



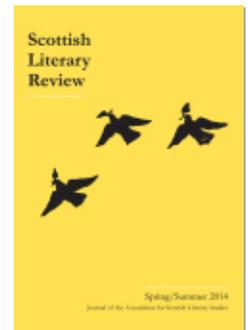
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first marquis of Montrose

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**Montrose and Modern Memory:
the literary after-life of the first marquis of Montrose**

Abstract

By addressing the ways in which historical and fictional texts from the mid-seventeenth century to the present have depicted the first marquis of Montrose (1612–1650), this article emphasises the influence of religious partisanship on Scottish historiography; the distorting lens that Romanticism offered to those seeking to understand the religious and national trauma of the covenanting wars; the influence of pre-1745 events on the interests of Victorian literary Jacobitism; the impact of populism on the cult of Montrose; and the revisionism of twentieth and twenty-first century texts that question the dichotomy of cavalier and covenant presented by earlier writers and suggest a subversive reading of the heroism evoked in conventional appreciations of the life of the marquis.

Instead of the monuments in stone, the festivals, and the commercialisation that commemorated and exploited the contributions of William Wallace, Robert Burns and others to the grand narratives of Scotland's history, it was the written word that was the principal means by which the legacy of the first marquis of Montrose (1612–1650) was carried across the centuries.² The association of Montrose with literature goes beyond the few lines of poetry he penned during his lifetime.³ It also goes beyond his writings related to political philosophy, be they his sole composition or the voice of Lord Napier, as it were, speaking through him.⁴ Further, it is far more complex than the hagiography offered by George Wishart which, hung round the neck of Montrose during his execution, was Montrose's 'proudest ornament on the scaffold'.⁵ Rather, a more intriguing state of affairs is suggested by the fact that it was as the Montrose of Walter Scott's novel, *A Legend of Montrose* (1819) that this awkward hero appeared first in stone, alongside the fictional Dugald Dalgetty, on the Scott Monument on Edinburgh's Princes Street.

Perhaps it is hardly surprising: it is difficult for a nation to celebrate a man whom its ‘founding fathers’ executed, and even more so when he appeared to change sides in the course of his life, from Covenanter to Royalist. Simply, Montrose was doomed to criticism from both factions, no matter which was in the ascendancy. In this regard he shatters the idea of the puritan provincial aesthetic proposed by Susan Manning, injecting doubt in ‘the powerful attraction of the Calvinist towards monovalency – the right path, the one true Church’. Montrose is certainly an exemplar of the puritan who ‘finds release from the deadlock of contemplation only in action’, and his life story is surely illustrative of the puritan impulse where man’s relationship with his conscience is central. Yet his toleration is suggestive of the ‘laxity’ Manning sees as presaging ‘moral and spiritual degeneracy’, and, in more mundane terms, his handsome demeanour evokes a certain puritan scepticism with respect to appearances.⁶ For all that, fiction (at one time or another), arguably allowed Montrose to acquire in death the heroic status his life denied him, and escape the nuances and qualifications of history. Historical novelists are constrained by fundamental facts relating to his life, but the Montrose legacy is far more complex than the foreclosed narrative of a biography offered to both historians and story tellers might first suggest. What we might call the cult of Montrose changed over time and responded to the pressures of each age. Through it we can see the impact of Presbyterianism on Scottish history, at once shifting, accommodating, and rejecting the romanticism of the early nineteenth century. We can identify the influence and the distorting lens of the English historical tradition, and the impact that the populism born of mass literacy and the cheap printed word had on the ‘debatable lands’ between history and literature. Finally, we can detect a maturing acceptance of the contradictions in our nation’s history, meaning that the subversive and conservative potential of our past are seen not in opposition but as constitutive of one another.

PARTISANSHIP, 1648–1722

It is hardly surprising that Montrose’s reputation was contested from the beginning. Having signed the Covenant in 1638, only to join the forces of Charles I and lead a horrific onslaught on those who supported the Solemn League and Covenant in the early 1640s, Montrose was condemned by the

victors of Philiphaugh (1645) and Carbisdale (1650) as a traitor to both cause and country. As the publishers of the 1756 edition of Wishart's *Memoirs* noted:

As no person had persisted with greater obstinacy in opposition to the black designs of the covenanters than this illustrious hero, or had, with greater resolution and intrepidity, endeavoured to support the royal authority against their audacious efforts to destroy it; so it was naturally to be expected, that none would be more the object of their resentment, and the butt of their vindictive rage.⁷

Against such popular opprobrium, however, must be set Wishart's work itself. Following Montrose's execution it offered the most comprehensive account of his life, and was readily taken up during the Restoration as a corrective to earlier covenanting propaganda. To Wishart, 'the present Marquis appeared in these worst of times, in order to re-establish the just rights and prerogatives of his sovereign, preserve the peace and liberty of his fellow subjects, and maintain the ancient splendour and dignity of his house.'⁸

These were statements echoed in other texts of the time. Iain Luim, the Bard of Keppoch, fails to mention Montrose in his poem on the Battle of Inverlochy, choosing instead to hail the martial prowess of the MacDonalds. But he praises Montrose in a lament dating from 1650:

Cha teid mi do Dhùn Eideann
O dhoirteadh fuil a' Ghreumaich,
An leómhann fearail treubhach
'Ga cheusadh air a' chroich

*I will not go to Edinburgh since the
Graham's life blood has been spilt,
that heroic valiant lion tortured on the
gallows.*

B'e sud am fìor dhuin' uasal
Nach robh de'n linne shuaraich,
Bu ro mhatth rudhadh gruaidhe
'N am tarrainn suas gu trod;

*He was the true nobleman not sprung
of ignoble stock; splendidly the blood
mantled in his cheek when closing for
the fight.⁹*

This was a distinctively Highland treatment. Instead of the Covenanters – or even simply Argyll – as the villain of the piece, condemnation falls on MacLeod of Assynt who had imprisoned Montrose in his castle at Ardvreck and ultimately betrayed him to the authorities.¹⁰ The bard refers to

MacLeod as a ‘stripped branch. . . without fruit or honour or comeliness’. This is an important early indicator that Montrose’s legacy would at times fracture on that Scottish cultural fault-line between Highland and Lowland, Gaelic and English.¹¹

These years, however, are perhaps more important for revealing the ways in which – at least until the late nineteenth century – Montrose’s covenanting past would be qualified and compromised as much by his supporters as by those who opposed him. His early support for the Covenant challenged the neat dichotomy of Covenant and Cavalier, and later, Hanoverian and Jacobite. These fissures ran deep in the period between the Restoration and the 1745 rebellion, making Montrose a problematic hero for both sides.¹² It is a problem tackled by Wishart in the very first pages of his work when he refers to the ‘specious pretexts’ of the Covenanters that hid more ‘sinister purposes’, and explains how in 1639 Montrose realised how their ‘fine pretexts were calculated to. . . alienate [‘the rabble’] from the king’. Detesting ‘such wickedness’, as Wishart puts it, Montrose abandoned the Covenanters, who were dominated by ‘private cabals’.¹³ In sum, to Wishart, Montrose’s covenanting years are an aberration.

