

# The Founding and Demise of Stewartstoun: The Carolina Company, the Wester Sugar House and the Expedition of 1686

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Through an analysis of the membership of the Scottish Carolina Company, this article demonstrates that there were two main motives for those involved in establishing the colonial settlement of Stewartstoun. Those motives were intertwined as two strands of opposition to the Restoration government of Charles II: opposition to forced episcopacy and opposition to the English Navigation Acts. With this understanding, the article examines the little-known 1686 voyage of the *Richard and John*. One of the direct causes of the demise of Stewartstoun was that this vessel prioritised Caribbean commerce and failed to resupply the settlement with people and provisions. Taking contemporary political and religious contexts into consideration, it is possible that the precedence given to the sugar trade in this case is indicative of a broader shift in Scottish colonial thinking in which commercial goals began to supersede religious motivations.

Both the founding and the demise of the Scottish settlement of Stewartstoun in Carolina have been subject to conflicting interpretations by historians. The traditional view of its founding is that it was established by Covenanters as a refuge from persecution in Scotland.<sup>1</sup> Based on the discovery of documents relating to the finances of the Carolina Company, Linda Fryer has argued for a shift in the interpretation of the project from the religious to the economic.<sup>2</sup> Some historians, such as T. M. Devine and Allan Macinnes, have adopted this view, while the most recent study on the topic has largely subscribed to the older religious interpretation.<sup>3</sup> Bridging the divide is the persuasive argument presented by L. H. Roper that, rather than a binary view that seeks to ‘separate

<sup>1</sup> For example, G. P. Insh, *Scottish Colonial Schemes, 1620–1686* (Glasgow, 1922), 188–94; V. W. Crane, *The Southern Frontier, 1670–1732* (Durham, NC, 1928), 26–7; C. M. Andrews, *The Colonial Period of American History*, III (New Haven, 1937), 230; D. Dobson, *Scottish Emigration to Colonial America, 1607–1785* (Athens, GA, 1994), 63–4.

<sup>2</sup> L. G. Fryer, ‘The Covenanters’ Lost Colony in South Carolina’, *Scottish Archives*, 2 (1996), 98–106; L. G. Fryer, ‘Documents Relating to the Formation of the Carolina Company in Scotland, 1682’, *South Carolina Historical Magazine*, 99:2 (1998), 110–34. Note that the Carolina Company was not an incorporated company but a large semi-formal partnership.

<sup>3</sup> T. M. Devine, *Scotland’s Empire, 1600–1815* (London, 2003), 38–9; A. I. Macinnes, *Union and Empire: The Making of the United Kingdom in 1707* (Cambridge, 2007), 165–7; P. N. Moore,

“economic” from “religious” reasons for colonization’, these motivations should be viewed as intertwined.<sup>4</sup> As Kurt Gingrich has pointed out, historians have also provided varying reasons for the demise of Stewartstoun, including the animosity of the Charles Town government, lack of assistance from Scotland, malaria, and Spanish raids. Gingrich himself adds over-ambition, ineffective leadership, and lack of perseverance to the list.<sup>5</sup>

This article seeks to update these discussions based on new evidence. It will be shown that religious and economic motivations were at play in the venture as two strands of Scottish opposition to the Restoration government of Charles II coalesced in the Carolina Company: opposition to enforced episcopacy in Scotland and opposition to the English Navigation Acts, which restricted Scottish trade with English colonies.<sup>6</sup> This situation will be demonstrated through an analysis of the membership of the company. With an understanding of the motivations of different groups of Carolina projectors, focus will then be placed on the little-known expedition of the *Richard and John* of London in 1686. Making use of Alexander Dunlop’s memorandum book, held by the William L. Clements Library at the University of Michigan, this examination reveals an entanglement of interests between supplying Stewartstoun and engaging in Caribbean commerce. This account shows that one of the direct causes of the demise of Stewartstoun was the decision of those on the *Richard and John* not to sail to the settlement as previously planned.

That decision also speaks to religious and economic developments that took place in Scotland in the 1680s, and their relation to changing perspectives on Scottish colonisation. Specifically, the balance of the commercial and religious motivations for Scottish colonisation began to shift in the commercial direction.<sup>7</sup> Whereas establishing a refuge from religious persecution was the prime motivation for the founders of the Carolina Company, it was not enough for the leaders of the *Richard and John* to prioritise over the opportunity for immediate profit from Caribbean commerce. Their sugar-manufacturing concerns as well as the expedition coinciding with increasing hopes for religious toleration in Scotland are of broader significance to Scottish colonial motivations. As James VII/II

‘Scotland’s Lost Colony Found: Rediscovering Stuarts Town, 1682–1688’, *Scottish Historical Review*, 99:1 (2020), 26–50.

<sup>4</sup> L. H. Roper, *Conceiving Carolina: Proprietors, Planters, and Plots, 1662–1729* (Basingstoke, 2004), 75–6.

<sup>5</sup> K. Gingrich, “‘That will make Carolina powerful and flourishing’: Scots and Huguenots in Carolina in the 1680s’, *South Carolina Historical Magazine*, 110:1/2 (2009), 8–9, 31–3.

<sup>6</sup> For the main Navigation Acts of the period, see (ed.) J. Raithby, *The Statutes of the Realm*, V ([London], 1819), 246–50, 393–400, 449–52.

