup> Gray, *Famine, Land and Politics*, (Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1999), p. 257.

<sup>82</sup> Kinealy, *A Death-Dealing Famine*, p. 36.

<sup>83</sup> Geraldine Vaughan, 'The Irish Famine in a Scottish Perspective, 1845-1851', *Cashiers du MIMMOC*, 12, 2015, p. 3.

Charles Trevelyan, one of the architects of the British response to the Famine, labelled Irish landlords as a 'barrier to modernisation,' an accusation that unnerved many British landlords.<sup>84</sup> Gray argues that Irish landowners became 'demonised', an outcome of concern for British landowners too, including the Duke.<sup>85</sup> The key difference was that landowners in Britain, including the Duke, were overall far more financially buoyant than those in Ireland, and were able in many cases to fund relief when required, even while arguing with the government about who was responsible.<sup>86</sup> The abject failure of the British government's response to the Famine was also absolutely central, and due in part to the dogmatic laissez-faire approach taken by the Whig government under Lord John Russell that took office after Peel in 1846. Charles Read has shown that the initial interventionist approach taken by Peel was 'dismantled' by Russell 'under the ideological influences of laissez-faire economic ideas and religious providentialism' which raised 'mortality levels.'<sup>87</sup> This failure in governmental policy with laissez-faire ideology is something Read has argued 'became a useful post-hoc justification of government economic policy failure.'<sup>88</sup> This laissez-faire approach during challenging times was rejected by the Duke. He adopted an interventionist approach reinforcing his image and reputation as a paternalist and a Peelite. Critically, as Christine Kinealy has pointed out 'Scottish landlords were financially more buoyant than those in Ireland' allowing those such as the Duke to have more buying power as prices rose allowing their intervention to have more relieving effect.<sup>89</sup> This fortunate position allowed the Duke to reinforce his image and reputation as a paternalist to not only his tenantry but the wider political and social community in which he operated.

The Duke's paternalistic approach was not uncommon amongst his Scottish peers, at least those who recognised that unacceptable behaviour in challenging times brought with it the risk of major reputational damage if assistance was not forthcoming.<sup>90</sup> Tindley argues that for the dukes of Sutherland, when faced with challenging economic circumstances, , 'the

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<sup>84</sup> Ibid, p. 121.

<sup>85</sup> Gray, *Famine, Land and Politics*, p. 277.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid, p. 89.

<sup>87</sup> Charles Read, 'Laissez-faire, the Irish Famine and British financial crisis', *Economic History Review*, 69(2), 2016, pp. 411 & 412.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid, p. 413.

<sup>89</sup> Kinealy, *A Death-Dealing Famine*, p. 89.

<sup>90</sup> Tindley, "Actual pinching and suffering", *The Scottish Historical Review*, 90(2), 2011, pp. 236-256.

ducal family was far more concerned about its social reputation than upholding stringent management principles.<sup>91</sup> The Duke generally was a firm believer that the individual should provide and look after themselves but he understood that in emergencies the landlord needed to be proactive and help individuals and sometimes whole communities through challenging periods.

A second, and more local and particular example of this paternalism in action during a crisis can be seen in 1849, when cholera struck Selkirk and the surrounding area due to poor sanitation and infected drinking water. This incident allows us to illustrate how carefully constructed the Duke's image as a paternalist landowner was. Multiple cholera epidemics occurred in Scotland between 1847 and 1853 and became a major public health concern. The influential doctor and writer W.P. Alison, Professor of Medicine at Edinburgh University, had already developed 'powerful arguments linking destitution to such diseases' particularly in areas where rapid population growth had occurred, which fitted the Selkirk case, as the town had rapidly expanded to support local textile industries in the previous decades.<sup>92</sup> This outbreak and Alison's arguments severely weakened the carefully constructed image the Duke had created as a paternalist, exposing how much of the community living on or near his estates lived in abject poverty with poor sanitation and dirty water. In Selkirk the cholera epidemic was contained largely to the working classes, and further investigations revealed it was the 'poorer classes' affected principally, highlighting 'a great amount of distressing destitution.'<sup>93</sup> These revelations confirm the view of W.P. Alison that the destitute living conditions of the poor were responsible for epidemics, although significant 'population growth went hand in hand' with alarming increases of infectious diseases.<sup>94</sup> On a national scale, as Michael Sigsworth and Michael Worboys note that during the 1848-9 cholera epidemic, the main observations by sanitary reformers were that working-class homes were

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid, p. 255.

<sup>92</sup> Stephanie Blackden, 'The Board of Supervision and the Scottish Parochial Medical Service, 1845-95', *Medical History*, 30, 1986, p. 149.

<sup>93</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 30, Letter from Mr D.C. Alexander to the Duke of Buccleuch, 13<sup>th</sup> January 1849.

<sup>94</sup> Blackden, 'The Board of Supervision', *Medical History*, 30, 1986, p. 149.

‘overcrowded, ill-ventilated, dark and dirty’; a reality that significantly paternalistic image of the Duke’s estate and industrial management.<sup>95</sup>

The mere fact that cholera emerged so close to the Duke’s Bowhill estate undermined the image of a proactive paternalist landlord. Being a paternalist meant ensuring epidemics such as cholera did not emerge in the first place. It was not good enough to merely be there for when crises occurred, even if it then allowed you to present yourself in a positive light. Incidents such as these crises highlighted the poor standard of living that many experienced on the Buccleuch estates. When cholera broke out, the seriousness of the situation was made rapidly apparent and the Bowhill chamberlain, William Ogilvie and a local employee, Mr D.C. Alexander, kept in regular communication with the Duke, informing him of the latest developments. An inspection of the town took place and, it was recommended that ‘many of the houses should be thoroughly fumigated and cleaned,’ highlighting the extreme levels of poverty. For example, it was found that many families were ‘devoid of proper [bed] covering’ and shared a bed with ‘only a rug or old blanket over them.’<sup>96</sup> It further highlighted that ‘several families are greatly in need of proper supplies of food.’<sup>97</sup> In initial response to this horrific news the Duke sent a donation of £10, 20 pairs of blankets and a ‘regular supply of horses for soup kitchen.’<sup>98</sup> The Duke also began to mobilise other authorities, writing to Ogilvie that he would ‘strongly recommend to convert their “Drying House” at once into an Hospital’ so that ‘all persons suffering from Cholera, or symptoms of Cholera should be removed at once out of the crowded dwellings.’<sup>99</sup> With regards to fumigating and cleaning the dwellings he stated that they should be ‘thoro’ly cleaned, the habitation thoro’ly worked with water & with hot lime, so that every corner from the floor to the ceiling be completely cleaned & purified.’<sup>100</sup> He was of the belief that ‘too often medical aid is sought for when too late’ when if treated early ‘many cases may be cured.’<sup>101</sup> Past experience of managing cholera at Dalkeith was no doubt helpful and suggests a landowner concerned to help his

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<sup>95</sup> Michael Sigsworth and Michael Worboys, ‘The public’s view of public health in mid-Victorian Britain’, *Urban History*, 21, 1994, p. 247.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

<sup>99</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 30, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 28<sup>th</sup> August 1849.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

tenantry and was willing to lend his 'presence at any meeting [likely the burgh or parochial board]' if it 'would be of service.'<sup>102</sup>

These two crises illustrate the specific kind of paternalistic approach taken by the Duke, whereby he had a clear sense of his paternalistic duty to his tenantry but was also motivated by reputational concerns both locally and nationally. The Duke's relatively strong financial situation and that of his Scottish peers more generally has been highlighted by Geraldine Vaughan as allowing them to be 'more active and collaborative than their Irish counterparts in providing relief for their tenants.'<sup>103</sup> However, financial prosperity was only part of the story: the reputational drivers were of equal importance. The Duke's reputation had already been severely damaged by the mid 1840s, especially on the Queensberry estate, due to his refusal of sites for the Free Church, which gained him unwelcome attention in Parliament and the national press, negatively impacting his image as a paternalist.<sup>104</sup> His position as a cabinet minister brought additional pressures of being more firmly in the public eye when it came to his tenantry. His active management of the crises of the potato blight and cholera was ultimately driven by a desire to mitigate for his failings in dealing with the Free Church but also the poor wider conditions on and in the vicinity of his estates. This approach was altered in providing support for all to ensure his reputation as one of Britain's leading landed paternalists with his actions feeding into the wider thinking around landlord and tenant relations.

### 3.4: Landlord-Tenant Relations and Worker-Landlord Relations

Over his lifetime, the Duke transformed his estates from largely agricultural concerns to a diversified mix of agriculture, mining, railways and harbours. This tied the estates together in ways that makes separating the respective component parts of estate management and relief challenging for historians. F.M.L. Thompson has shown that paternalistic relationships, particularly financial, between a landlord and tenant operated within a 'traditional and accepted social order.'<sup>105</sup> It was not that all matters were compartmentalised nor was it a

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<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Vaughan, 'The Irish Famine in a Scottish Perspective 1845-1851', *Cashiers du MIMMOC*, 12, 2015, p. 3.

<sup>104</sup> "Article 5 -- no Title." *The Scotsman*, Feb 08, 1845.

<sup>105</sup> Thompson, *English Landed Society*, p. 198.

relationship that enforced reminders of tenants' 'inferiority and dependence' but was instead centred on 'loyalty.'<sup>106</sup> This section asks whether the Duke was a paternalist for both his traditional rural tenantry and his new industrial workforces or only the former, and what that means for our understanding of the operation of landed power in an industrialising age.

The concept of loyalty between a landlord and a tenant is something that has become increasingly debated in the historiography with J.G.A. Pocock illustrating how a deferential society in a classical sense consists of an elite and a non-elite where the non-elite regard the elite as being of superior status.<sup>107</sup> This notion of superior status is illustrative in the form of petitioning that tenants and others requesting assistance from the Duke used. Peter Jones and Steven King note Thomas Sokoll's argument that tenant applications were addressed to a higher authority in a simplistic one-way direction.<sup>108</sup> However, as Terry Dunne has argued, petitions and applications were really a dialogue, subject to 'processes of negotiations', thus creating a moral economy clearly structured for both landlord and tenant.<sup>109</sup> Negotiation was clear, with deference playing a key part alongside persuasion.<sup>110</sup> Deference, however, is an ambiguous term and arguably too simplistic to fully understand the complex nature of paternalism and the relationship between landlord and tenant.<sup>111</sup>

Ensuring good tenant and industrial relations was crucial to the smooth running of the estates and industries and 'paternalism was a realistic and highly beneficial employer strategy' especially in 'small towns and isolated industrialised villages, where the employer had a near monopoly,' as on the Buccleuch estates.<sup>112</sup> There is a clear process of evolution in the Duke's paternalism towards these groups, as illustrated by the developments at Wanlockhead through bringing the lead mine back into his own hands and the renewing the

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<sup>106</sup> Ibid.

<sup>107</sup> Pocock, 'The Classical Theory of Deference', *The American Historical Review*, 81(3), 1976, p. 516.

<sup>108</sup> Jones and King, 'Voices from the Far North', *Journal of British Studies*, 55, 2016, p.87; Thomas Sokoll, 'Writing for relief: Rhetoric in English pauper letters, 1800-1834', *Being Poor in Modern Europe*, (eds.), Andreas Gestrich, Steven King & Lutz Raphael, (Bern: Peter Lang, 2006).

<sup>109</sup> Terry Dunne, 'Gentlemen regulators: landlord/tenant conflict and the making of moral economy in early nineteenth-century Ireland', *Rural History*, 31, 2020, p. 19.

<sup>110</sup> Thompson, *English Landed Society*, p. 187.

<sup>111</sup> Newby, *The Deferential Worker*, p. 111; Houston, *Peasant Petitions*, p. 15.

<sup>112</sup> Knox, *Industrial Nation*, p. 108.

tied housing, schooling and the miners library. The key drivers of this evolution in paternalistic approach took place against a wider societal backdrop of increasing volatility through the rise of Chartism, Famine in Ireland and Scotland, revolution in Europe, not to mention the increasing assertiveness of tenants on the estates. Visibility of paternalistic activity had always been important, from the late 1830s more than ever, as the Duke recognised.

In 1837 the Duke informed Ogilvie that he had been sending a donation of £20 'annually for some years' to the Burgh of Selkirk with the intended use of the money for 'furnishing coals or other necessaries to the Poor in that Burgh.'<sup>113</sup> This was to be used in addition to 'whatever may have been raised for the Poor, but at the same time distinct from it' as the intended recipients was for those 'who do not receive Parochial relief.'<sup>114</sup> The Duke was often critical of the parochial authorities, and made it clear that 'it was not given to relieve them from their burdens but to relieve the wants of the poor.'<sup>115</sup> In his view, the parochial authorities more often than not misspent and misallocated funds, and as the winter had 'been so severe the Poor shall not suffer from the faults of them.'<sup>116</sup> His explicit instruction was that the 'charity come from me, and be at my disposal, instead of being applied by others to purposes for which other funds ought to be provided.'<sup>117</sup> This incident illustrates a second point: the Duke had, from his point of view, serious grounds to mistrust the local authorities in terms of efficiency and proper treatment of the poor.

Paternalistic overview of the general conditions facing working people on the Buccleuch estates was an area of paramount importance to the Duke and Duchess. This section will use the case of those working in the woollen and cotton industries as a case study to highlight the paternalistic approach taken, emphasising the fluid relationship negotiated between landlord, estate chamberlain and worker. The difficulties faced by weavers gives us a clear snapshot of what life was like on the estates for those who were experiencing a protracted period of economic downturn nationally from the early 1840s as new mechanised

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<sup>113</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 24, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 28<sup>th</sup> January 1837.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

technologies overtook the older cottage industries. The Duke was keen to understand what was being done for the weavers across his estates, for instance in Langholm parish, particularly how much was being spent supporting them.<sup>118</sup> It was reported that between July 1840 and May 1841 £830 8d had been spent on relief.<sup>119</sup> Handloom weavers were disproportionately affected during economic downturns and gave much cause for political anxiety, being subject to several government investigations in the 1830s and 1840s, emphasising how in one generation they had gone from being 'the most prosperous group in the working class' to one of the 'lowest class of labourers.'<sup>120</sup>

There is a substantial body of wider literature on the conditions of working people in Victorian Scotland with the main focus on those in the cities, due to the increasing levels of urbanisation.<sup>121</sup> A fascinating snapshot from 1843 is provided by Ian Levitt and Christopher Smout in their research, albeit now somewhat dated, into the state of the Scottish working classes. Their work highlighted the contemporary concern about the plight of weavers nationally at this time.<sup>122</sup> Their focus, and that of Norman Murray's work, was on state support, and both underestimate localised landlord support, such as on the Buccleuch estates, making it challenging to estimate the success of occasional relief.<sup>123</sup>

The Duke was informed that the textile industries were 'not in an equally depressed state' meaning that some areas were 'consequently not suffering similar privations.'<sup>124</sup> For example, Hawick's principal manufacturing in this industry was stocking weaving where a total of approximately 1,700 people were employed with men earning on average 9s 3d per week.<sup>125</sup> In Langholm the principal manufacturing was of cottons by hand loom but in 1842 were experiencing 'very low wages, not being able to earn more than from 6/- to 7/- per

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<sup>118</sup> NRS, GD224/511/6, Letter from A.M. Maxwell to Gilbert Talbot Esq, 12<sup>th</sup> May 1842.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Levitt and Smout, *The State of the Scottish Working-Class in 1843*, p. 103.

<sup>121</sup> For example see: Iain Hutchison, *Industry, Reform and Empire, Scotland 1790 – 1880*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020); Knox, *Industrial Nation*.

<sup>122</sup> Levitt and Smout, *The State of the Scottish Working-Class in 1843*.

<sup>123</sup> Norman Murray, *The Scottish Hand Loom Weavers 1790-1850: A Social History*, (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers Ltd, 1978), p. 140.

<sup>124</sup> NRS, GD224/511/6, State of the Woollen and Cotton Manufacturers at Hawick, Langholm, and Sanquhar, the rates of wages and conditions of the operatives, February 1842.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid.

week.<sup>126</sup> This negative situation was worse the year previously with it noted that in February 1841 'upwards of 100 were thrown upon the Duke of Buccleuch for employment.'<sup>127</sup> These circumstances meant that a significant proportion of hand loom weavers ended up looking for other work, particularly in the woollen line which was reported to have had the consequence that 'their numbers have been considerably diminished.'<sup>128</sup> Langholm, it was acknowledged was dependent on the industry being buoyant in nearby Hawick and Galashiels and with these areas at risk of further depression would mean many will 'suffer accordingly.'<sup>129</sup> This acknowledgement of weakness highlights one major negative aspect of the integration of the Duke's industries. It reiterated to the authorities that when economic downturn occurred, even in just one industry, it had subsequent knock-on effects.

The role of the estate chamberlains in these enquiries was crucial. It enabled the Duke while in government to understand the challenging and volatile situation on the ground and whether or not assistance was required. Between February and April 1842, William Ogilvie and William Harley-Maxwell were in regular communication with the Duke informing of the minutest detail. The timing of these enquiries mapped onto growing government concern into the state of the weaving classes nationally.<sup>130</sup> The problem was acute: in 1842 Paisley suffered a depression in the weaving trade leading to 14,000 individuals subsisting on public relief of 2d per head per day.<sup>131</sup> This national decline was certainly evident across the Buccleuch estates also: for instance in Langholm in February 1842 'upwards of one hundred thrown upon His Grace for employment' with the depression 'inducing several of the hand loom cotton weavers to look out for other work.'<sup>132</sup> This depression continued into 1842 with the Duke writing to William Maxwell stating that something had to be done regarding the hand loom weavers in the vicinity of the Bowhill Estate. He felt that as 'so many of these people are dependent upon me,' during the summer months those capable of outdoor labour should be employed working upon 'making roads, embankments,' a method of relief introduced to alleviate the hardship in Ireland during the years of the Great Famine to

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<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Levitt and Smout, *The State of the Scottish Working-Class in 1843*, p. 103.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> NRS, GD224/511/6, Letter from Mr AH Maxwell to Lord Rosslyn, 15<sup>th</sup> February 1842.

minimal success, but still the main route to able-bodied relief available to the destitute, if the employment could be supplied.<sup>133</sup> This work was to be carried out even if it 'would not under ordinary circumstances have been executed.'<sup>134</sup> Aware of the fact that the money that he would expend 'will [not] be repaid, at least not above one half' he felt that it would be useful to at least 'expend it in making permanent improvements in the country.'<sup>135</sup> Of course, these improvements would also feed into the longer term increase in land values on the Buccleuch estates.

What was apparent from the Duke's response was that he was willing to assist further during the challenging winter months if necessary, noting that given the national attention being paid to the plight of weavers, if he did not the reputational damage would be high.<sup>136</sup> April 1842 was a challenging time financially for the Duke, with the industrial developments operating at considerable cost: however, he did not see this as a valid reason to sidestep his paternalistic duties.<sup>137</sup>

This mindset was applied in 1848 with the Sanquhar weavers where there 'were about 120 in number and that sixty of them were totally idle [due to the collapse of their market].'<sup>138</sup> In response to an application for assistance the Duke agreed that 'work should be afforded to the weavers in the same manner that it was upon the last occasion when they were in distress.'<sup>139</sup> In this manner it meant that the 'able bodied should be employed out of doors & those unfit for such work should have webs supplied to them' but he was more of the opinion that the younger members of the community 'would do well to turn their attention to some other trade.'<sup>140</sup> He was clearly of the view that there was little future in hand weaving, and although he was happy to 'relieve them now' he did not want them to 'depend

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<sup>133</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 25, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Maxwell, 21<sup>st</sup> April 1842.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>136</sup> Bowhill House Archive, GD224/1032/1, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Maxwell, 21<sup>st</sup> April 1842.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>138</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, Sederunt Book, Inventory of Petitions submitted to the consideration of His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch & Queensberry, 7<sup>th</sup> February 1848.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*

upon my bounty when better times come round.’<sup>141</sup> This example also reiterates the support the Duke was willing to give to those he felt ‘deserving’ of relief, and who had fallen on hard times through no fault of their own. This incident also highlights the failures of the unreformed Scottish Poor Law, with the able-bodied disqualified from receiving any assistance, leaving them ‘totally destitute.’<sup>142</sup>

This case study illustrates the proactive nature of the Duke towards crisis assistance on his Scottish estates as a paternalistic duty. The Duke was acutely aware of striking the right balance of where he should provide assistance, which was left in practical terms to the estate chamberlains to administer. They too had to strike a balance so that they could ‘relieve them [the weavers] now’ but ‘not as to induce them to depend upon my [the Duke’s] bounty.’<sup>143</sup>

The Duke was motivated by the travails of a class in an industrialising society that were at risk of being left behind. As Paul Richards notes, ‘the handloom weavers were both the most numerous and the most poverty-stricken occupational group within the industrial working class’, something recognised by the Duke.<sup>144</sup> He then worked in partnership with his estate chamberlains to mitigate the worst of the impacts, while recognising the industry was fatally undermined and that new occupations would need to be found as a long-term solution.

In 1842, the Duke faced new forces which impacted his decision as to whether and how far he should support the weavers on his estates: his evolving reputation and the rise of Chartism. Through close working with the estate chamberlains and his micromanagement of affairs on the ground, the Duke was able to work towards ensuring that Chartism had little or no impact on his estates. Richards has argued that the ‘handloom weavers were a scattered and diverse group making effective organisation or unionism very difficult’ which certainly was in evidence on the Queensberry estate and the small towns surrounding the

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<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Murray, *The Scottish Hand Loom Weavers 1790-1850*, p. 134.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> Paul Richards, ‘The State and Early Industrial Capitalism: The Case of the Handloom Weavers’, *Past & Present*, 83, 1979, p. 92.

Bowhill estate, likely due to their relative remoteness.<sup>145</sup> The Duke was acutely aware of his reputation, particularly the political ramifications, which drove his efforts in finding them alternative employment during difficult financial times.<sup>146</sup>

R.A. Houston has explored this framing of paternalism, highlighting how a landowner had to be careful with petitioners as they expected a certain level of generosity but that any 'unreasonable requests had to be turned down without causing offence.'<sup>147</sup> In July 1843, Dumfries Infant School applied for support. Applications from educational institutions were very rarely denied and in this case the Duke was of the belief that 'if it is well managed it ought to be supported.' However, the school had already requested a donation from Duchess Charlotte Anne, receiving £5 from her. With this in mind the Duke then thought this was 'quite enough.' The Duke had to finely balance finite resources with his conception of what was a deserving or urgent cause and also ensure offence was not given.

Charitable donations were one matter, but more structural economic adjustments quite another, as in the case of petitions for reductions of rent from tenants. In 1843, the Duke was informed that his tenantry on the Queensberry estate were 'preparing to Petition me for a reduction of rent.'<sup>148</sup> This was in response to low prices, which the Duke was prepared to accept as a rationale; however, he did not agree that a wholesale reduction was appropriate due to the varying performance of the farms. He felt that 'consideration should be given to those who have comparatively cheap farms, & those who have dearer.'<sup>149</sup> He stated to Maxwell that he had no objection in principle but that he 'must have more particular information before I can determine the amount.'<sup>150</sup> Keen to ensure that a dangerous precedent did not establish itself, the Duke felt that it was not fair that 'when the slightest pressure comes should declare they cannot pay at all' but rather that 'they should be able to pay an even rent throughout' and 'loss should not always fall upon the

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<sup>145</sup> Ibid, p. 93.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid, pp. 100 & 101.

<sup>147</sup> Houston, *Peasant Petitions*, p. 273.

<sup>148</sup> Bowhill House Archive, GD224/1032/3, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Maxwell, 12<sup>th</sup> August 1843.