History was not to be on Wishart’s side, however – at least not in the short term. The persecution of Presbyterianism in Scotland from 1660 to 1688 meant that Scottish historians would look at the years of the Civil War rather differently. Robert Wodrow (1679–1734), the early eighteenth-century ecclesiastical historian best known for his *History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland* (1721–1722), referred to the war years as a time when ‘Montrose changed hands and his men ravaged the country’. Indeed, rather than noble fighters, Montrose’s supporters are referred to as ‘malignants’.¹⁴

Wodrow, alongside other authors such as Patrick Walker (1666–1745), commemorated protestant martyrs at a time when the Jacobite threat was a real one: in between starting *The History of the Sufferings* in 1705, and its publication in the early 1720s, a French-sponsored invasion in 1708 had been foiled, Mar’s rebellion in 1715 had ended in defeat at Sheriffmuir, and Spanish forces who had landed in 1719 met a similar fate at the Battle of Glen Shiel. It would take the ultimate annihilation of the Jacobite threat at Culloden in 1746 before Scotland could look again with something resembling respect on the career of Montrose. By then he could be lauded as a supporter of a neutered cause, or his loyalty refashioned – as was the loyalty of the highland regiments – exemplifying national virtues which

could be harnessed in the interests of the Union and a safely protestant monarchy.¹⁵ It helped that, by the late eighteenth century, with Moderatism transcendent in the Church of Scotland, and the trauma of the Disruption still some way off, the covenanting past could be domesticated – at least politically desensitised – for popular consumption. Indeed, S. R. Crockett (1859–1916), a popular Kailyard novelist in later years, would fondly recall in a foreword to the 1901 edition of Walker’s *Six Saints of the Covenant* that as a child he had pored over Walker’s ‘little pamphlets’, allowing the author’s cadences to touch his heart ‘like nothing else in the world save the memory of a mother’s voice.’¹⁶ Thus, while Moderatism did not guarantee Montrose’s rehabilitation, it certainly made it easier. And in this it was helped by earlier histories such as those of Clarendon and David Hume, which were far more forgiving of the Stuart monarchs.¹⁷ In terms of the historiography, this is the backdrop to what would be a determining phase in Montrose’s posthumous reputation.

ROMANTICISM

In 1819 history and literature collided when Walter Scott’s publication of *A Legend of the Wars of Montrose* (aka *A Legend of Montrose*) encouraged Scott’s Edinburgh publishers, Archibald Constable & Co., to also republish Wishart’s *Memoirs*. They explicitly acknowledged that ‘As the last series of the Tales of My Landlord will probably call the attention of the public toward the biography of the Marquis of Montrose, it has been deemed expedient to republish this translation’.¹⁸

Purporting to be tales told to the parish clerk and schoolmaster of Ganderclough by an old mercenary soldier, Sergeant More MacAlpin, Scott’s surrogate author asserts that despite ‘that measure of the wild and wonderful which belong to the period’, the tales ‘rest upon a basis of truth’ – that, despite the fact that they are interlaced with a-historical quotations from Ossian, Burns and others.¹⁹ That aside, as in many of his historical novels, Scott here is playing with history and fiction, just as when we meet Montrose for the first time in the guise of a manservant, Scott challenges us to distinguish the characteristics of the hero beyond mere appearances. When his identity is revealed, however, Montrose *is* depicted in conventional heroic terms: ‘uncommonly well built’, ‘a constitution of iron’, ‘perfect in

all exercises’, and with ‘curled locks’, ‘a high nose’, ‘quick grey eye’ and ‘eloquent of nature’. For all that, however, Montrose himself has little more than a cameo role in Scott’s narrative. Indeed, Argyll’s character is more fully developed than that of his nemesis.²⁰ Like Francis Osbaldistone in Scott’s *Rob Roy* (1817), the central protagonist of this novel is not the man who gives it its name, but in this instance, Dugald Dalgetty – a mercenary soldier in Montrose’s army whose code of honour has less to do with principle than professional pragmatism.²¹ Indeed, despite the title of the novel, the central story line has very little to do with Montrose at all. Rather, the main drama involves the mysterious MacEagh clan, known as the ‘Children of the Mist’, and the beguiling story and character of the beautiful Annot Lyle.²²

One might argue that the contested memory of Montrose was not helped by Scott’s novel: indeed, it perhaps served to confound further any attempt to integrate his story in the history of the nation. The popular response to the novel was mixed, but three years after its publication it did spawn a musical drama that is particularly revealing.²³ The music for this Covent Garden production came from Henry Bishop, who had penned a three-act musical drama in 1811 based on Scott’s *Lady of the Lake*, and set Burns’ *Jolly Beggars* to music in 1817. With new musical numbers interspersed with anachronistic familiar favourites such as ‘Green grow the Rashes’, ‘Charlie is my Darling’ and even ‘The Campbell’s are Coming’, the finale chorus of Act One offered the stirring call:

... Gather! gather! gather!
The Chieftains are met, the banner’s uprear’d!
From clan to clan let the signal be heard!
Thro’ mountain and valley the summons shall ring;
The war cry is Scotland, Montrose and the King!
... Gather! gather! gather!²⁴

No hint here of the Marquis’ earlier devotion to the Covenant; no hint here of the complexities of his history. Scott, like many who would come after him, attributed Montrose’s covenanting years to ‘youthful error’, and identified in the persuasive powers of ‘ambitious hypocrites’ the source of Montrose’s poor judgement. Indeed, from the mouth of Scott’s Montrose, we hear the following: ‘I am here, with my sword in my hand, willing to

spend the best blood of my body to make amends for my error, and mortal man can do no more.²⁵

This depiction of Montrose as a devoted if belated cavalier owed much to Wishart, and it is a matter of record that Scott used his *Memoirs* when writing the *Legend*. As a consequence, an a-historical reading of Montrose's life was perpetuated in Scott's novel. Reading Montrose through the prism of a source refined in the Restoration period meant that Montrose's contribution was read backwards rather than forwards, and his legacy confined by the stark oppositions of Covenant and Cavalier that distinguished the environment of his later years rather than the more confused environment of his youth. Not surprisingly, it was a perspective that fuelled residual covenanting antipathies and stirred memories of the controversy that Scott had met with in 1816–1817 on the publication of *Old Mortality*, when Dr Thomas McCrie had taken the author to task on his unsympathetic depiction of the Covenanters.²⁶ John Galt offered a corrective. In Galt's novel, *Ringan Gilbaize* (1823), Ringan explicitly criticises the 'supple spirit of latter times' that had 'palliated' the true horror of the 1640s. Indeed, he singles out Clarendon's history of the wars of the seventeenth century for particular condemnation, attacking the author for his 'sordid courtliness'.²⁷ Yet, Ringan himself passes over the 1640s, referring to Montrose only in the context of Charles II's double dealings with the Covenanters in 1650.²⁸

Both Scott and Galt appear to struggle with how to deal with Montrose's history, and the result is characterisation that is partial, fleeting, ill-defined and contested. The 1830s, however, produced another treatment of Montrose in James Hogg's *Tales of the Wars of Montrose* (1835), although many of these tales had appeared separately elsewhere over a nine-year period.²⁹ Again, Montrose is not placed centre stage, and in much the same way as Scott used Dalgetty, Hogg employs the perspectives of 'ordinary folk' to make sense of the events and personalities of these years.³⁰ Also, in much the same way as Scott uses the Gandercleugh schoolmaster and Galt, the recollections of Ringan, Hogg offers the memoir of an Edinburgh Bailie (Archibald Sydserf) and the purported historical records of others to claim for his work a certain fanciful authenticity. Yet Hogg writes more assuredly at the interface of history and fiction than the other two novelists, taking liberties with both genres in his editing of memoirs, splicing his prose with that of familiar histories and even offering a poem purportedly by Montrose on the death of one of his own fictional characters, Colonel Peter Aston.

But Hogg's *Tales* were a commercial flop, even in Scotland, and are thus a less than convincing carrier of popular memory.³¹ That said, they signal a change in depictions of Montrose, as here Montrose is first encountered as a Covenanter, and his defection to the Royalist cause is blamed by the Edinburgh Bailie on Argyll's scheming, rather than any change of heart.³² Hogg is also more sensitive to the limitations of labels. When Montrose returns as the King's man to Scotland in disguise (it is a scene that features in many novels) he is first attacked as a covenanter by his hosts, thus extending the case of mistaken identity into the realm of principle. Mary Bewley's personal attack on Montrose gets to the heart of the matter:

I know you to be the very champion of the Covenanters. I know you took the Covenant on your knees. . . and likewise took the sacrament on your oath and dare you in the face of heaven now protest that you are an adversary to it. O no! the thing is not in nature at least in a noble nature.³³

The contrasting narrative voices in *The Tales* allow for the foregrounding of the contradictions in Montrose's life and legacy. So, in the tale of 'Wat Pringle o' the Yair' Montrose's reputation in the Borders after Philiphaugh is laid bare: 'they never gave any quarter but slaughtered on as long as they could find a man'.³⁴ But elsewhere Hogg takes liberties with the character of Argyll. Campbell's prevarication at the Battle of Inverlochy (1645) is humorously explained by Hogg as being the consequence of the over-long prayers of the minister on board the Argyll galley: 'after [Argyll] had kneeled down and joined in the homily he could not with any degree of decency leave it'.³⁵ Hogg leaves us bereft of heroes or villains, he undermines the assurance we seek in historical documents, and eschews a single narrative voice throughout.