<sup>7</sup> While this article focuses on these two motivations, others existed. For example, ‘national’ concerns about Scotland’s status as an independent kingdom as well as concerns about land ownership could be present. Macinnes, *Union and Empire*, 137–8; George Scot of Pitlochrie, *The Model of the Government Of the Province of East-New-Jersey in America; And Encouragements for such as Designs to be concerned there* (Edinburgh, 1685), n.p., 17, 20, 42–50.

moved towards a policy of toleration in Scotland in 1686 and then officially granted it in 1687, the need to establish a colonial retreat from persecution subsided.<sup>8</sup> The need diminished further with the Glorious Revolution and re-establishment of Presbyterianism in Scotland.<sup>9</sup> Thus, there was no ‘refuge’ aspect of the Darien venture in the 1690s and while some involved hoped to propagate the godliness of the Scots Kirk, the impetus for the project was commercial.<sup>10</sup> The goal of the founders of the company that organised the venture was to find new markets for Scottish manufactures.<sup>11</sup> And the goal of the progenitor of the Darien settlement, William Paterson, was to establish a trading entrepôt.<sup>12</sup>

The primary goal of the leaders of the *Richard and John* expedition was likewise commercial: to acquire raw sugar to process in their manufactory in Scotland. The founding and demise of Stewartstoun demonstrates two major motivations for Scottish colonisation in the Restoration period and is indicative of a trend towards commercial and manufacturing aims. While the single case examined in this article is not enough to prove the trend, it is consistent with other developments and serves as a piece of the puzzle to be considered in additional inquiry.

Interest in colonisation among Scottish Presbyterians opposed to episcopacy can be traced to the 1630s when Robert Blair and other deposed ministers made plans to settle in New England to escape ‘the Bishops’ tyranny’.<sup>13</sup> Upon the restoration of Charles II in 1660, it was rightly feared by Presbyterians that episcopacy would again be established in Scotland.<sup>14</sup> The staunch Covenanter John Kennedy, 6th Earl of Cassillis, responded to this situation with plans to establish a settlement in Jamaica or ‘ane iylle far south’ in the Americas.<sup>15</sup> Around the same time, Scottish merchants sought to establish a

<sup>8</sup> A. Raffé, *Scotland in Revolution, 1685–1690* (Edinburgh, 2018), 17, 20, 22, 32–3.

<sup>9</sup> That is, the need from the Presbyterian/Covenanter perspective that galvanised the Carolina venture. *Ibid.*, 140–4.

<sup>10</sup> For the religious aspects, see J. C. Ramsay, ‘The Darien Scheme and the Church of Scotland’ (PhD thesis, University of Edinburgh, 1949).

<sup>11</sup> G. P. Insh, *The Company of Scotland Trading to Africa and the Indies* (London, 1932), 17–35.

<sup>12</sup> D. Watt, *The Price of Scotland: Darien, Union and the Wealth of Nations* (Edinburgh, 2007), 1–11.

<sup>13</sup> (ed.) T. M’Crie, *The Life of Mr Robert Blair, Minister of St Andrews, Containing his Autobiography from 1593 to 1636, with Supplement to His Life, and Continuation of the History of the Times to 1680* (Edinburgh, 1848), 104–8, 134–5, 140–6.

<sup>14</sup> During the Restoration period, episcopacy was accompanied by the persecution of dissenters. For an overview, see I. B. Cowan, *The Scottish Covenanters, 1660–1688* (London, 1976).

<sup>15</sup> National Records of Scotland (hereafter NRS), GD25/9/30/2, Kennedy to [John Maitland, 2nd Earl of Lauderdale], 28 December 1660; NRS, GD25/9/30/2, [Lauderdale] to Kennedy, 14 January 1661; NRS, GD25/9/30/2, ‘Some nottes inclosed in the Earle of Lauderdales packald and sent with the comon packalt’, 7 March 1661.

colony in St Vincent to bypass the English Navigation Acts.<sup>16</sup> Like the plan of Blair and others in the 1630s, the plans of the 1660s were not realised. A 1671 design to establish Scottish colonies south of the English Carolina colony and on the Caribbean island of Dominica also had implications for Scottish dissenters and came to naught.<sup>17</sup> Some of the Scottish dissenters who would go on to form the Carolina Company then considered pursuing settlements in Massachusetts,<sup>18</sup> Pennsylvania,<sup>19</sup> and New York<sup>20</sup> between 1679 and 1682. They may also have been involved in the attempt by James Scott, Duke of Monmouth and Buccleuch, to obtain a Scottish charter to colonise Florida and Guiana in 1679.<sup>21</sup> Finally, after these unsuccessful endeavours, a group of Scots – most of whom were Covenanters, led by Sir John Cochrane of Ochiltree and Sir George Campbell of Cessnock – obtained territory in the English colony of Carolina in the summer of 1682.<sup>22</sup>

Around the time the agreement was being made with the Carolina proprietors, James Hamilton, Earl of Arran (later 4th Duke of Hamilton), was advised to ask ‘his ma[jes]tie for an gift of the cape of Florday q[ui]ch lyeth next to Carolina for some oth[er]s will endeavour it’.<sup>23</sup> There is no evidence that Hamilton pursued an interest in Carolina, however, and it was left to Cochrane, Campbell, and their partners, who came together in the Carolina Company. By analysing the membership of the company, it can be determined that the Scottish interest in Carolina in the 1680s was twofold: to establish a Presbyterian retreat from persecution and to stimulate colonial commerce.

<sup>16</sup> J. Wagner, ‘John Browne’s Transatlantic Enterprise: Scottish Sugar Manufacturing, Caribbean Commerce and the Colonisation of St Vincent in the 1660s’, *Scottish Historical Review*, 100:252 (2021), 129–37.

<sup>17</sup> NRS, GD205/40/10, no. 13/3, Charles II to Sir John Nisbet of Dirleton, 10 July 1671; NRS, GD205/40/10, no. 13/4, Lauderdale to Dirleton, 22 July 1671; Gilbert Burnet, *History of My Own Time*, (ed.) Osmund Airy, II (Oxford, 1900), 330–2.

<sup>18</sup> Massachusetts State Archives, Massachusetts Archives Collection (Felt Collection), Vol. 3: Colonial, Petition of Hugh Campbell, 4 February 1679/80, fol. 28a.

<sup>19</sup> (ed.) R. S. Dunn and M. M. Dunn, *The Papers of William Penn*, II (Philadelphia, 1982), 115–17, 132–4.

