THE MYTH OF THE ALLIANCE BETWEEN CHARLEMAGNE AND THE ANCIENT SCOTTISH KINGS*

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For a thousand years prior to the eighteenth century belief in the alliance between the ancient Scottish kings and Charlemagne (742-814) was never doubted in Western European countries, especially by the English who spent those centuries from the Later Middle Ages at war with either or both Scotland and France. Indeed, the firmly held belief in the antiquity of this alliance gradually gained importance as a tool of propaganda and was used to strengthen French and Scottish documents of state, treaties and marriage contracts between France and Scotland. However, to a greater or lesser degree all historical phenomena have their realities and myths, their facts and fables which surround them and are inherent within them. But the 'Auld Alliance', as the Scots referred to their relationship with France, is more than usually endowed with fable, whilst the facts have often been obscured, selectively refined, or omitted altogether. In the seventeenth century the French historiographer Godefroy[1] was so inspired with the fabulous story of the alliance formed between 'Achaius 65 Roy d'Escosse et Charlemagne',[2] which he had chosen to include in his collection of royal treaties, that he searched the ancient annals of France and came to the conclusion that:

> One has never found in any writings that the Scots were
> ever, or are, treasonous against the French but they
> have always remained loyal and faithful, giving them

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[1] 'The Godefroy Collection, conserved today at the Bibliothèque de l'Institut [de France, Paris], was collected almost entirely during the second and third quarters of the 17th century by Théodore and Denis Godefroy, father and son, both of whom were royal historiographers of France', *Catalogue Général des Manuscrits des Bibliothèques Publiques de France: Paris: Bibliothèque de L'Institut: Collection Godefroy*, ed., F. Géblin (Paris, 1914) p. 1.

[2] Bibliothèque de l'Institut de France; Collection Godefroy, MS. 512, fols 297r - 302r.

good assistance in times of their necessity, stemming
entirely from pure friendship as good and friendly
neighbours.[3]

Godefroy's 'Discourse on the League between France and Scotland',
is a variation of a number of similar discourses apparently spawned in the
seventeenth century from David Chambers of Ormond's *Abridged History
of all the Kings of France, England and Scotland, placed in harmonic
order: containing also a brief discourse of the ancient alliance and mutual
assistance between France and Scotland, plus abridged histories of the
Roman Popes and Emperors and those Kings*, published in Paris in 1579. In
the same publication he added another discourse on: *The most remarkable
research concerning the state of Scotland*, dedicated to Mary, Queen of
Scots; and the *Discourse of the legitimate succession of women to their
parents possessions: and the government of princesses [queens] of Empires
and Kingdoms*, dedicated to Catherine de Medici, and the entire publication
was dedicated by Chambers to the French king, Henri III, in 1579.[4]
Chambers' background was outlined in a 'Lecture' delivered at Bordeaux
on 5 October 1909 by James MacKinnon, the then Professor of
Ecclesiastical History at Edinburgh University, who said that:

David Chambers of Ormond had been a lord or judge
of the Court of Session in Edinburgh before he was
forced to flee to France in 1567. He was evidently a
Roman Catholic and an adherent of Queen Mary, and
was in straitened circumstances when he bethought him
of turning historian and writing this labouriously
compiled historical compendium which shows not even
a pretence of critical spirit, and the dedication is a
thinly disguised begging letter.[5]

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3   *Ibid,* fol. 302[r].
4   D. Chambre [Chambers], Histoire Abbregée de tous les Roys de France,
    Angleterre et Escosse, mise en ordre par forme d'harmonie: contenant aussi
    un brief discours de l'ancienne alliance, et mutual secours entre la France et
    l'Escosse, plus l'épitome de l'histoire Romaine des Papes, Empereurs y est
    adiouste, et celle d'iceux roys augmentée selon la mesme methode (Paris,
    1579). In the same publication he added: La recerche des singularitz plus
    remarquables, concernant l'estat d,Escosse, dedicated to Mary, Queen of
    Scots; and Discours de la Legitime succession des femmes aux possessions
    de leurs parens: et du gouvernement des princesses aux Empires et
    Royaumes, dedicated to Catherine de Medici (Paris, 1579).
5   J. MacKinnon, 'The Franco-Scottish League in the Fourteenth Century',
    Transactions of the Franco-Scotttish Society, (1910) p. 221, n.1; reprinted in