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

Landlord.<sup>151</sup> This point was reiterated when the Queensberry tenants petitioned again in 1844 for a further rent reduction.<sup>152</sup> Angered, the Duke was 'determined to make a stand upon this point' while being 'not at all satisfied with the conduct of the Tenantry in Dumfriesshire.'<sup>153</sup> The Duke blamed some tenants for poor farm management and argued that this was 'no ground for an abatement of rent.'<sup>154</sup> He pointed to the fact he had 'expended large sums in buildings & other improvements, & where I have completed my part of the bargain, the Tenants then strive to evade the fulfilment of their share.'<sup>155</sup> The Duke was not willing for his tenantry to merely take his largesse and give nothing in return, a feeling exacerbated by the fact that 'immense sums' had been expended upon the Queensberry Estate after it had been 'in the most wretched state' on his taking up the mantle, while acknowledging that although the tenantry had invested significant sums into their tenancies too, they then 'reaped the profit', at least in theory.<sup>156</sup> Even though his tenants were in a paternalistic partnership with the Duke and his estate management, Houston is correct in that due to the imbalance in wealth and power between 'lord and tenant' the choice of engaging with 'dialogue lay more with the former than the latter.'<sup>157</sup> This frustration on the part of the Duke towards his tenantry was not a unique occurrence on aristocratic estates. Annie Tindley has presented clear evidence of similar frustrations on the Sutherland Estate.<sup>158</sup> The Sutherland family understood the perceived need to separate the 'deserving' from the 'undeserving' poor; however, the estate management felt that previous high levels of generosity had created a 'dependency culture.'<sup>159</sup> Buccleuch and Sutherland were similar in that they could choose whether or not to promote a paternalistic culture through having the wealth to absorb the losses and were both sensitive regarding their reputations.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>151</sup> Ibid; Annie Tindley, *The Sutherland Estate, 1850-1920: Aristocratic Decline, Estate Management and Land Reform*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), pp. 27, 31 & 32.

<sup>152</sup> Bowhill House Archive, GD224/1032/3, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Maxwell, 12<sup>th</sup> January 1844.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Bowhill House Archive, GD224/1032/3, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Maxwell, 31<sup>st</sup> January 1844.

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Bowhill House Archive, GD224/1032/3, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Maxwell, 24<sup>th</sup> February 1844.

<sup>157</sup> Houston, *Peasant Petitions*, p. 269.

<sup>158</sup> Tindley, "Actual pinching and suffering", *The Scottish Historical Review*, 230(2), 2011.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid, pp. 241 & 242.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid, p. 255.

The Duke was not always the generous paternalist and could be critical if employees required assistance and were to found wanting of better management of their own affairs, particularly when they were employees rather than tenants. For example, we can examine the case of George Corbett, a servant who was dismissed and then subsequently fell into rent arrears.<sup>161</sup> George Corbett was discharged from the Duke's employment for several reasons including inefficiency and improper conduct of his family.<sup>162</sup> Having been discharged from employment, Corbett stated in a petition to the Duke pleading his case that he had been working with some 'aged men, some of them upwards of sixty years of age & others of weak mind,' in a storm they took shelter.<sup>163</sup> Upon being found sheltering, word reached Mr Maxwell and he was dismissed. This in turn caused him to be 'deprived of a living' and 'a home to shelter my wife and family.'<sup>164</sup> In his letter he claimed to have made every effort to support his family and decrease the arrears owing on his property but that this had failed and he had to throw himself 'entirely upon your Grace's mercy & from your Grace's well known benevolence & generosity I fondly trust you will still allow me a house and work upon your Grace's Estate.'<sup>165</sup> This request is laden with emotive and charged language and suggests a well-known rhetoric around petitions and appeals to landed power; however, it also points to a likely known outcome, as R.A. Houston has stated, applicants saw the reality of their position.<sup>166</sup> Incidents such as this one also allow the prevalent aristocratic fear of reputational damage on their estates to be examined. In this case the Duke deferred from dealing with and deciding on this case directly, reaffirming the point made by R.A. Houston again that due to the imbalance of power, it allowed them to choose if they wanted to 'engage in dialogue' or not.<sup>167</sup> The Duke stated to Maxwell that 'it is impossible for me to interfere in this matter' and that he 'must leave it to your discretion to arrange about this man.'<sup>168</sup> This illustrates the fear of local reputational damage the Duke was mindful of avoiding. Although unwilling to deal directly with the man, the Duke had clear views about

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<sup>161</sup> NRS, GD224/504/3, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from George Corbett, 21<sup>st</sup> February 1850.

<sup>162</sup> NRS, GD224/504/3, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Maxwell, 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1850.

<sup>163</sup> NRS, GD224/504/3, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from George Corbett, 21<sup>st</sup> February 1850.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>165</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>166</sup> Houston, *Peasant Petitions*, p. 271.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 269.

<sup>168</sup> NRS, GD224/504/3, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Maxwell, 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1850.

what the outcome should be noting that they 'ought to have been discharged long ago.'<sup>169</sup> He also stated that 'he has had many advantages, good wages, no deductions for broken work, a good house & garden rent free.'<sup>170</sup> Aware of his lack of fitness for work and trade as a forester, the Duke felt he 'cannot remain where he is, nor be employed as a common labourer.'<sup>171</sup> However, he was conscious of the size of his family and the age of his children and did 'not wish to push him to extremity.'<sup>172</sup> If the Duke perceived applicants to be unwilling to change and become 'industrious', he would not support their application. This was a common theme amongst landed paternalists who took a detailed view of applications and made decisions on moral as well as economic grounds.<sup>173</sup>

In 1857 a different kind of case emerged upon the Duke's discovery of a Roman Catholic labourer employed at Bowhill. In correspondence with William Ogilvie, he demanded as much information as possible, including his marital status, how long he had been employed and whether or not he was a good employee.<sup>174</sup> Eight days later the Duke was informed that the individual was no longer employed at Bowhill, to which he replied that he hoped none 'of that sort' will be employed again as he disliked 'the whole tribe of them.'<sup>175</sup> This intolerance was not uncommon in the early 1850s in Scotland, with anti-Catholicism reaching another societal crescendo in the wake of the Great Irish Famine and associated migration, and had a negative impact on paternalistic tolerance.<sup>176</sup> On the Buccleuch estates, as we have seen, there were paternalistic expectations of the Duke, but applicants, tenants and workers had to be of a 'deserving' character, with religion being a major component of that. The Duke emphatically stated that he 'objected to take Roman Catholics into his Domestic, & Labouring Establishments.'<sup>177</sup>

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<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.

<sup>172</sup> Ibid.

<sup>173</sup> Tindley, "Actual pinching and suffering", *The Scottish Historical Review*, 90(2), 2011, p. 242.

<sup>174</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 37, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 2<sup>nd</sup> December 1857.

<sup>175</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 37, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 10<sup>th</sup> December 1857.

<sup>176</sup> Ryan Mallon, *Dissent after Disruption: Church and State in Scotland, 1843-63*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021), p. 115.

<sup>177</sup> NRS, GD224/1126/49, Copy of correspondence with Mr Bergin, 19<sup>th</sup> May 1852.

The Duke did become more tolerant over the decades. In 1871 he was made aware that there were 'love begot bairns' in the vicinity of the Queensberry Estate.<sup>178</sup> The Duke had discussed the issue with the Duchess, as this area was viewed as a 'feminine occupation' and would fall under her purview for 'maternal and moral responsibilities', as it was commonly expected for female elites to act in this capacity for the dependents on their husbands' estates.<sup>179</sup> The Duke reported that the Duchess was 'shocked but not surprised', with both acknowledging that 'there is a hardly a cottage in the neighbourhood that does not contain a "Love begot" bairn', and that 'it is an epidemic which never ceases, constantly recurring.'<sup>180</sup> Illustrating a more relaxed view and greater autonomy for his estate chamberlains, the Duke told Clark that he might 'administer such a reprimand or rebuke as you consider the case of each requires.'<sup>181</sup> David Roberts has argued that one of the principal duties of a conscientious paternalist was to 'guide the lives of those dependent on him' by exerting 'a firm moral superintendence.'<sup>182</sup> Applying this theory, the Duke and Duchess had a fairly relaxed stance in this particular instance, while maintaining a clear vision of their role as moral paternalists. However, this incident raises a more important point, which was the fact that the Duke discussed this case with the Duchess, in a way he would not even consider for financial or managerial cases, such as rent reductions. This example conforms to the notion that this incident would be an extension of women's maternal function with an emphasis on moral welfare 'beyond the confines of their own homes into those of the poor.'<sup>183</sup> This was perceived to be the domain of the Duchess, and the Duke took her view of the case.

The relations between the Duke, the Duchess and his tenantry and workforces, can be characterised as a largely positive, if closely monitored and highly controlled working relationship. This relationship was coated in a paternalistic veneer as a constant was his

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<sup>178</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, GD224/504/12, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to J Gilchrist Clark Esq, 25<sup>th</sup> February 1871. Love begot bairns is a phrase used to describe illegitimate children.

<sup>179</sup> Reynolds, *Aristocratic Women and Political Society in Victorian Britain*, p. 71.

<sup>180</sup> This view is borne out by the statistics, which show a high level of 'bastardry' in the south-west of Scotland in particular: Andrew L. Drummond and James Bulloch, *The Church in Victorian Scotland, 1843-1874*, (Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press, 1975), p. 128.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>182</sup> Roberts, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England*, p. 5.

<sup>183</sup> Reynolds, *Aristocratic Women and Political Society in Victorian Britain*, p. 110; F.K. Prochaska, 'Women in English Philanthropy, 1790-1830', *International Review of Social History*, 19(3), 1974, pp. 426-445.

desire to ensure his reputation as a proactive paternalist remained intact. The Duke may have been one of the most powerful aristocrats in Britain at the time, but a poor reputation would have quickly undone his political, social and cultural influence, at least to some extent. To ensure his reputation was not diminished, the Duke made a point of ensuring he did not deal with individuals directly, to introduce a modicum of deniability and distance. The next section explores these dynamics in action in a case study of the Queensberry estate.

### 3.5:- the Queensberry Estate – a case study

As the foregoing chapter has evidenced, a great deal of the Duke's attention was applied to the Queensberry estate, and he readily acknowledged that this was the estate which required the greatest volume of investment and support. Under the 4<sup>th</sup> Duke, the Queensberry estate was neglected while he indulged in gambling, women and living a high life elsewhere, decimating the estate's valuable forests to fund his lifestyle and withdrawing investment from the tenancies. The sederunt books for the Queensberry estate present an invaluable resource in understanding the Duke's approach and thought processes holistically for the estate, including housing, charity, education, health, religion and infrastructure requests over a long durée. Wendy Gordon has highlighted that a large proportion of the scholarship regarding the poor and access to relief has focussed on the voices of the poverty-stricken, but an examination of the sederunt books for the Queensberry estate gives us a cross section of the whole of the society over a fifty-year period (1838-1884), allowing us to track patterns of change and continuity in the Duke's approach.<sup>184</sup>

The sederunt books were examined at five-year intervals across this period to provide a sampled overview.<sup>185</sup> This gives us a clear picture of the patterns of the paternalistic behaviour of the Duke, with the total success rate for applications amounting 59%. When this figure is combined with successful applications on condition, the overall success rate

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<sup>184</sup> Wendy M. Gordon, 'The Obligation to Support the Widow Settlement: Settlement, the New Poor Law and the Scottish Local State', *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies*, 35(1), 2015, p. 50.

<sup>185</sup> Where material was not available to be examined at 5-year intervals, volumes as close as possible to this were examined instead. The categories examined were as follows: Building applications; charities, public subscriptions, pensions; deductions; applications for houses and finally, miscellaneous requests.

was 85% of applications from a total of 963 requests. The Duke was predisposed to approve applications but often on condition, reinforcing his personal and detailed involvement in decision-making, and his clear understanding the intricacies of the tenant or applicant requests, and the power dynamics inherent in the exchange. The most common conditions were related to applications requesting assistance on the payment of interest on loans, grants for carting materials, insisting that the applicant carry out the labour themselves or compromising in some other way on their application, most commonly by reducing the amount of support given according to how recently the applicant had received support. The biggest category that had requests approved but on condition were individuals requesting rent deductions, with this standing at 68% of all applications (although separate to the collective rent education requests discussed earlier). Building and miscellaneous requests saw the largest share of rejected applications at 17%; however, this was still an 83% success rate. Miscellaneous applications included requests for help from local societies or charities, and the Duke rationed donations to these, and if he did not agree with their aims or approach, he would reject their application outright. Building applications were often rejected where improvements had either been recently made and the Duke wished to prioritise other applicants, especially where there was a record of failure to pay rents or interest on loans.<sup>186</sup> Likewise, he would only approve applications on the condition that the applicant would pay the interest on the work, as was the case with a John Smith of Middlehill who applied to the Duke for assistance to drain four acres, who agreed on condition that Smith pay the interest on the loan.<sup>187</sup> On the flip side, the Duke could be severe if applicants were perceived to have failed to meet their obligations: on 6<sup>th</sup> October 1840 the tenant of Buchan's Stock and Crop had fallen into significant arrears of rent and was described to the Duke as a 'most hopeless case'. It was admitted that he was in essence a good farmer, but his moral character did not 'stand high'.<sup>188</sup> The Duke, having reached the end of his tether with this individual, stated that 'if he cannot pay the rent he must leave the farm'.<sup>189</sup> These cases were relatively rare: overall there was no significant contraction of

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<sup>186</sup> Thompson, *English Landed Society*, p. 187.

<sup>187</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, List of matters and Queries submitted for the consideration of his Grace the Duke of Buccleuch & Queensberry at Drumlanrig Castle on the 6<sup>th</sup> of October 1840.

<sup>188</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, List of matters and Queries submitted for the consideration of his Grace the Duke of Buccleuch & Queensberry at Drumlanrig Castle on the 6<sup>th</sup> of October 1840, p. 27.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid*, p. 28.

benevolence towards those applying for assistance or donations. Over a sixty-year period, management of paternalistic benevolence on the Queensberry estate did not diminish, even when frustrations were surfacing over the lack of return. What is evident is the ways in which the language used in the applications followed a system noted by Peter Jones and Steven King.<sup>190</sup> Through their analysis of letters requesting assistance in contemporary Sutherland, Jones and King evidence how applicants were keen to emphasize ‘aspects of hardship that were likely to be considered favourably’ with this including loss of or limited access to land, advancing age and lack of family to support them.<sup>191</sup> This can certainly be corroborated from the Buccleuch estates, although this was not without risk to the applicant. If the Duke found out a tenant had misled him or not fulfilled their side of the paternalistic bargain, he would request that the individual be reprimanded. For example, a James Steel applied for leave to convert a store house into a house of accommodation, which the Duke granted.<sup>192</sup> However, the Duke subsequently found out that Steel was using it as a whisky shop, and stated that he had only granted the original application on the understanding that ‘food & clothing were to be the only articles sold’ with ‘ale & spirits being expressly prohibited from being sold.’<sup>193</sup> The Duke stated that if he found ‘the premises be used for any other purpose than that for which you obtained sanction’ he would ‘resume possession of them.’<sup>194</sup>

Education was at the forefront of the Duke’s paternalist efforts, even when considerable costs could be incurred. In October 1838 Reverend Robert Menzies wrote, asking for the ‘parish school [to be] removed to a more convenient situation and a site for an Infant School at Ecclefechan.’<sup>195</sup> In response the Duke stated that ‘£100 may be subscribed for the removal of the parish church to a more convenient situation, if the plan is agreed upon by the Heritors of the parish and a site for the Infant School may be granted.’<sup>196</sup> This was no small undertaking, particularly at a time when the Buccleuch finances were under pressure in

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<sup>190</sup> Jones and King, ‘Voices from the Far North’, *Journal of British Studies*, 55, 2016, pp. 76-98.

<sup>191</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 93.

<sup>192</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, Inventory of Petitions submitted to the consideration of His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry at Drumlanrig Castle the 26<sup>th</sup> day of September 1848, p. 111.

<sup>193</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 112.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>195</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, Sederunt Book, Bundle 1485, October 1838.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*

other areas. Requests for educational assistance from individuals were treated slightly differently. In October 1838 several individuals requested support, but the Duke was clear that he would give 'no answer not having the information requisite as to their character and whether they have relations who ought to maintain them or whether they receive parochial relief.'<sup>197</sup> This was an important principle, whereby the Duke saw his role as stepping in where the local authorities could not do so, or when he saw their actions as inappropriate or wasteful.<sup>198</sup> For example, in October 1843 Mary Reid from Sanquhar requested occasional relief from the Duke to supplement her poor relief upon the death of her son who had been employed 'as one of your Grace's gamesguards' with him being 'her sole support' and leaving her 'very destitute.'<sup>199</sup> Mary Reid was subsequently allowed 'some occasional relief.'<sup>200</sup> In contrast, when a request was made by Adam Brown, 94 years of age, who had suffered an accident aged 81 when returning home from the Duke's employment, he was unsuccessful. In his case, the Duke 'pays his house rent amounting to £3 5s - per annum' and so the Duke's view was that 'His house rent being paid by me, he has no further claim, any further assistance to be given through the Minister of the Parish.'<sup>201</sup> In making decisions about paternalistic activities, the Duke was not restrained by his wider financial situation. For the tenantry and workers, their homes, employment, pensions, and local structures such as education were looked after by a landlord who was very much actively leading the paternalistic management of the estates. As he put it in 1844, he had 'expended large sums in buildings & other improvements, & where I have completed my part of the bargain', that bargain being a two-way relationship with his tenants and workers.<sup>202</sup>

The Duke may have expressed frustration at expending considerable sums on the Queensberry estate for little return, but his approach and management of these petitions from the tenantry and wider community does not wholly conform to the style traditionally utilised as outlined in the historiography. In many instances an estate owner was absent leaving the outcome of many petitions left to the factor, a point emphasised by Peter Jones

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<sup>197</sup> Ibid.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, Sederunt Book, Bundle 1410, October 1843.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid.

<sup>202</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 27, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Maxwell, 31<sup>st</sup> January 1844.

and Steven King, citing Annie Tindley's work, that it was the factor 'who bore almost total responsibility for the welfare of tenants.'<sup>203</sup> This was due to the delegation of the role of decision maker by the landlord while they were absent. This was not the approach taken by the Duke, even when he was physically absent from the Queensberry estate. The evidence suggests that the Duke received petitions at whichever property he was resident at the time. This approach enabled him to understand the issues on the ground, but also to maintain a form of social control which was a key plank of paternalism. He still relied on the estate chamberlains to inform him of the background detail and context of each application and applicant, however; the tenantry and industrial workforces on the estates thus effectively applied indirectly to him through the estate management with the chamberlains being the critical link. On several occasions, applicants appealed directly to the Duke for assistance; but he would still refer to the knowledge of his chamberlains in making a final decision. Aspects of petitioning and outcomes were the domain of Duchess Charlotte Anne, who would also make appeals on behalf of tenants or workers, for example on visiting a farm labourers' home on the Bowhill estate, and later informing her husband that she was 'sorry to see it had a mud floor' and that she had told an employee to have it remedied.<sup>204</sup>

Wider economic trends could have an impact on paternalistic activities. In 1879, the Duke noted the severe agricultural depression affecting Britain, leading to poor returns and an increased demand for assistance from the tenantry and wider communities on the estates. At the same time, he faced greatly reduced returns from his mineral deposits, estimating 'they may be down nearly 50 per cent'.<sup>205</sup> He stated that 'from the Queensberry Estate I receive no income at all', having experienced 'a disastrous winter, spring & summer'.<sup>206</sup> Presenting the lead mines as 'a heavy burden' he was not willing for them to 'weigh down the rest of the Estate'.<sup>207</sup> The idea that he could 'stop working the mines' was not an option because of his paternalistic responsibilities. As he asked: 'but what would become of the

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<sup>203</sup> Jones and King, 'Voices from the Far North', *Journal of British Studies*, 55, 2016, p. 89; Annie Tindley, "'They Sow the Wind, They Reap the Whirlwind': Estate Management in the Post-Clearance Highlands, c. 1815-c. 1900", *Northern Scotland*, 3(1), 2012, p. 68.

<sup>204</sup> Boughton House Archive, Letter from Duchess Charlotte Anne to the Duke of Buccleuch, 6<sup>th</sup> January 1846.

<sup>205</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, GD224/504/12, Letter from Duke of Buccleuch to J Gilchrist Clark, 28<sup>th</sup> July 1879.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*

population at Wanlockhead in that case?’<sup>208</sup> T.C. Smout has highlighted how the Duke was a firm believer in ‘industrial benevolence combined with strict discipline.’<sup>209</sup> The latter was evident when the ‘workers lost their rights to own their houses and plots and became simple tenants.’<sup>210</sup> However, for all of this ‘strict discipline’ the Duke did continue some paternalistic activities, subsidising the library and presenting new instruments to the band.<sup>211</sup> There is no evidence as to why the Duke opted to remove the houses and plots from the lead miners but the likely reasoning for this was to ensure consistency for all miners on the Duke’s estates and as a form of social control. As Smout argues, they became ‘simple tenants.’<sup>212</sup> This example illustrates how paternalism could fundamentally affect financial decision-making on the Buccleuch estates: the lead mine could have been sold, relieving the Duke of major financial obligation to support the village but the Duke was conscious of his responsibilities and his paternalistic reputation.<sup>213</sup> It would have appeared selfish to abandon the workings of the mine. Knox has argued that in isolated industrial villages like Wanlockhead, where the Duke controlled both the labour market and housing as well as supporting welfare and social structures, he was ‘able to extend the workplace authority beyond the walls of the factory.’<sup>214</sup>

As the Queensberry case study demonstrates, the Duke took his role as a paternalist landlord very seriously: rarely would applications for assistance be rejected outright and if they were, there would be a clear rationale given against his consistent criteria and reasoning. No individual or community held an advantageous position with the Duke, with all applications being judged on individual merit within reasonable financial parameters.<sup>215</sup> Overall, relations between landlord, tenant and worker appeared to be broadly positive, the exceptions being when there was industrial action or trade union activity, as in 1842. The Buccleuch example reinforces Houston’s point that ‘Lords in fact remained central to social and material existence into the nineteenth century’ with this largely being due to the

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<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> T.C. Smout, ‘The Lead Mines at Wanlockhead’, *Transactions and Journal of Proceedings of Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural History and Antiquarian Society*, 1962, p. 157.

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>213</sup> Knox, *Industrial Nation*.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid, pp. 108 & 109.

<sup>215</sup> Houston, *Peasant Petitions*, p. 273.

imbalance in wealth and power between lord and tenant.<sup>216</sup> What this imbalance meant for the tenantry on the Buccleuch estates was that in a world where the Scottish poor law would 'provide nothing for the able-bodied man who became destitute through unemployment and precious little even for the sick and elderly' the Duke recognised his paternalistic duty to step into the breach and in return expect a deferential response.<sup>217</sup>

### **3.6: Buccleuch's paternalistic reputation**

Cultivating and delivering on a paternalistic reputation was crucial to many landed families as they negotiated a changing social, political and economic landscape, and Buccleuch was a leading member of this as is evident when it was in crisis. It was particularly vital in generating a strong political and media reputation, and to maintaining the family's position at court, as evidenced through the close relationship between Queen Victoria and Duchess Charlotte Anne. The Duchess played a key role in the Queen's visit to Scotland in 1842, orchestrated by Robert Peel, during which she became the Queen's 'confidante on matters Scottish' and her time as Mistress of the Robes.<sup>218</sup> The Duchess was also a leading female paternalist in the national context, regularly hosting charity balls, for example in 1837, when she acted as patroness for a Grand Dress Ball 'in aid of the subscription for the relief of the destitution in the Highlands and Islands.'<sup>219</sup> This national public display of charity and wider paternalism enabled Buccleuch to present a carefully crafted image of a family that understood its responsibilities beyond their estates. This section will place the paternalist activities of the family into their wider regional and national context and illustrate how their charitable and paternalistic activities were perceived outwith the estates.