<sup>20</sup> NRS, GD158/846, [?] to Sir George Campbell of Cessnock, 22 July 1682; Historical Manuscripts Commission, *Fourteenth Report, Appendix, Part III. The Manuscripts of the Duke of Roxburghe; Sir H. H. Campbell, Bart.; the Earl of Strathmore; and the Countess Dowager of Seafield* (London, 1894), 113.

<sup>21</sup> The National Archives, Kew (hereafter TNA), CO 1/49, ‘Memoriall of the Earle of Doncaster & Dalkeith ab[ou]t Florida & Guiana’, [September? 1682], fol. 237r; (ed.) J. H. Burton *et al.*, *The Register of the Privy Council of Scotland* (hereafter *RPCS*), 38 vols (Edinburgh, 1877–1970), 1681–82, 671–2.

<sup>22</sup> TNA, CO 5/287, Articles of agreement between Carolina proprietors and Sir John Cochrane of Ochiltree and Sir George Campbell of Cessnock, 31 July 1682, fols 8r–10r.

<sup>23</sup> NRS, GD406/1/3099, [William Hamilton?] to [James Hamilton, Earl of Arran], 25 July 1682.

Seventy of the eighty-three individuals who appear on various lists of the members of the Carolina Company can be identified with a level of confidence ranging from probable to certain.<sup>24</sup> Of these seventy, about forty-two were members of the gentry or nobility, about twenty-six were merchants, one was a goldsmith, and one was a minister. The members were concentrated in three areas: Glasgow and the nearby western lowlands (twenty-four), the south-west (twenty), and in and around Edinburgh (seventeen). A key piece of demographic information is that of the fifty-eight individuals for whom evidence relating to their political and religious outlooks has been gathered, all but two likely were or certainly were dissenters. Of those dissenters, at least forty-five were subject to persecution ranging from fines to imprisonment to forfeiture. The landed members of the company from the west and south-west were hardest hit, though merchants and those from other parts of Scotland were also affected.

Some of the leaders of the project – Sir John Cochrane of Ochiltree, Sir George Campbell of Cessnock (and his father Hugh), and Henry Erskine, 3rd Lord Cardross – were among those most severely impacted by the government’s policies against nonconformity. Soldiers had been quartered on Cochrane’s lands as early as 1663 and in the 1670s he was fined and outlawed for the misconduct of his tenants and for attending and countenancing conventicles.<sup>25</sup> This persecution led him to anti-government activity. According to one account, the only reason he did not join the Pentland Rising in 1666 was that he was in prison at the time.<sup>26</sup> He also refused to sign bonds for keeping the peace; was involved in planning a rebellion and, possibly, the assassination of Charles II and his brother in 1682–83 (the Rye House Plot); and was one of the leaders of the Earl of Argyll’s uprising in 1685.<sup>27</sup> The Campbells of Cessnock had similar experiences, being fined, imprisoned, and quartered upon for holding conventicles and other acts of nonconformity.<sup>28</sup> Like Cochrane,

<sup>24</sup> The four lists of company members, located in the A20 bundle of the Loudon Papers held in the Bute Archive at Mount Stuart, have been collated in Fryer, ‘Documents Relating to the Formation of the Carolina Company’, 131–2. The information in this paragraph was gathered from *RPCS* (volumes covering 1661–86); R. Wodrow, *The History of the Sufferings of the Church of Scotland, from the Restauration to the Revolution*, 2 vols (Edinburgh, 1721–22); (ed.) J. D. Marwick, M. Wood, and H. Armet, *Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Edinburgh*, 14 vols (Edinburgh, 1869–1967) (hereafter *ERBE*); (ed.) J. D. Marwick, *Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Glasgow, 1663–1690* (Edinburgh, 1905); *The Records of the Parliaments of Scotland to 1707* (hereafter *RPS*), A1685/4/2–3, A1685/4/5, A1685/4/7–8, A1685/4/12, <https://www.rps.ac.uk>.

<sup>25</sup> *RPCS*, 1661–64, 323; *RPCS*, 1669–72, 485–6, 535–8, 608; *RPCS*, 1673–76, 74; *RPCS*, 1676–78, 533–8, 550–1.

<sup>26</sup> (ed.) T. M’Crie, *Memoirs of Mr. William Veitch, and George Brysson, Written by Themselves* (Edinburgh, 1825), 385.

<sup>27</sup> *RPCS*, 1676–78, 423–4, 550–1; *RPCS*, 1683–84, 214, 222, 427; *RPS*, A1685/4/8; Wodrow, *The History of the Sufferings*, I, 508–9, II, 529–36.

<sup>28</sup> *RPCS*, 1665–69, 364, 372–3, 666; *RPCS*, 1676–78, 375, 416, 423–4, 533–8, 550–5, 564–5, 576–7, 647–8.

they responded to persecution with anti-government activity; they may have supported the Bothwell Brig rebellion in 1679 and they took part in the Rye House Plot.<sup>29</sup> Cardross' acts of nonconformity were manifold: he attended and organised conventicles, incited illegal preaching, had his children baptised by unlicensed individuals, refused to sign bonds against conventicles, and refused the Test Oath (which required those taking it to disown nonconforming beliefs).<sup>30</sup> Punishment for these acts included four years of imprisonment, ruinous fines, and the loss of his heritable jurisdictions.<sup>31</sup> Rather than turn to plotting and rebellion, Cardross chose to escape to Carolina in 1684.<sup>32</sup> Relatedly, Cardross' half-brother, John Erskine of Carnock, considered moving to Carolina for freedom of conscience and John Stewart explained his move to Carolina as stemming from his opposition to the Test Oath: 'I refus't the Test ... embark'd myself w[i]t[h] the Carolina company' and then 'deserted the Cuntry of my nativity to Enjoy a Safe conscience In hope of better days'.<sup>33</sup>