The Romantic moment in Scottish literature left readers with a contradictory vision of the first marquis of Montrose. Certainly his story – as a vehicle for embellishing the sublime aspects of the Scottish landscape and valourising the Highlander – contributed to many familiar or emergent tropes of the time. But as to Montrose *himself*, one can hardly say that he had proved a major focus for either romance or Romanticism. Strangely, it would be works of history that would change all that.

CLAIMING MONTROSE: NAPIER, TORYISM, AND UNIONIST NATIONALISM
(1838–1913)

Mark Napier (1798–1879), descended from the Napiers of Merchiston with whom Montrose spent much time during his short life, wrote three principal works concerning the marquis: *Montrose and the Covenanters* (1838), *Life and Times of Montrose* (1840), and the two-volume *Memorials of Montrose and his Times* (1848–1850) for the Maitland Club. Both implicitly and explicitly, it is clear that he took Scott as his literary benchmark.³⁶ Napier's Montrose is a 'statesman too honest for the councils of the Covenant, and a soldier too humane for its arms. . . a gentleman, accomplished in mind and body, his head stored with classic learning, and his heart overflowing with lofty and generous sentiments.'³⁷

In 1839, however, the *Eclectic Review* reviewed *Montrose and the Covenanters*. It noted:

[Napier] eagerly lays hold of every opportunity of magnifying the virtues, and wailing over the unmerited sufferings of the Royalists, whilst he is equally assiduous to bring out into prominent relief all that tends to depreciate the character, impugn the motives, and blacken the memory of their opponents. . . . For the unfortunate Covenanters. . . Mr N. finds no appellation too severely abusive.³⁸

The *Review* strongly hints at party and ecclesiastical bias informing Napier's history: this is not surprising, his Toryism and his Episcopal sympathies were writ large in the text. Indeed, the publication of *Montrose and the Covenanters* coincides with a flowering of Scottish Toryism, evident in the famous Eglinton Tournament of 1839 and the early activities of the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights.³⁹ With such connections in mind, it is not surprising to find that Napier's histories inspired other works at this time. Amongst the most notable was the ballad poetry of William Aytoun whose *Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers* was published in 1849 and included 'The Execution of Montrose' – a ballad of eighteen stanzas.⁴⁰

At mid-century there was little to counter the Tory revisionism of Napier and his ilk beyond constitutional histories such as those of the ardent Whig and Historiographer Royal, George Brodie, whose condemnation of Montrose was at times as immoderate as the praise of Jacobite apologists.⁴¹

Scottish history as an academic study was still very much in its infancy: Scotland had to wait another thirty years for the foundation of the Scottish History Society and fifty years before a chair in the discipline was founded at Edinburgh University. As a consequence, the default position was often that offered by the English historical tradition, and Montrose was regularly made to 'fit' the simpler dichotomies of the Cromwellian period on which were grounded many of the assumptions of Unionist grand narratives.⁴² Indeed, by 1892 Montrose's history had been so effectively translated into that model that Mowbray Walter Morris's *Montrose* (1892) was published as part of MacMillan's 'English Men of Action' Series.⁴³ By then there did not even appear to be the need to offer excuses for Montrose's dalliance with the Covenant: Morris noted, 'There was nothing in the letter of the Covenant he signed incompatible with the peculiar nature of Scottish loyalty, which had never been of that patient, unquestioning, one might say unreasoning nature which has sometimes marked the English loyalist.'⁴⁴

One is tempted to see in this period the accommodation of the Montrose legacy in the familiar exercise of Unionist Nationalism.⁴⁵ It certainly 'fits' with the dynamics apparent in the memorialisation of Wallace, and indeed coincides with the memorialisation of Montrose himself in Edinburgh.⁴⁶ Yet the strong Tory emphasis of the Montrose cult in these years and the unresolved tensions relating to his relationship with the Covenant *were* problematic. After all, evangelicalism in Scotland retained its hold on the hearts and minds of most Scottish protestants both within the Kirk and in the Free and dissenting congregations. In such a society, Montrose remained something of an enigma.⁴⁷

POPULISM: MACLAREN COBBAN, IRWIN, TRANTER (1898–1977)

Yet this was the age of the popular press, and compulsory free education eventually meant literacy was a skill shared by more than just the elite and a few lads and lassies o' pairts. Thereafter, as radio and moving pictures shrunk the world, and the hold of the churches grew weaker, Scots were apt to celebrate heroes a previous age would have dismissed. Mary Queen of Scots, Bonnie Prince Charlie and many other historic figures were graced in the late modern period with a mass popularity they might only have dreamed of in their lifetimes.⁴⁸ So what about Montrose?

Since the 1890s there have been a good number of fictional accounts of the life of Montrose which might usefully be grouped together under the heading of ‘populist’. One of the first was James Maclaren Cobban’s *Angel of the Covenant* (1898).⁴⁹ The Aberdonian Cobban – a former minister, a journalist and the author of a four-volume history of Lord Roberts – had intended the *Angel* to be the first of a trilogy based on the life of Montrose, yet he died in 1903 before this aim could be realised. As a consequence, this novel stops at the point at which Montrose’s loyalty to the Covenant is at its most secure: for that reason alone, it is worthy of study. And yet, of all the novels so far encountered, this one pushes history to its limits, and then some. At the centre of the tale is Montrose’s fictional ‘rescue’ of his sister, Katherine, in France from the clutches of her brother-in-law John Culquhoun of Luss. Needless to say, such a scenario is not supported by any historical evidence at all, nor are there any grounds for believing her sensational self-sacrifice at the climax of this novel has any basis in fact. Nor is there any evidence that the *Angel* of the title, the beguiling Maudlin, whose flirting and feisty character attracts the attentions and loyalties of many of the Scottish nobility, ever existed. Cobban, however, does not let that get in the way of a good story. Montrose shines here as an eloquent swashbuckling hero, but little more. Reviews at the time regretted that Cobban seemed to have alighted on the least brilliant period of Montrose’s life, and, while acknowledging the novel’s entertainment value, noted that Cobban’s Montrose was ‘a poor substitute for the real James Graham’.⁵⁰ According to *The Outlook* Montrose’s ‘high qualities’ had to be taken ‘mostly on trust’.⁵¹ *The Academy* was also critical:

The well-meaning, moderate gentleman with a stock of endearing epithets – surely this is not the whole truth about the mysterious great man, the statesman beyond his time, the melancholy fatalist, the opportunist, the military genius? The subtlest of historical figures fits badly with the historical novel, and such, for all its many merits, we must label Mr Cobban’s work.⁵²

After the 1890s (save for Neil Munro and John Buchan, to whom we will return) no novelist revisited the story of Montrose until 1931 when James Lorimer published *The Red Sergeant*. Thereafter, it fell to Margaret Irwin (1889–1967), the prolific historical novelist, to re-tell and embellish

the tale for the inter-war reading public in her two novels *The Proud Servant* (1934), and *The Bride* (1939). Just as Scott had relied on Wishart, Irwin makes explicit her debt to John Buchan's second biography of Montrose, but she goes well beyond the bounds of that history.⁵³

Perhaps it is not surprising that in the age of cinema Irwin's treatment of Montrose would have touches of Hollywood about it. In *The Proud Servant*, for example, we encounter the first Montrose sex scene when he returns to his wife, Magdalen, from his European tour:

His arms were round her. . . His body was stronger, his shoulders were broader than when he had last so held her; he was now a full-grown man, and his strength crushed her against him, a blind force, even alien – so long was it since she had felt it, so imperative and furious it had grown, like a gale of wind lifting her, or a wave of the sea overwhelming her; she was lost in it. . .⁵⁴

The death of Magdalen, however, meant that the love interest in Irwin's second Montrose volume had to be found elsewhere. Despite the slimmest of historical evidence linking Montrose and Louise Hollandine of the Palatinate, in *The Bride* Montrose again is styled as a Scottish Errol Flynn: 'He seized her by the shoulders and shook her hard, then caught her to him and kissed her, both laughing until they kissed again. They seemed suddenly to have known each other for years.'⁵⁵ Scottish reviewers were respectful of Irwin's story-telling ability in both these novels, but were somewhat unsettled by Irwin's self-confidence in making 'one of the renowned figures in British history the focal point of a work of fiction'.⁵⁶ Nearly forty years would pass before another historical novel would be written on Montrose.⁵⁷

Nigel Tranter's, *The Young Montrose* (1972), and *Montrose: The Captain General* (1973) might usefully be considered the next contribution to this populist phase. Tranter certainly evokes Montrose's heroic demeanour in these works, but in contrast to Cobban, this Montrose condemns rather than rescues his sister and in contrast to Irwin, this Montrose is more apt to argue with than make love to his wife. The homecoming of Tranter's Montrose is marked by the pent-up anger of Magdalen who has been nursing her wrath to keep it warm over several years: 'Magdalen Carnegie stays at home. A good wife. Dutiful. Waiting. Always waiting. Her husband's pleasure. A dutiful wife, mother of his bairns. Dutiful mother. Waiting – since the day we were wed. Bairns ourselves!'⁵⁸

This is not the place to offer a critique of Nigel Tranter's contribution to Scottish literature and history, save to say that a closer reading of his works reveals a far more complex legacy than conventional caricature might first imply, and the coincidence of such bestselling publications with the resurgence of Scottish nationalism in the 1970s is worthy of further study.⁵⁹ For our purposes here, however, they, alongside works such as those of Cobban and Irwin (and also popular histories such as that of Max Hastings in 1977) serve to mark the emergence of a popular heroic narrative that earlier nineteenth-century novelists had eschewed, and the popular disavowal of the once-dominant Presbyterian critique of Montrose in the popular consciousness.⁶⁰ They are not simply latter-day bodice rippers, they are not simply bad history: rather, they are indicative of the ways in which Montrose's legacy was shaped by social and cultural changes that had more to do with Scotland in the twentieth century than any intrinsic truth about the seventeenth century.

MATURITY AND SUBVERSIVE INTENT: MUNRO, BUCHAN, MCILVANNEY,
JENKINS (1898–2003)

It should not surprise us to find that, running alongside an emergent popular heroic image of Montrose, there was a more complex historiography and a more self-consciously literary treatment of the man and his legacy. In the final fictional works considered here, it is clear that some authors over the course of the last one hundred years have employed Montrose's story to elucidate important arguments concerning national identity, ethnicity, class, war, faith and gender in ways that serve to question contemporary values as much as historic judgements, and reflect an increasingly mature engagement with history in our literature.

The novels of Neil Munro (*John Splendid*, 1898), John Buchan (*Witchwood*, 1927), and Robin Jenkins (*Lady Magdalen*, 2003), and the unpublished (and – to date – unstaged) play of William McIlvanney (*Montrose: A Play*, c.1960–75) highlight the ways in which Scottish authors over the course of the twentieth century became increasingly sceptical about a singular rendering of national identity.⁶¹ Certainly, a case could be made that this was also true of Scott (there is even evidence for it in *A Legend of Montrose*), but the novelists of the twentieth century offered more radical readings,

and rejected the salve of unionism that Scott employed to reconcile internal differences.

Munro's principal contribution to this evolving discontent with narrow appreciations of Scotland is most clearly evident in his foregrounding of the Highland perspective on the wars of Montrose.⁶² In Munro's Scotland, Inverara (Inveraray) is the metropole; Campbell is the king; and the hills of Argyll, Appin and Lochaber the principal battleground. The 'other' for these Scots are Scots of opposing clans, or the commercially attuned Lowlanders whose breeches and language epitomise their alien presence.⁶³ There is little that binds them *as Scots*, nor is there a simple dichotomy of Highland and Lowland: following the Royalist attack on Inverara, John Splendid is sceptical about the mettle of the Dumbarton troops that form part of the Covenant ranks, but he also refers to the MacDonalDs and the Stewarts as 'banditti'.⁶⁴ The fight here is a local one, bound by ridges and straths as much, if not more so, than by honour, principle and nationality.

In similar fashion, while Buchan's Montrose does not hesitate to align himself with the 'free people of Scotland'⁶⁵, *Witchwood* is firmly rooted in the Borders landscape and the rural community which the Rev. David Sempill serves. One might proffer that it might be styled as Scotland in miniature, but Buchan offers us too many glimpses of other Scotlands for that idea to be convincing: there is the formal Scotland of institutional Edinburgh, the Scotland whispered of in rumours from 'the north', and – on Sempill's doorstep – the Scotland of the pagan woods that exists as powerfully in the minds of his congregation as the Scotland of the Kirk. This is a Scotland divided against itself.

When we come to Jenkins, this tendency to question the extent to which we are dealing with a drama of Scottish nationhood is at its most acute. Indeed, a striking feature of Jenkins' *Lady Magdalen* is the infrequency of his references to Scotland, and to collectivities and identities other than those defined by class, gender and region. Magdalen – the wife of Montrose, whom one might approach as the personification of Scotland, a Scotia, if you will – repeatedly disavows the principles claimed by her husband. At one point she implores him:

You think, James, you and the Earl of Argyll and the Earl of Rothes and the King and my father and Mr Henderson and all the rest of you are making the history of our country with your argu-

ments in Parliament and your wars but it is not so. What you are all doing is wasteful. It benefits no one. You do not build up, you break down, you destroy. Scotland is a poor country, but it is you, all of you, with your quarrels and wars, who have made it poor and who keep it poor.⁶⁶

The identification of internal differences – while admittedly less acute in McIlvanney's *Montrose* – is enhanced in all four works by reflections on ethnic divisions within the British Isles.⁶⁷ Again, one might suggest that in this all four authors were anticipated by Scott and Hogg who make much of the alien qualities of the Irish troops deployed by Montrose. Yet in this regard all four modern authors move beyond the demonization evident in the earlier works to a more nuanced appreciation of the intrinsic humanity of these soldiers and the women who follow and fight alongside them. McIlvanney's play foregrounds this theme, by beginning with a bawdy exchange between two prison guards who discuss the legitimacy of the rape and murder of Irish women. It is clear that these women were suffering as a result of the war ('she had fed for weeks on nothing but heather and Highland air'), but their humanity was compromised in the eyes of staunch covenanters by their ethnicity ('the reek of their blood was incense in the nostrils of the Lord').⁶⁸ Yet, in *John Splendid*, even to Elrigmore (fighting on the Campbell side) the Irish are a 'good humoured' bunch that compare favourably with the men of Athole: 'they cracked jokes with us in their peculiar Gaelic. . . [that] soon becomes as familiar as the less foreign language of the Athole men, whose tongue we Argiles find some strange conceits in.'⁶⁹ Indeed, elsewhere Elrigmore admits that 'the blood is the same in both races', and – more prosaically – 'between the savage and the gentleman is but a good night's lodging.'⁷⁰

Again, in both *Witchwood* and *Lady Magdalen* the respective authors are careful to align only those at odds with their principal protagonists with a damning indictment of the Irish.⁷¹ After the battle of Philiphaugh, for example, David Sempill encounters an injured Irishwoman: 'Her face was emaciated and of an extreme pallor, her shrunken breast heaved convulsively, and there was blood on her neck.'⁷² A drunken covenanting trooper, on calling her an Irish bitch, is chastised by Sempill in no uncertain terms. In similar fashion, on hearing that the Irish 'love slaughtering people', Jenkins' Magdalen asks 'have they not got wives and bairns too?'⁷³

It was not until 1937 that an account of the wars of Montrose would be told in fiction from the Irish perspective. Maurice Walsh's *And No Quarter* offers – as its subtitle details – a *Chronicle of the Wars of Montrose as seen by Martin Somers, Adjutant of Women in O'Caban's Regiment*. Instead of Philiphugh as the rout of an alien force, Walsh's Irish troops are resilient: 'One brief year ago we had been a ragged handful in imminent danger of throat cutting, and we had made that year the compass-time of a legend that will go down all the years undimmed in glamour. We could make another year like it.'⁷⁴ Here the Irish claim their role in a traditional heroic narrative that other popular works tend to reserve only for gallant cavaliers.⁷⁵ Indeed, all the authors that form the principle focus of these latter paragraphs have much to say about how distinctions of class and status reveal a counter narrative in the tale of Montrose.