The late Dr. John Durkan says that Chambers was 'a beneficed man, provost of Crichton and chancellor of Ross as successor to his uncle, had been present in Rome for Pope Paul IV's election in 1555, and had probably been an alumnus of Aberdeen before his higher studies at Paris and Louvain'.[6]

Writing one hundred years later Godefroy prefaced his 'Discourse' with a long preamble, but came around to essentially the same proposition to be found in other versions of the manuscripts of 'Preuve de l'Escosse Francois... [Proof of a French Scotland]' to be found in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, and the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, and another published in *Papers relative to the Royal Guard of Scottish Archers in France,* (1835). Also, included in volume two of P. Abercromby's, *The Martial Achievements of the Scots Nation, being an account of the lives, characters and memorable actions as have signalized themselves by the sword at home and abroad,* which was published in Edinburgh (1711-15) is an account of the 'Confederations contracted between the Kings and Queens of France and Scotland signed by his majesty in the year 791'. Furthermore, in the National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh, is an Advocates Manuscripts volume (A complete copy of this manuscript volume is also located in the Harleian Collection at the British Library, London) is another version of *'L'Ecosse Français'* (French Scotland) in the 'Complaints of the Scots Guards to King Louis XIII in 1612'.

> This Manuscript [volume] is described by Bishop Robert Keith in his history of the affairs of the Church and State in Scotland as "a fine large MS [manuscript] in the Lawyer's Library, containing all the treaties etc. betwixt our Kings and the Kings of France. It is said that this was transcribed from the Registers of France by order of the late King Louis XIV, and given as a present by that monarch to Graham, Viscount Preston, Minister from our King Charles II to the Court of France, who requested to have this in place of a gift of gold".

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the *Scottish Historical Review*, [SHR] VII (1920), pp. 119-129 [hereafter MacKinnon, 'Franco-Scottish League'].

[6]   J. Durkan, 'The Library of Mary, Queen of Scots', in M. Lynch (ed.), *Mary Stewart, Queen in Three Kingdoms, Innes Review*, XXXVIII (1987), pp. 77-8; reprinted by Basil Blackwell (Oxford, 1988).

Although the year that the alliance between Charlemagne and the ancient Scottish kings is said to have taken place varies: 777, 789, 790 or 791 are the years most often cited.[7]

According to Godefroy, after the conclusion of the ancient treaty of alliance Achaius not only made war against the English but also sent ambassadors to France accompanied by his brother, William, and 4,000 men to assist Charlemagne against the Saracens. He further claims that Achaius sent four scholars, who had been disciples of Bede, named Clemens, Johannes, Rabanus and Alcuinus, to France where Clemens is said to have founded the University of Paris. William, who was known in the ancient annals of France as 'Gillemer the Scot', is said to have assisted Charlemagne during his wars in Spain in the year 790. It is also claimed that William was sent to Italy to bring the city-state of Florence under the obedience of France and it was there that William is said to have met 'Johannes, called the Scot', who they say founded the University of Pavia. Later, Johannes accompanied William to Germany where it is claimed that they founded fifteen abbeys, two of which were in Cologne and the others in lands [unidentified] belonging to the Scots.[8]

Godefroy also cites Hector Boece and the latter's authorities in his 'Discours'. Boece, or Boethius, was born in Dundee and studied and obtained an M.A. degree at the University of Paris in 1494. His *History* of the Scots, first published in 1526, was dedicated to James Beaton, Archbishop of St. Andrews and Chancellor during the minority of James V. According to Father Thomas Innes in his, *A Critical Essay on the Ancient Inhabitants of the North-Parts of Britain or Scotland,* first published in

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[7]   'Preuve de l'Escosse francois...', Bibliothéque Nationale, Paris [B.N.], Coll. Dupy, 33, fols 286-288; 'L'Ecosse francoise...', Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, MA 239; *L'Ecosse Francois ...,* Paris, (1608) repr. in *Papers relative to the Royal Guard of Scottish Archers in France,* Maitland Club, 36 (1835). P. Abercromby, *The Martial Achievements of the Scots Nation, being an account of the lives, characters and memorable actions as have signalized themselves by the sword at home and abroad,* 2 vols, Edinburgh, (1711-1715), vol. 1, p. 83, and vol. 2, p. iv; 'Confederations contractees entre les Roys et Reynes de france et d'Escosse signez de sa majeste, L'an 791', National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh [N.L.S.], Adv. MSS. 35.1.5, fols 2-3, and British Library, London [B.L.], Harleian Coll. 1244, fols 14-15; 'Plaincte des Gardes Escossoises au Roy [Louis XIII] ... l'an 1612', *Ibid,* fols 284-293, and *Ibid,* fols 327-336; see also, B.L. Additional MS. 30666, fols 295-299.

