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‘Alive to Kindness’:

The Early Life and Achievement of John Patrick Crichton-Stuart, Third Marquess of Bute, 1847-1881.

Rosemary Hannah

2000

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DURHAM

19 JUN 2001

To the dear friend

Whose belief in this called it into being

Sheridan Gilley

Declaration

I confirm that the thesis conforms with the prescribed word length for the degree for which I am submitting it for examination.

I confirm that no part of the material offered has previously been submitted by me for a degree in this or any other university. If material has been generated by joint work, my independent contribution has been clearly indicated. In all other cases material from the work of others has been acknowledged and quotations and paraphrases suitably indicated.

Signed .....

Date.....9th October 2000

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Abstract

Eighty years ago Hunter Blair published his *Memoir* of *John Patrick Third Marquess of Bute Kt.* Since then, all students of the subject have been dependent on this work, and there has been minimal research, with much of the Bute archive being inaccessible throughout these years. A new evaluation of the man and his achievements, making use of the huge quantity of relevant archival material now becoming available, was urgently needed. In addition to the Mount Stuart archive, much important material has been found in the archives of Sandon Hall, the NLS, BL and elsewhere.

Using a biographical format, this thesis aims to go behind Hunter Blair's incomplete portrayal and uncover a more adequate picture of the man himself, his attitudes and his motivation, as well as his religious faith and philanthropy, his scholarly work and his artistic achievements. In particular, it looks for the unity of the person behind all these aspects, as revealed in his diaries and journals, and in the letters he sent and received. An extremely shy man, Bute presented a very different face to his closest intimates from the one which even Hunter Blair knew.

His personal growth and development is traced from birth, shortly followed by his father's death, through an unusual upbringing and unorthodox education by his mother until his orphaning at the age of twelve. His adolescence was dominated by custodial battles, and was followed by years of religious conflict at Harrow and Oxford, culminating in his conversion to Roman Catholicism and his marriage. For reasons of space, the narrative concludes with the birth of his second child (first son) in 1881, when he was thirty three.

Bute's achievements are set in the social context of mid-Victorian Britain, but the emphasis throughout is on their personal and interior dimensions. Questions addressed include the manner in which his extraordinary childhood affected his adult life, how his personal piety combined with sensuality to inspire his craftsmen to their finest work, and how his aristocratic birth and great wealth, while at once burdensome and liberating in different ways, could often be set aside entirely. Despite his splendid buildings and fine historical writing, it is concluded that Bute's greatest accomplishments were personal, his gentleness with social inferiors, his positive attitude to women, and his forgiveness of those who had caused him most hurt.

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Introduction

'Bute does it for the fun of the thing, I'm sure'[1]

Cardiff Castle was a fraud, or so I thought when dragged unwilling around it as a teenager. Instead of building with Georgian elegance, or Victorian red brick modernity, the patron and his architect had perpetrated a hideous and unoriginal fraud. I grew up. I came, gradually, to understand that Victorian Gothic was in fact one of the most original of all styles, a style that took the knowledge and wisdom of the past, and then had a great deal of light-hearted fun with it.

In middle age I found myself living next to another of Lord Bute's amazing houses, Mount Stuart. At that time it was still a private dwelling house, and visits to it were a rare treat. It was as closed and as mysterious as the man for whom it had been built. The best source for his life was the biography by his friend the Benedictine-baronet-Abbot Sir David Hunter Blair, a man whose social skills were such that he was plainly bemused by anyone whose idea of small talk ran along the lines of: 'Isn't it perfectly monstrous ... that St Magnus hasn't got an octave?'[2]

Hunter Blair went some way to explaining the scholarship manifest in a fascination with the mediaeval, but went no way to explaining the central heating in the houses - the marriage of ancient and modern. He was so torn between his amusement at Bute's social inexpertise, his respect for his friend, and his awe of Bute's wealth and social position that it is a very patchy portrait that emerges. One thing was clear: Hunter Blair thought that if Bute had received a more normal upbringing, he would have been a better man. Was that right? Did Bute's childhood cripple him, and was his mother to blame?

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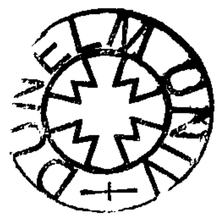
[1]BU/89/1/8 Gwen to Angela, 17 July 1872. Gwen was describing how Bute was urging her to wear her most beautiful and formal gown to a Cardiff ball.

[2]The Right Rev. Sir David Hunter Blair Bt., O.S.B., *John Patrick Third Marquess of Bute K.T. (1847-1900) A Memoir* (John Murray: London, 1921), henceforth HB, p.51n.