For Munro, the contrast in the fortunes of the people of Argyll is clearly evident in Inneraora itself:

If the burgh was dull and dark, night after night there was merriment over the drawbrig of the castle. . . . I went up with a party from the town. . . finding an atmosphere wondrous different from that of the cooped and anxious tenements down below. Big logs roared behind the fire-dogs, long candles and plenty lit the hall, and pipe and harp went merrily. . . . Venison and wine were on the board and whiter bread than the town baxters afforded. . .⁷⁶

As the elite celebrate, however, Montrose is poised to attack. Within hours, refugees flee from the town as dirk and sword clash on the streets and in the closes. Inneraora is put to the torch as Argyll flees to Edinburgh.

Class certainly informs the way in which characters experience and contribute to the tale of Montrose, breaking the easy dichotomy of Royalist and Covenanter by interjecting horizontal divisions across both warring parties. This is most acute but also very subtly handled in Jenkins' *Lady Magdalen*. Magdalen early on observes that 'Governing was like playing chess: the pieces were of flesh and blood but they were to be moved about as if made of wood or ivory, without emotions, hopes, joys and sorrows of their own.' Similarly, the much celebrated good manners of Montrose are exposed for what they are: 'James her husband, so courteous to those beneath him in rank, nevertheless took it for granted that their proper place

was beneath him.’ Yet divisions here are not simply of an ‘us and them’ nature. Mrs Witherspoon, a servant in the Graham household, we hear ‘believed strongly in rank, not only because God had ordained it, as the Kirk taught, but also because she considered herself above all the other servants in the house.’ Indeed, attempts to bridge the gap between Lady and maid come to little. Another servant, Janet, is relieved when Magdalen excuses her from sitting with her mistress: ‘She needed to be with her own kind, in surroundings fit for them and for herself.’ In part ‘knowing your place’ is strongly attributed to the role of the church. Janet reminds her mistress that ‘The Children of Israel in the wilderness werena’ comfortable.’ But more than that, the Scotland depicted by Jenkins is so broken along both vertical and horizontal lines and riven by competing interests, all claiming to speak for the people, that unity and consensus are impossible. In Jenkins’ Scotland heroism is not of the type that wins battles, but is inherent in the humanity that survives conflict, in a ‘different kind of courage’.⁷⁷

Given the cost to Scotland of the imperial encounters of the nineteenth century and the total warfare of the twentieth century, perhaps it is not surprising to find that all four authors raise questions about the extent to which war and the remnants of a chivalric code ought to be celebrated. For all John Splendid’s courage, Munro is clearly uneasy (far more uneasy than Scott) about the role of the mercenary soldier in Scotland’s past, and the ways in which the claims of a martial culture serve to limit other facets of Scottish identity.⁷⁸ ‘[B]ooks, books’ exclaims Splendid, ‘the curse of the Highlands and every man of spirit. . . for four generations court, closet and college have been taking the heart out of our chiefs.’ The Provost of Inneraora’s daughter, however, offers an alternative rendering of the Highland condition: ‘Here are the fields, good crops, food and happiness for all, why must men be fighting?’ Elrimore’s retort that ‘We are children of strife’, and that ‘we have been at it from the birth of time’ is, by contrast, lest than convincing.⁷⁹

The anti-war message is clearest in Jenkins’ *Lady Magdalen*. This is hardly surprising. Jenkins was a conscientious objector in the Second World War. Like Munro, the most critical anti-war perspectives emerge through characters associated with the domestic realm. Magdalen is certainly the most obvious carrier of this message. Jenkins writes: ‘Magdalen thought of the women whose husbands would be in [James’] army, thousands of them. Many of those husbands would be killed or wounded and their wives too

would have to be reconciled to a lifetime of unhappiness through no fault of their own.’ Magdalen’s misgivings about war infuse her deteriorating relationship with her husband, as she accuses him of perverting their sons by encouraging them to believe that ‘war, that killing people, is glorious.’ To her, the local dominie contributes more to the country than her husband, the King’s Lieutenant, and she wishes that he had won fame ‘as a poet rather than as a soldier’. In this she may have a point. Scotland’s future after 1650, if Enlightenment scholars are to be believed, was more the outcome of ‘Improvement’ than valour. It is a point made most convincingly in the character of the successful farmer, Graham of Braco, who is mocked by Montrose’s fellow cavaliers and told to ‘look after your bonny black cattle’.⁸⁰ The future, as we know, was with Braco rather than Montrose, with commerce rather than killing, particularly when dressed up as chivalry. It is hauntingly anticipated in McIlvanney’s *Montrose* when, in Act Three, Montrose walks the hills: ‘I talked with a shepherd. About sheep and the weather. The things that matter.’⁸¹

Buchan’s position, perhaps predictably, is more ambivalent. By the time he wrote *Witchwood* he had worked with Lord Milner on the reconstruction of the Transvaal following the Boer War, had been Director of the Ministry of Information during the Great War, and in 1918 had published *The Battle-Honours of Scotland, 1914–1918*. In *Witchwood*, Buchan, however, holds the military action at one remove from the tale of David Sempill: the reader is only intermittently faced with the consequences of warfare, and often only second-hand, in the tales told by commentators from outwith the community. Interestingly, however, both *John Splendid* and *Witchwood* end with central characters leaving Scotland for wars on the continent which – if it speaks for anything – certainly points to the futility at the heart of conflict. Mark Kerr – a mercenary soldier in Montrose’s army, concealed and looked after by Rev. Sempill – is the character that best illustrates Buchan’s approach to how war affects Woodilee. It is he who consoles Sempill when Katrine is taken by the plague, and it is he who speaks to the people following Sempill’s excommunication, blaming the Kirk for the warfare that had cost Scotland dearly. To Mark Kerr, both ministers and congregation were ‘fools bemused with Jewish rites which they did not comprehend’. ‘It’s nothing but a bairn’s ploy’ he declares, ‘but it’s a cruel ploy, for it has spilt muckle good blood in Scotland.’⁸²

The sleight of hand that passes the blame for the fight to the faith that

occasioned it is not entirely convincing, but it does serve to bring to light what would be lost if there was nothing worth fighting for, and the type of Scotland that would emerge if all its swords were beaten in to ploughshares. At one point, even Rev. Sempill – a man almost defined by his learning in the early stages of the novel – declares: ‘Not for the first time in his life he wished that he had been a soldier. He was striving against folly and ignorance, blind prejudice, false conventions, narrow covenants. How much better to be fighting with armed men!’⁸³