[8]   Bibliothèque de l'Institut de France, Coll. Godefroy, MS. 512, fols 297^v and 298^r.

1729, Boece wished to present models of virtuous kings to the young King of Scots, and these then became the main source for the myths elaborated by the sixteenth and seventeenth-century authors.[9] Among the sources which Boece used were the Chronicle of Inch-Colm, Bishop William Elphinston's history, also that of Turgot, Bishop of St. Andrews, but chiefly those of Veremundus, John Campbell and of Cornelius Hybernicus. Innes says that the writings and memorials of Veremund, John Campbell and 'Boece's *History* of the first forty kings... and over and above what is to be found in [the Chronicle of] John Fordun, are but late inventions about Boece's own time'.[10] Subsequently, asserts P. Hume Brown, it was from the Scottish translation of Boece's *History* from the Latin by Archdeacon Bellenden,[11] that the English annalist Holinshed appropriated certain passages for his *Chronicles of England*, in which Shakespeare found the nucleus for *Macbeth.* It gained a wider audience when it was also translated by the royal cosmographer of France, and thus Boece, who 'relates the lives and fortunes of successive kings of Scots whose portraits adorn the walls of Holyrood, [meant that] his narrative materially helped to convey the impression, long prevalent on the Continent, that the Scottish monarchy was the oldest in Europe'.[12] Dr Roger Mason observes that 'in the Picture Gallery of the Palace of Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh hang the portraits of 111 Scottish kings [which were] commissioned by Charles II and painted by a Dutch artist, Jacob de Witt'. These drab and undistinguished portraits are, asserts Dr Mason,

> an outstanding visual record of an historical mythology
> which for several centuries played a critical role in the
> development of Scottish national consciousness.

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9   T. Innes, 'A Critical Essay on the Ancient Inhabitants of the North-Parts of Britain or Scotland', reprinted from the original edition of 1729 (Edinburgh, 1879), pp. 130-132.

10   Innes, 'A Critical Essay on the Ancient Inhabitants of the North-Parts of Britain or Scotland', pp. 132 and 135.

11   In an excellent essay Dr Nicola Royan addresses the inconsistencies of Bellenden's translation into the Scots' language from the Latin of Hector Boece, which he presented to James V in 1533, makes no reference to any differentiation between Boece and Bellenden's translation regarding Boece's *History* of the first forty kings of Scots, 'The relationship between the *Scotorum Historia* of Hector Boece and John Belleden's *Chronicles of Scotland*', in *The Rose and the Thistle: Essays on the Culture of Late Medieval and Renaissance Scotland*, eds., Sally Mapstone and Juliette Wood (East Linton, Scotland, 1998) pp. 136-157.

12   P. Hume Brown, 'Intellectual influences of Scotland on the Continent', *SHR*, XI (1914), p.127.

Throughout the later middle ages and well into the early modern period, the long illustrious line of kings was repeatedly invoked, not primarily to legitimise Stewart kingship, but to demonstrate the antiquity and autonomy of the Scottish kingdom. ... In particular, as the enduring symbol of the kingdom's original and continuing independence, the ancient line of kings supplied a vital counterweight to an English historiographical tradition which insisted that Scotland was and always had been a dependency of the crown of England.[13]

Other myths, according to Dr. Jenny Wormald, 'which asserted that the Scots were descendants of the Greek Prince Gathelos and his Egyptian wife Scota, gave grounds for scoring off the English with their Trojan descent, for everyone knew that the Greeks beat the Trojans'.[14] As for the fabulous Scottish alliance with Charlemagne, Professor MacKinnon says 'there was neither a France nor a Scotland in the national sense to enter into a treaty with each other at the end of the eighth century, even if there had been a Scottish King Achaius who was willing to do so'. Professor MacKinnon says that 'there are some names in the *Chronicles of the Picts and Scots,* edited by Skene, that might probably be Latinised into Achaius. eg: MacEachach, Heochgain and Eogheche', but 'at this period,' he says, 'the term "Scotia" was applied to Ireland, and what after became Scotland was then designated Alban or Albania'.[15] Professor Ted Cowan observes that 'Dicuil, writing about 825 describes Ireland as *nostra Scotia,* to distinguish it from the other Scotia'.[16]

