SCOTLAND AND RUSSIA: A BOUNDLESS BOND

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A notion has been expressed (and I have heard it more than once) that Russo-Scottish links are a rather narrow, restricted subject. "Thay haif said, quhat say thay, let thame say".[1] A negative or dismissive approach can always be adopted, and there is little doubt that any topic has its limitations, as does anyone who attempts to study it. Historians readily sacrifice their entire lives to scrutinize a solitary event, or the career of a single person, or even some facet of it. However, after exploring a theme for years, and seeing no end to it, one is challenged to counter such accusations in a positive way.

Since Russo-Scottish connections have to do with individuals, families and relatively small groups of people, I am willing to concede that this is a kind of "chamber history" as compared to "symphonic" developments and global phenomena. But what if we deal, on the one hand, with natives of arguably the greatest of the world's smaller countries in terms of cultural achievement (at least according to Englishmen like Winston Churchill or Horace Walpole[2])? What if, on the other hand, their destination was the most immense and powerful empire history has known, and their field of action was her whole expanse from Poland to Alaska, from the Arctic to the Chinese frontiers? What if the unbroken relationship between the two spans over five centuries from the Middle Ages to the present? And because instantaneous travels across the continent were impossible until recently, there were often several stages along the way via other countries resulting in an international network of Scottish settlements or colonies. Surely, there must be some room for manoeuvre in this field.

Our sources on both sides are as abundant as they are varied, especially from the seventeenth century onwards, so that a researcher must literally, as one witty writer[3] put it, "climb paper mountains". Every sizeable collection of documents in Britain or Russia would yield some evidence on the matter. In St. Petersburg alone the Historical Archive contains dozens of files on Russian noble families of Scottish origin with their petitions, career records, pedigrees, coats of arms etc.; the Naval Archive is a wealth of information on seafaring Scots who joined the Imperial Russian Fleet, besides the priceless correspondence of the Greig family, while the Artillery Museum boasts the official and private letters of Count James Daniel Bruce (1669-1735), Master of the Ordnance under Peter the Great. Apart from random or isolated references of the early period, we possess, for instance, the muster rolls of the Tsar's "regiments of foreign order" recruited in Western Europe by Colonel Alexander Leslie in 1631-2.[4] The rolls swarm with his namesakes and compatriots, Leslies, Robertsons, Gordons, Carmichaels and Crawfords.

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[1] Words uttered by George Keith, Earl Marischal of Scotland, to those who opposed the foundation of his college in Aberdeen in 1593.

[2] "[Scots are] the most accomplished nation in Europe; the nation to which, if any country is endowed with a superior partition of sense, I should be inclined to give the preference". H. Walpole, *Correspondence*, XV, London and Yale, 1952, p. 41.

[3] Prince Antiokh Kantemir (1708-1744).

[4] Russian State Archive of Ancient Acts (RGADA), Moscow, Fond 210, opis' 1, No. 78.

In many sources, as in life itself, the same clannish principle is immediately apparent: wherever you meet a Scotsman, look out for more.

A handsome library can be amassed with volumes written by Scots about their Russian experience. Although sometimes underrated, long out of print, or even unpublished properly, their diaries, reminiscences and autobiographies make fascinating reading and have a lot to say on almost any feature of Russian life and history. My catalogue of such titles (non-fiction only) is nearing a hundred, from David Gilbert's brief description of the Time of Troubles in Muscovy to twentieth-century impressions of Robert Bruce Lockhart, William Gallacher and Thomas Johnston.

Historians in both Britain and Russia have produced a considerable corpus of works which bear, directly or indirectly, on Russo-Scottish links.[5] Paul Dukes, A.G. Cross and Harvey Pitcher, in particular, have enriched and widened our perception of the subject. On the Russian side relevant studies are less systematic and more biographical. N.V. Charykov's monumental book on Paul Menzies[6] stands out, while the towering figures of General Patrick Gordon, Admiral Samuel Greig, Prince Mikhail Barclay de Tolly, Charles Cameron the architect and Mikhail Lermontov the poet (along with his Fife forebears) have all received the attention they deserve. General accounts are also helpful. The index to the latest edition of Sergey Solovyev's classic "History of Russia from the Ancient Times"[7] mentions scores of Scottish names.

For all that, A.F. Steuart's "Scottish Influences in Russian History" of 1913 remains the one and only endeavour to treat the theme as a whole. His book is still useful if somewhat superficial; it rarely resorts to Russian sources and comes to a close at the early nineteenth century, probably the richest in this respect. A fresh survey, and a much fuller one, is badly needed, although it will be a formidable undertaking given the scope of the matter in time and space.

My own efforts toward a reappraisal led to the publication of several articles and a concise list of those involved in Russo-Scottish contacts from the Middle Ages to the revolution of 1917.[8] The approach taken there as a starting point for further studies was to identify the individuals and "clans" who directly contributed to our relations over the ages through their actual presence on, or service for, the other side. I have consciously left out those who, like Sir Walter Scott or Dostoevsky, exerted only a spiritual influence (however strong) on respective cultures, for consideration of such cases would expand the subject beyond reach.