Moreover, Hunter Blair raised as many questions as he answered. Why had Bute's marriage been rumoured to be unhappy,[3] and was it really so? Why was there such a long gap between the first child and the second? What was the truth behind Bute's behaviour to Marie Fox?[4] There were questions, but no answers.

Bute's entry in the *National Dictionary of Biography* by John Horne Stevenson, his collaborator in his work on the heraldry of Scottish Burghs, gave an impression of the breadth of his interest, and an acute description of his appearance, but even more than Hunter Blair's it is an account of the exterior of the man, with the springs of thought and action hidden from view, and the public facts of his life emphasised.[5]

There was also the question of Bute's Catholicism. There were many aristocratic Catholic converts in the nineteenth century and they married into the old Catholic families, as Bute himself did. Yet Bute was extraordinary amongst them. His faith spilled over into his patronage of the arts, and into his scholarship: indeed his faith, his scholarship and his art fed one other. His role in the Church was also far from passive. The interrelatedness of his faith, his character, his personal relationships and his building projects is fascinating, and it is with these aspects of Bute that this study is especially concerned.

Others writing about aristocrat converts of the nineteenth century, lacking access to the archives at Mount Stuart, have had to limit themselves to Hunter Blair's published material (Bute is mentioned in others of his books of reminiscence). Mark Bence-Jones[6] offers a readable account that places Bute in the context of this society. Madeleine Beard attempts to do the same thing.[7] Unfortunately her account is painfully inaccurate. She devotes fewer than three pages to Bute, but her mistakes are so numerous as to make it impossible to list them all. It is not true that 'As a schoolboy, Lord John Bute's headmaster's report ... had read "RELIGION ... Unhappily not to the taste of the British public".'[8] The 'report' was an ironic

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[3]HB, p.115.

[4]*Ibid.*, p.104.

[5]John Patrick Crichton Stuart, *The Arms of the Baronial and Police Burghs of Scotland* [with J.H. Stevenson and H.W.Lonsdale] (William Blackwood & Sons: Edinburgh, 1903).

[6]Mark Bence-Jones, *The Catholic Families* (Constable: London, 1992).

[7]Madeleine Beard, *Faith and Fortune* (Gracewing: Leominster, 1997). It is also inexplicable that such a class-orientated book should refer to Lord John Bute, which is absolutely incorrect. Until his father's death he was Lord John Crichton-Stuart; after it, he was John, Marquess of Bute, or Lord Bute.

[8]*Ibid.* p.151.

spoof compiled by the adult Bute himself.[9] His yacht, the *Lady Bird* (not *Ladybird*), was not purchased from Lord Herries[10], who did not fall on hard times. A more serious and less explicable error is Beard's assertion that Bute wrote after Capel's visit to Oxford that the latter 'made *many* think and say "now is the time to arise from sleep".'[11] Although this occurs in a letter which mentions Capel, it is quite clear that Bute, writing before the visit, is referring to the two tragic deaths of Oxford students which followed so closely on each other.[12] This last is a really important inaccuracy, since it bears on his state of mind shortly before his conversion. These errors tend to sensationalise Bute's life. Given the clarity of Hunter Blair's writing, it is hard to see how they arose.

Another source of information was Mordaunt Crook[13], who had some access to the archives at Mount Stuart. Admittedly this was fairly limited, since the former archivist had only deemed certain documents suitable for public scrutiny, and then usually in the form of a copy. Whilst allowing that Bute did have a sense of humour, it was Crook's judgement that

> 'The Bute' certainly cuts a bizarre figure ... Figures like Baron Corvo, Fr. Ignatius, Edmonia Lewis, 'Miss X', Mgr. Capel and Abbot Hunter Blair may appear to lend an air of melodrama to Bute's life-story. They should not be allowed to do so. For Bute himself was by no means a melodramatic figure. In fact he was painfully serious, excruciatingly conscientious and terrifyingly industrious ... He was hardly the sort of man to see the point of Max Beerbohm's jibe: 'A man must be really mad if he takes himself seriously.' Bute took himself very seriously. That was inevitable, given his temperament and position. More than most men, he walked alone.[14]

Yet both at Cardiff and at Mount Stuart, it is not a remote and hard-working personality, full of its own self-importance, that emerges from the blaze of colour, the constant current of jokes. Both buildings speak of passion, of humour and of the sublime. It seemed quite impossible that either had been created by or for a flat-footed emotional cripple.

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[9]HB, p.17.

[10]Beard, *Fortune* p.151.

[11]*Ibid.*

[12]HB, p.67.

[13]J. Mordaunt Crook, *William Burges and the High Victorian Dream* (John Murray: London, 1981).