In the sixteenth-century George Buchanan also took up the whole fabulous story of the ancient "forty kings" in his *Rerum Scoticarum Historia,* first published in 1582. Earlier, in 1558, he had referred to it in his poem, *Epithalamium*, composed to celebrate the marriage of Mary Queen of Scots to the dauphin, Francis:

13   R. A. Mason, 'Scotching the Brut: Politics, History and National Myth in Sixteenth-Century Britain', in R. Mason, ed., *Scotland and England, 1286-1815* (Edinburgh, 1987) p. 60.

14   J. Wormald, *Court, Kirk, and Community: Scotland 1470-1625* (London: Edward Arnold, 1981), p. 66. For a lengthy elaboration of this myth see; W. Matthews, 'The Egyptians in Scotland: The Political History of a Myth', *Viator,* 1 (1970), pp. 289-306.

15   MacKinnon, 'Franco-Scottish League', p. 222, n. 2.

16   E. J. Cowan, 'Myth and Identity in Early Medieval Scotland', *SHR,* LXIII (1984), p. 130.

And old descent
Is hers; a hundred ancestors have sent
Her crown to her; and twice a thousand years
Stretches the line of those august compeers.[17]

This fable, created by early Scottish historians, however, was very convincingly overturned in 1729 by Father Thomas Innes, vice-principle of the Scots College in Paris. Professor Hugh Trevor-Roper argues that Innes's *Critical Essay* 'was a brilliant work, the beginning of true historical scholarship in Scotland'; and in it 'he showed that Buchanan's sole source for these 700 years and for the forty kings who were said to have reigned in them, was the *Scotorum Historiae* of Hector Boece'.[18] Dr. Ian Rae says that Innes, with the exception of Buchanan, 'regards earlier Scottish historical writers highly as far as their reputation is concerned'. However, Dr Rae says that according to Innes, 'Buchanan deliberately distorted the past against all reason to support the tenets of his past political philosophy, an opinion which Innes supports by rational argument'. Dr Rae says that Innes concluded that 'Boethius's sources, especially Veremundus, could not have come from the twelfth century, but were fifteenth-century forgeries which Boethius had accepted in good faith... If Veremundus was a forgery (and no manuscript had survived for Innes to analyse) then not only Boethius's history of the period but also Buchanan's fell utterly to the ground, and the whole history of the early kings of Scotland, including the democratic principles on which their rule was conducted, was exposed as a myth'.[19]

Myths, however, are not easy to dispel. More than a century after the publication of Innes's work, Monsieur Francisque-Michel published in 1862, *The Scots in France and the French in Scotland*, citing David Chambers' sixteenth-century *Abridged History...*, 'as an authority for the medieval treaties between the kings of Scotland and France'.[20] Michel's *Scots in France...*, fundamental to any examination of the 'Auld Alliance',

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[17] *George Buchanan: A Memorial, 1506-1906*, ed., D.A. Millar (1907) [hereafter Millar, *George Buchanan*], p. 312.

[18] H. R. Trevor-Roper, 'George Buchanan and the Ancient Scottish Constitution', *English Historical Review,* Supplement 3 (1966), p. 1.

[19] T. I. Rae, 'Historical Scepticism in Scotland before David Hume', in *Studies in the Eighteenth Century, II*, papers presented at the Second David Nichol Smith Memorial Seminar, Canberra (Canberra: ANU Press, 1973), p. 216 and pp. 218-9.

[20] MacKinnon, 'Franco-Scottish League', p. 221, and n. 1, *cf,* F. Michel, *Les Écossais en France et les Français en Écosse*, 2 vols (London, 1862), vol. 1, pp. 30-1.