Many other members of the Carolina Company had similar experiences and motivations. Noteworthy examples include Sir George Maxwell of Newark and William Dunlop. Maxwell was fined the enormous sum of £94,800 Scots (£7,900 sterling) for withdrawing from public worship, keeping conventicles, and illegal baptism.<sup>34</sup> Dunlop, who would be a leader of the 1684 expedition to Carolina, operated as an unlicensed preacher, had contributed to a declaration justifying the 1679 rebellion, and, according to one account, was involved in the Rye House Plot.<sup>35</sup>

The involvement of dissenters in the company is seen among the merchants in addition to the gentry and nobility. For example, John Anderson of Dowhill, provost and dean of guild of Glasgow, was fined and imprisoned for attending conventicles and other acts of nonconformity.<sup>36</sup> Other nonconforming Glasgow merchants such as James Bogle and Matthew Cumming had similar

<sup>29</sup> *RPCS, 1683–84*, 222, 268, 271, 320–1, 365, 369, 374–5, 401–2, 427, 454; *RPCS, 1684–84*, 7, 17, 175–8, 183, 543; *RPCS, 1684–85*, 10, 46, 97, 555; *RPCS, 1685–86*, 87, 93, 120–1, 169–70, 186, 195, 398, 423; (ed.) T. B. Howell, *Cobbett's Complete Collection of State Trials*, X (London, 1811), 919–88.

<sup>30</sup> For the oath, see *RPS*, 1681/7/29; A. Raffé, 'Scottish Oaths and the Revolution of 1688–1690', in (ed.) S. Adams and J. Goodare, *Scotland in the Age of Two Revolutions* (Woodbridge, 2014), 182–3.

<sup>31</sup> *RPCS, 1673–76*, 283, 289–91, 314, 407, 412–15, 425, 428, 440–6, 460–2, 545, 653–5; *RPCS, 1676–78*, 51, 63, 86, 107, 127, 217–18, 616–18, 653; *RPCS, 1678–80*, 293, 296, 387–8, 564; *RPCS, 1681–82*, 305–6.

<sup>32</sup> (ed.) W. MacLeod, *Journal of the Hon. John Erskine of Carnock, 1683–1687* (Edinburgh, 1893), 72.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 62–3; (ed.) J. G. Dunlop and M. L. Webber, 'Letters from John Stewart to William Dunlop', *South Carolina Historical and Genealogical Magazine*, 32:2 (1931), 93, 111.

<sup>34</sup> Wodrow, *The History of the Sufferings*, I, 362; *RPCS, 1678–80*, 17–18, 32–3.

<sup>35</sup> Wodrow, *The History of the Sufferings*, I, 485, II, 58–61; MacLeod, *Journal of the Hon. John Erskine*, 71; *RPS*, A1685/4/3.

<sup>36</sup> *RPCS, 1676–78*, 172–7, 266, 317.

experiences.<sup>37</sup> This situation was not confined to the west as, for example, the Edinburgh merchants George Clerk, Patrick Johnston, and George Mossman were fined for not attending their parish church services and for attending conventicles.<sup>38</sup> Even merchants who may not have been strong dissenters could be caught in the cross-hairs of persecution as magistrates were sometimes fined and removed from office for religious disorders that took place in their burghs. Among Carolina Company members, this included the Edinburgh merchants Robert Baird, Charles Charteris, and Thomas Wilson as well as the Glasgow merchant John Caldwell.<sup>39</sup> The religious dispositions of these men and the persecution they faced likely played a role in their interest in the Carolina project.

Additionally, many of the merchants who were interested in the project were seeking a way to circumvent the Navigation Acts. One piece of evidence for this is that five or six of them – Baird, Bogle, Charteris, Mossman, Walter Gibson, and, perhaps, Patrick Johnston – were members of the 1681 committee of trade that promoted establishing Scottish colonies to stimulate the economy via colonial commerce.<sup>40</sup> Of company members, at least Baird, Gibson, Anderson of Dowhill, and John Caldwell had previous experience in colonial trade.<sup>41</sup> Patrick Bell, James Bogle, William Bogle, and Matthew Cumming may also have had previous colonial experience.<sup>42</sup>

A related factor for the mercantile interest in the Carolina Company was the need for resources and markets to fuel the growth of the Scottish sugar and textile industries. Stewartstoun had the potential to become a market for Scottish textiles and the Scots believed indigo, silk, sugar, tobacco, and wine could be grown or produced in the region.<sup>43</sup> It was also believed that the Scottish settlement would not be subject to the English Navigation Acts and, thus, it would fulfil the aims of the 1681 committee of trade as a colonial market and source of colonial commodities.<sup>44</sup> The Glasgow merchants James Armour and John Corse and the Edinburgh merchant Hugh Blair were partners in textile

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, 9–10, 172–7; *RPCS, 1678–80*, 648–9.

<sup>38</sup> *RPCS, 1665–69*, 626; *RPCS, 1673–76*, 540–2; *RPCS, 1683–84*, 294–8, 619.

<sup>39</sup> *RPCS, 1673–76*, 204–5, 231, 381–2, 469–70; *RPCS, 1676–78*, 83–4; *ERBE, 1665–80*, 231–3.

<sup>40</sup> *RPCS, 1681–82*, 651, 655, 659–61.

<sup>41</sup> *ERBE, 1665–80*, 23; *RPCS, 1681–82*, 178; Marwick, *Extracts from the Records of the Burgh of Glasgow*, 66–7, 117.

<sup>42</sup> J. McUre, *The History of Glasgow* (Glasgow, 1830), 170.

<sup>43</sup> J. Crawford, *A New and Most Exact Account Of the Fertiles [i] and Famous Colony of Carolina* (Dublin, 1683), 5–7; National Library of Scotland (hereafter NLS), MS 9250, Lord Cardross and William Dunlop to Sir Peter Colleton, 27 March 1685, fol. 16r; NRS, GD3/5/772, Dunlop to Sir James Montgomerie of Skelmorlie, [1686]; NRS, GD3/5/773, Dunlop to Skelmorlie, 1686.