People on my list can be divided into the following groups: 1) Scots who accepted Russian citizenship and settled in the country for good during one or more generations; 2) Scots on temporary service in Russia for periods between several weeks and several decades; 3) British subjects from north of the border who were active in Russia in some specific role (merchants, travellers, diplomats, preachers, engineers etc.); 4) persons of

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[5] See *The Caledonian Phalanx: Scots in Russia*. Edinburgh, 1987, and the bibliography there.

[6] N.V. Charykov. *Posol'stvo v Rim i sluzhba v Moskve Pavla Meneziya*. St. Petersburg, 1906. His protagonist apart, the author gives many details on other Scots in seventeenth-century Muscovy and shows that Tsar Peter's Life Guard regiments were largely a Scottish invention.

[7] S.M. Solovyev. *Sochineniya*. Kniga XV. Moscow, 1995, pp. 298-556.

[8] D. Fedosov. *The Caledonian Connection. Scotland-Russia Ties, Middle Ages to Early Twentieth Century*. Aberdeen, 1996.

Scots birth or descent employed by third countries on missions to Russia (as Danish envoy to Muscovy Peter Davidson *"de Scotia Aberdonensis"*, or Spain's first ambassador to St. Petersburg, who was a Stuart and a Jacobite). It was not a one-way street, and we must not forget Russian visitors to Scotland, mostly students, tourists and seamen. More of them have pursued the road to the isles than could be expected, including members of the Romanov dynasty and some leading characters of the Empire[9], but the flow in the opposite direction was by far the mightier.

My preliminary biographical study comprises nearly four hundred Scottish surnames. I have found about fifty more after it appeared, and no doubt the list will grow longer. The majority of the entries conceal more than one person, often several families or branches of many generations. The total figure of a few thousand people spread over four centuries is perhaps modest when set against the great migrations of history or, say, the number of German settlers in the Russian Empire (though, of course, Germans did not form a single nation until the latter nineteenth century). Nevertheless, given the difficulties of getting into Russia, and the size of Scotland with her population of just over a million at the time of the Union of 1707, the strength of the Scottish contingent in the Tsar's dominions is impressive. Russia has not been the only, the first nor the main goal for vagrant Scots, but for sheer vastness and potential she was unsurpassed as the land of opportunity. She sheltered and fostered many a braw lad, and not a few of them became the most famous men of the diaspora.

The names most frequently met with in Scotland, especially in the eastern counties, i.e. Hamilton, Gordon, Leslie, Scott, Stewart, Ramsay, Kerr (or Carr), were also among the most common in the adopted country. Every Scottish neuk sent its natives to Russia, and Highlanders were well represented from early on[10], but not surprisingly the bulk of the migrants came from the east which has always been oriented toward the busy Baltic route.

The journey did not necessarily follow a straight line, and in many cases the range of activity is incredible. Gabriel Elphinstone, "a valiant captaine", after a spell in Denmark and Sweden went on an expedition in search of the north-eastern passage to China, was captured by Tatars in Siberia and escaped to Moscow around 1581-5.[11] One soldier of fortune ended up at the Tsar's court in 1679 after spending twenty two years in Sweden, Spain, Poland, Bavaria and Austria.[12] Others arrived via Portugal, Venice, the Ottoman Empire, or (later) the Far East. A significant number of Scots settlers, firmly established in the Baltic region, swore allegiance to the Russian crown as Livonia, Finland and parts of Poland were gradually annexed to the Empire, and played a prominent role in the new administration, armed forces and trade.

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[9] Emperors Nicholas I and Nicholas II with their suites, Grand Duke Constantine, Princess Yekaterina Dashkova, the writers Alexander and Ivan Turgenev, Admiral Fiodor Lütke, anarchist revolutionary Prince Piotr Kropotkin, Secretary of State Alexander Polovtsov, philosopher and poet Vladimir Solovyev and architect Fiodor Shekhtel, to name a few.

[10] So far I have nearly 50 "Mac" surnames in Russia, some of which occur in the seventeenth century.

[11] *Russia at the Close of the Sixteenth Century. A Relacion or Memoriall Abstracted owt of Sir Jerom Horsey His Travells.* Ed. E.A. Bond. London, 1856, p. 225.

[12] "Count" David William Graham, alias Baron of Morphie. Charykov, *op. cit.,* pp. 578-84.

As regards their distribution on arrival, prior to the eighteenth century the natural focus was Moscow, where Westerners usually stayed in the so-called "Foreign Suburb". Since the reign of Ivan the Terrible Scots mercenaries were employed on campaigns all over the Tsardom, and Olearius encountered a lot of them in Nizhny Novgorod in the 1630s. With the foundation of St. Petersburg in 1703, and its rapid rise, the fame of Moscow was eclipsed. Direct passage by ship to the new capital took only a couple of weeks, and right down to the fall of autocracy the British community of St. Petersburg was the most numerous. In 1783 among the 422 parishioners of the city's British chapel (English, Irish, other Europeans, coloured servants etc.) over a hundred were certainly or probably Scots.[13] Next year the arrival of 140 builders with families, hired in Edinburgh by Charles Cameron, raised their presence to almost 50%, and in time it steadily increased. In 1865 Peter MacLaren, manager of Macpherson's Baltic Iron and Shipbuilding Works on Vasilyevsky Island, was delighted to discover "seventy Scots families living within a five minutes' walk" of his house![14] Moreover a substantial Scottish element abided in Moscow (the local British church was consecrated to St. Andrew), Kronshtadt, Archangel and Riga as well as in small Protestant missions[15] in the Caucasus, Crimea, Astrakhan, Orenburg and Selenginsk near lake Baikal. In the end very few districts of the Empire remained unfamiliar to the Scots.