is packed with seemingly every literary, chronicled and secondary source and some documentary evidence, available in France up to the middle of the nineteenth century and much from Scotland and England as well: a veritable treasure-trove of Franco-Scottish fact, fable and trivia in one glorious *mélange*. It is, without doubt, an ideal text for novelists, poets, fiction writers and storytellers. Thus, extreme caution should be exercised in referring to it in any historiographical work. To extract fact from fable in Michel's *opus* would be an immense undertaking, and one which most historians would shirk; indeed, it is probably best left in its nineteenth-century aspic. Dr Alan Macquarrie obviously decided to do so in his *Scotland and the Crusades, 1095-1560* (1985). He does not cite Michel's work at all, even though there are many references to Scots and the Crusades in it. Michel's *opus* certainly poses a problem for historians, which should not be ignored, and one which Macquarrie possibly dealt with in his doctoral thesis which was the genesis for his book.[21] Dr Brian Ditcham encountered the same problem in his doctoral thesis, in which he describes one episode as being 'the basis of Francisque-Michel's typically garbled account'.[22] Also in the nineteenth century, J.H. Burton's *The Scot Abroad,* cannot be ignored. This title was originally designated as volume two and the first volume was to have been entitled, *The Ancient League with France,* but owing to constraints on the author's time the two volumes were amalgamated and published in 1864, two years after Michel's work which Burton praises highly. Burton seems overwhelmed by Michel's bibliographical detail for, unlike Michel's work, this book has very few footnotes and no bibliography.[23]

To return to the myth of Charlemagne's alliance with the ancient Scottish kings. There is no doubt, following the expulsion of the French and the institution of the Scottish Reformation in 1560, that many seventeenth-century Scots would have disagreed with their contemporary, Godefroy, and his choice of sentiments in his footnote. But in 1552, only twenty-seven years prior to David Chambers' dedication of his *Abridged History...* to the French king Henri III,[24] the Privy Council of Scotland decided that: 'a

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[21] Alan Macquarrie, *Scotland and the Crusades, 1095-1560* (Edinburgh, 1985); *cf*, Michel, *Les Écossais en France*, vol. 1, pp. 12-3.

[22] B. G. H. Ditcham, 'The Employment of Foreign Mercenary Troops in the French Royal Armies, 1415-1470', Unpublished Ph. D. thesis, University of Edinburgh (1979), p. 15, *cf,* Michel, *Les Écossais en France*, p. 118.

[23] J. H. Burton, *The Scot Abroad* (Edinburgh, 1864), reprinted (London, 1898), pp.155-160. For a brief overview of the 15th century see, A.I. Dunlop, *Scots Abroad in the Fifteenth Century,* Historical Association Pamphlet (London, 1942).

[24] Chambers, *Histoire Abbregée,* pp. 8-10.

certain number of able-bodied men should be sent to France' in support of 'the most Christian King, [Henri II]'; always conforming with the 'lieges, bonds, friendship and alliance which have stood for a long time between the realms of Scotland and France', and renewed by their kings since the time of 'Achaius king of Scotland and Charlemagne king of France'. Also, recently [1543] between 'our sovereign Lady [Mary Queen of Scots] and Francis I, the late king of France, as is required by his special letters [patent]'.[25] A few years earlier, in 1549, Henri II had circulated letters of mandate to the bishoprics of France for funds to aid the Scots, 'as much as to recognize the ancient alliances between the kingdoms of France and Scotland, inviolably observed since the king Charlemagne, ... as to not abandon the said Scots, ancient and perpetual friends and allies of the French crown'.[26] Indeed, the ancient alliance of Charlemagne with the Scots is implicit in the marriage treaty of 1558 between Mary Queen of Scots and the dauphin Francis, Henri II's son. It was, asserted Henri, for 'the entire and perfect benevolence that is naturally present between the kings and kingdoms of France and Scotland who have reigned until now', that they have considered that each of 'their own affairs as if they were each others', and that during '800 years they have both followed the same path not only in time of peace but also during the greater perils and hazards of war'.[27] George Buchanan is more specific in his *Epithalamium* which he composed for Mary's marriage:

> Charlemagne ... bound our Scotia in a loyal league,
> Strong gainst all force, and strong gainst all intrigue,
> No years can waste it, and change comes not near
> Save for a holier love, a bond more dear.
> Ambition fails; War's fury breaks not down
> Our Scotia's union with the lily crown.[28]

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[25]   'Apud Edinburgh, ultimo Novembris, anno etc. V^e quinquagesimo secundo [30 Nov.1552] ... the which day, it is declared by my Lord Governor and Lords of Secret Council…,' *The Register of the Privy Council of Scotland* (vol. 1, 1545-1569), ed. J. H. Burton (Edinburgh, 1877), vol. 1, p. 129.

[26]   B.L., Additional Charters 12476. For a full transcription of this document see: Elizabeth Bonner (ed.), *The Scots and the French Army, 1547-1559: French Financial and Military Documents Concerning Scotland During the Reign of Henri II*, Scottish History Society, 5th Series (Edinburgh, forthcoming).