<sup>44</sup> See, for example, NLS, Wod.Qu. XXXVI, ‘Contract Betwixt Sir John Cocheran and S[i]r George Campbell and the Undertakers’, 15 September 1682, fol. 130v; NRS, GD3/5/773, Dunlop to Skelmorlie, 1686; TNA, CO 1/62, George Muschamp to [Lords of Trade?], 11 April 1687, fol. 90r.

manufactories by the time they joined the Carolina Company.<sup>45</sup> Corse and John Caldwell were involved in the Glasgow sugar industry, with Corse being a member of the Easter Sugar House and Caldwell being a member of the Wester Sugar House. The merchant Hugh Montgomerie, brother of the company member Sir James Montgomerie of Skelmorlie, was also a partner in the Wester Sugar House. The Wester Sugar House fell on hard times with the death of one of its founders in 1683 and Hugh Montgomerie purchased the sugar works and attempted to revitalise the venture.<sup>46</sup> As discussed below, the attempt to revitalise the Wester Sugar House became entangled with the Carolina venture in 1686 when a vessel connected to Montgomerie and the sugary failed to resupply the Scottish settlement in Carolina.

The first step taken by the Carolina Company after acquiring territory in the colony was to send an exploratory expedition to test the trading waters and locate the best place to settle. The fifty-ton *James* of Irvine, loaded with ‘goods to the valow of two hundreth pound ster[ling] in name of S[i]r Jo[h]n Cochrane and S[i]r George Campble and the rest of the partiners of the Carolina Company’, departed the Clyde in October 1682.<sup>47</sup> After a stop in Bermuda, the vessel arrived at Charles Town around 3 March 1683. In contravention of the English Navigation Acts, the company’s agents sold their cargo and gained the assistance of the colonists to locate the best region to settle. After sounding the rivers and gathering information about their preferred region – Port Royal – the party returned to Scotland to report their findings to the company.<sup>48</sup> Arriving in July, after the Rye House Plot had been uncovered, they found the company in disarray. In all, at least twelve members were accused of being connected with the plot, including the leading figures Sir George Campbell of Cessnock and Sir John Cochrane of Ochiltree.<sup>49</sup> Additionally, many of their associates involved in the company were subject to renewed persecutions in 1683 and 1684.<sup>50</sup> This situation explains the loss of momentum in the project and the fact

<sup>45</sup> For Armour and Corse, see *RPCS, 1681–82*, 299, 597–8; *RPS*, 1681/7/65. Blair’s involvement in the Newmills Cloth Manufactory can be traced in (ed.) W. R. Scott, *The Records of a Scottish Cloth Manufactory at New Mills, Haddingtonshire, 1681–1708* (Edinburgh, 1905).

<sup>46</sup> T. C. Smout, ‘The Early Scottish Sugar Houses, 1660–1720’, *Economic History Review* 14:2 (1961), 241–2, 247–51; (ed.) W. Fraser, *Memorials of the Montgomeries, Earls of Eglinton*, I (Edinburgh, 1859), 166.

<sup>47</sup> NRS, E72/19/6, Port Glasgow entry book: exports, 16 October 1682, fol. 24.

<sup>48</sup> Crawford, *A New and Most Exact Account*, 3–7.

<sup>49</sup> The other company members said to have actively promoted the plot were Sir Hugh Campbell of Cessnock, James Campbell (2nd Earl of Loudoun), Sir Patrick Home of Polwarth, Colin Campbell of Ardkinglass, David Montgomerie of Lainshaw, Alexander Monro, and William Dunlop. See, for example, *RPS*, A1685/4/3, A1685/4/5, A1685/4/7, A1685/4/12. John Crawford of Crawfordland and John Cochrane of Waterside were charged with treason at the same time, and some suspicion was cast upon Robert Baird. *RPCS, 1683–84*, 222; *ERBE, 1681–89*, 88–9.

<sup>50</sup> See note 24.



there were far fewer individuals involved when it was further pursued in 1684. By that time, many members of the company were under financial duress, in prison, or in exile.

Those who remained willing and able to continue the project were led by William Dunlop and Henry Erskine, 3rd Lord Cardross. They sailed from Gourock on the 170-ton *Carolina Merchant* (formerly the *Pelican*) of Glasgow in July 1684 with 146 additional passengers, and arrived in Carolina on 2 October.<sup>51</sup> Three other vessels with some connection to Cardross and Dunlop set sail for Carolina around the same time: the *Alexander* of Inverkeithing from Leith, the *Charles* of Glasgow from Glasgow via Ireland (perhaps Belfast), and the 120-ton *James* of Ayr from Ayr via Belfast.<sup>52</sup> Despite approximately five hundred would-be settlers embarking on these voyages, only forty-nine individuals ultimately accompanied Cardross and Dunlop to establish the settlement of Stewartstoun in Port Royal.<sup>53</sup> Many of those on the *Carolina Merchant* became ill (or were already ill) upon arrival in the colony and died shortly thereafter;<sup>54</sup> those on the *Alexander* were discouraged from settling in Stewartstoun ‘by thos about Charilstoun who had litle kyndes to’ Cardross and Dunlop;<sup>55</sup> the *James* wrecked off the coast of Carolina;<sup>56</sup> and it appears that the *Charles* was forced to return to Ireland after setting sail for the colony.<sup>57</sup>

Though beset by difficulties, Cardross, Dunlop, and the settlers of Stewartstoun made steady progress from its founding in November 1684 to the first Spanish raid in August 1686.<sup>58</sup> By March 1685, forty-one of 220 town lots had been taken up in Stewartstoun and they expected some English families to join them later in the year as well as some settlers from Antigua and other colonies. The Antigua connection is of particular interest. A colonist from the island had come to Stewartstoun ‘to see the place and is so confident th[a]t it will produce not only indigoe but good sugar he and fyve of sex other families

<sup>51</sup> NRS, E72/19/9, Port Glasgow entry book: exports, 1 July 1684, fol. 19; NLS, MS 9250, Cardross and Dunlop to Colleton, 27 March 1685, fol. 16r; MacLeod, *Journal of the Hon. John Erskine*, 71–2.