The national press was a central tool in building the Duke's national reputation as a paternalist, and he ensured his charitable activity was reported and celebrated. For example on 12 January 1842, the *Scotsman* reported that 'it gives us much pleasure to state that his Grace the Duke of Buccleuch has generously added the very liberal contribution of £100 ... in

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<sup>216</sup> Ibid, p. 269.

<sup>217</sup> Levitt and Smout, *The State of the Scottish Working-Class in 1843*, p. 128.

<sup>218</sup> Alex Tyrrell, 'The Queen's 'Little Trip': The Royal Visit to Scotland in 1842', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 82(1), 2003, p. 53.

<sup>219</sup> "Classified Ad 1 – No Title", *The Scotsman*, Mar 4, 1837.

aid of the unemployed operatives of Paisley.<sup>220</sup> This was supplemented with 'a very gratifying subscription of £4, 2s. from the servants at Dalkeith House.'<sup>221</sup> In addition, Duchess Charlotte Anne also took an active interest in championing Paisley, influencing her husband, and together they demonstrated their awareness of their duty to help others and set an example to other wealthy members of society.<sup>222</sup> In November 1843 the Duke again received praise in the *Scotsman* for his munificence.<sup>223</sup> The Destitute Sick Society had put out a public request for donations of coal due to the 'inclement season' and Robert Scott Moncrieff was the first to respond, stating that the Duke had 'authorised him to give a hundred tons of coals for that benevolent purpose.'<sup>224</sup> This generosity was supplemented by the Duchess to celebrate his birthday: 'the Duchess of Buccleuch gave orders for the distribution ... of above fifty tons of coals among the poor of Dalkeith.'<sup>225</sup> A similar action took place in February 1865 when 128 tons of coal was given to '256 of the most necessitous poor of the town.'<sup>226</sup> In February 1844 the Duke donated £10/10/- for the 'purpose of erecting baths for the working classes' in Edinburgh, with this being the second highest donation given.<sup>227</sup> These two examples were highly public acts of charity and enabled the family to demonstrate their awareness of the pressing issues of the time and the role of the aristocracy in ameliorating those coupled with the Victorian notion of improvements for the working classes..<sup>228</sup> In October 1868 the Duke chaired a public meeting about the proposal to rebuild the Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary, and he personally donated £500. Knox has argued that public paternalism surrounding new buildings like that such as Dumfries and Galloway Royal Infirmary was a form of 'mutual dependency' with the working classes. As well as trying to improve the conditions of those living in the local area, the family were also trying to ensure that their position remained tenable and credible in a modernising society.

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<sup>220</sup> "Editorial Article 6 - No Title.", *The Scotsman*, Jan 12, 1842.

<sup>221</sup> Ibid.

<sup>222</sup> "Editorial Article 6 -- no Title." *The Scotsman*, Jan 12, 1842.

<sup>223</sup> "Article 3 -- no Title." *The Scotsman*, Nov 29, 1843.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid.

<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

<sup>226</sup> "Article 1 -- no Title." *The Scotsman*, Feb 23, 1865.

<sup>227</sup> "Classified Ad 1 -- no Title." *The Scotsman*, Feb 07, 1844.

<sup>228</sup> Roberts, *Paternalism in Early Victorian England*, p. 5.

In March 1854 the Duke's promises to his tenantry were brought to national attention in *The Scotsman* as he redeemed 'his pledge of more zealous attention to the interests and household comforts of the working classes on his estates.'<sup>229</sup> The article reported that each new house would be 'constructed on the most approved style of sanitary and household comfort.'<sup>230</sup> This paternalistic approach was often highlighted in the national press in the 1850s, with the Duke and his family generally portrayed in a very positive light, despite the fact that fewer than ten years previously poor social conditions had exacerbated a cholera epidemic in Selkirk. As well as investing in improvements on his estates, the Duke took on national leadership roles and patronage: he became president of the Association for the Improvement of Agricultural Dwellings in the mid-1850s and used the opportunity to state his belief that 'considering the very short period during which the Association had existed, the results which had been achieved were extremely satisfactory' highlighting 'the state of the cottages in this country' stating 'that the cottages of Scotland were worse than those in any other part of Great Britain.'<sup>231</sup> The next report in *The Scotsman* in 1857 found the Duke lamenting the challenges faced when the public assumed it was moral and social failing that led to poor housing: 'how can you improve the habits of which you complain unless you give them the means of improvement?'<sup>232</sup> The Duke was being portrayed as a forward thinker, and was central to the image he had created as a responsible paternalistic landlord to both his tenantry and the nation at large.

However, the press could be critical of the Duke and his actions too, highlighting in a different way what expectations society had of their social and financial elites. In August 1860, after a period which 'had been disastrous to many farmers', the *Economist* reported on the pressures on the agricultural sector.<sup>233</sup> The report noted how the nineteen or twenty-one year leases typical in Scotland were not available on the Buccleuch estates, where, 'leases of only nine years' duration are in use' and those that live on these farms 'do not improve their farms as, under favourable circumstances, they ought to do.'<sup>234</sup> William

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<sup>229</sup> "Editorial Article 2 -- no Title." *The Scotsman*, Mar 18, 1854.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

<sup>231</sup> "AGRICULTURAL DWELLINGS: IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION." *The Scotsman*, Jan 09, 1856.

<sup>232</sup> "AGRICULTURAL DWELLINGS' IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION." *The Scotsman*, Jan 14, 1857.

<sup>233</sup> "LANDLORD AND TENANT: THE BUCCLEUCH LEASES." *The Scotsman*, Aug 13, 1860.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

Ogilvie was quoted at length in the article, outlining the rationale for the shorter leases but the negative impact on the Duke's reputation as a forward thinking improver cannot be underestimated, as he was accused of leaving his tenantry in a 'state of helplessness' but also 'many cases of hopeless dependence.'<sup>235</sup>

Despite sporadic criticism, the Duke was largely seen as a model paternalist. Throughout the Duke's lifetime, he found himself at a crossroads. He could maintain the position of previous generations, which was a belief that they could provide for their tenantry and the surrounding communities better than the state because they understood the needs and desires of the locality better. The alternative was to work in partnership with the increasing reach of the state, ensuring that the needs of the tenantry and the communities were heard most vocally through the efforts of an active landlord who campaigned to government agencies on their behalf. The Duke understood that he could not resist the tide fully and after much frustration at the changing status quo, opted to work with it in a way that allowed him to maintain his paternalistic reputation but maintain forms of control in a society that was ever changing.

### 3.7: Conclusion

Paternalistic activities ensured that the Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch were able to maintain their position as one of the great landed families of Scotland. What paternalism meant for the Duke evolved over time from a position of relative intolerance of others' views to one where he understood that by assisting groups whom he would previously have denied support to, he could harness for his own benefit a powerful but unequal relationship. If the Duke had sufficient evidence from those applying for assistance that they were deserving and making attempts to help themselves, they were rarely denied assistance. Likewise, if they had not received overly generous support from him previously, they were again rarely denied assistance with both of these instances clear in the sederunt books relating to the Queensberry estate. The role of his forefathers in his conception of

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<sup>235</sup> Ibid.

paternalism was critical not only in his actions as an improver on his estates, but nationally too.<sup>236</sup>

His relationship with the tenantry and workforces on his estates was a stable one, so long as he was in the driving seat and his estate chamberlains were effective in managing the local affairs efficiently, with regular communications informing the Duke of anything of interest. Across the Duke's lifetime, reforms to poor and medical relief, as part of a growing trend of state intervention, had a major impact on the dynamics of paternalism on the Buccleuch estates.<sup>237</sup> The Duke viewed these bodies with scepticism, especially around how they expended the funds raised by taxation, a not uncommon view amongst landed elites, who regarded it as a challenge to the status quo and their powerful position within that.

Paternalism generally underwent a resurgence during the Duke's lifetime, and he played a leading role in its exercise and reform nationally, ensuring that the reputation of the family remained broadly positive. His approach decided in consultation with his estate management, with the chamberlains acting as the local face of the Duke's paternalism. His proactive approach was very much in evidence during the 1840s when both potato disease and cholera hit his estates. However, the Duke's true motives must be questioned. As a member of Peel's cabinet, he was aware of the increased scrutiny he was under, spurring him on to act quickly and effectively and beyond his normal measures. Having witnessed his Irish and Scottish Highland contemporaries actions, he was keen not to make the same errors. Reputational concerns were evident throughout his decision-making even though it is undeniable that he did to some degree have the interests of the tenantry and surrounding communities at heart. At its heart, paternalism can be a two-sided agreement as can be seen through the language of a petition. However, for individuals like the Duke, it was a power relationship with major imbalance at its heart. It was used as a means of ensuring relative calm and stability while he exercised and remained fully in control with the final say on his estates.

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<sup>236</sup> Bonnyman, *The Third Duke of Buccleuch and Adam Smith*.

<sup>237</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 24, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 28<sup>th</sup> January 1837.

## **Chapter Four: Politics – ‘I am sick of politics, & especially of electioneering politics’<sup>1</sup>**

### **4.1: Introduction**

Hailing from a family with immense territorial, financial and social power, a political presence - if not career - was an obvious expectation of the Duke of Buccleuch. It was common – even expected - for male aristocrats to be part of the national political fabric, and the Duke was no exception. He was one of Scotland’s, arguably one of Britain’s, largest landed aristocrats, and as such exercised considerable influence over the political landscape in the south of Scotland and fortunes of the Conservative party more broadly. This chapter aims to set out the changing political fortunes of the Duke in the national and local spheres. His political lifetime was tumultuous and included the Reform Act (Scotland) 1832, the repeal of the Corn Laws in the 1840s and challenges to the fortunes of the landed aristocracy and other elites by groups such as the Chartists, against a turbulent European context. The Duke’s political career can be divided into a relatively short but eventful spell as a cabinet minister between 1842 and 1846, and his lifelong effort to maintain political control and influence across his estates. He personally orchestrated much of the activity taking place locally and even though political agents may have carried out the groundwork, he ultimately had the final say as to the action being taken.

The Duke may have presented himself as a paternalist but under this veneer was an individual who clearly knew what benefits political power and control meant for him locally and nationally. Like his version of paternalism, politics had to be on his terms while a carefully orchestrated image was maintained of a caring landowner who had the needs of his tenantry and workers high in his priorities was maintained. Within the locality of his estates covering much of lowland Scotland, he had to have the final say as to how political operations were conducted ensuring that the outcome went his way. As the Duke spent a

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<sup>1</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 48, Letter to William Ogilvie from the Duke of Buccleuch, 28<sup>th</sup> September 1847.

relatively small period of time at the forefront of government, this chapter will instead focus on the politics local to his estates and how that intersected at different times and over different issues with the national political and party picture. It was the local and Scottish political scene that the Duke wielded more influence over and this chapter illustrates the ways in which politics was a means of control over not only his tenantry and the communities in which he operated but also a way of pushing back against the social and political changes sweeping through wider society that he was opposed to. This chapter argues that the Duke's paternalism, as discussed in the previous chapter, was intimately tied to local political operations and that it formed the essential well-spring of his operations both as a landowner and as a politician. It will do this by examining the Duke's position on the Corn Law repeal controversy, his local activity in Scotland in creating fictitious voters in the aftermath of the 1832 Reform Act and his support for candidates and other political management machinations in influencing the political flavour of his estates in the decades after leaving frontline politics. Overall, the Duke attempted to advance the cause of the Conservative party in Scotland, socially, economically and culturally through any means necessary within a changing legislative context.

Recent times have seen a reappraisal of the action of Sir Robert Peel in a variety of contexts with these including the economic implications of the repeal of the Corn Laws and aspects such as his political management particularly surrounding the risks he took when repealing the Corn Laws.<sup>2</sup> However, for this study the work of Norman Gash is still the leading account even though it is dated. Gash has illustrated the challenges Peel faced as prime minister and what part the Duke played in these, especially the defining issue of the period: the repeal of the Corn Laws.<sup>3</sup> More recently there has been a reassessment of Peel's economic and constitutional achievements, that his second ministry marked a 'crucial stage in the evolution of the Victorian state' in which the Duke played an important part not only as an

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<sup>2</sup> Douglas A. Irwin and Maksym G. Chepeliev, 'The Economic Consequences of Sir Robert Peel: A Quantitative Assessment of the Repeal of the Corn Laws', *The Economic Journal*, 131, 2001, pp. 3322-3337; Matthew Cragoe, 'Sir Robert Peel and the 'Moral Authority' of the House of Commons, 1832-41', *The English Historical Review*, 2013, 128, pp. 55-77; Charles Read, 'The political economy of Sir Robert Peel' in Julian Hoppit, Duncan Needham and Adrian Leonard (eds), *Money and Markets, Essays in Honour of Martin Daunton*, (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2019).

<sup>3</sup> Norman Gash, *Politics in the Age of Peel*, (London: Longmans Green and Co Ltd, 1969).

aristocratic landowner but as a government minister.<sup>4</sup> The Duke was someone who carried great influence over not only his tenantry but those whom he interacted with socially and politically as one of the most respected individuals of his lifetime. The repeal of the Corn Laws has seen enormous academic attention, with the Duke of Buccleuch played something of a footnote. The impact of his decision to support the repeal contributed heavily to the resulting split in the Conservative party, especially in Scotland, a split that the Duke then worked hard to try and bridge while remaining loyal to Peel and repeal.<sup>5</sup>

Academic attention on the nineteenth century Conservative party in Scotland has increased in recent years with Gary D. Hutchison providing valuable analysis on how the Conservative party operated at a grassroots level, including on the Buccleuch estates.<sup>6</sup> He uses the Reform Act (Scotland) 1832 as a vehicle to analyse the wider political operations of the Conservative party which in Scotland was strengthened locally after 1832, with political management being reinforced through the work of professional agents being directed by landlords.<sup>7</sup> However, Hutchison also argues that the development of Scottish political parties in the years immediately after 1832 remains relatively unexplored.<sup>8</sup> Hutchison examines this time period and reinforces how reform didn't necessarily prevent landowners from being politically strong but enabling the local agents working on behalf of the landowners to become stronger creating a system where the local party became the real driving force, not necessarily the national party.<sup>9</sup> Iain Hutchison has analysed the period from 1832 and 1924 illustrating the major reforms and subsequent changes that took place with aristocratic

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<sup>4</sup> Norman Gash, 'The Economic Achievement of Sir Robert Peel 1841-6', *Parliamentary History*, 41(3), 2022, p. 434.

<sup>5</sup> Gordon F. Millar, 'The Conservative Split in the Scottish Counties, 1846-1857', *Scottish Historical Review*, 80, 2011, pp. 221-250.

<sup>6</sup> Gary D. Hutchison, 'Party Principles' in *Scottish Political Culture: Roxburghshire, 1832-1847*, *The Scottish Historical Review*, 98(248), 2019, pp. 390-409; Gary D. Hutchison, 'A Distant and whiggish country': the Conservative party and Scottish elections, 1832-47', *Historical Research*, 93(260), 2020, pp. 333-352.

<sup>7</sup> Hutchison, 'Party Principles', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 98(248), 2019, p. 392.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Gordon Pentland, *Radicalism, Reform and National Identity in Scotland, 1820-1833*, (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2008); Gordon Pentland, 'The Debate on Scottish Parliamentary Reform, 1830-1832', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 1(219), 2006, pp. 100-130; Iain Hutchison, *Industry, Reform and Empire, Scotland, 1790 – 1880*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020); I.G.C. Hutchison, *A Political History of Scotland, 1832 – 1924*, (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers Ltd, 1986).

power over electoral politics changing particularly within Conservative circles but not necessarily understanding the changes from the perspective of an individual like the Duke.<sup>10</sup>

Despite the political challenges and divisions faced by the party, the Duke remained a leading Scottish Conservative; in Gary Hutchison's analysis, the *de facto* leader of the party in Scotland.<sup>11</sup> Not only was he senior in the leadership of the party in Scotland but he was critical to the party's fortunes both locally across the Borders and nationally, at a time when the majority of other landed families were loyal to the Whig/Liberal party.<sup>12</sup> Nineteenth century Scotland was predominantly Liberal, including many of its leading aristocratic families, such as the Argyll and Sutherlands, but also more locally to the Duke of Buccleuch, in his neighbour and fellow major landowner, the Duke of Roxburghe being a prominent liberal family.<sup>13</sup>

The historiography currently lacks a detailed investigation of the sinews of political power and operations at the estate level, which this chapter will offer. It will do this in two ways: firstly, through a discussion of the national political career of the Duke and how that intersected with his estates and secondly, the role he played in the local politics of Lowland Scotland. The first section will set out his position in Peel's government and his evolving views, particularly in relation to the changing fortunes of the landed interest, set against the context of his dawning realisation that he could not commit fully to Westminster politics whilst leading on the diversification of his estates. This understanding crystallised at exactly the moment he faced a decision as to whether or not to support the repeal of the Corn Laws and risk contributing substantially to a split in the Conservative party. Arguably he had more political influence outside of office than he did within it. This chapter will show that in the aftermath of 1846, his influence in the House of Lords remained strong but he only engaged actively to champion topics that he was personally invested in, such as education reform and the push back against the Free Church.

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<sup>10</sup> Hutchison, *A Political History of Scotland*.

<sup>11</sup> Hutchison, 'Party Principles', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 98(248), 2019, p. 394.

<sup>12</sup> Norman Gash, *Aristocracy and People, Britain, 1815 – 1865*, (London: Edward Arnold, 1979).

Gary D. Hutchison, 'An Illegal Union of lawyers, and writers, and political Baronets': The Conservative Party and Scottish governance, 1832-1868', in *Union and disunion in the nineteenth century*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019).

<sup>13</sup> Gary D. Hutchison, 'A Distant and whiggish country': the Conservative party and Scottish elections, 1832-47', *Historical Research*, 93(260), 2020, p. 335.

Secondly, this chapter will establish the complex interplay between his political position and his conception of paternalism, through the prism of local politics. His role in Scotland was that of de-facto leader: Sir James Graham, the Home Secretary, having ‘no wish to directly administer Scotland from Whitehall’ instead asked the Duke to carry out ‘activity related to Scottish affairs’ as Graham believed it would be better done by someone who was on the ground.<sup>14</sup> The Duke accepted this approach and in doing so became the unofficial minister for Scotland, informing the Westminster government what was taking place, while advising on Conservative strategy and action. This cemented the Duke’s highly influential position within the heart of the Conservative party. His real arena of power, however, was across his estates.<sup>15</sup> He opposed the Reform Act (Scotland) 1832, but after it was passed, he went on to utilise its loopholes to his own political advantage by creating fictitious voters. In doing so, he secured his position at a time of social change which threatened the traditional power of the landed aristocracy. After leaving government in 1846, he directed the evolution of Conservative-supporting newspapers at a time of rising circulation and literacy as a political tool of influence.<sup>16</sup> Taken together, this chapter will argue that the Duke of Buccleuch was a major figure in the repeal of the Corn Laws during the second ministry of Sir Robert Peel. It will illustrate that he influenced political ongoings more in the local sphere than he did in the national sphere, but this influence in the local sphere took time to recover after the split he contributed to in the repeal of the Corn Laws. Moreover, it will highlight how his involvement in Conservative supporting publications was not only ahead of his time but influenced by spending more time in the local political sphere than the national. Finally, this chapter will point out that the Duke may have opposed reform to electoral legislation, he then heavily manipulated it to his own advantage thus gaining notoriety.

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<sup>14</sup> Gary D Hutchinson, ‘An Illegal Union of lawyers, and writers, and political Baronets’: the Conservative party and Scottish governance, 1832-1868’, in *Union and disunion in the nineteenth century*, Edited by: James Gregory and Daniel Grey, (London: Routledge, 2019), pp 11 & 12.

<sup>15</sup> Hutchison, ‘Party Principles’, *The Scottish Historical Review*, 98(248), 2019, p. 394.

<sup>16</sup> Ewen A. Cameron, ‘Journalism in the Late Victorian Scottish Highlands: John Murdoch, Duncan Campbell, and the “Northern Chronicle”’, *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 2007, 40(4), pp. 281-306; Bob Harris, ‘The Press, Newspaper Fiction and Literary Journalism, 1707-1918’ in *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature: Enlightenment, Britain and Empire (1707-1918)*, edited by Susan Manning et al, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007); Matthew Roberts, ‘Constructing a Tory world-view: popular politics and the Conservative press in late-Victorian Leeds’, *Historical Research*, 79(203), 2006, pp. 217-246.

In 1841 Robert Peel became Prime Minister for the second time, and his term continued until 1846, during which period the Duke held two posts: first, Lord Privy Seal (1842-1846) and second, the more senior position of President of the Council (January-July 1846). The Duke had impressed Peel by assisting in organising the visit of Queen Victoria to Scotland in September 1842 with Alex Tyrrell stating that 'Peel's care in managing the royal visit was evident in the role he allocated to the Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch.'<sup>17</sup> During the planning stages of the visit the Duchess became the 'Queen's confidante on matters Scottish' with such actions helping reduce the negative memories of the Bedchamber Crisis.<sup>18</sup> This occurred when Peel was asked to become Prime Minister in 1839 upon the resignation of Lord Melbourne. When Peel requested Queen Victoria dismiss some of the ladies of the bedchamber whose husbands were Whigs and replace them with Tory peeresses, Queen Victoria refused. Peel subsequently resigned and Lord Melbourne returned as Prime Minister until 1841 when the Whig administration fell again, and the question re-arose. As Mistress of the Robes, Duchess Charlotte Anne 'helped to consolidate Conservative influence in the royal household' something which Peel began to count on in the face of patrician Whig influences such as the Duchesses of Sutherland and Argyll.<sup>19</sup> This public display of closeness reinforced Peel's consideration that Buccleuch could be a powerful ally in the Conservative party and needed to be kept on side for his future legislative programme and in addition, reassure the landed interest that Peel appreciated them.<sup>20</sup> This was becoming increasingly important due to a range of challenging economic issues that were beginning to impact the landed classes in Britain.

The 1840s were a challenging decade for the landed interest. Protectionism ended with the repeal of the Corn Laws, seen as a grave threat to the agricultural income most landed fortunes were still based on.<sup>21</sup> The Great Irish Famine had a profound and often negative

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<sup>17</sup> Alex Tyrrell, 'The Queen's 'Little Trip': The Royal Visit to Scotland in 1842', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 82(1), 2003, p. 53.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, Bundle 1164, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to Lord Montagu, 1<sup>st</sup> February 1842.

<sup>21</sup> Irwin and Chepeliev, 'The Economic Consequences of Sir Robert Peel', *The Economic Journal*, 131, 2001, pp. 3322-3337.

impact on the paternalistic reputations of landowners.<sup>22</sup> At the same time, many landowners were under immense financial pressures as they experimented in diversifying their interests into industry, like Buccleuch. Dominating all of these changes was an economic downturn and resulting recession, which did not ease until the 1850s, once the impact of the growth of the railways was subsequently felt.<sup>23</sup> The Duke's selection for Cabinet was motivated by the need for 'a person high in rank & station to hold that office [Keeper of the Privy Seal]' and that out of all the candidates the Duke was 'the person who would add most weight to the government.'<sup>24</sup> Gash has emphasised that Peel acknowledged that there were only two landed aristocrats in Scotland that held comparable power to Buccleuch; the Duke of Gordon and Duke of Sutherland.<sup>25</sup> Buccleuch held considerable sway in political circles, a key advantage for the government at a time when it wished to convey a message that the Corn Laws would not affect the landed interest too severely, even though Peel personally did not believe the landed class 'was entitled to regard itself as a privileged class for which the rest of community should be taxed.'<sup>26</sup> The Duke's influence cemented his position within the Conservative party as a moderate, a stance which would bring him a great deal of criticism in the years following the repeal of the Corn Laws, including from his family and social circle.<sup>27</sup> The Duke was doubtful about taking the role at first, stating that the habits and pursuits of his life 'were decidedly opposed to [the] undertaking any Office whatever' and that he 'had a great distrust of [his] own abilities' but took the offer after much reassurance that the role was not onerous and only required someone with sound common sense.<sup>28</sup> This offer came at a time when the Duke's industrial diversification efforts were reaching a crescendo; Granton harbour was well underway, the modernisation and reorganisation of the mining operations were beginning to pay, and strategic decisions on railway routes were required from the Duke.