[27]   Archives Nationales [hereafter AN], Trésor des Chartes [hereafter Tr. des Ch.] J. 680, No. 63; AN, AE II, 646; NLS, Adv. MS. 35.1.5, fo. 203; and BL, Harl. 1244, fo. 239.

[28]   Millar, *George Buchanan*, p. 313.

The firm belief by sixteenth and seventeenth-century Scots in the antiquity of their alliance with Charlemagne, notwithstanding their attitude to it, especially after the institution of the Scottish Reformation in 1560, was shown by Innes in the eighteenth century to have absolutely no foundation. But it was eagerly taken up by Scots and French alike in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As Professor Donaldson points out, 'history is the story not only of what happened but of what men believed: the point is that people believed in the antiquity of the Franco-Scottish alliance and such a belief added to its force from a propagandist angle'.[29]

Once the shrouds of Scottish mist have been lifted from those remaining verifiable facts concerning the 'Auld Alliance' a very different picture begins to emerge, especially regarding the role played by France in the politics, government, institutions and culture of Scotland and, crucially, the reaction of England during the initial period of 265 years in particular. Aspects of this ancient tripartite relationship have already been examined elsewhere[30] but in general terms it can be summarized as follows. The 'Auld Alliance', as the Scots referred to their relationship with France, was signed by every Scottish and French monarch (with the exception of Louis XI) from 1295 to the mid-sixteenth century.[31] It was first and foremost a military defensive/offensive alliance with France against England, which was signed in order to curtail the incursions and hegemonic ambitions of Edward I, and it has generally been held to have ended with the death, on 5 December 1560, of Francis II, Mary Queen of Scots' first husband, both of whom were the first and last king and queen of both France and Scotland.[32]

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[29]   Gordon Donaldson, *The Auld Alliance: The Franco-Scottish Connection* (Tillicoultry, 1985), p. 24.

[30]   Elizabeth Bonner, 'Continuing the 'Auld Alliance' in the 16th Century: Scots in France and French in Scotland'; in Grant G. Simpson (ed.), *The Scottish Soldier Abroad, 1247-1967* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1992), pp. 31-46; Elizabeth Bonner, 'Scotland's 'Auld Alliance' with France, 1295-1560', *History,* 84, 273 (1999), pp. 5-30; Elizabeth Bonner, 'Charles VII's dynastic policy and the 'Auld Alliance': The Marriage of James II and Marie de Gueldres', *Innes Review*, 54 (2003), pp. 142-85; 'The Earl of Huntly and the King of France, 1548: Man for Rent', *English Historical Review*, CXX, 485 (2005), pp. 80-103.

[31]   For a table of Franco-Scottish Alliances, treaties and grants from 1295-1661 see, Elizabeth Bonner, 'French Naturalization of the Scots in the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries', *The Historical Journal*, 40, 4 (1997), pp. 1102-1103.

[32]   Act of parliament, 29 Nov. 1558, *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland, 1124-1707,* eds., T. Thomson and C. Innes (12 vols, Edinburgh, 1814-1875), vol. 2, p. 506.

From its very shaky beginnings in 1295 the 'Auld Alliance' gradually developed other familial, personal, social and cultural associations which did not die with Francis II, and indeed did not ever entirely disappear. The expansion of the 'Auld Alliance' from its military origins accelerated in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries with significant Scottish support for the French against England, particularly in the fifteenth century during the reign of the dauphin Charles (later Charles VII), during the Hundred Years War. The sterling efforts of the Scots were richly rewarded, for their role in the ultimate French victory, with lands, titles and pensions by the grateful French king.[33] Then, in the sixteenth century when Scottish sovereignty was again threatened by Henry VIII the French, under the terms of the 'Auld Alliance', came to the aid of the Scots. Thus, it was the advent of Mary Queen of Scots and the Anglo-French competition for her hand in marriage, culminating in treaties, alliances and military engagements in which the French were victorious, which resulted in the dominant role of France in the government of Scotland. Ultimately, this led to the apogee of the 'Auld Alliance' in 1558 with the marriage of Mary to Francis and the union of the French and Scottish crowns. Whilst the effects of the Habsburg-Valois conflicts on the Continent in the 1550s, which inevitably included England and Scotland, were to lead to the end of the formal military 'Auld Alliance' in 1560.[34]