<sup>52</sup> NRS, E72/15/28, Leith entry book: exports, 6 August 1684, fol. 10; NRS, E72/3/13, Ayr entry book: exports, 19 August 1684; NRS, E72/19/9, Port Glasgow entry book: exports, 28–29 August 1684, fol. 21.

<sup>53</sup> NLS, MS 9250, Cardross and Dunlop to Colleton, 27 March 1685, fol. 16r.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.; NLS, Wod.Qu. XXXVI, ‘The Account of [the] Carolina Voyage’, fols 223r–4v; MacLeod, *Journal of the Hon. John Erskine*, 139.

<sup>55</sup> NLS, MS 9250, Cardross and Dunlop to Colleton, 27 March 1685, fol. 16r.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.; Scot of Pitlochrie, *The Model of the Government*, 210; *The Life and Prophecies of Mr. Alexander Peden, Late Minister of the Gospel At New Glencue in Galloway* (Falkirk, 1810), 51; (ed.) J. D. Marwick, *Miscellany of the Scottish Burgh Records Society* (Edinburgh, 1881), 77.

<sup>57</sup> *The Life and Prophecies*, 51.

<sup>58</sup> For the Spanish raids of August and December 1686, see, for example, NLS, MS 9255, ‘Spanish Depredations’, 1686, fols 34r–6v; NRS, GD26/7/277, ‘Memorial of the hostilities committed in the Province of Carolina by the Spainiards’, 1689.

who had sent him to see the cuntrie are expected heire in August nixt'.<sup>59</sup> It is possible that the settlers from Antigua were to be transported to the settlement on the *Richard and John* in 1686, but, as will be seen, the vessel returned directly to Britain from the island rather than sail on to Carolina as originally intended.

Other examples of progress include the successful raising of livestock, the building of a fort, and that the settlement had an abundance of lumber to be sold or traded.<sup>60</sup> The settlement was not thriving, but it was surviving. At least one vessel, the *Abercorn*, had come to the settlement from Ulster and taken on a cargo of lumber to carry to Barbados, but it was on the *Richard and John* that the hopes for long-term success were pinned.<sup>61</sup> This idea is made apparent in a series of letters written by Dunlop to his business partner in Scotland, Sir James Montgomerie of Skelmorlie. Upon hearing of the purchase of the *Richard and John*, Dunlop was much encouraged as he thought it was explicitly purchased 'to advance the settlement at Port Royall'.<sup>62</sup> Key to the settlement's advancement was the arrival of additional settlers, servants, and slaves.<sup>63</sup> As Dunlop explained after an initial delay:

I have had hitherto patience w[i]t[h] ease, but now must tell you that if you have sent no recruits till this come to your hand you are much to blame & it will much damage your interest here for you must think that all new settlements are gone about w[i]t[h] great charge at first & it takes time before profite come in, and with all if new settlements be not followed out when begun men will lose what they have laid out.<sup>64</sup>

Though Dunlop prepared for the arrival of reinforcements and believed their arrival to be imminent, they never came. He believed this failure caused the demise of Stewartstoun. Referring to the destruction of the settlement by the Spanish, Dunlop wrote that 'if that ship had come straight from Scotland to Port Royall or come at all before the 17 of August it might in all probability have prevented that ruin which hath come upon us' as the Spanish 'wold not have dared to attack us if that ship or the men in her had been there'.<sup>65</sup>

What course had the *Richard and John* taken and why did it not make the journey to Stewartstoun? To answer these questions, one must refer to Alexander

<sup>59</sup> NLS, MS 9250, Cardross and Dunlop to Colleton, 27 March 1685, fol. 16r.

<sup>60</sup> NRS, GD3/5/772, Dunlop to Skelmorlie, [1686]; NRS, GD3/5/775, Dunlop to Skelmorlie, 21 October 1686.

<sup>61</sup> For the *Abercorn*, see (ed.) W. A. Shaw, *Calendar of Treasury Books, 1685–1689* (London, 1923), 910.

<sup>62</sup> NRS, GD3/5/772, Dunlop to Skelmorlie, [1686]; NRS, GD3/5/775, Dunlop to Skelmorlie, 21 October 1686.

<sup>63</sup> The author is currently conducting additional research on the role slavery played in Stewartstoun. For an indication that Cardross held at least one African in bondage, see R. Wodrow, *Analecta: Or, Materials of Remarkable Providences; Most Relating to Scotch Ministers and Christians*, II (n.p., 1842), 292.

<sup>64</sup> NRS, GD3/5/773, Dunlop to Skelmorlie, 1686.

<sup>65</sup> NRS, GD3/5/775, Dunlop to Skelmorlie, 21 October 1686; NRS, GD3/5/776, Dunlop to Skelmorlie, 21 November 1686.

Dunlop's memorandum book. Alexander Dunlop was the son of James Dunlop of Dunlop and a kinsman of William Dunlop. Like others involved in the Carolina venture, he was a dissenter and he was pursued by the government in 1683 and 1684 for his alleged involvement in the Bothwell Brig rebellion of 1679.<sup>66</sup> In order to escape potential prosecution, he planned to emigrate to Carolina. While still in Scotland he was nominated by Cardross and William Dunlop to be appointed as the sheriff of the new Scottish county in the colony (Port Royal County). The Carolina proprietors confirmed the appointment in 1685 as Alexander Dunlop began making plans for his transatlantic journey on the *Richard and John*.<sup>67</sup>