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<sup>22</sup> Christine Kinealy, *A Death-Dealing Famine, The Great Hunger in Ireland*, (London: Pluto Press, 1997).

<sup>23</sup> Peter Fletcher, 'Railway Capital in Northern Scotland, 1844-1874', *Journal of Scottish Historical Studies*, 30(2), 2010, pp. 146-174.

<sup>24</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, Bundle 1164, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to Lord Montagu, 1<sup>st</sup> February 1842.

<sup>25</sup> Gash, *Politics in the Age of Peel*, p. 186.

<sup>26</sup> Gash, *Aristocracy and People*, p. 184.

<sup>27</sup> NRS, GD224/1031/19/6-8, Lord John Scott to Duke of Buccleuch, 10<sup>th</sup> April 1859.

<sup>28</sup> Gash, *Aristocracy and People*, p. 184.

The Duke occupied an important place in Peel's plans, especially as de facto political manager for Scotland, especially the south and Borders.<sup>29</sup> As the Duke wrote himself to Peel, he had taken 'an active charge in the management of the Scotch Peers Election' which had given him a 'great knowledge of that body.'<sup>30</sup> Peel needed this support, as one of his greatest political difficulties lay in the House of Lords and he needed influence there to successfully repeal the Corn Laws.<sup>31</sup> The Duke's influence enabled him to remain adamant that 'no permanent rupture should occur' within the party in the aftermath of repeal locally and by controlling the selection of candidates he was able to prevent 'opposing the Protectionist in Roxburghshire' as he believed it would 'alienate friends and divide an otherwise strong party.'<sup>32</sup>

The Duke would not accept any role that was offered to him, even if they were promotions. In 1842 he turned down the position as Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, a critical role at any time but in the early-1840s more so than ever.<sup>33</sup> This refusal did not damage his political career, but it begs the question why? His industrial diversification was reaching a critical stage and he feared taking it would spell 'annihilation'.<sup>34</sup>

However, Buccleuch continued to have influence in other ways when out of office in the period after the repeal of the Corn Laws and took it upon himself to work towards reuniting the fractured party. The Duke wrote to Lord Redesdale for example, that the 'most desirable & important' item for everyone should be that the 'Conservative Party should be again reunited'<sup>35</sup> and that it was 'most dangerous to the Public Welfare to allow a continuance of personal feelings & animosity.'<sup>36</sup> Sir G.W. Hope was also informed that divisions had to be

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<sup>29</sup> I.G.C. Hutchison, *A Political History of Scotland 1832-1924, Parties, Elections and Issues*, John Donald Publishers Ltd: Edinburgh, 1986, pp. 8 & 9.

<sup>30</sup> NRS, GD224/1031/5, Duke of Buccleuch to Sir Robert Peel, 31<sup>st</sup> December 1834.

<sup>31</sup> Ian Newbould, 'Sir Robert Peel and the Conservative Party, 1832-1841: A Study in Failure?', *English Historical Review*, 98(388), 1983, p. 536.

<sup>32</sup> Hutchison, *A Political History of Scotland*, p. 89.

<sup>33</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, Bundle 1164, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to Lord Montagu, 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1844.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid; Robert Peel, Philip Henry Stanhope & Edward Cardwell, *Memoirs by The Right Honourable Sir Robert Peel*, (London: John Murray, 1857), p. 257.

<sup>35</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Duke of Buccleuch to Earl of Dalhousie, 31<sup>st</sup> December 1846; Bowhill House, Duke of Buccleuch to Earl of Lincoln, 28<sup>th</sup> December 1846; Bowhill House, Duke of Buccleuch to Lord Redesdale, 23<sup>rd</sup> December 1846.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

put aside and that ‘a conservative should not oppose a Protectionist & vice versa solely upon the grounds of their own differences of opinion.’<sup>37</sup> He continued, that he would use his ‘whole support by influence & purse’ if need be illustrating that he may be able to help bring the party he contributed splitting back together.<sup>38</sup>

## 4.2 : Buccleuch – Holder of the Deciding Vote

### 4.2.1: The Repeal of the Corn Laws

Douglas Irwin and Maksym Chepeliev have argued that the repeal of the Corn Laws was ‘perhaps the signature trade policy event of the nineteenth century.’<sup>39</sup> Introduced initially by Lord Liverpool’s Conservative government in 1815, the Corn Laws placed tariffs on cereal grain imported from other countries. They were highly unpopular when they were introduced with protests coming from many sections of society, criticising the way the policy was seen to protect the interests of the wealthy at the expense of the poor at a time of national economic crisis. This unpopularity dogged the policy throughout its lifetime, especially during the turbulent economic conditions of the early industrial revolution.<sup>40</sup> Opposition gained ground in the later 1830s and between 27 January and 28 August 1842, 467 petitions were presented to the Commons for the repeal of the Corn Laws totalling over 1.4 million signatures.<sup>41</sup> In comparison, 1,953 petitions in favour of the Corn Laws were presented with 145,855 signatures.<sup>42</sup> Controversially, the Corn Laws protected the landed interest. By imposing tariffs on imported grains, it favoured domestic production and led to higher profits for agricultural landowners. The policy was defended by some on the basis that the ‘landed and agricultural interest ... could not sustain the present value of their property, pay the public burthens which the wants of the country and the state entail upon them.’<sup>43</sup> By 1844 Peel had come to the view that there was little value in the protection for

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<sup>37</sup> NRS, GD224/525/10, Letter from the Duke to Sir G.W. Hope, 15<sup>th</sup> April 1847.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Irwin and Chepeliev, ‘The Economic Consequences of Sir Robert Peel’, *The Economic Journal*, 131, 2001, p. 3322.

<sup>40</sup> *Petitions and the Corn Laws*, UK Parliament Committees, Available at: <https://committees.parliament.uk/committee/326/petitions-committee/news/99040/petitions-and-the-corn-laws/>. Accessed: Monday 17 July 2023.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> James Wilson, *Influences of The Corn Laws, as affecting all classes of the community, and particularly the Landed Interests*, (London: Longman, 1840), p. 2.

British corn production and acknowledged it was not contributing to the 'prosperity or to the efficiency of British agriculture, rather the reverse' and that it would be a 'political folly for a land-owning parliament to attempt to maintain indefinitely an illusory protection for its supposed economic interest'.<sup>44</sup> The repeal of the Corn Laws abolished a 28% tariff on imported grain which is notable considering at the time roughly 9% of total employment was in grain agriculture with 24% of total employment in agriculture.<sup>45</sup> Politically, Peel faced robust opposition from most of the landed interest, which made up a large proportion of his party and the political establishment generally; however, many of the most vocal landed opponents of repeal were those who had not diversified their estates, in the Buccleuch model, putting them in a more precarious economic position.<sup>46</sup> Disraeli argued that Peel had 'unnecessarily sacrificed' not only tenant farmers but the landed gentry; despite the Duke's repair efforts, his decision to side with Peel over repeal would have a profound impact on his political legacy and reputation.<sup>47</sup>

The debate surrounding repeal was more than just politics or the future direction of Conservatism for the Duke: it affected him personally on a number of levels – economic, in relations with his tenantry and his family. Despite the industrial diversification outlined in previous chapters, a large proportion of the Buccleuch estates' value still lay in agriculture with considerable returns coming from this element of the business portfolio. The historiography is divided on whether repeal brought economic disaster or benefits to landowners, however; Mark R. Brawley has argued that repeal reduced the risks landowners faced as they moved away from land-intensive production, especially when they were convinced they could 'flourish with freer trade'.<sup>48</sup> Gash has highlighted that Peel was convinced that British agriculture could prosper by introducing greater productivity from intensive cultivation and modern methods, rather than government intervention on prices.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>44</sup> Gash, 'The Economic Achievement of Sir Robert Peel', *Parliamentary History*, 41(3), 2022, p. 431.

<sup>45</sup> Irwin and Chepeliev, 'The Economic Consequences of Sir Robert Peel', *The Economic Journal*, 131, 2021, p. 3324.

<sup>46</sup> Anthony Howe, *Free Trade and Liberal England 1846-1946*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 26; Michael Lusztig, 'Solving Peel's Puzzle: Repeal of the Corn Laws and Institutional Preservation', *Comparative Politics*, 27(4), 1995, p. 395.

<sup>47</sup> Howe, *Free Trade and Liberal England 1846-1946*, p. 5.

<sup>48</sup> Mark R. Brawley, 'Agricultural Interests, Trade Adjustment and Repeal of the Corn Laws', *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 8, 2006, pp. 468 & 470.

<sup>49</sup> Gash, *Aristocracy and People*, p. 238.

This view was shared by the Duke, who had already spent significant funds and effort into encouraging his tenants to improve their farms with modern methods and who took the long view, able to ride out short term downturns by utilising his other resources. The Duke was concerned about the views of his tenantry about repeal too. In May 1846 he wrote to Ogilvie for clarification having heard that ‘some of my Tenants are red hot against the Corn Bill, who are they... some are as hot in favour of it, who are they?’<sup>50</sup> These divisions were unsurprising and could be found in agricultural communities across Britain, but they added pressure on the Duke locally as well as at Westminster. In January 1844 he was made aware that a Hawick correspondent had stated in a local newspaper that the Duke was ‘in favour of a total repeal of the Corn Laws.’<sup>51</sup> Angered at this, he wrote that this was a ‘deliberate intentional lie, put forth by someone for some bad purpose.’<sup>52</sup> The Duke was further infuriated when he received a letter with a Melrose post mark, again accusing him of being fully behind repeal. He noted that this sort of incident would not influence him in the slightest, and if they thought so, ‘they are much mistaken.’<sup>53</sup> Trying to pressure the Duke in the local press was a common tactic but failed to influence his actions.<sup>54</sup>

In December 1845 the Duke considered resigning from the cabinet over repeal but felt he ought to stay in government to support Peel and as ‘his duty to the Queen & country to make every personal sacrifice.’<sup>55</sup> Buccleuch was far from the only individual struggling to come to a decided position; his colleague Lord Stanley was likewise wrestling with the same conundrum. The cabinet concluded that to lose both Stanley and Buccleuch would ‘make it impossible to carry Peel’s bill and the prime minister announced that in those circumstances he felt it his duty to resign’ illustrating the high stakes for Peel and the Conservative government, and for the Duke.<sup>56</sup> He was in a difficult position: he wanted to be loyal to Peel, but as a member of the landed interest he was being asked to support a controversial measure which would undoubtedly damage the economic interests of that group and his

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<sup>50</sup> Brawley, ‘Agricultural Interests’, *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, 8, 2006, p. 468.

<sup>51</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 27, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 15<sup>th</sup> January 1844.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 28, Letter from Gilbert Talbot to the Duchess of Buccleuch, 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1845.

<sup>56</sup> Norman Gash, *Aristocracy and People, Britain 1815 – 1865*, (Edward Arnold: London, 1979), p. 237.

own political reputation nationally and locally.<sup>57</sup> Putting aside his private views, the Duke acknowledged it was essential that the 'corn question should be finally settled.'<sup>58</sup> On 22 December 1845, the Duke informed Peel that he would give his 'decided support, not only to your administration generally, but to the passing through Parliament a measure for the final settlement of the Corn Laws, founded upon the principles which you have stated,' at least partly out of sense of 'duty to the Queen & country' but which 'involves no small sacrifice of feeling and opinion on my part.' The Duke was aware that Peel attached 'great weight to the influence which my name and conduct may have with them' but that he felt he could have more influence 'out of office than in it.'<sup>59</sup> The Duke's decision to side with Peel on this decisive matter rested on his sense of duty to Queen and country. The Conservative party was foremost in his thinking, and he was willing to put aside his private feelings for the stability of the cabinet and 'give way to what the public good requires.' The Queen agreed and praised the Duke as being 'very honourable.' The repeal debate was the moment the Duke recognised that a front bench political career was ultimately too much for him to manage. The harbour at Granton, expansion of his coal mining operations, the development of Barrow-in-Furness and the railways, as well as the day-to-day running of the estates was becoming ever more demanding. He wrote to Peel that 'the extent and nature of my private affairs are such as to render it impossible for me, under any circumstances to remain in office beyond a very limited period.' He emphasised that this was not as a 'present excuse' but rather as a 'future and not distant necessity.'<sup>60</sup>

The course chosen by the Duke over repeal had a damaging effect on his Westminster career, but also highlighted the deep splits in the Conservative party which – despite his efforts – did not heal for several years. However, this split should not be exaggerated, with Michael Fry highlighting that 'nearly every one of note followed the line of Buccleuch' who he argues was their 'acknowledged head.'<sup>61</sup> Gordon Millar has also emphasised that most of

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<sup>57</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 28, Letter from Gilbert Talbot Esq to Duchess Charlotte Anne, 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1845.

<sup>58</sup> Earl Stanhope and The Right Honourable Edward Cardwell, *Memoirs by the Right Honourable Sir Robert Peel*, (London: John Murray, 1857), p. 253.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 254 & 256.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid*, p. 257.

<sup>61</sup> Michael Fry, *Patronage and Principle, A Political History of Modern Scotland*, (Aberdeen: Aberdeen University Press, 1987), pp. 56 & 57.

the Scottish Peelites remained moderate Conservatives, in part perhaps down to the Duke's efforts at unification after a divisive period.<sup>62</sup> Millar attributes this lack of notable division down to the 'restricted area in which large-scale arable farming was found in Scotland' which meant many Conservatives were not directly affected by the repeal in the same way that landowners in parts of England were.<sup>63</sup> This is not to say it did not have any impact on the Conservative interest in Scotland at all, but the damage was limited.<sup>64</sup> We can see this in the relative stability of Conservative electoral performance in Scotland in the 1840s; in 1841 they held twenty two seats with this only falling by one to twenty in 1847.<sup>65</sup> For individuals like the Duke who had major influence in several counties including, Dumfries, Selkirk, Roxburgh, Peebles and Dumfries Burghs the power of one individual can be witnessed to cushion against the division that a divisive policy could have upon electoral prospects.<sup>66</sup> The Duke was adamant that a permanent rupture should be avoided as he advised 'against opposing the Protectionist in Roxburghshire' due to multiple factors influencing the electorate such as the Free Church and free trade thus reaffirming how his control over several areas could mitigate from challenging incidents electorally.<sup>67</sup>

In the months following his resignation the Duke kept a low political profile. In correspondence with the Earl of Dalhousie he said he wanted to 'keep myself to myself,' likely a result of the negative press coverage that was flowing in.<sup>68</sup> Gordon Millar has highlighted that 'the significance of the 1846 split should not be exaggerated in Scotland but it did have negative consequences for the Conservative party in the following election in 1847.<sup>69</sup> In Roxburghshire, where the Duke exercised considerable electoral influence, the seat passed to a Whig even though there was 'apparently a Conservative majority on the register.'<sup>70</sup> Millar speculates that 'an understanding between the Whigs and the Buccleuch-

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<sup>62</sup> Millar, 'The Conservative Split', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 80(2), 2001, p. 222.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> Hutchison, *A Political History of Scotland*, p. 85.

<sup>65</sup> Millar, 'The Conservative Split', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 80(2), 2001, p. 223.

<sup>66</sup> Hutchison, *A Political History of Scotland*, p. 85.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 85 & 89.

<sup>68</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to the Earl of Dalhousie, 13<sup>th</sup> January 1847.

<sup>69</sup> Millar, 'The Conservative Split', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 80(2), 2001, p. 225.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

led Peelites would seem to have played a part.<sup>71</sup> His course of action did not see him cast aside for long but amongst his own family, it continued to have major ramifications, particularly with his more conservative brother Lord John Scott with valid criticism. Lord John attacked the Duke for joining Peel's administration at all, as his 'personal influence went into Peel's pocket for the time' resulting in the fact that 'now no one knows what are your politics.'<sup>72</sup>

The repeal of the Corn Laws continued to get considerable coverage after the end of Peel's term as Prime Minister. In March 1852 the position of the Duke was brought up in the House of Commons by Sir James Graham, who highlighted that the Duke agreed with Lord Derby that 'it was not wise to suspend the operation of the Corn-laws in December 1845' even though he had voted for their repeal.<sup>73</sup> In return, it had been argued that the Duke and other colleagues had believed the repeal to be temporary, made on the condition that an 'attempt should be made to reimpose the duty upon corn as soon as the emergency had ceased.'<sup>74</sup> However, the Duke soon retreated from this position, writing to Sir James Graham that to 'reimpose the Corn-laws was to be deprecated as most dangerous to the owners of the land.'<sup>75</sup> This exchange illustrates two points. Firstly, the Duke was still perceived as one of the leaders of the landed interest in Conservative political circles, almost a decade after the repeal of the Corn Laws. Secondly, it highlights an individual who was willing to reflect and amend his opinions even if it meant risking his political fortunes in the short term. This later acknowledgment that repealing the Corn Laws had been the correct course of action at the time reaffirmed his position as a moderate within the party.

Despite the criticisms and difficulties, Buccleuch remained an undoubted grandee of the Conservative party even if his vote contributed to a major long-lasting split in the party. His opinion was still sought after, especially on Scottish issues and political management reinforcing his grandee position. He was offered positions in two different ministries, first by

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid; Gordon Millar states that the reason for this transfer was not clear and did not have to do with the repeal.

<sup>72</sup> NRS, GD224/1031/19/6-8, Lord John Scott to 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Buccleuch, 10<sup>th</sup> April 1859.

<sup>73</sup> "Editorial Article 4 – No Title", *The Scotsman*, Mar 17, 1852.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

Lord Aberdeen of Master of the Horse in 1852, which he turned down, arguing that he could exercise his influence 'to a far wider extent and a more important character.'<sup>76</sup> He continued to influence government policy and maintain his high standing in the party, and was frequently consulted by Lord Derby regarding patronage and appointments during his short ministry of 1858-1859, emphasising his influence at court.<sup>77</sup> Over a decade after the repeal of the Corn Laws, Buccleuch still exerted considerable influence in Scottish political circles, something due not to any outstanding political ability but due to his position as one of Scotland's largest landowners, with the ability to exert political control over large areas which were pivotal to the electoral successes of the party.

#### 4.2.2: Political debates, political change

The departure of the Duke from frontline politics was not the end of his career, but an important evolution. Instead, he began to focus his attention in the Lords on issues that either impacted him directly on paternalistic aspects of running his estates, such as the employment of women and children in mines, or he felt passionately about, such as education. Attitudes towards and expectations of state intervention were changing, and the impact of legislation in people's day to day lives was increasing and government was beginning to play a more prominent role in the lives of ordinary people to protect them from the evils that were being emitted from an increasingly industrialised society, a principle to which the Duke was often opposed.<sup>78</sup>

Education was a topic that both the Duke and Duchess cared passionately about, as previous chapters have shown. As a paternalistic landlord, education was not merely a benefit in its own right but a tool of social control locally. Gordon F. Millar has emphasised that the Duke had been 'very active in defending the parochial system' due to his 'natural conservative instincts' where he preferred minimal state interference on his estate, underpinned by a belief that he knew what was best for his tenantry.<sup>79</sup> Although the Duke had no objection to

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<sup>76</sup> Millar, 'The Conservative Split', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 80(2), 2001, p. 245; Buccleuch to Aberdeen, 31 December 1852, Aberdeen MSS, BL Add. MS 43201, fos. 59-62.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Graeme Morton, *Unionist Nationalism*, (East Linton: Tuckwell Press Ltd, 1999), p. 23.

<sup>79</sup> Millar, 'The Conservative Split', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 80(2), 2001, p. 246.

supporting parochial schools, he did take issue with ‘the maintenance of other Schools with which we have no connection as he was a believer in public and private funds being spent wisely.’<sup>80</sup><sup>81</sup> He felt it unfair that remote schools that had small numbers of pupils should support those that were much larger in faraway places such as ‘Airdrie or the Gorbals of Glasgow’.<sup>82</sup> The Duke felt that the interference of the state creating a form of centralised funding for schooling was a ‘bribe’ and that ‘this rage for getting money out of the public purse amounts in Scotland to a sum of monomaniac.’<sup>83</sup> Amplifying his Conservative principles, the Duke argued that it would effectively give away the ‘independence in the integrity of [the] Schools’ and give ‘money [to the] headed monster the Public the power to interfere.’<sup>84</sup> This frustration surrounding the funding arrangement of parochial education came at the same time as acrimonious debates on salaries of parochial schoolmasters, a topic on which the Duke had strong opinions.<sup>85</sup> Almost a decade earlier the Duke used his political influence as a member of the government to present nine petitions between February and June 1846 on behalf of schoolmasters across Scotland on the issue of improving their conditions.<sup>86</sup> In 1854 the case was made that parochial schoolmasters were to only receive £16 per annum, which the Duke felt was too little, and he argued that ‘this deserving body of men should not be placed in the miserable position in which they now found themselves’ and should be remunerated accordingly.<sup>87</sup> In May 1854 the Duke presented a petition from the ministers and elders of the Synod of Dumfries to the Lords, arguing against any measure by which the control and superintendence of the presbytery were to be superseded.<sup>88</sup> His reason for bringing this petition was ‘fear that the efficiency of that system was imperilled.’<sup>89</sup> The Duke stated his belief that fluctuation in schoolmasters’ stipends was damaging their prospects and ‘he wished to know what steps the Government intended to take to provide for their better remuneration.’<sup>90</sup> Challenging the Duke, the

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<sup>80</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 48, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 29<sup>th</sup> April 1854.

<sup>81</sup> *Hansard*, HL, Vol. 133, Column 658, Monday 22 May 1854; Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 48, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 29<sup>th</sup> April 1854.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 48, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 29<sup>th</sup> April 1854.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>85</sup> *Hansard*, HL, Vol. 133, Column 658, Monday 22 May 1854.

<sup>86</sup> *Hansard*, HL, Vol. 78, Friday 7 March 1845.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>88</sup> *Hansard*, HL, Vol. 133, Column 658, Monday 22 May 1854.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, Column 659.

Marquess of Breadalbane stated that he was sure that the he 'did not wish to impede the progress of education in Scotland' but that if he continued his insistence that parochial education be attached only to the Established Church, then it would only tend to the 'defeat of any sound system of national education for Scotland.'<sup>91</sup> Angered, the Duke responded by stating that 'there was no system of education so open in the whole world as that of the parochial schools in Scotland; for there was not the slightest impediment to children of any religious denomination attending them.'<sup>92</sup> The Duke was voicing not only his concerns but those of the established Church of Scotland which was vulnerable in the face of the changing religious landscape in the aftermath of the Great Disruption in 1843.