All four authors are sceptical of the faith that led to war in Scotland in the seventeenth century: in that they have much in common with Hogg in particular. Beyond the settling of local scores, the motives of both Covenanting and Royalist forces and their leaders are unclear. Munro himself plainly condemns ‘session-made morality’ and at times appears to put more faith in Highland superstitions and the prophecies of the Black Dame.⁸⁴ Nevertheless, the Rev Gordon – the only minister depicted in the novel – is sketched with some compassion, alternately lampooned and respected, as when he makes the Earl of Argyll ‘writhe to the flame of a conscience revived’ after Inverlochy.⁸⁵ Munro leaves us in no doubt that John Splendid’s view of Gordon as a ‘plain, stout, fozy, sappy burrowman, keeping a gospel shop’ is not to be condoned.⁸⁶ There are no straightforward villains of the piece. Even Montrose himself is judged favourably by the Covenanting forces: he proves a gallant host to prisoners of war and lets them go before battle commences, he walks with his infantry to the field of battle, and – like them – eats nothing but brose on the eve of Inverlochy. Clearly, we are light years away from Wodrow. And it is a state of affairs reaffirmed in McIlvanney’s play, where Montrose reflects on the legacy of the Reformation: ‘We gave them the bible and said, free yourselves with this. (Pause.) But is this freedom? You’re building a nation in bondage. You’re forging a shackle from every verse of the bible.’⁸⁷

Jenkins too is dismissive about the idea that the wars have anything to do with religion, or that the Scottish Kirk is something of which to be proud. Yet, unlike McIlvanney, he is sceptical throughout about Montrose’s motivations, and reflecting on the principle of bishops in the Kirk, Magdalen speaks for her author when she considers it the ‘most absurd reason for men to kill their fellow men’. The power of the church is clear, however, throughout the novel: Magdalen’s brother warns her that ‘No one can prevail if he has the Kirk against him. Your James has been excom-

municated. He is doomed. . .'. The Rev Henderson's words on the death of her son are no more consoling: 'It had to be remembered. . . that he had died while in the service of the anti-Christ: it would be entered against him in the celestial ledger, for the Lord demanded His due. However, since he had been only fourteen and was under the malign influence of his father, the traitor-rebel, God would make allowances.' Despite the protestations of Henderson, however, Jenkins' Montrose speaks nothing of faith. He credits fate rather than God for his glorious destiny, and is considered little more than an ambitious upstart by those with whom Jenkins would have us have some sympathy.⁸⁸

In *Witchwood*, however, Buchan places religion at the heart of his narrative. Hypocrisy, intolerance and extremism are the motor forces that shape David Sempill's story. A minister of the Kirk, his fights – unlike Montrose's – are in the realm of biblical precedent and morality. For all that, however, Buchan encourages us to draw comparisons between the two men: Montrose in the guise of a servant early on describes himself as an 'elder of the Kirk', and indeed, David is immediately drawn to Montrose: 'There was a compelling power in that quiet face, and he was strangely loth to part from it.'⁸⁹ In contrast to the Montrose of Munro and Jenkins, Buchan's Montrose (the template for McIlvanney's character) is depicted as a man of faith.⁹⁰ He suggests that both he and Sempill desire a 'pure doctrine and a liberated Kirk', but is fearful that Scotland's sovereign was fast becoming 'King Covenant' rather than 'King Jesus'. (In similar fashion, McIlvanney's Montrose accuses Argyll of following his zeal 'far beyond God or Scotland's purpose. You served your own ends.'⁹¹) Instead of tyranny, Buchan's Montrose preaches tolerance, and is given scope by his author to clearly enunciate his political philosophy. This Montrose is not the waverer of Wodrow nor the simple royalist of Napier. Rather, even when in the service of the King Charles, he declares: 'I am for the Covenant.' In this scenario it is Scotland that has deserted the values of 1638 rather than Montrose: it is Scotland that has, as it were, changed sides. David Sempill's fight against an erring congregation and the authoritarianism of the local Presbytery echo Montrose's frustrations with the irresolute Scottish populace on the one hand and the machinations of court on the other. But it takes time for David to see this: he struggles with 'an unregenerate admiration for. . . Montrose', but at the same time acknowledges him to be 'a son of Belial'.⁹² Ultimately, we measure David's self-knowledge by his growing doubt in the

Kirk's authority and his growing love for Montrose. That for both this is ultimately realised in tragedy, is in effect Scotland's tragedy, according to Buchan. After Phliphaugh David Sempill recalls his last sight of Montrose and reflects that the Marquis 'would continue to hope manfully though his neck were on the block.'⁹³ The ultimate achievement of both men – if one can call it that – is self sacrifice.

This is a theme paralleled in Jenkins' characterisation of Montrose's wife, and was anticipated in McIlvanney's play, where Magdalen addresses her husband thus: 'You are denying your family for the sake of yourself'.⁹⁴ For Jenkins it is Magdalen, rather than her more famous husband whose 'different kind of courage' alerts us to a gendered reading of the Montrose narrative. The historical record tells us little about her beyond her ability to conceive and deliver Graham heirs, and even in this regard Jenkins offers as a subversive reading as ultimately it is the exhaustion of pregnancy and the trauma of childbirth – the ultimate creative process – that kills her. From the beginning, she is described in terms of qualities more commonly attributed to her husband: even he acknowledges her 'steadfastness, loyalty and devotion', though she herself suspects her chastity and docility were as attractive to James, whom she considered to be more in love with ideas than his young bride. Jenkins is explicit – even rather clunking at times – in his constant reminders of how society at the time restricted Magdalen's ability – indeed any woman's ability – to live a life as free as that of her husband. But more than this, the author's searching exploration of Montrose's relationship with his wife throws up aspects of his character in subtle ways that – one suspects – required a twenty first century perspective to become apparent. On his wedding night *this* Montrose asks his wife, 'So you know what has to be done?', and reflects 'One might have thought that God in His omnipotence might have devised some other way, not so repugnant. Less like animals, I mean.' Magdalen's mind drifts: 'She had seen a bull in the field affectionately licking a cow before mounting it.' In the end their love making 'was more of an attack than an act of love.' The 'romantic hero' in Jenkins novel is seen as a cold and contrived young man whose poems are 'full of neatly worded compliments but empty of true insights', whose talk of honour, duty and loyalty is repeatedly punctured by his wife's more penetrative sensitivity, and who embarks on a bloody war as a 'noble crusade', paying more attention to his attire than the fate of his troops.⁹⁵ Reflecting on Montrose's verse, Magdalen – Jenkins' Scotia – sees clearly

the inhumanity of what others might style idealism, and the full cost to both Scotland and herself of Montrose's 'noble ways'.

But if thou wilt be constant then
And faithful of thy word
I'll make thee glorious by my pen
And famous by my sword.
I'll serve thee in such noble ways
Was never heard before;
I'll crown and deck thee all with bays
And love thee evermore.
Montrose, 'My Dear and only Love'
(n.d.)

She pretended that it was
addressed to her but of course it
wasn't. It was addressed to some
more glorious creature, the
mythical embodiment of all he
believed in; she fell far short of
that. Perhaps she had never tried
hard enough to measure up to his
ideal, but what mortal woman
could have?⁹⁶

On hearing of his wife's death, Montrose acknowledges that: 'The cruel truth was that, except as the mother of his children, she had never been of much importance to him, and, now that she was dead, even less so.'⁹⁷ By association, we are left wondering what Scotland actually meant to Montrose, other than a conduit for expressing his personal ambition and abstract principle (Scotia as the necessary politician's help-mate) and the vehicle for the perpetuation of his reputation (Scotia as the necessary bearer of his offspring).

CONCLUSION

By foregrounding the themes of national identity, ethnicity, class, war, faith and gender modern novelists have alighted on the complexity of history and both its conservative and subversive functions. They have given us a Montrose of our times, not because they have come closer to revealing any incontestable truth about the man and his times, but because they have used his history to ask important questions of both our past and our present.⁹⁸ For all that, Montrose remains an awkward 'hero'⁹⁹, not because he caused division in Scotland and, in literature, sustained alternately puritan and Royalist sympathies, but because Scotland was in any case a divided country and remains one which sustains several national identities; not because he deployed Irish troops against his 'own' people, but because by doing so, he

highlighted pre-existing ethnic and sectarian hatreds which remain to be reconciled; not because he had an absolute sense of his right to lead, but because modern Scots are now, perhaps, more reluctant to be led; not because he glorified the martial traditions of Scotland, but because many Scots now see the resort to arms as a sign of failure; not because he was or was not a man of faith, but because both ecumenical and secular Scots have come to question institutionalised religion; not because he exemplified the qualities of Renaissance masculinity, but perhaps because we are now less sure of what a modern hero should look like, or indeed if they exist at all.