It is only with the benefit of hindsight, however, that the 'Auld (mutually defensive/offensive military) Alliance' between France and Scotland against England can be said to have ended with the Anglo-Scottish peace treaty of Edinburgh on 6 July 1560; that after 265 years there would never be another formal military alliance between France and Scotland. Indeed, in 1560, contemporary Scots and French were firmly convinced that their 'Auld Alliance' stretched back over eight centuries to the time of Charlemagne; that this treaty was probably seen as only another of a number of vicissitudes the 'Auld Alliance' had suffered over the centuries. It is also doubtful if any contemporary could have predicted the nature and impact of the Reformation in Scotland, or the effects of the civil wars, or 'Wars of Religion' as they are known by some, which were soon to break out in France or, indeed, the future role of England's foreign policy in both France and Scotland.

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[33]   Bonner, 'Scotland's 'Auld Alliance' with France', pp. 11-18.

[34]   For a greater elaboration of these themes see Elizabeth Bonner, *The Betrothal of Mary Queen of Scots: Tudor and Valois Politique and Intrigue in Scotland, 1543-1560* (forthcoming).

The 'Auld Alliance' fell into abeyance during the second half of the sixteenth century at the time of the religious upheavals in France and Scotland but it was to be picked up with renewed vigour in the 1590s during the reigns of Henri IV of France and James VI of Scotland; then it slowly declined after the union of the Scottish and English crowns in 1603 with the advent of James VI as James I of England following the death of Elizabeth; the decline becoming more rapid following the parliamentary union of the two kingdoms in 1707. In any case, the 'Auld Alliance' had long since ceased to be just a military alliance. Notwithstanding the end of formal treaties between Scotland and France, there has persisted to the present day a sense of understanding, of friendship and comradeship, of shared cultural and social links, which do not exist with the remainder of Great Britain, especially with the 'Auld Enemy'; England. Over the centuries France and Scotland had developed many other social, cultural, architectural, commercial, artistic, literary and educational links which certainly did not cease in 1560, and were much stronger than the fairly fragile peace with England.

It is beyond the scope of this article to examine the French influence on Scottish language and literature, art and architecture, legal institutions and education, or, for example, the establishment of the Scots College in 1326, which provided a focus for Scottish students studying in Paris. Dr John Durkan says that W.A McNeill 'calculated 800 [Scottish student] names at Paris from between 1492 and 1633'.[35] It was indeed unfortunate that the accumulation of these centuries of scholarship was rudely interrupted at the time of the French Revolution when the Scots College library of books and precious manuscripts was ultimately scattered to the four winds. Violette Montagu asserts that 'on the 15th Nivôse, an II de la République (14 January 1794), the Commune ordered the confiscation of all the valuables owned by the Scottish College; on the 18th of this same month the commissioners of the Section of the Sans-Culottes executed this order... and soon after the college archives and library were removed to the Bureau du Domaine National'.[36] She continues that 'it is much to be regretted that so little is known about the library. The first mention we find of it is in a document, preserved at the Archives Nationales, dated 1660, when it appears to have possessed 30 printed volumes and about 225

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[35]   John Durkan, 'The French Connection in the Sixteenth and early Seventeenth Centuries', *Scotland and Europe, 1200-1850,* ed., T.C. Smout (Edinburgh, 1986) p. 19; see also, D.E.R. Watt, 'Scottish University Men of the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries', *Ibid*, pp. 1-18.

[36]   Violette M. Montagu, 'The Scottish College in Paris', *SHR*, iv (1907), 409.

manuscripts'.[37] For example, James VII & II had bequeathed his "Memoirs" to the College which was just one of the manuscripts which disappeared during the French Revolution and/or the First Republic'[38] It is also not possible to examine here the Scottish influence in France of Scots such as John Major and George Buchanan both of whom studied and taught at the University of Paris in the early sixteenth century, and either of whom may have caused Erasmus to remark that the Scots 'plume themselves on their skill in dialectic subtleties'.[39] Moreover, there are also the contributions of Thomas Reid, David Hume and Adam Smith in the eighteenth century, to what was known in France as the "Scottish School of Philosophy", and to which Auguste Comte attributed his own evolution 'in the first instance especially due to some luminous inspirations of Hume and Adam Smith'. [40]