The Duke did not rest easy in his opposition to further changes to education, as was evident during the Parochial Schools (Scotland) Bill in July 1856.<sup>93</sup> The Duke 'divided the House successfully' in 1856 on the passage of the Parochial Schools Bill when discussing the 'retention of the test for parish schoolmasters', something which he was in favour of.<sup>94</sup> The origins of his opposition was that by removing the test, it would enable the Free Church to have control over schools, something which the Duke vehemently opposed. The Duke felt that had he not raised the issue on schoolmasters' salaries, 'nothing would have been heard of the Bill' and this issue would have passed unopposed.<sup>95</sup> The Duke felt that the test should be retained, opposing the point put forward by the Duke of Argyll who believed removing it would enable the 'amalgamating the teaching of children of different sects under one master' and would in turn create a 'great advantage' by creating a 'more national system', something which was echoed by Lord Panmure.<sup>96</sup> The Duke used his position to champion those that he felt warranted having their voices heard but also allowed him to cement his local position by illustrating to his tenantry and surrounding communities that he was fighting their causes.<sup>97</sup> However, his opposition to the Free Church did cloud his judgement on the progression and advancement of education for not only those on his estates but the country as a whole. The Duke's actions on his estates reaffirmed how the estates particularly

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid, Column 661.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid, Column 665.

<sup>93</sup> *Hansard*, HL, Vol. 143, Monday 14 July 1856.

<sup>94</sup> Millar, 'The Conservative Split', *Scottish Historical Review*, 80, 2011, p. 246.

<sup>95</sup> *Hansard*, HL, Vol. 143, Column, 731, Monday 14 July 1856.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid, Column 730.

<sup>97</sup> Hutchison, *A Political History of Scotland*, p. 73.

in Scotland were very much under his political management ensuring that his political views were adhered to.

### 4.3: Political management on the Buccleuch estates

As one of the great landed aristocrats of Scotland, the Duke of Buccleuch was able to exert considerable political influence at a local level, including candidates for MPs and the direction of elections, creating a political hegemony in his favour. The Duke was adept at strategic political management although it was his chamberlains and agents who executed the work on the ground and his methods were often corrupt, even by the standards and expectations of the day. They did, however ensure that the Duke remained the supreme political individual across his estates and the Scottish Borders in his lifetime. This section will explore the nature and workings of this political dominance through the creation of fictitious voters in the aftermath of the Reform Act (Scotland) 1832 and how this reform may have been opposed by the Duke but was ultimately exploited to his own advantage. This exploitation thus allowed the Duke to reinforce his already powerful position over several constituencies but subsequently gained him notoriety in not only the press but government also.

The Reform Act (Scotland) 1832 was a pivotal moment in the political life of the Duke. Before 1832 there were only 4,500 Scottish voters; after 1832, this rose to 64,447, an increase of 1,400%.<sup>98</sup> The Act allowed tenants on a life lease to be registered as voters, 'or on one of no less than fifty-seven years of a property valued at no less than £10 per annum; or if on a lease of not less than nineteen years on property of annual value of £50; or, irrespective of the length of the lease, where a grassum of not less than £300 had been paid.'<sup>99</sup> However, the Act also 'ushered in a new era of faggot votes in the counties of Scotland' with votes being created on joint proprietorship, life-rent interests and joint tenancies, a trend particularly prominent in Selkirk, Peebles and Roxburgh, with the Duke actively encouraging

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<sup>98</sup> Hutchison, *A Political History of Scotland*, p. 1.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid; A grassum is a Scottish legal term relating to the lump sum first paid when taking up a lease in addition to regular rent.

this.<sup>100</sup> This allowed the Duke to corruptly strengthen his political position locally at the cost of a 'very large capital outlay.'<sup>101</sup> The Duke was public in his opposition to the 1832 Act, and in July 1832, when his carriage was attacked by reform supporters in Edinburgh, one individual held a rope out exclaiming that he would give money for anyone to 'hand the Juck.'<sup>102</sup> But, as a number of historians have pointed out, the Duke and his peers had little to fear in practice from the 1832 Act. Gary Hutchison has highlighted, the 1832 Reform Act meant 'localism was, if anything, strengthened by reform' which allowed the Duke and his contemporaries to strengthen and arguably exploit their position within their local sphere of influence.<sup>103</sup> This exploitation applied to landed peers of all political persuasions, as the example of the dukes of Sutherland demonstrate. Annie Tindley has pointed out that between 1832 and 1885 the Sutherland county seat remained in ducal hands and uncontested, partly due to the seat having the smallest electorate of all Scottish counties, but more importantly due to the political and cultural power the dukes of Sutherland continued to exercise.<sup>104</sup> However, Hutchison has pointed to a lack of scholarly exploration regarding the 'development of Scottish political parties in the first decades after 1832'.<sup>105</sup> This section aims to fill this gap with a case study of local political workings post-1832 on the Buccleuch estates. The Duke was motivated by a desire to see Conservative primacy in Scotland, as well as ensuring his own political dominance over his estates.<sup>106</sup>

The Select Committee on Fictitious Votes in Scotland 1837 reported that in Selkirkshire alone, at least 56 new life-rents had been created by the Tories in advance of the next registration of which 53 were non-resident.<sup>107</sup> Overall this created 129 life-renters and 52 joint proprietors.<sup>108</sup> Ferguson highlights the 'copious details of the Duke's activities in the report of a select committee of 1837' illustrating how both parties had been creating votes

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<sup>100</sup> Ibid, p. 109; Hutchison, 'A Distant and whiggish country', *Historical Research*, 93(260), 2020, p. 346.

<sup>101</sup> Hutchison, 'A Distant and whiggish country', *Historical Research*, 93(260), 2020, p. 345.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid, p. 2.

<sup>103</sup> Hutchison, 'Party Principles', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 98(248), 2019, p. 392.

<sup>104</sup> Annie Tindley, 'The Sword of Avenging Justice': Politics in Sutherland after the Third Reform Act', *Rural History*, 19(2), 2008, p. 179.

<sup>105</sup> Hutchison, 'Party Principles', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 98(248), 2019, p. 392.

<sup>106</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, GD224/504, Duke of Buccleuch to William Maxwell, 2<sup>nd</sup> January 1853.

<sup>107</sup> *Remarks on the First Report of the Select Committee on Fictitious Votes in Scotland: With Extracts from the Evidence*, (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1837) p. 43.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid, p. 44.

with the Duke in 1834-5 inducing his friends to 'buy' properties in Selkirkshire of 'sufficient value to qualify for the vote, numbering in all ninety-two,' reinforcing his role as one of the top individuals in not only the county but the wider Conservative party in Scotland.<sup>109</sup> The Select Committee highlighted with emphasis on Selkirkshire the abuse taking place in light of the Reform Act 1832.<sup>110</sup> The committee remarked that since the passing of the Reform Bill, across Scotland, 'men of wealth and influence, and especially by large landed proprietors' had been attempting to 'neutralize and overpower the Local Constituencies' thus allowing them to 'regain the political power which, under the old system, they had long and unsparingly exercised.'<sup>111</sup> They went on to state that in constituencies such as Selkirkshire, where the Duke was the main proprietor, the 'Reform Act is rendered little better than a mockery.'<sup>112</sup> The creation of faggot voters, described by the Committee as the 'most dangerous and powerful engine', also gave the Duke a 'new means of coercing tenants' with the Reform Act (Scotland) making an already unequal relationship even more unequal.<sup>113</sup> The Committee report concluded that the abuse committed by individuals like the Duke and his contemporaries in reinforcing their political power and position 'ought never to be tolerated' particularly in a country which 'professes to recognise the right of the people to a full, free, and fair representation in parliament.'<sup>114</sup> Such scathing criticism would indicate as to why it took until the early 1840s for the Duke to take up a position in government for a short period of time.

The unintended consequences of the Reform Act were not altogether surprising: Alan Heesom has contended that 'it was therefore neither 'wonderful' nor 'unconstitutional' that such families should have great influence at elections.'<sup>115</sup> Lord John Russell continued to argue that aristocratic influence, such as the Duke's was 'inevitable, and indeed desirable.'<sup>116</sup> The Select Committee reported that the Tories had justified their actions on the basis that

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<sup>109</sup> W. Ferguson, 'The Reform Act (Scotland) of 1832', *Scottish Historical Review*, 45, 1966, p. 110.

<sup>110</sup> *Remarks on the First Report of the Select Committee*.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid*, p. 3.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid*, p. 4.

<sup>113</sup> Ferguson, 'The Reform Act (Scotland)', *Scottish Historical Review*, 45, 1966, p. 111; *Remarks on the First Report of the Select Committee*, p. 4.

<sup>114</sup> *Remarks on the First Report of the Select Committee*, p. 44.

<sup>115</sup> Alan Heesom, 'Legitimate' versus 'Illegitimate' Influences: Aristocratic Electioneering in Mid-Victorian Britain', *Parliamentary History*, 7(2), 1988, p. 286.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid*, p. 282.

‘property ought to be represented’ and that a ‘landed proprietor is entitled to secure the representation of his property’ implying their actions were wholly legitimate.<sup>117</sup> However, critics argued strongly that it was the ‘most insidious species of corruption, illegitimate influence.’<sup>118</sup> These forms of control allowed the Duke and other landed magnates to maintain local political influence, reinforcing the landed national political position; as Hutchison argues, these ‘activities served to bolster landowner authority over the party machinery’ and explains why the Scottish Conservative party was more landowner dominated than in England.<sup>119</sup> In Roxburghshire it was noted in the national media that the Duke used his influence to support Lord Schomberg Kerr, his son-in-law, in the 1868 election, as reported in the *Scotsman*, which noted the ‘combined influence of the noble families of Buccleuch, Lothian, and Melville all locally resident, was brought to bear in favour of the Tory candidate.’ The financial outlay required was high, although – perhaps unsurprisingly – the actual amount spent cannot be traced. We do know that the Duke tired of it, complaining in 1840 that he could not continue as the ‘burden has become too great’ however, he never stated as to how much this burden was.<sup>120</sup> In 1847 he wrote to William Ogilvie that he was ‘sick of politics ... people seem to think that I am made of money, & that I am to use that money in bolstering up constituencies.’<sup>121</sup> He went on to state that ‘I have no money to expend in this hopeless & thankless manner. Many thousands of my money have been expended & never fully accounted for.’<sup>122</sup> This was at a time when the Buccleuch finances were under intense pressure supporting burgeoning industrial projects and debt was ever increasing.

Although the Duke may have claimed that he was tired of electioneering by the mid-1840s, this did not prevent him from staying involved via the creation fictitious voters. This drew negative press coverage, but it did not deter him, and he became notorious for the practice. As late as 1864, over thirty years after the 1832 Act, the *Scotsman* reported that of the 501

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<sup>117</sup> *Remarks on the First Report of the Select Committee*, p. 19.

<sup>118</sup> Heesom, ‘Legitimate’, *Parliamentary History*, 7(2), 1988, p. 287.

<sup>119</sup> Gash, *Politics in the Age of Peel*, p. 186; Pentland, ‘The Debate on Scottish Parliamentary Reform’, *The Scottish Historical Review*, 1(219), 2006, p. 104; Hutchison, ‘A Distant and whiggish country’, *Historical Research*, 93(260), 2020, p. 346.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 347.

<sup>121</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 48, Letter to William Ogilvie from the Duke of Buccleuch, 28<sup>th</sup> September 1847.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*

voters registered in Selkirkshire, 'the great majority are non-resident, and roundly speaking, fictitious.'<sup>123</sup> The *Scotsman* criticised the Duke for violating the 'rights of property and outraging the feelings of the inhabitants in the countries where he seeks to rule.'<sup>124</sup>

Buccleuch was not alone in questionable involvement in politics and election management however; there was a considerable level of partnership working amongst the Conservative landed interest in Midlothian.<sup>125</sup> Elections were co-funded in county seats, enabling families to have a monopoly over the constituency.<sup>126</sup> Prior to 1843 Lady Lothian gave £150 towards election expenses in Roxburghshire which was matched by Lord Douglas. In 1836 the Duke wrote to a neighbour in Midlothian, Sir Francis Walker Drummond, speculating that Sir George Clerk alone had spent £2130 on elections and that the total expense amongst all the individual contributors amassed to an estimated at £7880.<sup>127</sup> The Duke was a majority funder but did not solely finance the political contests in Midlothian.

The political power that a landlord could exert over their tenants was an ever-present threat, despite the reform acts of the nineteenth century. Examples of this tactic and its results can be seen across the Duke's estates, for instance in Canonbie in 1870, where even in the wake of the Second Reform Act of 1867 the village was almost entirely controlled by the Duke. The colliery surgeon, a Dr Macaulay, who had been appointed and employed by the Duke for fourteen years, voted Liberal and was subsequently informed by the estate that his services would no longer be required.<sup>128</sup> The mining community mobilised and 228 colliers petitioned the Duke asking for Dr Macaulay to be 'retained amongst them' but to no avail.<sup>129</sup> He left and a Conservative-supporting surgeon was appointed in his stead. This behaviour on the behalf of the Duke highlights the power and control that one individual could have through ownership of the land and industry, but did generate criticism in the press. Even the Tory-leaning *Scotsman* reported that this sort of behaviour was unjust, that peers should not

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<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> NRS, GD224/526/1, Midlothian Political Correspondence, 1836-1851. Within this record there are accounts for the years between 1832 and 1836 showing expenditure on elections. This is communicated in a letter between the Duke of Buccleuch and Sir FW Drummond on the 10<sup>th</sup> May 1836.

<sup>126</sup> These families included the following, William-Drummond baronets, Sir George Clerk, Lord Melville and Sir John Hope.

<sup>127</sup> NRS, GD224/526/1, Midlothian Political Correspondence, 1836-1851.

<sup>128</sup> "Article 1 – No Title" *The Scotsman*, Sep 20, 1870.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

'interfere in elections' and that the ballot 'is a question for all classes' not merely those who own the land acting as political tyrants.<sup>130</sup> What is remarkable is how the Duke, usually sensitive to public and political criticism and careful of his reputation, continued to act in this way, in the face firstly of the savage criticisms of the Select Committee on Fictitious Votes in Scotland from 1837, and then continuing criticism in the press. He conformed to the stated Tory view that 'the government in every country should be just like a corporation'<sup>131</sup> and that as the government was made up of the landed interest, it meant they have 'any right to be represented.'<sup>132</sup> By dismissing the colliery surgeon, who the colliers paid for through deduction of wages, the Duke made very clear that those making a living from his industries should conform to his political (and religious) views.

Buccleuch's behaviour was far from unique and continued well into the twentieth century, illustrating the power of the landlord and employer as is evident in the case of another dismissal of a local doctor, in the western Highlands in 1902, Dr Lachlan Grant of Ballachulish.<sup>133</sup> Dr Grant was employed by the Ballachulish Slate Quarries Company Limited which was chaired by Colonel Edward Donald Malcolm of Poltalloch, a Conservative and a foremost landowner in Argyllshire.<sup>134</sup> The company at first operated employer paternalism as part of a wider system of 'industrial moral economy' based upon fairness, honourable behaviour, reciprocity which informed relations between employers and workers, a set of values very similar to that followed by the Duke of Buccleuch.<sup>135</sup> Dr Grant was sacked without any reason or explanation having been in post for less than two years as medical officer, and this generated protests and strikes from the men, culminating in a lock out which gained national attention.<sup>136</sup> This incident may not have been overtly political but it is illustrative of the ultimate power a landlord or employer could have in preventing dissent or disruption on their land. It shows their concern that they wanted to maintain 'total power and control', something the Duke was often accused of by resisting the ever growing reach

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<sup>130</sup> Ibid.

<sup>131</sup> *Remarks on the First Report of the Select Committee*, p. 22.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Ewen A. Cameron and Annie Tindley (eds), *Dr Lachlan Grant of Ballachulish 1871-1945*, (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2015).

<sup>134</sup> Ibid, p. 47.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid, p. 50.

of the state witnessable through his manipulation of the Reform Act (Scotland) 1832.<sup>137</sup>

What both of these instances illustrate is the vulnerability of those in the employ of or of those living on the lands of a landowner who does not tolerate dissent or alternative views who were particularly autocratic.

The Duke of Buccleuch was an individual who opposed reform early on his ducal life. This opposition did not prevent him and his associates from exploiting the very real loopholes for his own gain to ensure that his power did not wane but rather it strengthened his power. Through this manipulation of power and creation of fictitious voters, the Duke gained notoriety in the press and parliament for his actions to ensure that his position was not threatened by an increased electorate. However, his actions to prevent his power from being weakened were not limited to merely creating fictitious voters but also removing from his employment those in positions of responsibility that may be a dissenting voice. All of these actions illustrate not only an individual who felt vulnerable at the thought of differing views but one who was not apprehensive of using his position for his own gain thus illustrating limits to the carefully constructed image as one who was caring and willing to listen.

#### 4.4: The establishment of a Conservative newspaper for Scotland

At a time when political parties were vying for the support of an ever-growing and diversifying electoral base, increasing the scope of party influence was essential. The Duke was acutely aware that increasing the reach of the Conservative party in Scotland in new ways to capture new voting groups was critical. He was also influenced by the success of the *Yorkshire Post* in bridging the changing support of the Conservative party from that of Villa Toryism (a term describing the hold the party held over the urban and suburban middle classes), to working-class Conservatives in industrial areas.<sup>138</sup> Studies into the growth of newspapers have been numerous but as highlighted by Roberts 'the role played by the press in late-Victorian provincial politics remains limited' with scholarship largely focussing on the political left and London.<sup>139</sup> Scotland's first weekly newspaper at the cost of a penny

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid, p. 55.

<sup>138</sup> Roberts, 'Constructing a Tory world-view', *Historical Research*, 79, 203, 2006, p. 136; Matthew Roberts, 'Villa Toryism' and Popular Conservatism in Leeds, 1885-1902', *The Historical Journal*, 49(1), 2006, p. 217.

<sup>139</sup> Roberts, 'Constructing a Tory world-view', *Historical Research*, 79(203), 2006, p. 116.

emerged in 1855 with the first daily penny paper in 1859 and the first half-penny evening paper appearing from 1870.<sup>140</sup> By the 1850s, the Scottish Conservatives were suffering from the 'demise of many pro-Conservative newspapers' with very few 'popular journals backing it' leaving the 'heartland of industrial and commercial Scotland without a weighty Tory paper.'<sup>141</sup> This was down to wider political trends: in this period, Scotland was a 'safe ground' for Liberalism, having won a majority of Scottish seats at general elections since 1832, partly due to the change in county politics where the electorate had expanded in 1868 and attempts were made to 'solidify organisational structures.'<sup>142</sup> Ewen Cameron has highlighted that the Liberal party drew several crucial groups into their sphere of influence, including industrialists and farmers who were both supporters of free trade and no longer willing to 'tug their forelocks' to traditional elites.<sup>143</sup> Scotland as a whole was seen as fertile ground for the development of a Conservative supporting newspaper as there was only one main title, *The Edinburgh Evening Courant*, which was limited to the capital, had a poor reputation for its journalism and was in a weak financial position.<sup>144</sup> Ewen Cameron notes that the 'Conservative party belatedly began to pay attention to the press as a political vehicle.'<sup>145</sup> Aled Jones makes the same point for the wider British context in that before 1867 'the Conservative party had been relatively slow to grasp the importance of the cheap daily press' and little had changed by the 1880s.<sup>146</sup> Why was the Duke so ahead of his contemporaries in London at a time when among the "old guard" there was a 'residual hostility towards the rise of the popular press' due to the belief that it undermined 'traditional bonds of community?'<sup>147</sup> It is likely that the Duke had seen the potential a Conservative-supporting daily publication could have after he left frontline politics and spend more time on his three Scottish estates.

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<sup>140</sup> Harris, 'The Press, Newspaper Fiction and Literary Journalism' in *The Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature: Enlightenment, Britain and Empire (1707-1918)*, p. 309.

<sup>141</sup> Hutchison, *Industry, Reform and Empire*, p. 251.

<sup>142</sup> Ewen A. Cameron, *Impaled Upon a Thistle, Scotland since 1880*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), pp. 55 & 59.

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 60.

<sup>144</sup> Cameron, 'Journalism in the Late Victorian Scottish Highlands', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 2007, 40(4), p. 283.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 281.

<sup>146</sup> Roberts, 'Constructing a Tory world-view', *Historical Research*, 79(203), 2006, p. 116; Aled Jones, *Powers of the Press: Newspapers, Power and the Public in 19<sup>th</sup> century England*, Aldershot, 1996, pp. 166-176.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*

The Duke was already involved in the publication of the *Edinburgh Courant*, noting in 1867 that it was not exhibiting the 'vigour' which he'd expect of the leading Conservative journal in Scotland.<sup>148</sup> An example can be given around reporting on the Duke himself in the *Courant*, which rather than focus on his political activities – and their place in the wider Conservative party – focused instead on his position in the Royal Bank of Scotland and the emergence of cholera in Dalkeith in 1832.<sup>149</sup> This was a lost opportunity, particularly around the period of the Second Reform Act in 1867. This act enfranchised all householders in the boroughs as well as lodgers who paid rent of £10 or more per annum and lowered the property threshold in the counties and gave agricultural landowners and tenants with small amounts of land the vote.<sup>150</sup> To have a leading Conservative newspaper to speak to these newly enfranchised groups was of critical importance for the party and the *Courant* was certainly seen to still have potential as the only daily newspaper 'advocating Conservative principles published in Scotland; and is here regarded as the organ of the party.'<sup>151</sup> Acknowledging this, the party donated the publication 'a sum of £10,000 to assist in its development.'<sup>152</sup> This was no small undertaking and the Duke was very likely have been involved in this decision, helping to raise considerable sums of 'Conservative money in the east of Scotland' to save it.<sup>153</sup> In a private memorandum sent to the Duke, the requirement for 'an organ in the press worthy of its position as their representative' was 'in the present condition of public affairs it is a matter of paramount importance', and went on to hope that the 'Conservative gentlemen of Scotland will promptly respond to the appeal now made to them for assistance.'<sup>154</sup> The Duke did not carve out a direct editorial role for himself, but like many landed magnates invested in the enterprise, recognising the influence it could garner for his party. He also paid for debentures of £200 each in the names of his sons, Lord

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<sup>148</sup> NRS, GD224/1031/43, Memorandum relating to the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 16<sup>th</sup> February 1867; Cameron, 'Journalism in the Late Victorian Scottish Highlands', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 2007, 40(4), p. 283.

<sup>149</sup> 'Cholera', *The Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 28<sup>th</sup> January 1832; 'Royal Bank of Scotland', *The Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 8<sup>th</sup> March 1832.

<sup>150</sup> Samuel Berlinski, Torun Dewan and Brenda Van Coppenolle, 'Franchise Extension and the British Aristocracy', *Legislative Studies Quarterly*, 39(4), 2014, p. 537; Robert Saunders, 'The Politics of Reform and the Making of the Second Reform Act, 1848-1867', *The Historical Journal*, 50(3), 2007, pp. 571-591.

<sup>151</sup> NRS, GD224/1031/43, Memorandum relating to the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, 16<sup>th</sup> February 1867.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>153</sup> Cameron, 'Journalism in the Late Victorian Scottish Highlands', *Victorian Periodicals Review*, 2007, 40(4), p. 283.

<sup>154</sup> NRS, GD224/1031/43, Memorandum sent to the Duke, 6<sup>th</sup> February 1867.