The motives for leaving home were more or less alike. Patrick Gordon frankly explains them in his diary: "being unwilling, because of my dissenting in Religion, to go to the University in Scotland, I resolved, partly to dissolve the bonds of a youthfull affection, wherein I was entangled, by banishing my self from the object; partly to obtaine my liberty, which I fondly conceited to be restrained, by the carefull inspection of my loveing parents; but, most of all, my patrimony being but small, as being the yonger son of a yonger brother of a yonger house; I resolved, I say, to go to some forreigne countrey."[16] Personal, religious and financial reasons are given here, to which political ones must be added, certainly in Gordon's case, as he set out from Scotland shortly before she was swallowed by Cromwell's Commonwealth, and to his last breath clung to the Stuart cause.

Ancient Anglo-Scottish feuds inevitably told on the pace of Scottish emigration and sometimes flared up abroad, as when Alexander Leslie shot a fellow officer of the Tsar's service, the Englishman Sanderson, at the siege of Smolensk in 1633, "upon which Murder, the English in a rage drew into a Body to be revenged upon Leslie; the Scots likewise drew into a Body, but the General prevailed with both Parties to mind their Duty".[17] In the 1650s Scottish loyalists at the Court of Muscovy flourished under the

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[13] *Register of the British Factory Chapel* - Russian State Historical Archive (RGIA), St.Petersburg, F. 1689, op. 1, No. 1, ff. 60-60 v.

[14] F.L. MacLaren, "From Clyde to Neva", *The Scots Magazine*, N.S., XLIII, No. 4, 1945, pp. 249-54.

[15] In the first half of the nineteenth century. The village of Karass in the Caucasus became known as *Shotlandka*, or Little Scotland.

[16] *Diary of General Patrick Gordon of Auchleuchries* - Russian State Archive of Military History (RGVIA), Moscow, F. 846, op. 15, No. 1, f. 3 v. The full scholarly publication of this priceless source is now nearing completion in both the original text and Russian translation (Aberdeen and Moscow).

[17] P. Dukes, "The Leslie Family in the Swedish Period of the Thirty Years' War", *European Studies Review,* XII, 1982, pp. 409-24.

leadership of Generals Thomas Dalyell of the Binns and William Drummond, Lord Madderty, who were appointed Russian commanders by Tsar Alexey. Patriotic traditions were later upheld by a band of highly influential Russian Jacobites originally headed by Patrick Gordon, whose son James was wounded at Killiecrankie, and surviving into the 1740s with General James Keith and his brother George, the Earl Marischal, both of whom sought Russian citizenship - in vain because of Hanoverian intrigues.

While old hatred subsided, rivalry remained. In 1763 the uncle of a young mate deplored "the rage against Scotsmen" in the Royal Navy.[18] It was evidently not lack of talent or resolution that hindered his advancement; within months Samuel Greig swore an oath of loyalty to Russia as captain of the first rank, to become in due course the commander of her Baltic Fleet, and full admiral. In the latter eighteenth century Russo-Scottish contacts reached new heights, so that, according to the observation made in 1805 by an envious English engineer, "to come from the North side of the Tweed is the best recommendation a man can bring to this city [St. Petersburg], the Caledonian Phalanx being the strongest and most numerous, and moving always in the closest union".[19]

By that time, however, those who formed the Phalanx were roundly known as "*anglichane"*, i.e. Englishmen. Since the eighteenth century the "Greater England" syndrome led to the virtual disappearance of the "Celtic fringe" in the eyes of many, and this attitude still survives today not only in popular imagination, but in scholarly thought as well; even modern Russian editions persevere in styling Adam Smith an English economist and Sir Walter Scott an English writer. What of self-consciousness, then? Could it be that Russian (or, indeed, other) Scots simply neglected their own background and ancestry, or despaired of ever getting it across to ignorant foreigners? Some might have done so, but there is enough evidence to the contrary.