Notes

- 1 The author wishes to thank Chris Whatley for his comments on a previous draft of this article.
- 2 See, for example, Richard J. Finlay, 'Heroes, Myths and Anniversaries in Modern Scotland', *Scottish Affairs* 18 (1997), pp. 108–25; Graeme Morton, *William Wallace: Man and Myth* (Stroud, 2004); Alex Tyrrell, 'Paternalism, public memory and national identity in early Victorian Scotland: the Robert Burns Festival at Ayr in 1844', *History* 90 (2005), pp. 42–61; Murray Pittock and Christopher A. Whatley, 'Poems and Festivals, Art and Artefact and the Commemoration of Robert Burns, c.1844–c.1896' *Scottish Historical Review* 93.2 (2014), pp. 56–79.
- 3 See Robin Bell, *Civil Warrior: the extraordinary life and poetry of Montrose* (Argyll: Luath Press, 2002);
- 4 The authorship of the writings and letters on political philosophy attributed to Montrose since at least the mid-nineteenth century have been the focus of some historical debate. See W. Cunningham, 'The Political Philosophy of the Marquis of Montrose', *Scottish Historical Review* 14 (1917), pp. 354–69, and – for a revisionist view – D. Stevenson, 'The 'Letter on Sovereign Power' and the influence of Jean Bodin on Political thought in Scotland', *Scottish Historical Review* 61 (1982), pp. 25–43.
- 5 G. Wishart, *Memoirs of the Marquis of Montrose* (trans. and ed., Rev. Alexander Murdoch and H. F. Morland), (London: Longmans, 1893), Preface. Published first in Latin, Wishart's memoirs went through several editions and a revised version was published after his death as *Montrose Redivivus* in 1652.
- 6 Susan Manning, *The Puritan-Provincial Vision: Scottish and American literature in the nineteenth century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), pp. 17, 6, 11, 16, 14.
- 7 George Wishart, *Memoirs of the Most Renowned James Grabam, marquis of Montrose* (Edinburgh: Archibald Constable & Co, 1819), p. 2. This was a new edited edition of a translation that appeared in 1756, printed for 'A. Kincaid and A. Donaldson, W. Gordon and C. Wright, Booksellers in Edinburgh; and for And. Walker, Bookseller in Glasgow.'

- 8 Wishart, *Memoirs*, p. 15.
- 9 Annie M. Mackenzie (ed.), *Iain Laim: Songs of John MacDonald, bard of Keppoch* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1964), pp. 56–59.
- 10 A spirited defence of Macleod was offered in a pamphlet many centuries later: Misses M. L. and E. A. MacLeod and Bee Jay, ‘3 Centuries of Falsehood Exposed’ (Privately published, n.d.).
- 11 Montrose also features prominently in the writing of Niall MacMhurich (d. 1726), bard of Clanranald. See also, ‘Account of the Campaigns of Montrose’, *Edinburgh Annual Register*, January 1812, pp. 416–27; George Duncan, ‘Some Sidelights on the History of Montrose’s Campaigns’, *Scottish Historical Review* 2.5 (1904), pp. 47–52.
- 12 Murray Pittock, *The Invention of Scotland: the Stuart myth and the Scottish identity, 1638 to the present* (London: Routledge, 1991), pp. 15, 45.
- 13 Wishart, *Memoirs*, pp. 21–23.
- 14 Robert Wodrow, *History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland* 4 vols (Glasgow: Blackie, Fullerton & Co, 1828 ed.) i. p. 89.
- 15 In 1720, the worst Defoe would say of Montrose was that he had been over confident. Daniel Defoe, *Memoirs of a Cavalier* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1922 ed.).
- 16 S. R. Crockett, ‘Foreword’, in Patrick Walker, *Six Saints of the Covenant* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1901 ed.), pp. vii–viii.
- 17 L. Okie, ‘Ideology and Partiality in David Hume’s *History of England*’, *Hume Studies* 11 (1985), pp. 1–32. Okie notes that ‘Hume wrote with a strong Royalist bias and. . . he drew uncritically upon the work of Royalist and Tory historians.’ (p. 24)
- 18 Wishart, *Memoirs*, p. 1.
- 19 Walter Scott, *A Legend of the Wars of Montrose* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995 ed.), p. 7.
- 20 It is telling that in Alexander Welsh’s study of *The Hero of the Waverley Novels*, Montrose hardly warrants a mention: A. Welsh, *The Hero of the Waverley Novels* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).
- 21 P. D. Garside, ‘A Legend of Montrose and the History of War’ *The Year-book of English Studies* 4 (1974), pp. 159–71.
- 22 Franz Schubert’s ‘Lied der Anne Lyle’ speaks to the impact of this intriguing character. D.830 (Op. 85 No. 1), 1825.
- 23 Isaac Pocock, *The Children of the Mist* (Edinburgh: J. Anderson, 1825 ed.).
- 24 Glasgow, Glasgow University Library, Special Collections, *Montrose or the Children of the Mist A Musical Drama in Three Acts Founded on the Legend of Montrose*, Covent Garden, 14 February 1822.
- 25 Scott, *Legend*, p. 65.
- 26 Douglas M. Murray, ‘Martyrs or Madmen? The Covenanters, Sir Walter Scott and Dr Thomas McCrie’, *Innes Review* 43.2 (1992), pp. 166–75; Andrew Lang, ‘Editor’s Introduction’ in Walter Scott, *Old Mortality* (Boston: Dana Estes, 1893 ed.), pp. ix–xxvii. Scott responded by co-authoring a review of his own work, see: *Quarterly Review*, January 1817, pp. 430–80.
- 27 John Galt, *Ringan Gilhaize* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 1995 ed.), p. 216.
- 28 *Ibid.*, p. 221.
- 29 Gillian Hughes, ‘Introduction’, in James Hogg, *Tales of the Wars of Montrose* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2002 ed.), p. xi.
- 30 In this there is an echo with Colin Milton’s appreciation of modern historical fiction: ‘The central figures in the post-Scott tradition are, in the main, ordinary, unexceptional

- individuals, who find themselves caught up in major historical events': 'Past and Present: Modern Scottish historical fiction' in *Edinburgh History of Scottish Literature, Volume Three* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2007), pp. 114–29, at 114.
- 31 Admittedly, short-lived commercial success is no guarantor of cultural longevity, and limited commercial success might misrepresent the influence the tales had on oral culture and tradition.
- 32 Hogg, *Tales*, p. 66.
- 33 *Ibid.*, p. 166.
- 34 *Ibid.*, p. 201.
- 35 *Ibid.*, p. 95.
- 36 Mark Napier, *Montrose and the Covenanters* (London: James Duncan, 1838), i. pp. v–vi.
- 37 *Ibid.*, p. 7.
- 38 *Eclectic Review*, July 1839.
- 39 Alex Tyrrell, 'The Earl of Eglinton, Scottish Conservatism, and the National Association for the Vindication of Scottish Rights', *Historical Journal* 53.1 (2010), pp. 87–107.
- 40 William E. Aytoun, 'The Execution of Montrose' in *Lays of the Scottish Cavaliers* (London: Bliss Sands & Co, 1896 ed.), pp. 35–44 at 42 (stanza XV).
- 41 See George Brodie, *A Constitutional History of the British Empire: from the accession of Charles I to the restoration; with an introduction, tracing the progress of society and of the constitution from the feudal times to the opening of the history, and including a particular examination of Mr. Hume's statements relative to the character of the English government* (London: Longmans, 1866). This is a second edition (renamed and reworked) of his earlier *History of the British Empire* (1822). Brodie was appointed historiographer of Scotland in 1836. Perhaps not surprisingly, Mark Napier took issue with Brodie's version of events in *Memorials of Montrose and His Times* (Edinburgh: Maitland Club, 1848), i. pp. 210–11.
- 42 See Robert Anderson, 'University History Teaching, National Identity and Unionism in Scotland, 1862–1914' *Scottish Historical Review* 91.1 (2012), pp. 1–41.
- 43 As an aside, it should be noticed that David Livingstone and Sir Colin Campbell – both Scots – also appeared in that series, and in the 1s. 'English Men of Letters' Series there appeared Burns, Scott, MacAulay, Hume and Carlyle.
- 44 Mowbray Walter Morris, *Montrose* (London: MacMillan & Co, 1892), p. 36. Similarly, Lucy Sealy's *The Champions of the Crown* (London: Methuen & Co, 1911) offers us Montrose as a straightforward cavalier. Sealy explains his signing of the Covenant in terms of 'youthful enthusiasm and self-confidence' and hints that he 'may have dreamed of controlling and guiding the movement'. Regardless, she notes, 'his loyalty to the King it is impossible to doubt'. (p. 252)
- 45 Graeme Morton, *Unionist Nationalism: Governing Urban Scotland, 1830–60* (East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1999).
- 46 In 1878 *Chambers Journal* recorded the ignominious fate of the bones of Montrose, said to have been located in a 'dirty, dingy coal cellar' under St Giles Cathedral. (*Chambers Journal*, 3 August 1878). In 1880 a stone plaque ('Montrose 1661') was laid in the Montrose Aisle of St Giles to mark the burial of Montrose. Six years later, following Queen Victoria's jubilee visit to Edinburgh that year, a public subscription campaign was instituted by the duke of Montrose to fund a fitting tribute to the first marquis. The result was Robert Rowand Anderson's memorial in St Giles Cathedral, executed by the sculptor William Birnie Rhind, followed in 1893 by the stained glass window above by Alexander Ballantine. (*Scotsman* 14 August 1880, 21 May 1887.)