[14]*Ibid.*, pp.257-8.

John Davies's highly readable and compendious study of the achievements and influence of the Bute family in Cardiff[15] suggested that a companion study of the personal lives of the Second and Third Marquesses was long overdue.

Bute is traditionally seen as a man in thrall to the middle ages. He undoubtedly loved them, but there were aspects of his behaviour that simply do not fit the image of the dreamy, backward-looking romantic. David Cannadine sees Bute's establishing a medical and a law school at St Andrews University as an attempt to turn it into a 'medieval place of learning'.[16] Yet a broadly-based curriculum including science is not only the mark of a traditional Scottish University, but also of a modern one. When one adds that Bute bullied the university into appointing its first woman lecturer[17] and that he was responsible for instituting and funding a chair of modern Greek,[18] Bute appears more as a moderniser.

One day, it suddenly became clear to me that there was nothing to which I would more like to devote my next five years than resolving the enigma of this man on whom such diverse judgements have been passed. Clearly, a revaluation was overdue. What motivated Bute to his great and his less conspicuous achievements? To what extent did the peculiarities of his upbringing inspire him in some areas, and disable him in others? How far did his aristocratic status determine the set of his mind, and how much did his great wealth assist or distract him? How important was religion in the formation of his attitudes, and how central was it to the larger pattern of his outward life? These questions provide the axes around which this thesis revolves.

This is the first work since Hunter Blair's biography to be based on a wide reading of the Bute papers, and I have also had access to ten other major archives, which he did not have. Where Hunter Blair's treatment was adequate I have not repeated his stories, except when this was unavoidable for the continuity of the narrative. But the sheer weight of primary material has posed a major problem, not least as Bute wrote excellently and copiously. There are in excess of thirteen thousand documents relating to him at Mount Stuart alone. It became clear that it would only be possible to get his whole life within the confines of a

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[15]J. Davies, *Cardiff and the Marquesses of Bute* (University of Wales Press: Cardiff, 1981); (henceforth JD).

[16]David Cannadine, *The Decline and Fall of the British Aristocracy* (Yale University Press: New Haven, 1990) p.577.

[17]R. J. Macrides, 'The Scottish Connection in Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies', *St John's House Papers No 4* (University of St Andrews: 1992) p.2.

[18]*Ibid.*

hundred thousand words by suppressing every good story and every lively quotation, a procedure which would cripple the whole project, since Bute's life is most vivid in the details. I had originally hoped to see my subject safely buried. Instead, I have chosen to end this story with the birth of Bute's first son, his second child, in 1881. Bute was then thirty three, and his life had reached a plateau, with certain of its features well established.

I have tried very hard to preserve the flavour of the original writing, underlining passages originally underlined instead of shifting them into italics, not least because the latter leaves one with a dilemma with doubly underlined words. I have also retained Bute's habitual X or x when writing words such as excellent. The family spelling of the title is Marquess, which is also the modern standard spelling, but I have used Marquis in quotations where that spelling is used. The family name is Crichton-Stuart, although the *British Museum General Catalogue of Printed Books* prints this as Crighton Stuart, with a g and omitting the hyphen, and the *Dictionary of National Biography*, while spelling the name correctly, enters Bute's biography under –Stuart. The correct Christian name of the Third Marchioness is Gwendolen, not Gwendoline, although the more common spelling is often found in documents relating to her. The modern spelling of the family home on the Isle of Bute is Mount Stuart; the older spelling, all one word, is used where it occurs in quotations.

Apart from a continuing fascination with Bute himself, one thing has emerged from those five years - the kindness I have met with from almost all those whom I have bothered in the pursuit of my goal.

I am fairly certain that my admission to the archives at Mount Stuart arose from a misunderstanding, which, having once been made, was honoured by Johnnie Bute. He once asked me why I wanted to write about his great-great-grandfather. I answered as best I could, but I hope that as he reads these pages he gets a better answer, and one that in part repays his great kindness in giving me early access to his archives.

Of all those to whom I have been a nuisance, Andrew McLean, archivist at Mount Stuart, must have suffered most, though he has never suggested it by word or look. Not only has he been superbly professional at his job, but he has also been a companion on the way, always ready to laugh, to commiserate, and above all to enthuse over the latest discovery. His has been the ready, sympathetic, listening ear into which I have been able to pour enthusiasm, and never have it dampened.

I had no right at all to call upon the generosity of Diane Walker, but she has kindly and unstintingly supplied help in all kinds, from a whistle-stop tour of Cardiff to a wealth of

information on the death and burial of various members of the Bute family. Had this thesis not been so curtailed in its dates, evidence of her help would have been more apparent.

