KINGDOM OR PROVINCE?

KINGDOM OR PROVINCE?
SCOTLAND AND
THE REGAL UNION,
1603–1715

KEITH M. BROWN

Macmillan Education

ISBN 978-0-333-52335-3 ISBN 978-1-349-22419-7 (eBook)
DOI 10.1007/978-1-349-22419-7

© Keith M. Brown 1992
Softcover reprint of the hardcover 1st edition 1992

All rights reserved. For information, write:
Scholarly and Reference Division,
St. Martin's Press, Inc., 175 Fifth Avenue,
New York, N.Y. 10010

First published in the United States of America in 1992

ISBN 978-0-312-08387-8

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Brown, Keith M.

Kingdom or province? : Scotland and the regal union, 1603–1715 /
Keith M. Brown.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-312-08387-8

1. Scotland—Politics and government—17th century. 2. Scotland—
—Politics and government—18th century. 3. Scotland—History—The
Union, 1707. I. Title.

DA800 . B76 1992

941 . 106—dc20

92–19659

CIP

I will make them one nation in the land
on the mountains of Israel.

There will be one king over all of them
and they will never again be two nations
or be divided into two kingdoms

Ezekiel 37, v. 22 (NIV)

Can a country be born in a day
or a nation be brought forth in a moment?

Isaiah 66, v. 8 (NIV)

CONTENTS

<i>Acknowledgements</i>	viii
<i>Preface</i>	ix
<i>Map</i>	xi
Introduction	1
1 Political Institutions	6
2 Political Elites	33
3 Political Ideas	60
4 The Imperial Experiment, 1603–37	86
5 Revolution, War and Conquest, 1637–60	112
6 Restoring the Kingdom, 1660–88	143
7 Scotland and the British Revolution, 1688–1715	170
<i>Bibliography</i>	197
<i>Index</i>	212

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am especially grateful to Dr Roger Mason not only for reading and making helpful corrections to the typescript, but also for engaging in many useful discussions during over-long morning coffees in St Andrews. A similar debt is owed to Dr Jenny Wormald and Dr John Morrill for reading and commenting on the typescript. The fact that all three of these scholars are such distinguished and effective ambassadors for a British approach to the early modern period also makes one hopeful that a book on Scottish History will be more widely read than might have been the case only a decade ago.

I wish to thank B. T. Batsford Ltd for use of a map from I. Donnachie and C. Hewitt, *A Companion to Scottish History*, Map 16, 1989. Every effort has been made to trace all the copyright holders, but if any have been inadvertently overlooked the publishers will be pleased to make the necessary arrangement at the first opportunity.

Thanks are also due to all mentioned in the bibliography at the end of this book. We all see the landscape of the past on the shoulders of others. I am grateful to the British Academy and to the Royal Society of Edinburgh who each sustained my research career at the outset of this inquiry into the nature of the regal union. Finally, thank-you to my wife, Janice, for tolerating my neglect of things present for things past, and to my children, Michelle and Mark, for agreeing occasionally to turn down the volume on the television set.

PREFACE

A book of this nature relies very much on the work of a great many scholars, and my own role simply has been to try and bring together recent research in a format which is accessible. I owe, therefore, a considerable debt to many colleagues who have greatly expanded our knowledge of seventeenth century Scotland, even in the relatively short time since I was an undergraduate.

However, there remain surprising gaps, and one would have little difficulty suggesting topics for research students in this period. Here and there I have tried to fill in some of those gaps, but it would require a very different type of book to do that task properly. On the whole the first half of the century and the post-1689 years are better researched than the restoration era. I suspect that the 1688–9 revolution in Scotland is the least understood of the major events of this remarkable century. Generally, we know more about political ideas than about how government operated, especially the post-1660 privy councils, while the whole area of government finance is very sketchy. The picture we have of burgh elites and the clergy is more complete than that of the landed aristocracy. Individuals like Montrose and Claverhouse have been the subject of a surfeit of biographies while the likes of Argyll, Lauderdale and Queensberry are crying out for revision. Surprisingly, a region like the highlands has been more written about than the south-west, and on the whole rural local studies are non-existent. I suppose what this is leading up to is an excuse for the patchy nature of this present work. It is also a plea for scholars and their research students to take up some of the above topics.

Preface

Seventeenth-century historiography has been something of a battleground over the years. Scottish historians have been, on the whole, less combative than their English colleagues in recent times, although there are a few notable exceptions. It has been difficult to write this book without treading on some toes, and especially at a time of such national uncertainty over the future of the union, it is particularly difficult to be dispassionate. I have tried to reflect the state of the current literature rather than to imprint my own interpretation in too partisan a way. Needless to say there is no such thing as objective history and, since prejudices make their appearance, perhaps I should declare them. The views expressed here, therefore, are those of a lowland, protestant Scot with little sympathy for Gaelic culture, for Stewart romanticism, or for bishops. I also have a deep distrust of London while remaining ambivalent about the English and the union. Very probably I would have agonised before voting for the union in 1707, and then spent years worrying over whether the Scots had made a dreadful mistake. If any of that baggage gets in the way I apologise, and hope this cautionary note helps the reader see past my own inadequacies.

One other point. I am sure some colleagues will disagree with my treatment of the aristocracy, but I remain unimpressed by any arguments which suggest even a relative decline in aristocratic power in the early modern period.

Since this is essentially a history of Scottish politics I have retained the Scottish spelling of the Stewart dynasty, and the Scottish designation of monarchs, namely James VI, James VII and William II. At all times £ are £ Scots unless £ sterling are specifically stated. £1 sterling was the equivalent of £12 Scots.

There are no notes to the text, but an extensive bibliography of secondary works can be found at the end. In using the bibliography readers should be aware that works are only cited once where I think they might be most useful. However, this does not mean that they cannot be used in the context of another topic or chapter.

KEITH M. BROWN

Scotland; counties and major burghs

From I. Donnachie and G. Hewitt, *A Companion to Scottish History* (Batsford, 1989), map 16.