In 1688 the Lermontov brothers, although wholly russified and converted to Orthodoxy, drew up a genealogy of Learmonths of Dairsie in Fife, going back to the reign of King Malcolm III, victor of Macbeth, and submitted it to Muscovite authorities.[20] The Moscow-born James Daniel Bruce stocked his library with lives of Wallace and Mary Queen of Scots, interceded with the Tsar for captive Swedish officers named Bruce and Hamilton, and attracted his cousins from as far afield as Westphalia and Clackmannan to Russia.[21] During his audiences with Catherine the Great in 1779 the London-born architect Charles Cameron enchanted the Empress with stories of Scotland, and imprinted the device of his chief Lochiel on his bookcovers. Thomas Mackenzie (+1786), Rear Admiral of the Black Sea Fleet, sported a full Highland attire complete with broadsword and dirk at the time when it was banned in Britain.[22] In 1829 the St. Petersburg doctor Thomas Walker, native of Polmont, Stirlingshire, matriculated his coat of arms at the

[18] Russian State Naval Archive (RGAVMF), St.Petersburg, F. 8, op. 1, No. 54, f. 23 v.

[19] *The Caledonian Phalanx*, p. 74. I hope I can be forgiven for quoting this passage too often for it is a striking one.

[20] *Lermontovskaya Entsiklopediya*. Moscow, 1981, pp. 467-8.

[21] Archive of the Artillery Museum, St. Petersburg, F. 2, op. 1, No. 38, ff. 583, 586 & No. 39, ff. 173-173 v.; Scottish Record Office, Edinburgh, Airth Writs, GD 37/328-9; see also my article "The First Russian Bruces" in *The Scottish Soldier Abroad*, ed. G.G. Simpson, Edinburgh and Maryland, 1992, pp. 55-66.

[22] RGAVMF, F. 243, op. 1, No. 19, ff. 13 v.- 15 v. Mackenzie wore it in Sevastopol at the last ceilidh of his life.

Court of Lord Lyon in Edinburgh; it displayed a saltire on the shield and a "Scottish fir eradicate proper" as the crest.[23] In the 1890s Russian Leslies dedicated an Orthodox church on their country estate near Smolensk to St. Bartholomew because it was the name of the legendary progenitor of their clan. A Russian officer in World War I, whose mother was an Elliot, entertained a Scottish comrade in arms at the Eastern Front; the former spoke poor English, but the latter instantly recognized the "braid" accent inherited from his grandfather.[24] In these and other ways roots were treasured, despite the distance in miles or years.

Unlike many of my colleagues, past and present, I believe (regardless of current political implications) that Scoto-Russian contacts can be distinguished from Anglo-Russian. Not only because the Scots themselves *are* different from the English, as anyone having the slightest acquaintance with Britain in a historical or personal sense would realize, but for other reasons as well. To give one important distinction, at least until the mid-eighteenth century "Russian Scots" were overwhelmingly soldiers while Englishmen mostly engaged in trade of some sort. Secondly, it can be demonstrated that Scots more readily became Russian citizens and served *for,* rather than *in*, their adopted country. Whether their motives arose from habit, attachment, ambition, or something else, is another question, but the results are quite remarkable. There were about a dozen titled aristocratic families of Scottish descent in the Empire (Princes Barclay de Tolly, Counts Graham, Gordon, Bruce, Douglas, Fermor and Balmain, Barons Stuart, Rutherford and Sutherland, Baronet Wylie) against one English (Baron Dimsdale, who never took root in Russia). At a lower social level, among untitled gentry of British extraction, Scots also prevailed.[25]

Besides, the very essence of the relationship is distinctive. There were several chances for, or attempts at, establishing official links. In 1556 Osip Nepeya, first Muscovite envoy to Britain, after a shipwreck off Fraserburgh, spent over three months in Scotland and had talks with the Queen Regent; in 1601 the Russian and Scottish diplomatic representatives met in London[26]; later in the century Patrick Gordon, as *de facto* Stuart ambassador in Moscow, prevented Tsar Peter from acknowledging the outcome of "The Glorious Revolution" for a long while. In 1718 at the Russo-Swedish peace congress on Aland Islands the parties discussed the possibility of a mutual alliance, one of the aims of which could be the restoration of the Stuarts on their throne[27]; curiously, the Russian delegation was headed by James Bruce whose kinsmen in Clackmannan were ardent Jacobites. In the end the combination failed, and Scotland has departed from the European stage at the very time when Russia made her triumphant appearance.

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[23] *Lyon Register*, Court of the Lord Lyon, New Register House, Edinburgh, III, f. 69.

[24] I.T. Beliayev. *Zapiski russkogo izgnannika*. I am grateful for this reference to his descendant, the late Mrs. Irina V. Kuznetsova.

[25] This conclusion is based on my extensive research at RGIA. A huge amount of documents of the Imperial Russian Senate anent hereditary noble status is preserved there (Fond 1343).

[26] N.E. Evans, "The Meeting of the Russian and Scottish Ambassadors in London in 1601", *Slavonic and East European Review*, LV, 1977, pp. 516-28.

[27] *British Diplomatic Instructions*. London, 1922, I, pp. 82-9; S.A. Feygina. *Alandsky Kongress*. Moscow, 1959, p. 155.

But precisely because Russo-Scottish ties never quite attained official level, they seem to have been undamaged by chronic political hostility between London and St.Petersburg, except perhaps for the period of the Crimean War. And even then many Scottish names distinguished themselves on the losing side, while others languished in St. Petersburg or elsewhere and could hardly wait for a formal peace to resume and expand their enterprises, as did Murdoch Macpherson when he launched his giant Baltic Works at the mouth of the Neva in 1856. The dialogue went on between people and cultures, not states or governments, and can thus be called truly international, in the proper meaning of the word.