Matthew Williams, Curator of Cardiff Castle, has only been luckier in that some poor traces of his help appear in the text. His impeccable generosity and unfailing kindness has extended far beyond what I will ever be able to acknowledge. Whenever the magnitude of the task before me dampened my spirits, he made me laugh.

Libraries opened their doors, and their staff have struggled to help me. I would like to thank the staff of: Rothesay Public Library, Durham University Library, Glasgow University Library, the British Library, the Scottish National Library, and the Mitchell Library, Glasgow.

A great deal of my work has been done in archives far from home, and I would especially like to thank those who helped me struggle to decipher doubtful Victorian handwriting and impossible signatures. My thanks and acknowledgements go to: the Principal and Chapter of Pusey House, Oxford; the Earl of Sandon for entry to the Sandon Hall Papers, Staffordshire; the archives of the Scottish National Library and the British Library; the National Archives of Scotland; the Ayrshire Archives; the National Museum of Wales; Cardiff Central Library; Paisley Burgh Library; and the Sneyd family.

I would like to thank the priests at Cumnock and Galston for their kindness in allowing me to see their churches, and the minister at Cumnock Parish Church for his help with this project. I would also like to thank Ian Maclagan LL.B., F.S.A. Scot., for his advice on Victorian Scots law, and Mr David Hamilton, head of the Renal Unit at Glasgow Western Infirmary and medical historian, for his invaluable help on the causes and symptoms of Bright's Disease. To him is due the graphic description of the suffering of the Hastings family.

It is a truth that should be universally acknowledged that a man in possession of excellent proof-reading skills must be in want of a dyslexic wife. Considered in these terms, my husband might be considered lucky. Otherwise, he deserves great thanks for the hours spent struggling with this text. I would like to thank my children for their patience, especially my daughter Grace, who cleaned and cooked through wonderful summer weather in order to allow me to finish this thesis.

My last, and my greatest thanks go to my supervisor, Dr. Sheridan Gilley. It is no conventional thanks that I owe him. Not only has he readily offered me any help from the vast body of knowledge lodged, sometimes on his bookshelves, but more often in his head, but his steady faith in this work, his constant encouragement, his careful nurturing have given

me a faith in it, and in myself, that I might otherwise not have found. If this account of the early years of Bute's life is readable (as I still hope it is), then that is due to his encouragement to tell it as a story. He was the audience for which I wrote this, his the reaction I imagined, as I tried to allow Bute to come out of the shadows and tell of the laughter, the pain, and the triumph of his life.

I

Infancy

'all that should make a Parent's heart thankful'

Considering his reputation for punctilious business management, the mess in which the Second Marquess of Bute left his personal affairs after his death is odd. Perhaps he still could not believe that in his fifty-fifth year he had become the father of a healthy son. Perhaps, like other great men, he did not believe he would die, or perhaps final proof of his vigour in begetting two children in the space of three years (even if his first child had been still born) had given him a false assurance of his state of health. Perhaps he intended to make detailed provision for his son, wife and brother during his stay in Cardiff; later his family certainly believed this.[1]

John, Second Marquess of Bute, was born in 1793. He was the child of Lady Penelope Crichton, heiress to the Earldom of Dumfries, and John, Viscount Mountstuart, heir to the Marquesate of Bute. Dashing and debonair, John Stuart had been his parents' darling. He died young in 1794 after falling from his horse whilst on the way home from hunting in Essex, and his wife died three years later.

Young John Stuart had a brother, named Patrick after his Crichton grandfather, John Patrick Crichton the Earl of Dumfries. In fact he was always known by his second name, James. The boys were largely brought up by their Crichton grandfather, for their Stuart one had remarried and now had a wife much younger than himself and a second young family. A delicate water-colour at Mount Stuart shows the two little boys, still in frocks, standing together looking out at the world. In the same household was the orphan Flora Mure Campbell,[2] Countess of Loudon in her own right, brought up with them almost as an elder sister. Old John Patrick died

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[1]Mount Stuart mss. Note in regard to the domicile of the Marquess of Bute, undated, in the papers prepared for the Court of Session 1860.

[2]Flora Mure Campbell 1780-1840, SP vol.V.

in 1803, and his daughter's son became Earl in his place. In 1814 he also succeeded his Stuart grandfather, and became the Second Marquess of Bute. He changed the family name to Crichton-Stuart. In 1818 he married the eldest of the Earl of Guilford's three daughters, Lady Maria North. She was a sweet-faced woman, and seems to have been sweet natured. Of the Marquess of Bute's affection for her, there is no doubt. After her death, her husband 'liked something of Lady Bute's to be in every house of his.'[3] She was an invalid, and never bore a child.