- 47 The reception of Samuel Rawson Gardiner's history of the Civil War showed the persistence of the dichotomies of an earlier age: *A History of the Great Civil War, 1642–1649* 3 vols (London: Longmans, Green & Co, 1886–1891). Yet for some Tories, Gardiner (a Liberal) did not go far enough in his partial rehabilitation of Montrose. See 'Montrose and Dr Gardiner', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, April 1892, pp. 537–48.
- 48 Catriona M. M. Macdonald, *Whaur Extremes Meet: Scotland's twentieth century* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 2009), pp. 318–19.
- 49 'Montrose and Argyll in Fiction', *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, January 1899, pp. 93–105.
- 50 *The Bookman*, December 1898, p. 84, *The Academy*, 29 October 1898.
- 51 *The Outlook* 5 Nov. 1898, p. 439.
- 52 *The Academy* 29 October 1898.
- 53 John Buchan published his first biography of Montrose, *The Marquis of Montrose*, in 1913 (London, Thomas Nelson & Co, 1913), and a revised and more mature scholarly version, *Montrose*, in 1928 (London, Thomas Nelson & Co, 1928).
- 54 Margaret Irwin, *The Proud Servant* (Feltham: Hamlyn, 1979 ed.), p. 139.
- 55 Margaret Irwin, *The Bride* (London: Pan Books, 1969 ed.), p. 215. On Montrose's relationship with Louise, see E. J. Cowan, *Montrose: for covenant and king* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1977), pp. 269–70.
- 56 *Scotsman*, 8 November 1939.
- 57 Margaret Irwin was a close friend of the historian Dame Veronica Wedgwood (C. V. Wedgwood) who, in 1952 published a 'brief' biography of Montrose for the reading public, *Montrose* (London: Collins, 1952).
- 58 Nigel Tranter, *The Young Montrose*, (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1984 ed.), p. 42.
- 59 The author is currently engaged in a research project, funded by the Carnegie Trust for the Universities of Scotland and the University of Glasgow, which addresses the contribution of Nigel Tranter, John Prebble and other authors to Scottish historiography in the twentieth century.
- 60 Max Hastings, *Montrose: the king's champion* (London: Victor Gollancz, 1977).
- 61 The author would like to record her thanks to William McIlvanney for allowing her access to this MS. *Montrose* is a play in five acts, and was written before McIlvanney's literary career took off, when he was working as a school teacher.
- 62 See 'Symposium' in *The Bookman*, October 1898, pp. 10–13.
- 63 Douglas Gifford has noted that 'Munro shows the Lowlands changing Inveraray'. Douglas Gifford, 'John Splendids and Jaunty Jocks', in Ronald W. Renton and Brian D. Osborne (eds), *Exploring New Roads: Essays on Neil Munro* (Colonsay: House of Lochar, 2003), pp. 37–67, at 54.
- 64 Neil Munro, *John Splendid* (New York: Dodd, Mead & Co, 1898 ed.), p. 195
- 65 John Buchan, *Witchwood*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993 ed.), p. 47.
- 66 Robin Jenkins, *Lady Magdalen* (Edinburgh: Canongate, 2003), p. 161.
- 67 McIlvanney, through Montrose and others, repeatedly speaks of Scotland, as in Act V where Montrose addresses Argyll: 'You ceased to think of Scotland, and thought only of yourself.' (William McIlvanney, *Montrose: A Play*, p. 160.)
- 68 McIlvanney, *Montrose*, Act I, Scene 1.
- 69 Munro, *John Splendid*, p. 244.
- 70 *Ibid.*, pp. 79, 322.
- 71 Buchan, *Witchwood*, p. 116.
- 72 *Ibid.*, p. 169.

- 73 Jenkins, *Lady Magdalen*, p. 196.
- 74 Maurice Walsh, *And No Quarter* (London: W & R Chalmers, 1937).
- 75 See Jenkins, *Lady Magdalen*, p. 195.
- 76 Munro, *John Splendid*, pp. 102–03.
- 77 Jenkins, *Lady Magdalen*, pp. 71, 137, 209, 82, 86, 130.
- 78 Munro also addressed this theme in poetry. See ‘The Sergeant of Pikes’ in Bob Preston (ed.), *Bagpipe Ballads and Other Poems*, (Glasgow: Kennedy & Boyd, 2010), p. 27.
- 79 Munro, *John Splendid*, pp. 33, 78.
- 80 Jenkins, *Lady Magdalen*, pp. 130, 162, 191, 218, 238.
- 81 McIlvanney, *Montrose*, p. 88.
- 82 Buchan, *Witchwood*, 288.
- 83 *Ibid.*, p. 188.
- 84 Munro, *John Splendid*, p. 61.
- 85 *Ibid.*, p. 295.
- 86 *Ibid.*, p. 302.
- 87 McIlvanney, *Montrose*, Act V.
- 88 Jenkins, *Lady Magdalen*, pp. 50, 259, 274, 34, 243.
- 89 *Witchwood*, pp. 43, 36.
- 90 McIlvanney read Buchan’s second biography of Montrose before writing his play and still in conversation refers to the marquis as a ‘man of principle’.
- 91 McIlvanney, *Montrose*, p. 53.
- 92 *Witchwood*, p. 64.
- 93 *Ibid.*, p. 173.
- 94 McIlvanney, *Montrose*, pp. 32–33.
- 95 Jenkins, *Lady Magdalen*, pp. 8, 12, 37, 101, 107, 128.
- 96 *Ibid.*, p. 219.
- 97 *Ibid.*, p. 328.
- 98 A similar case might be made for the histories written since the Second World War. David Stevenson’s *The Scottish Revolution, 1637–1644* (Newton Abbot: David & Charles, 1973), Ronald William’s 1975 publication, *Montrose: cavalier in Mourning* (London: Barrie & Jenkins, 1975), Ted Cowan’s 1977 biography *Montrose: For Covenant and King* and Allan Macinnes’s biography of the marquis of Argyll, *The British Confederate* (2011) have transformed our appreciation of the seventeenth century, bringing out nuances and offering revisionist readings of the careers of some of the most controversial characters of these years.
- 99 James J. Smyth and Michael Penman, ‘Reputations and national identity, or, what do our heroes say about us?’ *Etudes Ecosaises* 10 (2005), pp. 11–23.