My next argument can be regarded as the most controversial, and I would have dreaded suspicions of prejudice on so elusive and delicate an issue, had it not been for the fact that my view is shared by a multitude of other people on both sides. Nor do I claim the discovery. The point is that a certain, nay, a deep affinity exists between the Scots and the Russians in terms of national character. I would even suggest that no other nation in Western Europe is so like us. Both peoples dwell in a Northern environment with a difficult climate, both are Christian sharing a common Patron Saint, both are polyethnic and culturally diverse, both had to wage fierce and protracted struggles for self-determination, both exerted an enormous influence over large areas of the globe, and both societies have a strong sense of kinship. What one writer describes as "the fiery imagination, incisive intellect, tough stoicism and gentle affection that are aspects of the Scottish character"[28] can be applied to the Russian nature too. Then there is the famous fighting spirit; experts would doubtless agree that few nations make better warriors than Scots and Russians. On the gastronomic plane both prefer simple peasant fare, good (and neat) grain spirits and plenty of sweets. Of course, these are not necessarily positive traits, for "the fiery imagination" can manifest itself as hopeless idealism, and tenacity as obstinacy, and there are a lot of differences as well. Scottish disposition is of a more active and restless kind, while a Russian normally shakes off his innate indolence when cornered - to perform miracles of valour and ingenuity.

Still, the similarity is there. When I asked Eugenie Fraser[29], a scion of a Russo-Scottish family, about it, she exclaimed, "Right you are! Scots *heuch* when they dance, just like us" (she considers herself Russian in the end). A more profound statement than it sounds, for it instantly evokes the air of unbridled revelry so typical of both cultures.

This closeness, which certainly requires a fuller examination, can account for the tremendous popularity of Ossian, Burns, Scott and Stevenson in Russia. It is also part of the answer why the Scots were drawn there in great numbers and, by and large, felt very much at home, despite all the obstacles, misconceptions and fits of xenophobia. Their own comments in this respect are numerous and eloquent, ranging from details on customs and costume ("The dress of the Russian women is exactly the same as that of the Highland women in Scotland: both have the short jacket, the striped petticoat, and the tartan plaid; and both too, in general, have a napkin rolled about their head"[30]) to wider, often very keen and moving, reflections. R. Bruce Lockhart, who was nearly shot by the

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[28] J. Derrick McClure. *Why Scots Matters*. The Saltire Society, 1988, p. 63.

[29] Author of *The House by the Dvina. A Russian Childhood,* Edinburgh, 1984.

[30] Andrew Swinton. *Travels in Norway, Denmark and Russia in the years 1788, 1789, 1790 and 1791*. London, 1792, p. 227.

Reds, probably spoke not just his own feelings when he confessed: "Russia has been the dominant influence in my life. Try as I will, I cannot escape from it... Even today she haunts me like an unfaithful mistress whom I cannot discard. The experience has affected my subsequent career, my character, and my attitude to life. It has given me confidence and fears, disgust and tolerance, an unrealised desire to forget, and a constantly recurring and at times almost uncontrollable longing to return. Even today my strongest feeling is affection for that country... and for its people, unrivalled in attractiveness as individuals and, in the mass, cruel beyond Western imagination... I do not lack entirely the canniness of the Scot, but I am still affected by the Russian passion for extremes to the point of sometimes accepting as a reproach my own adherence to the less exacting middle way".[31]

Russian visitors, in turn, are unanimous in their praise of Scottish warmth and hospitality, and the beauties of the country, that in places, as some thought, is not unlike the Russian landscape.[32] For Princess Dashkova, who lived in Edinburgh with her children in the 1770s and ventured out to the Highlands, in her own words, "it was the most tranquil and happy period that befell my lot in this world".[33] The Scottish impact abroad was also noticed. Alexander Turgenev wrote in 1836 that "Walter Scott's native country benefits the homeland of Karamzin and Derzhavin. Tatarization [*tatarshchina*] cannot long endure against this Scottish coal smoke; it will eat into her eyes, and they will clear".[34] Ironically, Turgenev, a refined man of letters with a perfect knowledge of the European cultural scene, sprang from ancient Tatar stock.

In the development of Russo-Scottish ties several phases can be singled out. The "Dark Ages" lasted as late as the sixteenth century, and vestiges of that period are barely perceptible. But the legends are haunting. No less a source than the Declaration of Arbroath opens with the assertion that the Scots originated from "Greater Scythia", i.e. the steppes of Southern Russia, or Ukraine. The very words *"Scythia"* and *"Scotia"* are strikingly close, which probably gave rise to the myth. The veneration of St. Andrew the Apostle traditionally passed from one to the other and was inherited by both the Kingdom of Scots and the Tsardom of Russia.