Cardross and William Dunlop also wanted and expected their wives to make the journey to Stewartstoun on the *Richard and John*.<sup>68</sup> Dunlop's wife, Sarah Carstares, wrote of her plans and desire to join her husband, but also her apprehensions and the difficulties she and Catherine, Lady Cardross encountered in arranging travel to the colony.<sup>69</sup> Though they did not make the journey, they entrusted Alexander Dunlop with money and supplies to be carried to their husbands: Lady Cardross gave him £15 sterling and Sarah Carstares gave him a 'ball of goods' to be delivered to Stewartstoun.<sup>70</sup> Confirming Alexander Dunlop's intentions to complete the journey to Stewartstoun and deliver these items, he wrote of his obligations for 'when I shall come to Portroyall in Carolina' a week before departing Scotland.<sup>71</sup>

He departed on the *Richard and John* from Kelburn, on the Clyde estuary, on 4 March 1686. The vessel then sailed between Carrickfergus and Dublin before leaving Ireland on 2 April to sail to Antigua via the Azores. It arrived in Antigua on 16 May and, rather than moving on to Carolina, stayed at the island until setting sail for Britain on 27 July.<sup>72</sup> This timeline indicates that it had time to sail to Carolina and resupply Stewartstoun – so why did it not do so? William Dunlop believed that merchants aboard the vessel prioritised acquiring a profitable cargo in the Caribbean:

Capt[ain] W[illia]m Anderson with his vessell came here & informed me that your ship was at Antego and was returning home again to Scotland & Dunlop & the

<sup>66</sup> J. Paterson, *History of the County of Ayr with a Genealogical Account of the Families of Ayrshire*, II (Edinburgh, 1852), 47.

<sup>67</sup> TNA, CO 5/288, Carolina proprietors to Joseph Morton, 18 November 1685, fol. 37r.

<sup>68</sup> NRS, GD3/5/773, Dunlop to Skelmorlie, 1686; NRS, GD3/5/774, Dunlop to Skelmorlie, 15 July 1686.

<sup>69</sup> See, for example, NLS, MS 9250, Carstares to Dunlop, 29 June 1686, fol. 25r.

<sup>70</sup> University of Michigan, William L. Clements Library, wclmss000628, Alexander Dunlop's memorandum book, fols 2r, [4]r–[4]v. My thanks to Jack Abernethy for photographing this source for me.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, fols 2r, [4]r.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, fols 95–92 (reverse). Though an English vessel, the *Richard and John* was likely breaking the English Navigation Acts by arriving in the English colony of Antigua from Scotland via Ireland. Additionally, its crew and master may have been Scots.

other passengers w[i]t[h] her[.] S[i]r you may be assured I was not a litle surprised to find all my fair hopes of releif coming to us from our freinds thus dashed at once and all forsook because the ship got a good freight homeward, truely I wold have thought that Skelmorly wold have been more concerned in our settlement at Port Royall then in a trading voyage to the West Indies; I know not who were the first advysers of you to send the ship (which you made me belive was bought only for our service to advance the settlement at Port Royall) by the way of the Leewards Islands to kill [harm] the passengers who were to come in her for the lure of a litle gain some merchant aboard her might get.<sup>73</sup>

He also wrote that he did not ‘know who advised the return of the ship from Antego when she was designed hither without performing her voyage’.<sup>74</sup>

Though not all directly involved, former Carolina Company members who appear in Alexander Dunlop’s accounts relating to the expedition include the Glasgow merchants John Caldwell and James Bogle, the Edinburgh merchant Archibald Muir, and the western lairds David Montgomerie of Lainshaw, Sir Alexander Cunningham of Corsehill, and Sir James Montgomerie of Skelmorlie.<sup>75</sup> The involvement of Caldwell and Montgomerie of Skelmorlie’s brother Hugh – partners in the Wester Sugar House – suggests a connection with the Glasgow sugar industry.<sup>76</sup> The possibility of this connection is supported by the fact Dunlop’s memorandum book includes ‘The Accompt of the bonds & ready money taken from the sugarrie’.<sup>77</sup> It is possible that in addition to travelling to take up his position as sheriff of Port Royal, Dunlop was acting as an agent of the Wester Sugar House during the voyage. This is suggested by the fact that, while in Antigua, he paid wages to Thomas Steill ‘in name of the Society’, which appears to be a reference to the Wester Sugar House. It is also possible that Hugh Montgomerie travelled with the expedition, which may indicate that it was under his influence that the sugar trade in Antigua took priority over the colonisation effort in Carolina.<sup>78</sup>

Sarah Carstares was sceptical of Skelmorlie and the other purchasers of the *Richard and John* from the time they acquired the vessel. She wrote to her husband in February 1686 that she thought it was too large for his designs and ‘altogether unfit for you’. Though Dunlop had left £1,300 Scots (approximately £108 sterling) with Skelmorlie for the purchase of a vessel to be used in the Carolina project, Carstares was unsure about using it to acquire a  $\frac{1}{32}$  share of the *Richard and John*.<sup>79</sup> Her concern had grown after the vessel departed Scotland in March and, in June, she wrote to her husband that the Carolina

<sup>73</sup> NRS, GD3/5/775, Dunlop to Skelmorlie, 21 October 1686.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> University of Michigan, wclmss000628, Dunlop’s memorandum book, fols 89v–88r, 86r–85v.

<sup>76</sup> See note 46.

<sup>77</sup> University of Michigan, wclmss000628, Dunlop’s memorandum book, fol. 90v.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., fols 2v–5r.

<sup>79</sup> NLS, MS 9250, Carstares to Dunlop, 24 February 1686, fols 21r–v.

projectors who remained in Scotland ‘have all quit thoughts of you or giving any help to you’.<sup>80</sup> In November, Dunlop’s mother, Bessie Muir, blamed Alexander Dunlop and Skelmorlie for abandoning Stewartstoun and instead designing ‘other things’ – likely a reference to Caribbean trade.<sup>81</sup> Not only had the *Richard and John* not made the journey to Carolina in 1686, Carstares wrote to her husband in April 1687 that he should never expect its assistance: ‘Skelmurlyss vessal is not to com to you at all for anything I know and I wold intreat you my heart lay no stresse at all in your settelling again upon any help from Scotland’.<sup>82</sup> Thus, William Dunlop’s partners in Scotland obtained a vessel inconsistent with what he wanted for the venture and prioritised Caribbean commerce over the success of Stewartstoun.