Dalkeith and Lord Henry Scott.<sup>155</sup> There was a further crisis in May 1871, when the *Courant's* editor, Mr Wescomb, died and the future of the paper was thrown into doubt. The Duke instantly saw that that it would be a 'very serious misfortune' for the Conservative party in Scotland having its only daily paper 'discontinued or transferred to persons who might divert it to the support of other principles.'<sup>156</sup> At the same time, it was acknowledged that it had 'not attained all that influence in the country which one might expect ... by the only daily Conservative paper in Scotland.'<sup>157</sup> It was agreed that an increase in circulation was of 'vital importance to the Conservative party' and that the most effective way of achieving the prominence and success desired would be through 'energetic management, first-class editing, and ample capital.'<sup>158</sup> It was decided that a company with limited liability should be formed to support the newspaper, and enable it to be of 'very material service to the interests of the Conservative party.'<sup>159</sup>

The Duke's newspaper efforts were not confined to Edinburgh and the east however; in January 1872, he was informed that there was 'an earnest effort to get up a conservative newspaper for the city of Glasgow and the west of Scotland.'<sup>160</sup> The sum of money required was considerable, quoted at £30,000.<sup>161</sup> It was felt that establishing this newspaper at a 'very opportune' time, was necessary to combat 'the old *Glasgow Herald*' due to its support for the 'radical.'<sup>162</sup> The industrialist, party donor and former Tory MP for the Falkirk Burghs, James Baird Esq, told the Duke that 'if we do not get assistance from those who have the means and who have something to conserve we can not expect to get it from those who have not.'<sup>163</sup> The aim was to strengthen Conservative support across both Glasgow and Edinburgh and in response to this pressure – and ultimately, opportunity - the Duke subscribed to 'the extent of 100 shares' for £2500.<sup>164</sup> This reaffirms the point made by

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<sup>155</sup> NRS, GD224/1031/43, Letter to Mr Walker from unknown, 18<sup>th</sup> March 1867; NRS, GD224/1031/43, Memorandum regarding formation of a Company, for the purchase of the "Edinburgh Courant", May 1871.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> NRS, GD224/1031/43, Memorandum regarding formation of a Company, for the purchase of the "Edinburgh Courant", May 1871.

<sup>158</sup> Ibid.

<sup>159</sup> Ibid.

<sup>160</sup> NRS, GD224/1031/43, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from James Baird Esq, 12<sup>th</sup> January 1872.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid; Cameron, *Impaled Upon a Thistle*, p. 60.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid.

Roberts that the Conservative party eventually began to realise that they could construct cross-class coalitions of electoral support 'through the medium of the press.'<sup>165</sup>

What was the influence of the Duke in all of these proceedings? From the evidence available, he was not directly involved in the operations or editorial direction of the *Edinburgh Courant* but his financial support across both the Edinburgh and Glasgow Conservative dailies was vital and his name alone as a subscriber would have carried sway in convincing others to follow suit to make them a financial success. The Duke was an early supporter of the creation of a daily Conservative newspaper at a time when many of his contemporaries were opposed to the idea of using party funds to bolster this sort of development. Having spent time away from frontline governmental politics, the Duke saw in action what could be a powerful political tool especially on his estates. As emphasised by I.G.C. Hutchison, 'the absence of close contact between the social wings of Scottish Conservatism is further illustrated by the efforts to found a party newspaper' and the Duke realised what a profound impact this could have for the party.<sup>166</sup>

#### 4.5: Conclusion

The enormous scale of the Duke's landholdings gave him more political influence outside of frontline Westminster politics than he ever had from within. His decision to side with Peel over the policy to end protection and repeal the Corn Laws reflected the changing scope and focus of his own estates, away from agricultural dominance to industrial diversification. He received a good deal of criticism for this decision, but it was also the moment when he recognised that he could have more impact out of political office than in it. This realisation had a major impact on his position in the Conservative party in Scotland, where he became the de-facto leader of party operations on the ground. As part of establishing this position he exploited the loopholes of the 1832 Reform Act to create fictitious voters to further not only the success of the party but also consolidate his own local power during a period of social and political change. In doing so, he corruptly reinforced his political position alongside his economic and social monopoly across much of the Scottish Borders, a

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<sup>165</sup> Roberts, 'Constructing a Tory world-view', *Historical Research*, 79(203), 2006, p. 143.

<sup>166</sup> Hutchison, *A Political History of Scotland*, p. 114.

monopoly that did not end until 1880, when his son the Earl of Dalkeith was defeated in the admittedly smaller sized Midlothian constituency, seen as a bastion of both Buccleuch and Conservative power.<sup>167</sup> These corrupt practices were noted with opprobrium in government enquiries, but this direct attack on his reputation and attempt to shame him into change, failed.

Buccleuch, alongside many of his landed contemporaries in Midlothian, was a key player in the funding and the managing of the political machine in Conservative circles. He was one of the primary financial backers and also brokers and arrangers of donations.

Recognising the advantages of establishing and supporting a Conservative-leaning newspaper in raising the national profile and electoral prospects of the party, the Duke subscribed to new or faltering publications which went on to publish daily in Edinburgh and Glasgow. Measuring the success of these Conservative supporting newspapers is challenging to ascertain however, the mere fact that the Duke invested in these publications is a symbol in the influence he had over affairs in Scotland. Moreover, the simple fact that in the 1840s they only lost one parliamentary seat across Scotland indicates that these publications had an impact. With the backing of a notable individual like the Duke, it marked a significant change in campaigning politically with an increased electorate.

However, the Duke's departure from governmental politics in 1846 marked the beginning of the changing fortunes for Buccleuch family no longer desiring to maintain the political reputation that they once had. The political landscape was changing and the hegemony that the aristocracy had in politics was waning pushing them out and forcing them to find new ways of exerting their political power over an enlarged and vocal electorate. The political power of the Buccleuch family did lessen as is illustrative when the Dumfriesshire tenants of the Duke in 1868 voted against his party with this due to the increased electorate that was no longer as sympathetic to the dominance of the aristocracy or accepting of the status quo.

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<sup>167</sup> Robert Kelley, 'Midlothian: A Study in Politics and Ideas', *Victorian Studies*, 4(2), 1960, pp. 118-140; David Brooks, 'Gladstone and Midlothian: The Background to the First Campaign', *The Scottish Historical Review*, 64(177), 1985, pp. 42-67.

## Chapter Five: Religion – A Godless Tyrant?

### 5.1: Introduction

Religion in Victorian Scotland was a central pillar of society, culture and the state. In addition, for the landed and aristocratic classes, it was a key element of their operation of social control, and the Buccleuchs were no exception.<sup>1</sup> Charlotte Anne was strongly vocal regarding her religious views and her midlife conversion to Roman Catholicism in 1855 shook their marriage to its foundations.<sup>2</sup> Unlike his wife, the Duke kept his religious views more private, although he was a lifelong stalwart of the Established Church of Scotland. His opposition to both Catholicism and the Free Church from 1843 became a source of embarrassment for the family, with it taking several decades for his position to soften. How can we assess a man who regarded himself as an enlightened and improving landowner but lacked religious tolerance?

In 1800, between 80 and 90 per cent of the population 'adhered to the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, or the Church by law established.'<sup>3</sup> However, over the space of just a few decades Scotland underwent an economic and social revolution which was in turn reflected in a major shift in the role of the Church and challenged the social services it had traditionally provided, such as poor relief and primary education.<sup>4</sup> As government became more centralised and slowly more democratic and secular, the role of the Church was diminished further. It also faced increased competition from the rising number of Catholics in Scotland after the Irish Famine and from 1843, new members of the Free Church.<sup>5</sup> Both of

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<sup>1</sup> Rowan Strong, *Episcopalianism in Nineteenth-Century Scotland*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 266.

<sup>2</sup> K.D. Reynolds, *Aristocratic Women and Political Society in Victorian Britain*, (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1998).

<sup>3</sup> Stewart J Brown, 'Beliefs and Religions', *A History of Everyday Life in Scotland, 1800 – 1900*, edited by Trevor Griffiths and Graeme Morton, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010), p. 116.

<sup>4</sup> Ryan Mallon, *Dissent After Disruption*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021), p. 242; R.D. Anderson, 'Education and the State in Nineteenth-Century Scotland', *The Economic History Review*, 36(4), 1983; Iain Hutchison, *Industry, Reform and Empire, Scotland 1790 – 1880*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020), p. 243.

<sup>5</sup> S. Karly Kehoe, *Creating a Scottish Church, Catholicism, gender and ethnicity in nineteenth-century Scotland*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010), p. 111; Mallon, *Dissent After Disruption*, p. 220.

these factors challenged the Established Church in Scotland and in turn, threatened a key plank of the social control exercised by the landed classes, as they traditionally controlled the appointments of ministers, schoolmasters and doctors. Rowan Strong has highlighted that the Scottish landed classes had powerful influence at a local level, where their religious and parochial patronage meant 'they ruled supreme in rural Lowland Scotland,' although detailed scholarship is minimal.<sup>6</sup> Allan W. MacColl has highlighted that prior to the Disruption in 1843 congregations had had to accept a considerable degree of landlord control over the appointment of a minister, enabling control over what was said in and to congregations.<sup>7</sup> This point is echoed by Callum G. Brown who points out one the most 'controversial' aspects regarding the Established Church was 'the system of patronage' where a hereditary owner, such as the Duke, 'installed his choice of minister in the parish church' ensuring that their view was echoed across the parish.<sup>8</sup> However, it was not merely in the appointment of the minister but the landlord interference in all aspects of the church that became increasingly controversial, including, economic, judicial, devotional and educational work.<sup>9</sup> This dominance meant that the landlord had complete social control, and in the case of Buccleuch that extended over several parishes. This landlord interference was a major contributor to the Disruption in 1843, in turn generating landlord fury when their status quo was challenged, leading to a significant number refusing to agree sites for new Free churches.<sup>10</sup> MacColl argues that the events of 1843 has a more intense and prolonged impact in the Highlands than in other areas of Scotland; however, this chapter argues that the actions of the Duke of Buccleuch in the aftermath of the Disruption created prolonged agitation and unstable relations with tenants and communities.<sup>11</sup> This power struggle between the aristocracy and the Free Church represented by Alan MacColl contributes to a clearer understanding of what role religion played in the power dynamics on landed estates. MacColl built on James Hunter's work, which presented the Highlands of Scotland in the run up to the Disruption as 'disorientated and demoralised by social and economic change' with

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<sup>6</sup> Strong, *Episcopalianism in Nineteenth-Century Scotland*, p. 266.

<sup>7</sup> Allan W. MacColl, *Land, Faith and the Crofting Community*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), p. 20.

<sup>8</sup> Callum G. Brown, *Religion and Society in Scotland since 1707*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1997), p. 18.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, p. 68.

<sup>10</sup> MacColl, *Land, Faith and the Crofting Community*, pp. 21 & 22.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*, p. 30; Brown, *Religion and Society*, p. 18.

the Established Church failing to provide adequate guidance and assistance.<sup>12</sup> Hunter presents a landlord class who were deeply suspicious of the Free Church, believing it to be a fundamental challenge to their rights and powers.<sup>13</sup> The example of Buccleuch shows that this was a feeling not only confined to the Highlands, as the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke's refusal to grant sites demonstrates.<sup>14</sup> Mallon contends for the Lowlands that the Disruption created fertile ground for other forms of radicalism, as the Duke and many of his peers feared.<sup>15</sup> This chapter will unpack that experience on the Buccleuch estates to understand why the Duke moved from a position of vehement opposition to compromise and acceptance of Free Church sites on his land.

As we have seen, the Duke also regarded rising numbers of Catholics in Scotland as a major social threat, especially from the mid-1840s and the influx of Irish Catholics into Scotland in the wake of the Great Famine.<sup>16</sup> S. Karly Kehoe has argued that this is generally the defining period of anti-Catholic feeling 'witnessing a dramatic resurgence' in Scotland, combining the increasing Irish in-migration and domestic factors such as the Maynooth controversy creating a tinder box of anti-Catholic fervour.<sup>17</sup> The Duke of Buccleuch vehemently opposed supporting Catholics in his tenancies and employment, and this can be contextualised by the wider anti-Catholic feeling of the period.

Having a full understanding of the Duke's approach to religion can give a wider insight into the role religion played in the landed aristocracy's armoury in the nineteenth century and is profoundly important in relation to understandings of the changing workings of deference and paternalism. With the increased reach of the state and the diminishing power of

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<sup>12</sup> James Hunter, *The Making of the Crofting Community*, (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers Ltd, 1976), p. 95.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid*, p. 103 & 4.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid*, p. 105.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid*, p. 5.

<sup>16</sup> John F. McCaffrey, 'Roman Catholics in Scotland in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries', *Scottish Church History Society*, 21, 1983, p. 276.

<sup>17</sup> I. Muirhead, 'Catholic Emancipation: Scottish Reactions in 1829', *The Innes Review*, 24(1), 1973, p. 41 Martin J. Mitchell, 'Anti-Catholicism and the Scottish Middle Class, 1800-1914' in C. Gheeraert-Graffeuille, G. Vaughan (eds.), *Anti-Catholicism in Britain and Ireland, 1600-2000 Practices, Representations and Ideas*, (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020); Sir T.M. Devine and Michael Rosie, 'The Rise and Fall of Anti-Catholicism in Scotland in C. Gheeraert-Graffeuille, G. Vaughan (eds.), *Anti-Catholicism in Britain and Ireland, 1600-2000 Practices, Representations and Ideas*, (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).

landlords, the challenges posed by the Free Church and growing Catholicism, the Duke saw his way of life and traditional approach having to adapt to stay relevant. An additional, though personal factor, in the Duke's approach was the conversion to Catholicism of his wife Duchess Charlotte Anne in 1856. This fundamentally affected his anti-Catholic sentiment but also his style of paternalism and levels of tolerance. This sensational religious conversion by one of the leading Scottish female aristocrats, and one with close ties to the monarchy and court, has been neglected in the historiography of religion in nineteenth century Scotland, and will be explored and contextualised here in terms of its familial, local and national impacts.

Religious patronage and control was a key element in the landed armoury of social control, and one which the Duke took a serious and active interest. He embarked on a significant programme of church and religious building construction across his estates, ultimately leveraging this expenditure as a means of social control. Strong highlights that aristocratic patrons like the Duke were prepared to support local churches 'in accordance with their own religious ... agendas.'<sup>18</sup> This is evident in the accounts held at Drumlanrig Castle, illustrating that for the four years between 1852 and 1856 an average of £2306 7s 1d was expended annually on minister stipends, and repairs to churches and manses averaged £570 13s 9d.<sup>19</sup> This partly explains why a man as powerful as the Duke could feel threatened by what remained, in the end, two minority religious groups in Scottish society. The fear of alternative locuses of power and influence voicing discontent was the element of his concern, building on traditional anti-Catholic and anti-dissenting tropes and assumptions. The reaction of the Duke towards the Free Church gained him a notoriety nationally, negatively impacting his carefully constructed image as a tolerant paternalist by a group who at their heart, were anti-landlord desiring a more egalitarian society in response to the rising levels of poverty in Scotland in the 1840s. This chapter will illustrate that there were limits to the Duke's paternalism with these limitations largely due to religious issues putting at risk his paternalistic reputation. His reasoning for these limitations was never put in writing and reputational damage will have been a reasoning behind this omission. However, fear was a

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<sup>18</sup> Strong, *Episcopalianism in Nineteenth-Century Scotland*, p. 284.

<sup>19</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, GD224/518/1, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from William Maxwell re Income and Expenditure on the Queensberry Estate 1852-1856.

major driving force in this limitation to the Duke's paternalism. This chapter will illustrate that the fear that was the major driving force in the rebuttal of an ever-changing religious landscape in Scotland giving way to a more tolerant Duke who realised he could work in partnership and remain a large degree of control over his estates and the events on them.

## 5.2: the Duke and the Free Church

For many landlords the establishment of the Free Church in 1843 was a pivotal moment in the religious history of their estates. Many landlords are still to have their reactions to this event examined however, the examination of the Duke's actions reiterates an individual who resisted change that threatened his control over his land. This study places the Duke and his actions into the wider context of this momentous event. In 1843 around 450 evangelical ministers walked out of the annual meeting of the General Assembly of the Established Church of Scotland and formed the Free Church of Scotland, taking approximately half of the lay membership with them. Their main reason for doing so was in protest over lay patronage in appointments to the Church and the related refusal of the state to recognise its spiritual independence.<sup>20</sup> This split generated major ramifications not only in the country's religious life but also its civic and political structures, reaching 'out into politics, education and society'. National-scale religious controversy was compounded by Peel's decision to increase the stipend to the Roman Catholic seminary at Maynooth in 1845, which Ryan Mallon has noted 'redefined the relationship between Britain's Protestant established churches.'<sup>21</sup> The secession in Scotland of the Free Church from the Church of Scotland was in part a campaign against the Scottish landed aristocracy, against a backdrop of ever worsening social conditions in Scotland. Many landed elites saw this challenge as an existential threat to their power, expressed as a lack of control over religious apparatus and the role of the minister on their estates, thus creating a fundamentally 'hostile relationship' with the Free Church.<sup>22</sup> The literal disruption this caused in Scottish society cannot be underestimated. Subsequent research has shown that the Free Church 'drew strength' from the – mainly middle and

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<sup>20</sup> Mallon, *Dissent After Disruption*, p. 27.

<sup>21</sup> James G. Kellas, 'The Liberal Party and the Scottish Church Disestablishment Crisis', *The English Historical Review*, 79(310), 1964, p. 31; Mallon, *Dissent After Disruption*, p. 5.

<sup>22</sup> Mallon, *Dissent After Disruption*, p. 48.

professional – classes that gained the vote through the 1832 Reform Act, in the Duke’s eyes, confirming his belief in the dangers of that legislation.<sup>23</sup>

Many landowners were opposed to the new Free Church and some chose to express their opposition by refusing requests to grant church sites. The Duke was one of these but he was not alone: the 2<sup>nd</sup> duke of Sutherland – as pointed out in the House of Commons in June 1846 by the future Earl of Dalhousie – had ‘at first refused to grant sites for Free churches’ until he believed the movement was real but moreover, did not ‘interfere with the Established Church of the land.’<sup>24</sup> Refusal of sites was a common tactic in the Highlands and Islands, with many landlords concerned about what the Free Church meant for their power and influence and so began a ‘campaign of obstruction ... and refusal to sell sites’ to the Free Church.<sup>25</sup> Lord MacDonald, the biggest landowner on Skye, refused sites to no fewer than seven congregations.<sup>26</sup> Those landowners who chose to pursue such radical obstructive action played a risky game however. The Duke was one of a number of Scotland landlords who gained a considerable notoriety for his refusal of sites, with criticism in the press and multiple petitions coming his way urging him to reconsider.<sup>27</sup>

In October 1843 the Duke was sent a petition from the ‘Scottish United proprietors, friends of the Free Church of Scotland’ as someone ‘who have [sic] directly or indirectly refused sites for Free Churches on their Estates.’<sup>28</sup> Although it is unclear as to how many sites in total were refused by the Duke in the aftermath of 1843, it was clearly enough to generate national pressure. The petition argued that the course being taken was ‘inconsistent with the due exercise of the rights of property’ and was ‘injurious to the people on your estates.’<sup>29</sup> Just as Duchess Charlotte Anne had reminded the Duke on several occasions, the petition noted that ‘property has its rights, it has also its duties’ and that neither could

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<sup>23</sup> Andrew L. Drummond and James Bulloch, *The Church in Victorian Scotland 1843-1874*, (Edinburgh: The Saint Andrew Press, 1975), p. 30.

<sup>24</sup> HC Deb (10 June 1846). Vol. 87, col.206-28.

<sup>25</sup> Hunter, *The Making of the Crofting Community*, p. 103 & 104.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> NRS, GD224/367/5, Answer to the first petition from the inhabitants of Canonbie, no date.

<sup>28</sup> NRS, GD224/367/5, Petition to the Duke of Buccleuch from friends of the Free Church, 21<sup>st</sup> October 1843.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

ultimately be 'neglected.'<sup>30</sup> This approach was calculated to hit the Duke where he was most sensitive: his self-image as a responsible paternalistic landlord.

However, this was a national issue, and was not the first time the Duke and his landed contemporaries had been reprimanded by the Free Church for their actions. In August 1843, a Special Commission of the Free Church of Scotland stated that 'a Proprietor of many parishes cannot claim a right so to mould the minds of his tenantry' but that the Commission 'do not, and cannot, dispute the entire right in Law of every Landowner to do what he wills with his own.'<sup>31</sup> They did acknowledge the fact that 'legally he may remove them from his lands, or refuse them all means of worshipping God' but they warned the landed classes that 'even an indirect attempt on the part of the higher classes to interfere with the rights of conscience, will surely lead to a dislocation of the different orders of society.'<sup>32</sup> The Duke, facing striking miners, Chartists and now the Disruption on his estates felt threatened by the scale and pace of both the changes being demanded and the criticism he faced in resisting them.

In 1844 Canonbie was one of several sites refused by the Duke, but was the one which hit national attention in the press and parliament. Ultimately, he denied the Canonbie Free Church residents a place for religious worship in their parish and forced them to travel some distance to the next available Free Church building. For a landlord who presented himself as a paternalist and improver, this intolerance badly affected his and his family's reputation at a time of challenge for his class. In response to the petition sent to him on behalf of the inhabitants of Canonbie, the Duke stated that he 'cannot comply with the Prayer of that Petition.' His reasoning for this was that he believed there was 'accommodation ample' for their requirements 'within a reasonable distance at Half Morton and Sanquhar.' By responding in this way, the Duke appeared to portray himself as not actively refusing a site for those in Canonbie, but also not agreeing to their request. Acknowledging this fact, he

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> NRS, GD224/367/5, Minute of the Special Commission of the Free Church of Scotland, 8<sup>th</sup> August 1843.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

stated to Maxwell 'that plenty abuse will be lavished upon me I am well aware, but neither applause nor abuse ever affects my decision.'<sup>33</sup>

The following year 1845 brought with it a barrage of criticism from the national press, notably *The Scotsman*, with the Marquis of Breadalbane presenting a petition from the General Assembly of the Free Church highlighting the Duke's refusal to grant sites at Canonbie, Wanlockhead and Peebles which was 'compelling his tenantry to meet for worship in the open air.'<sup>34</sup> Mr Guthrie, a member of the Free Presbytery of Edinburgh was quoted in the *Scotsman's* report, stating that for all that the duke was 'wrong in doing' he was honest in stating he 'will not grant a site.'<sup>35</sup> He acknowledged and praised the Duke for allowing his servants to attend the Free Church and believed that the duke would in 'course of time ... agree to give us sites for churches.'<sup>36</sup> His colleague Dr Candlish, a leading figure during the Disruption, put a more sympathetic analysis on the picture, suggesting the Duke had been 'guided by misrepresentations made to him' and that with him there had been 'no petty tyranny' as he had acted on his 'conscience.'<sup>37</sup>

The Canonbie incident again gained the Duke unwanted attention in the House of Commons in March 1847. During the Sites for Churches (Scotland) debate, Edward Pleydell-Bouverie stated on behalf of the Free Church that their rights had been 'interfered' with and had been 'prevented from the exercise of their religious worship.'<sup>38</sup> He also accused the Duke of essentially 'amounted to nearly a prohibition of public worship altogether.'<sup>39</sup> *The Scotsman* took up the cudgels, proclaiming that the 'Duke of Buccleuch and his co-persecutors may become ashamed of themselves.'<sup>40</sup> Sir George Grey, a Whig, argued that those like the Duke 'who held in their hands extensive estates' and refused sites were in opposition to the 'true principle of Christian toleration.'<sup>41</sup> However uncomfortable it may have been, this debate did not change the Duke's stance. Other landed politicians came to his rescue also: Sir James

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<sup>33</sup> NRS, GD224/367/5, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to Mr Maxwell, 11<sup>th</sup> July 1844.

<sup>34</sup> "House of Lords" *The Scotsman*, Jul 16, 1845.

<sup>35</sup> "Article 5 -- no Title." *The Scotsman*, Feb 08, 1845.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>38</sup> HC Deb 2 March 1847, Vol.90, Col.681.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, Col.682.

<sup>40</sup> HC Deb 2 March 1847, Vol.90, Col.682; "Summary." *The Scotsman*, Mar 06, 1847.

<sup>41</sup> HC Deb 2 March 1847, Vol.90, Col.686.