There are grounds to believe that the family of St. Margaret of Scotland spent some time of their exile at the court of Prince Yaroslav the Wise, the most powerful ruler of Ancient Rus. It has even been claimed that the future queen was born in Kiev, where her parents had wedded.[35] Margaret and her mother Agatha were given Greek names, very uncommon for eleventh-century Western Europe. At the same period a Celtic monastic community existed in Kiev, and, strangely enough, the earliest British reference to the Tatar devastation of the East is found in the chronicle of Melrose abbey under the year 1238.[36] Was the dreadful news carried to the brethren by some monk fleeing from Russian lands just before the infidel hordes laid them waste?

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[31] R. Bruce Lockhart. *My Europe*. London, 1952, pp. 3-4.

[32] Unpublished diary of Nikolay Fan-der-Flit (Van der Vliet), who toured Scotland in 1862 - Russian National Library, St. Petersburg, MSS Dept., F. 806, No. 8, ff. 12 v., 16-16 v.

[33] Princess E. Dashkova. *Zapiski, 1743-1810*. 1985, p. 99.

[34] *Literaturny Arkhiv*, I, 1938, p. 85.

[35] G. Ronay, *"The Other St. Margaret"*, History Today, No. 43, 1993. Cf. Geffrei Gaimar. *Lestorie des Engles*. Rolls Series, No. 91, vol. I, London, 1888, p. 194.

[36] *The Chronicle of Melrose*. Ed. A.O. and M.O. Anderson. London, 1936.

After a long hiatus, which coincided with the "Tataro-Mongol Yoke" over Russian principalities, came the Late Medieval (or Early Modern) revival. From the sixteenth to early eighteenth century the unified Tsardom of Muscovy emerged as a major Eurasian power. A hearty appetite for expansion and endless conflicts with neighbours brought military matters to the fore. Each successive Tsar increasingly relied on professional mercenary forces that in many respects proved superior to irregular local levies and *streltsy* part-timers. It was also the dominant feature in Scoto-Russian contacts at this stage. Already famed throughout Europe as *bonnie fechters*, Scots infantrymen had a promising start under Ivan the Terrible (1533-1584). Nearly a hundred of them, headed by captains Lingett and Elphinstone, showed how to handle firearms against the Crimean Tatars: "The Crim, not knowinge then the use of peece and pistolls, stroken dead of their horses with shott they sawe not, cried -'Awaye with those new divells that com with their thunderinge puffs!' ".[37]

From then on the Scottish presence in Muscovy, especially in the army, was a constant and growing factor. Boris Godunov and the False Dmitrys hired Scottish soldiers for their bodyguard, and Captain David Gilbert survived the chaos of the interregnum to tell his story. Innovation in armament, structure and tactics became the order of the day, and it is significant that Russia's first serious military reform was entrusted to the supervision of a Scot. Alexander Leslie's unparalleled recruitment drive of the early 1630s aimed at importing thousands of men, muskets and swords from the West. Even if he fell short of the intended goal, his efforts did bear fruit in the near future. Again, we find a heavy Scottish element among the recruits, notably the officers. In the spring of 1633 Captain James Forbes procured a letter from King Charles I permitting him to enlist in Scotland on Leslie's behalf 200 men for the Tsar's employ.[38] In recognition of his role, Leslie received lavish gifts, real estate, the governorship of Smolensk and the rank of first ever Russian general. His offspring served his "second homeland" with honour for twelve generations, and reside there to this day.

Recent historical works rightly stress that Peter the Great's transformation of his Tsardom was largely prepared by his predecessors. This is certainly true in the military field. Naturally, it was not just the soldiers who flocked to the opulent Romanov court. Christopher Galloway (or Halloway) designed the first clock and water supply system in the Moscow Kremlin, and Scottish merchants, smiths, doctors etc. practised their trade in seventeenth-century Muscovy. But soldiers still prevailed until at least the end of the Great Northern War in 1721. Their numbers were considerable, as I tried to show, but their calibre was really astonishing. In the half century between the 1650s and 1700s alone I have counted fifteen Russian generals of Scottish provenance, and two of them (George Ogilvie and James Bruce) reached the supreme rank of field marshal. No other contemporary foreign party can match this record.

From his childhood to his deathbed Tsar Peter was accompanied by a constellation of Scots who helped to shape his outlook and policies. Paul Menzies became his earliest foreign tutor; Patrick Gordon advised him on all urgent matters, especially in time of war; John Chambers commanded his elite Semionovsky Guards; George Ogilvie consolidated his army at a critical point of the war with Sweden; Robert Bruce, the High Commandant

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[37] See Sir Jerome Horsey, *op. cit.*, pp. 182-4, 225.

[38] *Register of the Privy Council of Scotland*, 2nd series, V, pp. 79, 548.

of St.Petersburg, was responsible for the construction and defence of Peter's beloved "paradise" city, and as to Robert's brother James, equally skilled as a scholar, statesman, general and diplomat - "there was nothing he had not a finger in"[39]; Robert Erskine was the Tsar's personal physician and confidant; and, not least, Henry Farquharson ran Russia's first special educational institution, the Moscow School of Mathematics and Navigation, later the Naval Academy.