By this time Father Thomas Innes, in his *Critical Essay...* first published in 1729, had also extinguished the myth of the ancient alliance between Charlemagne and Achaius. Yet there remains a curious reference to the donation of 'la terre d'Ecoussais [the land of the Scot]' by 'Raoul Mauclavel, son of Giraud de Soutiers, to the abbot Pierre', in a charter of 1120 of the Abbey of Absie.[41] The origins of the Abbey seem to have commenced 'at the beginning of the twelfth century at Absie where there was an abandoned church in which a hermit called Pierre de Bunt supervised a cult with the authorisation of Pierre, bishop of Poitiers in 1115... who granted the monastic habit to Pierre de Bunt and his companions and transformed the hermitage into an Abbey, of which Pierre was appointed the first abbot, on 6 April 1120'.[42] According to E. Raison, who published a history of the Abbey in 1936, 'the text of the charter contains a hole which does not allow us determine to which Abbey was given possession of the land of the Scot'.[43] Unfortunately, further research

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37 Montagu, 'The Scottish College in Paris', pp. 405-06.

38 Montagu, 'The Scottish College in Paris', p. 404; for further information see, Brian M. Hallaron, *The Scots College, Paris, 1603-1792* (Edinburgh: John Donald, 1997).

39 A remark which 'Galileo also made a century later'. Brown, 'Intellectual Influences', p. 13.

40 Brown, 'Intellectual Influences', pp. 125.

41 *Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques,* eds., A. Baudrillart, A. Vogt et U. Rouzies (Paris, 1912), vol. 1, col. 204.

42 Ibid, col. 202, cf, Ledain, Cartulaires et Chartes de l'abbaye de l'Absie (Archives Historiques du Poitu), vol. XXV (1895), pp. 7-8.

43 'Ut "mihi indulgeatur injuria et damnum quod fecerunt religiosi [here the text is missing] Durandi monachis et fratribus Absiae quando consilio et consensu meo, terram de Escozai illis abstulerunt"', E. Raison, Abbaye de l'Absie, p. 201, n. 3, cf, Ledain, Cartulaires, p. 57, No. 374.

on the Abbey of Absie has been rendered almost impossible because, apart from fifty documents, the archives of the Abbey of Absie were destroyed by a fire at the Departmental Archives at Deux-Sèvres in 1805, where they had been re-located during the French Revolution.

The point of interest lies in the fact that the "terram de Escozai" [44] (the land of a Scot) is mentioned in 1120 in a charter of the Abbey of Absie, which was subsequently to be granted in the sixteenth century to David Paniter, bishop of Ross, and James Beaton, bishop of Glasgow (both Scottish ambassadors to the French court) by the French king, Henri II, for diplomatic services rendered to France. A coincidence perhaps, but who was the Scot who possessed land near Poitiers which by the beginning of the twelfth century had come into the hands of Raoul Mauclavel, whose name does not sound particularly Scottish?[45] It seems unlikely to have been a donation to a Scot for services rendered in the First Crusade which Macquarrie says, 'was an international movement which involved not only France and Italy... but also remote parts of Northern Europe, including Scotland'.[46] The First Crusaders did not begin to return to Europe until the early twelfth century, thus the land must have been acquired in at least the eleventh or possibly the tenth century, probably for military service, although at this time in European history this Scot may have come from Ireland; even though he may have been known as Scottish or called a Scot. This chronology brings the "terram de Escozai" much closer to the time of Charlemagne and makes one wonder whether there might have been some reality in the myth after all?

It would seem, however, that the eighteenth-century historians, supported by their twentieth-century successors, have more than satisfactorily shown that the alliance between the ancient Scottish kings and Charlemagne was a myth. This was engendered by early Scottish historians in order to show, especially in the sixteenth century, that the Scottish monarchy was one of the oldest (as opposed to the newly created English Tudor monarchy) in Western Europe. Thus, having served its purpose by the eighteenth century the Scots had no longer a need for their ancient alliance with Charlemagne because in 1707 the Anglo-Scottish Act of Union took place creating the United Kingdom of Great Britain.

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[44]   'Ecoussais, Escozai v. 1120 (cart. l'absie) Escozay, 1136, belonging to the Abbey of Absie (cart. Absie) Scozaicus, XIIe siècle', *Dictionnaire topographique de département des Deux-Sèvres*, ed., B. Ledain (Poitiers, 1902) p. 105.

[45]   Dictionnaire d'histoire et de géographie ecclésiastiques, vol. 1, col. 205.

[46]   Macquarrie, *Scotland and the Crusades*, p. 10.