Graham argued that they were 'not involved in a debate on the political opinions of the Duke of Buccleuch' although he also 'lament[ed] the refusals which have taken place.'<sup>42</sup> Lord Bentinck further defended the Duke, suggesting he must have had 'great provocation to have induced him to refuse to these parties sites for their churches' with this reaffirming the point made the previous year by the duke.<sup>43</sup> What these great provocations were is not readily apparent.

The Duke's reasoning was made clear during a later House of Lords debate led by the Free Church supporter Lord Breadalbane in July 1846.<sup>44</sup> In the face of criticism from Breadalbane, the Duke responded that the new Free Church had 'enjoyed equally with other Dissenters such facilities as it was in the power of landowners to afford in obtaining sites and accommodation for building their churches.'<sup>45</sup> He further emphasised that the Free Church's 'hostility to the Established Church had not at first even been attempted to be concealed' and that the applications made to him for sites he had 'considered... unreasonable.'<sup>46</sup> These factors had contributed to his refusal of sites but his real objection was that he did not want people who had 'no earthly connexion with the parish, or even with the district' coming into the communities 'exciting the people' and then creating 'ill-feeling against the landlord.'<sup>47</sup> This was a view shared by many rural landlords who regarded the Free Church as being essentially founded on an 'anti-landlord principle.'<sup>48</sup> The Duke also reaffirmed his long standing opposition to external 'interference' 'between himself and his tenants and labourers' and that any issue was merely a question between 'himself and them, and not between him and strangers, who knew nothing of the parish, and who were only there to foment bad feeling.'<sup>49</sup> This highlights the limitations on the Duke's paternalistic approach: he was willing to provide a paternalistic estate management, but it had to be on his terms and match his expectations with no interference. Evidently, this religious tolerance reached its

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<sup>42</sup> HC Deb 2 March 1847, Vol.90, Col.693.

<sup>43</sup> HC Deb 2 March 1847, Vol.90, Col.694-95.

<sup>44</sup> HL Deb 21 July 1846, Vol.87, Col.1355-60.

<sup>45</sup> HL Deb 21 July 1846, Vol.87, Col.1358.

<sup>46</sup> HL Deb 21 July 1846, Vol.87, Col.1358-9.

<sup>47</sup> HL Deb 21 July 1846, Vol.87, Col.1359.

<sup>48</sup> Hunter, *The Making of the Crofting Community*, p. 105.

<sup>49</sup> HL Deb 21 July 1846, Vol.87, Col.1359.

limit with the Free Church and the public criticism of his actions generated further anger on the part of the Duke.

This debate in the Lords was commented on in *The Scotsman*, which suggested that the Duke felt bound to 'revenge himself by making his tenantry and their wives and children worship in the snow on the public road.'<sup>50</sup> The *Daily News* was also critical, noting that he was 'angry with the Free Kirk.'<sup>51</sup> They believed the Duke was setting a dangerous precedent in his refusal of sites and that he wanted to be 'Pope on his own estates'. The *Daily News* argued that he should acknowledge that times had changed from those when he succeeded to the dukedom. They emphasised that the Duke could not 'expect that his estates should be hermetically sealed against its [time's] access' and that there is 'no feudality in religion binding them to do suit and service in the same church as his landlord' as long as they paid their rent on time and were good tenants, which the vast majority were.<sup>52</sup> The Duke was also the target of individual campaigners and correspondents; for instance, in April 1844 a Mr George Bell in wrote to him to argue the case, noting firstly that many landed proprietors who were originally opposed to the Free Church had changed their views and instead 'not only granted sites, but in many cases done so gratuitously' having had their concerns satisfied that the 'obliged hostility of the Free Church supporters ... is nothing more than a desire to spread and disseminate their new views.'<sup>53</sup> There was also correspondence from a Mr J.A. Wallace, informing the Duke that he had been described by a minister in one of the new congregations of the Free Church in an area in which the Duke was the landlord, as 'a Godless tyrant who would trample down their rights', adding fuel to the fire that the Free Church would cause further agitation towards landlords.<sup>54</sup> The description of 'a Godless tyrant' did nothing to soothe the feelings of the Duke, and his fears were further stoked by the analysis of his chamberlain William Ogilvie, who believed there was 'no saying what this man may not do' reaffirming the fear that the growth of the Free Church could open the floodgates to further anti-landlord behaviour.<sup>55</sup> Ogilvie informed the Duke that the Mr

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<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> "THE DUKE OF BUCCLEUCH ON SITES." *The Scotsman*, Jul 25, 1846.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>53</sup> NRS, GD224/367/11, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from George Bell, 30<sup>th</sup> April 1844.

<sup>54</sup> NRS, GD224/367/11, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from Mr J.A. Wallace, 15<sup>th</sup> July 1845.

<sup>55</sup> NRS, GD224/367/11, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from Mr William Ogilvie, 21<sup>st</sup> July 1845; Hunter, *The Making of the Crofting Community*, p. 105.

Wallace in question was no longer in Hawick in July 1845, having departed 'before the report of Your Grace's speech reach[ing] Hawick.'<sup>56</sup> Ogilvie noted that Wallace acknowledged himself to be a 'convicted slanderer and this I will also prove by a superior testimony to his thousand witnesses by his own handwriting.'<sup>57</sup>The estate launched an investigation took place to try and root out what was being said by whom and focus fell onto a minister of the Free Church, Thomas Duncan.<sup>58</sup> In a robust rebuttal, Duncan argued that it was unfair that the Free Church was made 'responsible for every violent or unmutable expressed.'<sup>59</sup> Outlining his firm view that the Duke was taking the wrong course of action in refusing sites for the Free Church, Duncan drew the his attention to its growth into a national issue amongst 'men of all shades of political opinion and of every religious denomination... of great & increasing importance.'<sup>60</sup> There was then a gap of almost two years before in March 1847 when William Ogilvie provided an update.<sup>61</sup> He stated that he had spoken with three individuals who he could 'put every confidence' in and that 'they heard the Preacher allude to your Grace, by name more than once.'<sup>62</sup> Ogilvie informed that the Duke that they were 'all Free Church men' meaning 'that there could not be better evidence.'<sup>63</sup> This incident will have only further infuriated the Duke and reaffirmed his views on the Free Church and the dangers they posed to traditional social structures.

This fury with the Free Church extended in 1848 when he considered launching libel proceedings against the Free Church newspaper *The Witness*. The *Witness* was established in 1840 by Hugh Miller in Edinburgh and it had 'put forward very severe strictures upon the Duke of Buccleuch respecting his conduct' towards the Free Church, as well as 'radical criticisms' of the landed elite and the social and political status quo generally.<sup>64</sup> The Duke collated all of the extracts from *The Witness* but was further enraged that the editor expressed 'no regret, makes no apology, offers no amends for the infamous attack' but

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<sup>56</sup> NRS, GD224/367/11, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from Mr William Ogilvie, 21<sup>st</sup> July 1845.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> NRS, GD224/367/11, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from Thomas Duncan, 24<sup>th</sup> July 1845.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> NRS, GD224/367/11, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from William Ogilvie, 19<sup>th</sup> March 1847.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

<sup>64</sup> "Imperial Parliament: HOUSE OF LORDS--Tuesday, June 6." *The Scotsman*, Jun 10, 1848; MacColl, *Land, Faith and the Crofting Community*, p. 24.

rather defended his actions.<sup>65</sup> The attack was based on the accusation that the Duke had not only refused sites but had 'extended the system of persecution, by removing from his estates some of his tenantry on account of adherence to the Free Church.'<sup>66</sup> The whole incident centred on a John Reid, a sub-tenant of David Brunton at Yarrow who was apparently evicted from his home. The Duke denied the accusation, arguing that it was 'fiction and the interferences drawn from it as well.'<sup>67</sup> Instead, the Duke pointed to new tenancy arrangements being introduced so that 'on every farm there shall be a resident Tenant'.<sup>68</sup> The Duke consulted with Sir James Graham in 1848, who agreed that the accusations published in the *Witness* newspaper were 'quite unjustifiable.'<sup>69</sup> However, Sir James advised the Duke to not proceed with a prosecution arguing that it would only 'perpetuate [the issue] and to aggravate the community' when instead it should be 'not only mitigated but extinguished.'<sup>70</sup> Sir James was willing to defend the Duke from 'unjust assertions' in the House of Commons due to these misrepresentations, which Sir James saw as 'inconsistent with your established character of a kind and considerate landlord.'<sup>71</sup> Sir James defended the Duke publicly too, stating that he had 'publicly vindicated himself from the accusation' of his 'determination to clear his estates of all tenants who were members of the Free Church.'<sup>72</sup>

The Duke's stance took a decade or more to soften. In April 1857 the Duke refused a site for a Free Church in Kirkmichael parish on the basis that there were 'other proprietors' who he felt 'might feel inclined' to grant them a site.<sup>73</sup> In the same year he finally granted a site at Canonbie, presumably because he was the sole landowner in the parish and had no choice without becoming one of the last landed refusers.<sup>74</sup> In addition, he likely recognised that the Free Church was established and growing, and as one of the great landed proprietors of

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<sup>65</sup> NRS, GD224/512/1, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch regarding *The Witness*, 7<sup>th</sup> June 1848.

<sup>66</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, GD224/512/1, *The Witness*, 30<sup>th</sup> May 1848.

<sup>67</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, GD224/512/1, Statement of Facts relative to Calumnious attack on The Duke of Buccleuch in the *Witness* newspaper of 26<sup>th</sup> May 1848.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> NRS, GD224/512/1, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from Sir James Graham, 30<sup>th</sup> May 1848.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>73</sup> Drumlanrig Castle Archive, GD224/504/5, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Maxwell Esq, 15<sup>th</sup> April 1857.

<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*

Scotland he had to be accommodating, even if it was against his wishes. It took him over a decade to reach this point, however, straining relations and damaging his paternalistic reputation. The emergence of the Free Church created many challenges for the Duke and pushed his paternalism to extreme limits. His fear of ministers being appointed to Free Churches on his estates, over who he had no control and who might preach radicalism worried him to such an extent he denied the approval of sites, an extreme action which created a furore beyond his estates and into the national papers and in Parliament. This went beyond party political lines, with scathing cross-party criticism portraying the Duke as a 'godless tyrant' who trampled over religious freedoms. In doing so, it drew into question his paternalistic approach and will have caused his tenantry to question how far their landlord truly supported them, especially if they held different religious views. The wider context of significant social, political and economic changes no doubt provided unsettling for the Duke. Social control via religious patronage was a central element of traditional of landed power and the Free Church challenge to this was of existential concern. This point was made by Sir James Riddell, proprietor of Ardnamurchan who believed it would 'lead the people astray' from the clergy put there for their benefit in terms of their 'spiritual good and edification', replaced by 'illiterate laymen.'<sup>75</sup> This was a particularly strong point made during the 1840s, with the Free Church challenging the 'established order' with uncertainty about where it would end in terms of traditional social hierarchies.<sup>76</sup> This is an argument put forward by Allan MacColl who points out landlords saw the Free Church as not only a 'challenge to the status quo' but also 'their proprietorial interests.'<sup>77</sup> This challenge was very real for the Duke who would have been alarmed that it would have majorly impacted not only his running but the impact upon his style of paternalism.

### 5.3: the Duke and Roman Catholicism

It wasn't only the Free Church that the Duke opposed but also Roman Catholicism. Similarly to the Free Church, examination of the response by the landed classes to Catholicism in Scotland particularly is lacking and this thesis aims to begin to fill that gap. It illustrates

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<sup>75</sup> *Committee on Sites, 1847, 1<sup>st</sup> Rep., 96; 2<sup>nd</sup> Rep., 92; Hunter, The Making of the Crofting Community, p. 105.*

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>77</sup> *MacColl, Land, Faith and the Crofting Community, p. 21.*

again, like with the Free Church, that this denomination made the Duke feel threatened and pushed his paternalistic actions to a limit. However, Anti-Catholic feeling across all levels of Scottish society was a prominent feature in the Duke's lifetime, as part of a much longer tradition of intolerance and persecution, and one which the Duke certainly adhered to.<sup>78</sup> The twenty years after 1843 witnessed some of the most intense and prolonged outbreaks of anti-Catholicism in nineteenth century Britain.<sup>79</sup> K.D. Reynolds has stated that 'anti-Catholicism, whether of the Roman or the home-grown variety, was at the forefront of the political agenda in the late 1840s and 1850s' with this period being when the Duke's anti-Catholic feelings were at their most fervent but also when his political career was reaching a crescendo.<sup>80</sup> Scotland by the mid-1850s began to set the pace for 'anti-Catholic activity throughout Britain' having been 'quieter than England in the 1830s' and was still catching up in the 1840s.<sup>81</sup> Catholicism in Britain had undergone significant change in the early nineteenth century: emancipation received royal assent in April 1829 generating the first 'widespread anti-Catholic activity in nineteenth-century Scotland.'<sup>82</sup> Unfortunately, it is unclear which way the Duke voted on the emancipation legislation.<sup>83</sup> It was likely he voted against it, given his actions both on wider political questions and on his estates, as this section will demonstrate. Emancipation 'provoked a decidedly mixed response among Scottish Presbyterians.'<sup>84</sup> The passage of this legislation was the starting gun in a prolonged period of anti-Catholic sentiment with Kehoe emphasising that between 1830 and 1860, Catholicism experienced slow but steady growth and that even though emancipation may have been partially intended to reduce anti-Catholic prejudice, it by no means achieved this.<sup>85</sup> This can be seen in the furore nearly two decades later when Peel's government proposed tripling the financial grant in support of Maynooth College, as a measure to

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<sup>78</sup> Devine and Rosie, 'The Rise and Fall of Anti-Catholicism in Scotland' in Gheeraert-Graffeuille, Vaughan (eds.), *Anti-Catholicism*, p. 275.

<sup>79</sup> Mitchell, 'Anti-Catholicism' in Gheeraert-Graffeuille, Vaughan (eds.), *Anti-Catholicism*, p. 224.

<sup>80</sup> Reynolds, *Aristocratic Women*, p. 81.

<sup>81</sup> John Wolfe, *The Protestant Crusade in Great Britain, 1829-1860*, Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1991, p. 2.

<sup>82</sup> Mitchell, 'Anti-Catholicism' in Gheeraert-Graffeuille, Vaughan (eds.), *Anti-Catholicism*, p. 222; Muirhead, 'Catholic Emancipation', *The Innes Review*, 24(1), 1973, p. 28.

<sup>83</sup> Correspondence with the British parliamentary archives has been attempted to try and establish what the voting actions of the Duke were. They are not able to ascertain how he voted due to this period lacking any records pertaining to members voting directions. Hansard does not allow for any insight nor does personal correspondence.

<sup>84</sup> Mallon, *Dissent After Disruption*, p. 121.

<sup>85</sup> Kehoe, *Creating a Scottish Church*, p. 50.

improve relations with Irish Catholics with this action proving to be one of the most divisive of Peel's premiership with notable individuals such as W.E. Gladstone resigning.<sup>86</sup> The Duke voted against it, in line with the majority of Scottish feeling at the time.<sup>87</sup> Norman highlights three main objections to the permanent endowment of Maynooth which varied from 'crude hatred of Catholicism' to 'distrust of Catholicism on historical' grounds.<sup>88</sup>

The Catholic population of Scotland increased during the 1840s, mainly due to the influx of refugees from the Irish Famine: by 1841 there were 126,000 people of Irish birth living in Scotland, or 4.8% of the population, two-thirds of which were Roman Catholic.<sup>89</sup> Accusations were soon flying that an increase in disorder and violence in the west of Scotland was down to the new arrivals.<sup>90</sup> To what extent this influenced the Duke's opposition to Catholicism is unclear but there was every chance that this was a factor. Devine and Rosie have highlighted that 'the Catholic Irish were stereotyped in the strongest possible terms' as being 'alien in religion, speech and culture and politics.'<sup>91</sup> Reiterating the notion of disturbance and violence caused by Irish Catholics settling in Scotland, 'they were made the scapegoats for every conceivable social evil' a factor that may have influenced the Duke, as it did so many others.

More directly relevant to the Duke was the influx of Irish navvies who came to work on the railways booming in the 1840s, including those financed by and crossing the Buccleuch estates. For instance, on the Hawick line of the North British Railway, one third of the navvies were Irish, equal to the number of Scots on the Caledonian line.<sup>92</sup> The increasing number of Irish workers taking up employment on the Buccleuch estates was a major

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<sup>86</sup> G.I.T. Machin, 'The Maynooth Grant, the Dissenters and Disestablishment, 1845-1847', *The English Historical Review*, 82(322), 1967, p. 61.

<sup>87</sup> Gilbert A. Cahill, 'The Protestant Association and the Anti-Maynooth Agitation of 1845', *The Catholic Historical Review*, 43(3), 1957, pp. 273-308, p. 273; Muirhead, 'Catholic Emancipation', *The Innes Review*, 24(1), 1973, p. 41.

<sup>88</sup> E.R. Norman, 'The Maynooth Question of 1845', *Irish Historical Studies*, 15(60), 1967, pp. 416 & 417.

<sup>89</sup> Mitchell, 'Anti-Catholicism' in Gheeraert-Graffeuille, Vaughan (eds.), *Anti-Catholicism*, p. 219.

<sup>90</sup> Devine and Rosie, 'The Rise and Fall of Anti-Catholicism in Scotland' in Gheeraert-Graffeuille, Vaughan (eds.), *Anti-Catholicism*, p. 276; Walter Ralls, 'The Papal Aggression of 1850: A Study in Victorian Anti-Catholicism', *Church History*, 43(2), 1974.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> *Ibid.*

contributory factor to the Duke's changing perception of Catholics to something more tolerant. It will have presented a case that they were a useful section of society in assisting in his vision of a diversified estate portfolio away from agriculture towards one of industrialisation while at the same time disproving the connections they had with the worst aspects of industrialisation they had become associated with. The Duke was keen to ensure traditional relations on his estates were maintained; however, he acknowledged that with increasing demands for industrial growth, he had to accept a new and growing labour force. There were practical concerns also: incomers looking for work and housing put increased pressure upon the Duke to provide, and put the local poor in 'direct economic competition with this new labour force.'<sup>93</sup> The 1840s were a difficult time for the estates, already undergoing a major re-configuration at great expense. Martin J. Mitchell has highlighted how Irish emigration, and subsequent anti-Catholic sentiment, did not stop the growth of the Catholic Church in Lowland Scotland and it becoming an 'important and permanent presence' by the beginning of the 1850s.<sup>94</sup> The Catholic Church became a crucial part of the community, particularly in working class areas linked to railway construction. This caused alarm bells to ring for the Duke in terms of pressure to provide for his tenantry and maintain a paternalistic image while an economic depression gripped the country in 1847-8.<sup>95</sup> As religion changed for the masses whom the Duke employed, it put more pressure upon him to accommodate these changes. However, this pressure forced him to be more accommodating in practice only but not overly due to his position allowing him to exercise a style of control only he could enable as society changed around him.

Catholicism was of course not unheard of in the aristocracy and there was a 'significant minority' who were, including neighbours such as the Marchioness of Lothian but also further afield, in the the Norfolk and Clifford families.<sup>96</sup> However, as pointed out by Karly Kehoe, landed families were not 'identifiably Roman in their religiosity' having 'preserved and protected the culture and traditions that best suited their needs in a society that was

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<sup>93</sup> Ralls, 'The Papal Aggression', *Church History*, 43(2), 1974, p. 244.

<sup>94</sup> Mitchell, 'Anti-Catholicism' in Gheeraert-Graffeuille, Vaughan (eds.), *Anti-Catholicism*, p. 234.

<sup>95</sup> Mallon, *Dissent After Disruption*, p. 121.

<sup>96</sup> Reynolds, *Aristocratic Women*, p. 73.

deeply hostile to the “old Church.”<sup>97</sup> Kehoe has highlighted that in the 1820s, a formative period for the Duke, Scotland offered considerable opposition to the campaign for Catholic emancipation, followed by a lull in the 1830s and a further resurgence in the 1840s and 1850s, which Reynolds has noted for being a period of ‘anti-popery crusades’ which raised considerable public comment and discussion about future conversions.<sup>98</sup> Duchess Charlotte Anne’s conversion to Roman Catholicism was a defining moment for the Duke and brought these wider concerns right into the heart of his household and marriage. Her conversion created considerable ill feeling and tension between the Duke and his wife. He acknowledged to the Duchess of Gloucester that he was ‘quite brokenhearted’, something which Duchess Charlotte Anne confronted him about.<sup>99</sup> Kehoe has pointed out that many of those ‘who converted to Catholicism in the nineteenth century had come from mainstream Scottish society’s upper echelons’ and crucially ‘possessed a natural confidence in their civic status’ which was certainly the case for Duchess Charlotte Anne, one of the most senior female aristocrats in Britain and Mistress of the Robes to Queen Victoria from 1841 to 1846.<sup>100</sup> Duchess Charlotte Anne converted in February 1856 at the chapel at Abbotsford near Bowhill after ten years of preparation.<sup>101</sup> Even some ten years after her conversion to Catholicism in 1866 she was still justifying herself to the Duke in the hope that they could ‘reconcile.’<sup>102</sup> The Duke’s blatant anti-Catholic stance obviously did not help the situation. In July 1868 the Duchess confronted him about his lack of willingness to meet the Catholic archbishop and stated that it would confirm him as being a ‘ultra or anti Catholic’ and ‘no one can accuse you of otherwise.’<sup>103</sup> The Duke’s intolerant stance towards Catholics in his employ also drove a wedge between them. In 1870 this flared up when the Duchess was

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<sup>97</sup> S. Karly Kehoe, ‘Unionism, Nationalism and the Scottish Catholic Periphery, 1850-1930’, *Britain and the World*, 4(1), 2011, p. 66.

<sup>98</sup> Reynolds, *Aristocratic Women*, p. 77.

<sup>99</sup> Buccleuch Living Heritage Trust Archive, Letter from Duchess Charlotte Anne to the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Buccleuch, 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1856.

<sup>100</sup> Kehoe, ‘Unionism, Nationalism and the Scottish Catholic Periphery’, *Britain and the World*, 4(1), 2011, p. 73.

<sup>101</sup> K.D. Reynolds states that Duchess Charlotte Anne converted to Roman Catholicism in 1860 having delayed her conversion by over ten years to ease the impact it would have had on her husband. Archival evidence though held within the Buccleuch family archive though shows that this was not the case and that she converted in February 1856. For more on Reynolds work and Duchess Charlotte Anne see: Reynolds, *Aristocratic Women*, p. 77; Boughton House Archive, Letter from Duchess Charlotte Anne to the Duke of Buccleuch, 8<sup>th</sup> February 1856; Boughton House Archive, Letter from Duchess Charlotte Anne to the Duke of Buccleuch, 23<sup>rd</sup> April 1856.

<sup>102</sup> Boughton House Archive, Letter from Duchess Charlotte Anne to the Duke of Buccleuch, 7<sup>th</sup> April 1866.