Given the weight of this party, it will not come as a surprise that the principal Russian order of knighthood, and the saltire chosen by Peter as the banner for his nascent fleet, bear an obvious resemblance to Scottish prototypes. The debt is plainly acknowledged in the original statutes of the Russian Order of St. Andrew dating back to 1698.[40]

Peter the Great ushered in a new age in Russian history, and opened new horizons in the Scoto-Russian ties. Although the signing of army officers went on until the time of Empress Catherine II, the exchange became ever more lively and diverse. Now it encompassed the naval sphere and trade, industrial development and the realm of culture.

From its very birth the Russian Navy was joined by a throng of Scots: common sailors, officers, shipwrights, engineers, doctors and teachers. They arrived in waves in the 1710s, 1730s, 1764 and later until the end of the century.[41] The string of Russo-Scottish army generals is rivalled by an equally brilliant line of marine leaders. Mention must be made of at least a handful. Thomas Gordon, first British admiral of the Russian Empire and long-standing commander of Kronshtadt, led the seaborne campaign that culminated in the capture of Danzig in 1734; Thomas Mackenzie headed the Black Sea squadron after Russia conquered the Crimea in 1783 and laid the foundations of Sevastopol, where local hills still bear his name; John Paul Jones from Kirkcudbright, having "fathered" the American Navy, turned a Russian vice-admiral and proved his worth against the Turks[42]; Henry Baillie liberated Naples from the French in a daring raid in 1799, which won him the admiration of European monarchs and the Russian star of St. Anne, 1st class. But the first place in this cohort undisputedly belongs to Samuel Greig of Inverkeithing (1735-1788), full admiral, reformer of Russia's Baltic Fleet, victor at Chesme and Hogland. Some celebrated naval dynasties were established by these men; all four of Greig's sons followed in his footsteps, and his grandson, after a spell in the Marine Ministry, ended up Minister of Finance under Emperor Alexander II. All told, nearly thirty Russian Scots achieved flag ranks before the destruction of the Imperial Navy in 1917.

The success of Russia's military exertions largely depended on her economic progress. During the eighteenth and early nineteenth century the small workshops and old-fashioned factories were gradually enlarged and upgraded with the aid of Western expertise. Here too Scottish entrepreneurs and engineers, with their proud technological traditions, had a chance to shine. Carron, one of the largest and most advanced iron foundries in the world, dealt with the Russian government since about 1770. In 1786 the Company's director, Charles Gascoigne, accepted the invitation to move to St.

[39] Steuart, *op. cit.,* p. 75.

[40] RGIA, F. 496, op. 3, No. 1, f. 6 v. I have edited the original of the Statutes for publication.

[41] *Obshchiy Morskoy Spisok*, vols. I-V, St. Petersburg, 1885-1890.

[42] *Istoricheskiy Vestnik*, LXXXVII, No. 3, 1902, pp. 1062-85.

Petersburg. In his twenty Russian years he did as much as could be done to modernize production by building, reconstructing and directing the biggest works in the Empire.[43] Under his guidance the annual output of cast iron at the Olonets foundries more than doubled, and in the south he established an enterprise at Lugansk making use of the newly discovered ore and coal.

Gascoigne's colleagues and followers took over his legacy. Charles Baird created his own industrial kingdom in St. Petersburg, including a wharf where in 1815 he devised and launched Russia's primary steamship, the *Elizaveta*. The business further thrived under his heirs Francis and George who naturalized in Russia.

Scholarly and artistic contacts also prospered from early eighteenth century onwards. James Bruce and Robert Erskine, the most learned men in Petrine Russia, bequeathed their unique libraries and collections to the St. Petersburg Academy of Sciences. The architects Charles Cameron, Adam Menelaws and William Hastie stand on a par with any European master of their time. Scots doctors made an extraordinary contribution, directing Russian medical bodies, publishing novel essays and practicing modern methods of treatment.[44] Probably the most eminent of them was James Wylie (1768-1854), who rose from regimental surgeon to personal doctor of three Emperors, Chief Medical Inspector of the Army, President of the Medico-Chirurgical Academy and Russia's sole baronet. Their pursuits were very broad indeed: Dr. James Mounsey exported rhubarb seeds from Russia to Britain for the first time, while Dr. Matthew Guthrie translated and printed the earliest piece of Russian fiction to appear in English, a tale by Empress Catherine the Great.[45] Since mid-eighteenth century traffic between the two countries became bilateral, with a growing number of Russians attracted to one of the hotbeds of European Enlightenment.

The next chapter in the Scotland-Russia story can be dated from mid-nineteenth century to 1917, but, for all the richness of material, it is least appreciated from this angle. It was no longer customary to engage foreigners for the army or navy, and the majority of peregrine Scots at this stage were involved in various industries which boomed after the abolition of serfdom. Some enterprises continued from the previous age, others were just being established in both capitals or provincial cities. Siberia, the Far East and the outskirts of the Empire emerged as new economic regions with the development of the railway system, machinery, oil processing etc. Many businesses across the country were owned, managed, consulted and staffed by Scots. In St. Petersburg some employees of Macpherson's Baltic and Baird Works lingered on even when they changed hands. In 1890 the textile tycoon Coats struck a deal with his rivals setting up the joint Nevsky Thread Mills with a capital of 12 million roubles[46]; as a consequence, his Paisley workers invaded Russia. In Moscow "the leading British families were Bells, Gibsons, Hoppers, McGills and Smiths... all were Scottish not only by birth but by conviction"; the originally Glaswegian Smiths ran their boiler works until 1916, while the biggest

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[43] R.P. Bartlett, "Charles Gascoigne in Russia", in *Russia and the West in the Eighteenth Century*. Newtonville, Mass., 1983.