The 1686 expedition was intended as both a trading and colonising venture, but, in the end, the trading interest superseded the colonising. The dual intentions of the expedition, as well as the result, reflect different approaches to transatlantic ventures among Scots and broader developments in Scotland. First, it reflects the motivations of those who formed the Carolina Company in 1682. On the one hand they wanted to establish a colony that could serve as a refuge for persecuted Covenanters; on the other, they wanted to stimulate Scottish colonial commerce. Second, it reflects how the priorities of the Scots involved in the Carolina venture had changed by 1686. The leaders of the Carolina Company at the time of its formation – Sir John Cochrane of Ochiltree, Sir George Campbell of Cessnock, and other dissenting members of the gentry – prioritised settlement and the importance of a refuge for those persecuted in Scotland. They and other Scottish dissenters such as John Kennedy, 6th Earl of Cassillis, had been interested in such a settlement since 1660. With the arrests, fines, and legal issues that came for many leading dissenters involved in the Carolina Company after the discovery of the Rye House Plot, William Dunlop and Henry Erskine, 3rd Lord Cardross, became the leaders of the project. They held views similar to their predecessors and, as seen in their activities in Carolina, focused on establishing a Scottish settlement in the colony.

For their partners who remained in Scotland, however, transatlantic commerce became more appealing than colonisation. This development was, in part, due to the difficulties encountered by Cardross and Dunlop – such as the high mortality rate of indentured servants – and the negative opinion of Carolina that formed in Scotland as a result.<sup>83</sup> The most direct evidence for

<sup>80</sup> NLS, MS 9250, Carstares to Dunlop, 29 June 1686, fol. 25r.

<sup>81</sup> NLS, MS 9250, Muir to Dunlop, 14 November 1686, fol. 33r.

<sup>82</sup> NLS, MS 9250, Carstares to Dunlop, 3 April 1687, fol. 42r. A ‘*Richard and John* of Glasgow’, possibly the same vessel, was seized in Dover in 1688 after officials there learned it had ‘transported a cargoe of sugar from the West Indies to Scotland’. NLS, Adv.Ms.83.7.3, Statement of William Stokes, 16 November 1688, fols 11r–12r.

<sup>83</sup> See, for example, NLS, MS 9250, Carstares to Dunlop, 20 July 1686, fols 27r–8r; Scot of Pitlochrie, *The Model of the Government*, 145, 209–14; MacLeod, *Journal of the Hon. John Erskine*, 139.

the commercial focus of Dunlop's and Cardross' partners in Scotland is the simple fact that their vessel prioritised trade in the Caribbean over reinforcing Stewartstoun in 1686. Dunlop's main partner for the Carolina venture in Scotland was Sir James Montgomerie of Skelmorlie and, as his mother wrote to him, Skelmorlie was 'ons [once] as [a] brother', but had 'becom your enemie'.<sup>84</sup> Skelmorlie's betrayal of Dunlop can be explained by the fact his real brother, Hugh Montgomerie, had purchased the Wester Sugar House and needed his help in returning it to profitability. John Caldwell and Alexander Dunlop were also involved in the 1686 expedition and had interests in the Wester Sugar House. Thus, it appears they purchased a vessel more fit for the sugar trade than colonisation and used the 1686 expedition to further their commercial interests in Caribbean sugar at the expense of aiding Stewartstoun. As William Dunlop related, without the expected reinforcements of settlers, servants, and slaves in the summer of 1686, the small group of Scots in the colony was left vulnerable to Spanish raids.

The decision not to reinforce Stewartstoun also took place in the context of politico-religious developments in Scotland. The religious impetus for Scottish colonisation was waning by 1686 due to James VII/II's moves towards toleration after his succession to the throne in 1685.<sup>85</sup> Notably, James' policy of toleration coincided with a decline in Scottish Quaker migration to East New Jersey<sup>86</sup> and toleration was presented as a reason why William Dunlop should return to Scotland from Carolina.<sup>87</sup> In this context, the other main impetus for the Carolina venture – Scottish mercantile concerns – came to the fore. That shift resulted in the end of the attempt to establish a Scottish settlement in Carolina and was a precursor to the next attempt at establishing a Scottish foothold in the Americas – the Darien venture. Stewartstoun could not fulfil the commercial needs of the owners of the *Richard and John*, so instead they ordered it to sail to a settlement that could. With fewer religious considerations at play, the Darien venture, unlike that in Carolina, was primarily pursued to establish a Scottish colony that could further Scottish mercantile and manufacturing interests.<sup>88</sup> The 1686 voyage of the *Richard and John* had a similar commercial focus and is indicative of a broader transition in Scottish thinking about colonisation.

<sup>84</sup> NLS, MS 9250, Muir to Dunlop, 14 November 1686, fol. 33r.

<sup>85</sup> Raffe, *Scotland in Revolution*, 17, 20, 22, 32–3.

<sup>86</sup> Though the persecution of Quakers in Scotland mostly abated in 1679, they were not officially granted tolerance until 1687. Official toleration was certainly not the sole reason for the decline in emigration (nor were Quakers the only ones to emigrate as part of the project). L. G. Fryer, 'Robert Barclay of Ury and East New Jersey', *Northern Scotland*, 15:1 (1995), 4, 7–14.

<sup>87</sup> NLS, MS 9250, William Moncrief, Ralph Rogers, and William Crichton to Dunlop, 29 June 1687, fol. 50r.

<sup>88</sup> See RPS, 1693/4/107, 1695/5/104; Insh, *The Company of Scotland*, 17–35; Watt, *The Price of Scotland*, 1–11.