<sup>103</sup> Boughton House, Letter from Duchess Charlotte Anne to the Duke of Buccleuch, 3<sup>rd</sup> July 1868.

looking for a new maid; she had met one that she would 'fancy much' and she would be a 'great comfort.'<sup>104</sup> In justifying her desire to have this maid, who was Roman Catholic, the Duchess stated that she was 'no gossip and does not talk of religion.'<sup>105</sup> At this time there was already another Catholic in their employment who, the Duchess pointed out, did not cause any interference with the 'harmony in the house.'<sup>106</sup> There is no doubt that her conversion was a turning point in their marriage, and in 1871, she stated to the Duke that her conversion, even though one of her greatest blessings, was also one of her 'greatest sorrows for the pain it gave you at the time and since.'<sup>107</sup>

His vehement opposition to Catholicism was evident in decision-making on the Bowhill estate. In 1852 it was revealed to him that the keeper of the St Boswells Inn, a Mr Bergin, was a Roman Catholic. Bergin was applying to renew his tenancy but was refused by the Duke on the grounds of his religion. As the Duke explained, he 'would not turn out a man whom I found as a Tenant in possession for that reason, but I would not willingly & knowingly accept of a man who is a Roman Catholic as a Tenant.'<sup>108</sup> This decision was made regardless of Bergin being a good tenant, paying all his dues on time and not falling into arrears. The Duke clarified his position and drew on the wider anti-Catholic public feeling in society at the time as his justification for saying that 'a man being a Roman Catholic disqualifies him in any degree from being Tenant of the Inn, but upon public feeling & in the present state of feeling I consider it to be very injudicious that I should prefer a Roman Catholic as a Tenant.'<sup>109</sup> Acknowledging the potential reputational impact of his decision, he admitted that 'this decision of mine may be construed with persecution or bigotry.'<sup>110</sup> This explains why he also stipulated that Bergin 'should be answered verbally & all writing as much as possible avoided.'<sup>111</sup> Mr Bergin responded by trying to point out the extremism of the Duke's views and the reputational damage they could entail, stating that he would not consider it likely that many 'liberal Protestants will believe that your Grace could refuse me

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<sup>104</sup> Boughton House Archive, Letter from Duchess Charlotte Anne to the Duke of Buccleuch, 7<sup>th</sup> June 1870.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>107</sup> Boughton House Archive, Letter from Duchess Charlotte Anne to the Duke of Buccleuch, 15<sup>th</sup> August 1871.

<sup>108</sup> NRS, GD224/1126/49, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to Mr Ogilvie, 22<sup>nd</sup> April 1852.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>111</sup> NRS, GD224/1126/49, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 6<sup>th</sup> May 1852.

the occupation of the Inn solely because I am a Catholic.<sup>112</sup> Acknowledging the sensitivities, the Duke stated that the ‘decision of mine may be construed with persecution or bigotry .... But [I] must act as appears to me to be best.’<sup>113</sup> In subsequent correspondence the Duke did believe that he should be given ‘reasonable compensation for his trouble & expences [sic] already incurred.’<sup>114</sup> He felt ‘£50 is too little, that £500 is too much, & should have supposed that £100 was sufficient to cover all loss he could in reality sustain.’<sup>115</sup> The final sum for compensation given is not known. It is all the more ironic when the Duke also said that he had ‘no doubt that his experience would have enabled him to make a good Landlord of the Inn.’<sup>116</sup> It is difficult to infer otherwise that the reason behind the Duke’s decision was “anti-popery” expressed at a fever pitch. Ogilvie was informed that Bergin wanted to ‘have hold of the Duke’s views about his religion in writing’ however, this ‘ought to be avoided’ as it could be used ‘improper[ly].’<sup>117</sup> This anger and intolerance softened over time, and his paternalistic approach gradually expanded to dissenting communities, including Catholics. By 1860, he was prepared to support school building for Catholics, although very much on his terms. In Hawick, he supported a Catholic school on condition the ‘whole of that establishment [was] in one place’ rather than ‘in separate parts of the town,’ likely to ‘contain’ the Catholic influence in the town.<sup>118</sup> The contract further stipulated that ‘the ground shall be used as a School & for no other purpose.’<sup>119</sup>

What made him change his position with regards to Catholics? There is no definitive explanation, but it was likely a combination of his wife’s conversion and the fact that his fears of wider social unrest and agitation did not materialise after the 1840s. He never shook off his decided anti-Catholic prejudices fully, at least in part because of his strong support for the Church of Scotland and its role in social and moral welfare.<sup>120</sup> Mallon highlights how that

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<sup>112</sup> NRS, GD224/1126/49, Letter to the Duke of Buccleuch from Mr John Bergin, 21<sup>st</sup> May 1852.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to Mr William Ogilvie, 30<sup>th</sup> April 1852.

<sup>115</sup> NRS, GD224/1126/49, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1852.

<sup>116</sup> NRS, GD224/1126/49, Letter from the Duke of Buccleuch to William Ogilvie, 6<sup>th</sup> May 1852.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid, Letter from Thomas Stewart to Mr William Ogilvie, 13<sup>th</sup> May 1852.

<sup>118</sup> Bowhill House Archive, Bundle 48, Letter to Mr William Ogilvie from the Duke of Buccleuch, 25<sup>th</sup> September 1860.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Devine and Rosie, ‘The Rise and Fall of Anti-Catholicism in Scotland’, in Gheeraert-Graffeuille, Vaughan (eds.), *Anti-Catholicism*, p. 275.

rather than any sole reason there was various factors at play, largely all stemming from the fact that anti-Catholic feeling enabled a way for all Scottish Presbyterians to come together in the aftermath of Catholic emancipation and uncertainty after the Disruption.<sup>121</sup> Both of these the Duke was vehemently opposed to, while living in a society that was experiencing increased levels of Irish immigration, generating a further contributory factor to the resurgence of anti-Catholic feeling that came to dominate life in Scotland in the 1840s and 1850s.<sup>122</sup> As has been shown by James Hunter, the threat of the Free church was primarily that of the unknown, concerns about the breakdown of the status quo all led to his anxiety around a shifting religious landscape, which seemed to be rejecting his traditional controls.<sup>123</sup> Once the Free Church had established itself and had not turned into the threat he feared, as with his attitude to Catholics, realised that he was able to work with them in a manner that suited him, helped along by constant reminders from his wife that they should be grateful for their privileged position: 'we who expect so much from our fellow creatures for kindness we do to them, are so forgetful of the showers of Blessings we receive.'<sup>124</sup>

#### 5.4: Conclusion

The Disruption of 1843 and the emergence of the Free Church frightened the Duke, as it removed a critical element of social control via religious patronage. His refusal to grant sites in several parishes across his Scottish estates brought considerable negative attention in the national press and parliament, forcing him to defend his decisions publicly. This essentially came down to his fears around radicals and 'strangers' holding positions of political and social influence on his estates, diluting his own control.

His opposition to the Free Church did slowly abate over time as his fears of unrest, unruly tenants and equally unruly visitors to the estates did not materialise. Slowly, the Duke relented and gave permission for further sites for the Free Church, moving back to paternalistic and more tolerant ways. Iain Hutchison has argued that within a generation 'the great expectation of the Free Church was irretrievably punctured' and this soothed the

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<sup>121</sup> Ibid, p. 116.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> Hunter, *The Making of the Crofting Community*, p. 105.

<sup>124</sup> Boughton House Archive, Duchess Charlotte Anne to the Duke of Buccleuch, 13<sup>th</sup> August 1869.

Duke's – and other landlord's - nervousness and animosity.<sup>125</sup> In addition, by 1880, four years prior to the death of the Duke, the Church of Scotland had undergone a revival to such an extent that its membership exceeded the total of the United Presbyterian Church and the Free Church and was also attracting a new younger generation, especially in the Lowlands where the Duke still reigned supreme.<sup>126</sup> This was a remarkable turnaround from 1851 where just over 32 per cent of churchgoers on census Sunday were part of the Church of Scotland and another 32 per cent attending the Free Church.<sup>127</sup>

Again, his opposition to Catholics, like the Free Church was down to fear. Fear of unrest, fear of a 'foreign' religion and fear of increased pressures upon him to provide both employment and housing alongside new religious buildings. There was a long history of anti-Catholicism not just in Scotland but across the whole of Britain and the Duke was certainly also deeply influenced by this. Unlike the Free Church, Catholicism came closer to home with his own wife converting in 1856. This personal experience eventually altered the approach taken by the Duke to practising Roman Catholics on his estates. His attitude mellowed but only so far. He eventually began to grant land to the Free Church and Catholic Church, strictly on his terms in regard to size, purpose and location. In this way he was able to maintain control over activities on his estates. His changing labour needs also meant that he had to be accommodating when newcomers of different denominations came onto his estates, as they brought benefits in terms of increased and cheap labour for his industrial operations.

The position of the Church of Scotland allowed the Duke to maintain minimal external influence in the running of his affairs on the Scottish estates allowing him to champion his own style of paternalistic action especially.<sup>128</sup> Rowan Strong concludes that, despite the challenges, the landed classes ruled supreme in rural Lowland Scotland with a central element of this power their religious patronage, enabling various forms of control over those

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<sup>125</sup> Hutchison, 'The Presbyterian Churches' in *Industry, Reform and Empire: Scotland, 1790-1880*, p. 137.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>127</sup> Ryan Mallon, 'The Scottish Presbyterian Defence of British Protestantism: The Scottish Reformation Society and the "Papal Aggression", 1850-52', *Journal of Religious History*, 46(1), 2022, p. 101.

<sup>128</sup> Devine and Rosie, 'The Rise and Fall of Anti-Catholicism in Scotland', in Gheeraert-Graffeuille, Vaughan (eds.), *Anti-Catholicism*, p. 275.

who lived on their lands coupled with paternalism.<sup>129</sup> The prospect of this aspect of control being challenged alarmed the Duke and his response was fairly extreme defensiveness and hostility. This resistance, however, did recede, as it became apparent that the threat would not be existential.<sup>130</sup> This allowed the Duke to realise that he could work with them but in a form of partnership which suited his style of paternalism on his estates in Scotland.

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<sup>129</sup> Rowan Strong, 'Aristocratic Episcopalianism' in *Episcopalianism in Nineteenth Century Scotland*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 266.

<sup>130</sup> Hutchison, 'The Presbyterian Churches' in *Industry, Reform and Empire: Scotland, 1790-1880*, p. 137.

## **Conclusion**

The 5th Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry was one of Scotland's richest and most influential Victorian landed aristocrats.<sup>1013</sup> Taking a largely agricultural landholding and transforming it into a diversified and future proofed portfolio of mixed assets, including harbour construction, coal and lead mining and railways, the Duke ensured his estate's and family's viability for decades to come. How the Duke and his managers and advisers navigated the complexities and risks – financial, political and social – of this process has been the key focus of this thesis. These complexities included how the industrial operations of the Buccleuch estates developed, the subsequent impact this had on their tenantry, workforce and how it impacted the paternalistic approach of one of Britain's grandest aristocrats. By putting the industrial operations into the wider context of the estate's operations overall, this thesis has shown that the Duke was driven largely by long-term economic and financial planning but was significantly influenced by considerations of his reputation. His reputation was a constant throughout his lifetime particularly as a paternalist but also as a landlord who saw it as his duty to ensure the estates were run properly to provide their longevity. This mindfulness of reputation underpinned the day-to-day decisions taken impacting the workforce, tenants and wider communities living on and near the Buccleuch estates. However, there were limits to his mindfulness of reputation: progressive movements such as trade unionism were not tolerated. The emergence of both adherents to and the institutions of the Free Church and Roman Catholicism on his estates are examples of where his personal antagonism outweighed the reputational danger of his need to attempt to limit the influence of these groups in society. This thesis has illustrated that the industrial operations of the Buccleuch estates in Scotland developed opportunistically. With the decline of neighbouring Leith harbour, the Duke was able to capitalise on a gap in the market through the creation of Granton harbour, linking this with the modernisation, expansion and development of the Buccleuch mining operations and railways. These industrial developments had a major impact on those who worked on and for the Buccleuch estates, with the Duke taking on an increased paternalistic role, expanding his approach

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<sup>1013</sup> David Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*, (London: Yale University Press, 1990), p. 711.

from his traditional sphere of agricultural tenantry and labourers to the new industrial labour forces on his estates. His paternalism included sick funds provision, housing and mandatory education. Underpinning all of these actions (and the associated investment) was a driving concern for family and estate reputation.

This thesis has made a number of additions to the existing historiographies of the aristocracy and their changing roles in the nineteenth century, as well as Scotland's wider industrial, welfare, political and religious histories.<sup>1014</sup> The much more detailed understanding of the financial underpinnings and evolution of the Buccleuch estates has allowed this thesis to contribute to the wider historiography of industrial development, financing and leadership in one of the national cockpits of the Industrial Revolution: the Scottish Lowlands. The creation of Granton Harbour was the epitome of the industrial transformation that took place on the Buccleuch estates in the nineteenth century.<sup>1015</sup> Only a handful of aristocratic landlords had pockets deep enough and a reputation secure enough to raise the credit for developments on this scale.<sup>1016</sup> However, for all the grandeur that came with constructing a strategic new harbour in Scotland's capital, it also came at great cost. As this thesis has unpicked, the high capital costs required for Granton, as well as the modernisation and expansion of mining operations, required several hundreds of thousands of pounds, nearly all supplied by the Royal Bank of Scotland in one decade, the 1840s. As Deputy-Governor and then Governor of the Bank, the Duke was in an advantageous position to access credit and he leveraged that advantage to its maximum in order to orchestrate a transformational economic revolution on his estates.

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<sup>1014</sup> Eric Richards, *Leviathan of Wealth, The Sutherland Fortune in the Industrial Revolution*, (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973); Iain Hutchison, *Industry, Reform and Empire, Scotland, 1790-1880*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2020); Graham Mee, *Aristocratic Enterprise: the Fitzwilliam industrial undertakings, 1795-1857*, (Glasgow: Blackie, 1975); John Davies, *Cardiff and the Marquesses of Bute*, (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2011).

<sup>1015</sup> J.H. Hannay-Thompson, *History and Development of the Harbour of Granton*. (Edinburgh: Waterstons & Sons Ltd, 1937).

<sup>1016</sup> The Duke of Sutherland with his creation of the railways having previously invested in canals being the first, the Marquess of Bute and his creation of Cardiff Docks and finally, the Dukes of Devonshire and their major work in Barrow-in-Furness. Richards, *The Leviathan of Wealth*; Davies, *Cardiff and the Marquesses of Bute*.

This transformation however, required skilful management. Without the Duke's Edinburgh solicitor, Mr Gibson, deftly managing the ducal and estate finances across several critical junctures, the outcomes might have been far less advantageous. The main risk was that the debt burden would overwhelm the Duke's ability to pay back either capital or interest, or that the Royal Bank would lose confidence and start to foreclose. Often frustrated with incomplete remittances from the Scottish estates, Gibson applied pressure to ensure that the minimum levels required were met and that arrangements with regards to repayment of the debt to the Royal Bank were carried out on terms that kept the creditors content but also meant the estates could still meet their needs. Gibson was not only influential in operational matters, ensuring the financial viability of the estates and wider Buccleuch industrial empire but also in strategic terms.

This expertise was very much required, as the Duke did not develop any kind of detailed strategy during this key period of industrial transformation on the estates, other than simple opportunism. This applied to the Duke's approach to the different portfolios: at Granton, he was content to leave Gibson in charge, just signing off the big decisions. In contrast, when it came to modernising and expanding the coal and lead mining operations on the estates the Duke was very much personally in charge, although ably assisted by the Dalkeith colliery manager, James Wright. Wright became the strategic lead on the mining operations, sent to Canonbie and Sanquhar to report on strategy and viability. While the Duke welcomed expert counsel, he would also take matters into his own hands when required, as illustrated by his approach to railway expansion across the Scottish Borders. The opportunities presented by the new railways appeared at a highly opportune time in the mid-1840s, and the Duke was able to maximise the sale of lands to railway promoters to leverage cash just when he was most in need of it. He took this on personally, as his name lent weight to the negotiations and secured a more favourable outcome than if he had left it in the hands of his chamberlains. In almost every other aspect of the management of the three Scottish estates, the chamberlains played the leading role. They were responsible for multiple aspects of the industrial endeavours located on their estates as well as the wider social and welfare conditions of the tenantry, workforces and wider population. The chamberlains were the eyes and ears of the Duke, critical in ensuring adequate levels of support were provided for those affected by disasters such as the potato blight or cholera but also chronic structural

issues such as housing, health and parochial relief. The Duke's approach to strategy and overall management worked. It enabled each manager in their own respective industry enough independence, but it gave the Duke enough involvement to ensure that his name and position was not being abused. It created a culture that reminded the individuals that the Duke did have the final say but that he trusted their judgement. This culture ensured that the industrial developments, but also wider Buccleuch estates operated not only during the Duke's life but future generations at peak performance ensuring their survival during future years.

These areas overlapped into the Duke's wider belief in paternalism, an idea to which he was dedicated, although on his own terms and strongly informed by concerns about maintaining his reputation. This created a highly personalised style of paternalism which was unique to him where tenants and others applied directly to him and he in turn dealt directly with their request, creating a personal (if highly unequal) relationship between the Duke and the petitioner. This style of paternalism allowed the Duke to ensure that he controlled the terms on which his paternalistic approval (or disapproval) was bestowed. Constructing a paternalistic reputation took considerable time, while it could be dismantled very rapidly. During the Duke's lifetime, the government became increasingly centralised and interventionist in areas that landed elites had traditionally dominated: he regarded this as economically wasteful and ideologically wrong. During his lifetime he attempted to maintain control for as long as possible and work alongside the growing apparatus of the state, mainly through the personal management of petitions and requests from his tenants and the wider communities living on his estates. In this way, he was able to exert both financial and social controls well into the later nineteenth century. However, even though the 1840s were the crunch decade for industrial investment and growth, as well as political and religious turbulence and a challenging economic landscape, the Duke never shied away from providing a constant level of support to his tenantry, seeing that as the baseline of a paternalistic landowner. This consistency was rooted in the Duke's lifelong belief that he could look after his tenants better than an increasingly centralised state could, thus creating a style and regime of paternalism that was largely unique to him.

There were limits to the paternalism espoused by the Duke, largely framed by his own preferences and tolerances, particularly when it came to matters of religion. Much has been examined in terms of Scotland's religious history particularly in the Highlands but very little has been examined with regards to the Free Church and why landed proprietors were opposed to them.<sup>1017</sup> Wider historiography often charts the emergence of the Free Church and the rise of Catholicism in Scotland but not the responses of individuals who had the power to refuse sites.<sup>1018</sup> This thesis has charted how one of the most powerful landed aristocrats did this and his reasoning for doing so was fear. It shows that this fear did abate adding a new perspective on this turbulent time in Scotland's religious history. The Disruption and the resultant creation of the Free Church in 1843 pushed the tolerance of the Duke well beyond its limits. He refused requests for sites of worship and individual petitions for assistance from Free Church members across his estates. These refusals severely damaged the Duke's public image as a paternalist and drew the scorn and criticism of many in the Houses of Parliament and in the wider newspaper and pamphlet press and public opinion. The driver of his refusal to engage with the new church was ultimately fear of this potentially radical and subversive institution. Overall, fear of change was a major element of the Duke's life. It was applied also to the Catholic Church, which came even closer to home with the conversion of Duchess Charlotte Anne in 1856. Despite this, the Duke continued to behave prejudicially to Catholic tenants and employees, as Chapter Five demonstrated. As the years passed and he observed that the potentially anti-landlord thrust of both institutions was limited, his fears abated, and his tolerance slowly increased. To what extent this fear impacted his reputation is questionable with it ultimately being short term and limited to the 1840s. It did not weaken his overall reputation with his tenantry and surrounding communities who observed closely his refusal of sites and wider prejudice. His refusal of change religiously had little impact on his reputation even though the criticism of his actions was considerable. This refusal of sites did very little to impact his reputation long term however, opponents of the Duke used it in the future to little success.

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<sup>1017</sup> Rowan Strong, *Episcopalianism in Nineteenth-Century Scotland*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

<sup>1018</sup> Ryan Mallon, *Dissent After Disruption*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2021); S. Karly Kehoe, *Creating a Scottish Church, Catholicism, gender and ethnicity in nineteenth-century Scotland*, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2010); Sir T.M. Devine and Michael Rosie, *The Rise and Fall of Anti-Catholicism in Scotland* in C. Gheeraert-Graffeulle, G. Vaughan (eds.), *Anti-Catholicism in Britain and Ireland, 1600-2000 Practices, Representations and Ideas*, (Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).

This thesis also makes a contribution to the political history of one of the Conservative Party's most influential, but understudied figures during the Victorian period and contributes to the historiography of Scottish politics in the post-1832 landscape.<sup>1019</sup> The Duke was an ardent and loyal Conservative, and served at the heart of Peel's second government, effectively representing the landed interest there. This was the highest the Duke reached politically in national terms, and it brought with it immense pressures, especially around the repeal of the Corn Laws. The Duke ultimately had the deciding vote and chose loyalty to Peel over loyalty to his class interests, citing his duty to Queen and country. This decision saw the end of the Duke's frontline political career and a turn to the management of local and regional politics in Scotland. This had begun with his exploitation of the 1832 Reform Act (Scotland) and creation of fictitious voters, a corrupt practice that he gained notoriety for but refused to give up, despite the widespread criticism it engendered. As the Duke moved away from frontline politics, he instead championed causes close to his heart such as education and establishing Conservative supporting newspapers in Edinburgh and Glasgow. To what extent his influence had any measurable impact on the performance of the party at elections in Scotland is questionable, but it was certainly a key element of what he perceived to be his duty as a landed aristocrat, incorporating strategic leadership and of course, much of the funds required.

Overall, this thesis has demonstrated that the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Buccleuch fundamentally an opportunist who cultivated those opportunities not only for his own gain but for a much longer-term benefit to his estates and his family's coffers. Surrounded by a comprehensive and competent estate and industrial management structure, the Duke was able to take advantage of opportunities that presented themselves to diversify and develop his estates to secure them successfully for his family's future and their future generations. Although he initially resisted social changes, he was willing to accept that by embracing change and being tolerant to a reasonable extent meant his position would be more secure in the long run.<sup>1020</sup>

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<sup>1019</sup> Gary D. Hutchison, 'An Illegal Union of lawyers, and writers, and political Baronets': The Conservative Party and Scottish governance, 1832-1868', in *Union and disunion in the nineteenth century*, (Abingdon: Routledge, 2019).; I.G.C. Hutchison, *A Political History of Scotland, 1832 – 1924*, (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers Ltd, 1986).

<sup>1020</sup> This flexible and opportunistic approach echoes the point made by David Cannadine as one of the major ways in which the British aristocracy survived in comparison to those in Europe: Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy*, pp. 697-709.

The industrial changes on the estates allowed him an opportunity to develop his own style of paternalism, with a carefully choreographed image as a moderniser and improver, committed to housing and sick fund provision for his new workers. He ensured that his tenantry remained at the heart of his decision making and led a resurgence of paternalism on his estates. Of course, this had to be on his own terms, and he refused to tolerate the intervention of other parties, be they state, church or trade union. After he retreated from frontline politics, he applied this approach – both philosophical and managerial – to the management of local politics and patronage, never shying away from corrupt methods to do so. It is this combination of paternalistic methods applied to new industries, societal questions and problems, and of course the shaping of what an old aristocracy could and should be leading on in newly industrialising and urbanising Britain, that makes an analysis of the Duke of Buccleuch a valuable addition to our understandings of nineteenth century Scotland and Britain overall.

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### **A. The Buccleuch Estate Papers**

The Buccleuch Estate Papers consist of several main deposits. The main one is within the National Records of Scotland, under GD224. The remaining archival materials are held at the various Buccleuch properties consisting of Bowhill House, Drumlanrig Castle and Boughton House.

#### **National Records of Scotland**

Buccleuch Estate Papers, GD224. This contains a variety of material relative to the lifetime of the Duke of Buccleuch. This was originally material held at the Buccleuch family properties as mentioned above.

### **B. Estate and Personal Papers**

#### **Bowhill House**

Papers of the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Buccleuch and estate management.

#### **Drumlanrig Castle**

Papers of the 5<sup>th</sup> Duke of Buccleuch and estate management.

#### **Boughton House**

Papers of the 5<sup>th</sup> Duchess of Buccleuch.

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