[44] J.H. Appleby, "Through the Looking-glass: Scottish Doctors in Russia" in *The Caledonian Phalanx,* pp. 47-64.

[45] *Ivan Czarewitz, or The Rose without Prickles that Stings Not*. London, 1793.

[46] A.A. Polovtsov. *Dnevnik*, II, Moscow, 1966, pp. 266-7, 283, 323, 327.

department store in contemporary Russia belonged to the firm of “Muir & Mirrielees”.[47] There was furthermore “the giant concern of William Miller & Co. whose activities ranged over the whole country. Begun as a partnership for the import of coal and herring, it launched out later into local industry on a large scale... It had in Moscow alone a great brewery, a factory for sweet mineral waters including a highly popular cranberry cordial, and the largest stearine works in the country”.[48] The extent of Sir William Miller’s Russian fortune is apparent in the grand mansion of Manderston in Berwickshire.

This period presents as colourful a mosaic as can be. William Carrick and John MacGregor pioneered photography among the lower townsfolk and peasantry of Russia; a Scot named Denbigh engaged in fur trade, fishing and processing “sea cabbage” on the island of Sakhalin[49]; Alexander Bisset introduced and supervised tea-planting and manufacture in Georgia; a Clyde shipyard built a luxurious yacht for the Russian Emperor, while “Shanks & Co.” of Barrhead supplied bathroom facilities to the Imperial palaces; in the 1890s football got started in St. Petersburg largely by the Scottish labour force who formed the bulk of the first champion side[50], but when rugby was taught by the Hopper family to their Moscow workers the police banned the game as too violent.

Artistic life blossomed at the turn of the century, and both Russia and Scotland gave birth to some of the most exquisite creations in Europe. It is little known that Sergey Diaghilev’s first exhibition (St. Petersburg, 1897) was mainly devoted to paintings by the Glasgow Boys.[51] In 1901-2 two great masters of *Art Nouveau*, Fiodor Shekhtel and Charles Rennie Mackintosh, held an exchange of their work in Glasgow and Moscow; Shekhtel’s fairytale “Russian village” in Kelvingrove Park, built by 200 Russian carpenters, drew millions of visitors and won him the diploma of the show’s best architect.[52] The first British production of a Chekhov play was also staged in Glasgow (“The Seagull”, 1909).

The amicable convention of 1907, negotiated and signed by the British ambassador in St. Petersburg Arthur Nicolson, himself a Scotsman, ensured that Britain and Russia fought side by side in World War I. Liaison missions and direct co-operation between the allies were maintained until the collapse of the Eastern Front in 1917, after which Scottish units took part in the unhappy allied intervention in Soviet Russia. For most Russian Scots the revolution and the ensuing civil war meant disaster: some fled leaving all their possessions behind, others lost their lives. The survivors frequently had to change their alien-sounding names and hide their past to avoid trouble. Almost the only remaining channel of communication was the one between the Bolsheviks and Red Clydesiders who were keen to express proletarian solidarity. John Maclean acted as Soviet consul in Britain, William Gallacher went to Moscow to meet Lenin, and Arthur MacManus’s wish that his ashes be placed in the Kremlin wall was fulfilled. Today, after

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[47] H. Pitcher. *The Smiths of Moscow*. Cromer, 1984,p.21; idem, *Muir & Mirrielees*, Cromer, 1994.

[48] R. Bruce Lockhart, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

[49] P. Barlow, “Chekhov’s Far Eastern Scotsman”, *Scottish Slavonic Review,* No. 8, 1987, pp.7-15.

[50] This was *Nevka* in 1901.

[51] *Sergey Diaghilev i Russkoye Iskusstvo,* I, Moscow, 1982, pp. 61-3.

[52] C. Cooke, “Shekhtel in Kelvingrove and Mackintosh on the Petrovka”, *Scottish Slavonic Review,* No. 10, 1988, pp. 177-205.

a long hibernation, the Scotland-Russia ties are as vigorous as ever, but here we enter a different age.

The present article does not pretend to show that Scots formed the main foreign ingredient in Russian history, but be it said that their amazing achievement can stand comparison with any other. The cast of characters is more or less clear, as well as the principal sections and trends of the plot. However, proper study of the subject has really just begun, and many riddles still await solution. In particular, when and how a Scot turns into a Russian? Why did the migration continue even at the peak of Britain's prosperity? What part did the image of Scotland play in Russia's awareness of the West, and vice versa? These and a lot of other questions should be answered if we want to fully appreciate the past, enjoy the present and foresee the future of our links.

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