The Second Marquess had inherited a run-down South Wales estate. John Davies[4] gives a fascinating account of how Lord Bute created a thriving industrial complex out of this former agricultural land. The city of Cardiff was largely of his making, springing up around the docks he built; and he blazed the way in the creation of new collieries. He was a tremendously hard worker, personally superintending all the details, as well as the broad sweep of his estates. He was creating the prospect of enormous wealth; just how much the next generation was to find out.

Lady Maria died in 1841. In 1845 Bute married for the second time. His bride was Lady Sophia Hastings,[5] the daughter of his old play-fellow, Flora. Flora had married the first Marquess of Hastings, and had a numerous family. After her husband's death a tragedy struck which was to affect the family for generations. Her eldest daughter had been called after herself. Beautiful and talented, Lady Flora Hastings[6] had become a lady-in-waiting to the Princess Victoria, mother of the Queen. Her tragic story is well known. She had been alone with Victoria's *bête noire,* Conroy. Her belly began to swell, and she was sick. Ugly rumours flew around. The young Queen believed them. But it was not pregnancy, but cancer, which was the cause, and Flora, who had been publicly humiliated by the rumours, was only able to establish her innocence by an exhaustive intimate examination. Victoria tried to make amends, but it was both too little and too late.

Sophia was the next eldest daughter, and she nursed Flora through her painful illness; afterwards she gathered her sister's poems together and published them.[7] Within six months, her mother, too, was dead and her brother, the Second Marquess of Hastings, who was already

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[3]NAS GD 152/196/8/1. Lady Sophia Bute to Tyndall Bruce, 16 April 1848.

[4]JD.

[5]Lady Sophia Frederica Christina Rawdon Hastings was born in 1809, SP vol.II.

[6]Lady Flora Elizabeth Rawdon Hastings 1806-1839, SP vol.V.

[7]Lady Flora Elizabeth Rawdon Hastings, *Poems, ed. by her sister* (William Blackwood: Edinburgh, 1842).

ailing, died within four years. How the couple met is now lost, but the family lands of the Loudons are very near the Crichton lands. At Loudon graveyard Lady Sophia's mother was buried, romantically reunited with her husband's mummified hand.

Bute, who was fifty two and whose sight was seriously impaired,[8] had married a woman who might well have been his daughter; indeed, given his upbringing, it was almost like marrying a niece, yet this Lady Sophia was already thirty-six years old. Bute's brother and heir James Stuart would not have hoped to inherit his brother's title and wealth. But as it became clear that Lady Maria was not going to present her husband with an heir, he had become accustomed to the idea that probably he or his children would inherit, not just the title, but the wealth that was being created. It must have seemed unlikely that a late marriage would disrupt these hopes, but shortly after her wedding Lady Sophia became pregnant. Her child was still-born in the seventh month.[9] To add to the pain, it was a boy. Lord James must now have been confident that either he or his eldest son James Frederick, would inherit the Bute title and the wealth of Cardiff. Lady Sophia, after all, did not come from a very healthy family.

In 1847, two years after the marriage, it became plain that Lady Sophia was again pregnant, and, this time, she carried her child to term. On 12 September she gave birth to a son 'at half past five o'clock in the afternoon.'[10] On 13 September, Lord Bute wrote to a friend: 'I now give you my news, and I know you will be rejoiced to hear that Lady Bute by the blessing of God gave me a little boy yesterday afternoon.'[11] He wrote again, confirming that they were both doing well, not this time by the careful hand of an amanuensis, but in his own difficult scrawl.[12] Since by this time he rarely wrote in his own hand, it is a measure of his joy, and, perhaps, his disbelief that he, who was fifty-four, and his thirty-eight year old wife, had a son and heir. That she was scarcely less happy is confirmed by her answer to felicitations; she found her little boy was 'indeed all that should make a Parent's heart thankful.'[13]

If it was as a sop to his brother that the young heir was christened John Patrick, Lord James was in no way appeased. He had made a career in politics, and come almost at once into conflict with his brother. He was elected member for Cardiff in 1818 and again in 1826. He

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[8]JD, p.14.

[9]BU/21/160/20 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[10]Mount Stuart mss. Note in Lady Bute's hand.

[11]NLS Ms. 3445 f.322 Bute to Principal Lee, 13 Sept. 1847.

[12]NLS Ms. 3445 f.325 Bute to Principal Lee, 15 Sept. 1847.

[13]NLS Ms 3445 ff.356-359 Lady Bute to Principal Lee, 11 Dec. 1847.

was a popular M.P. and supported reform whilst his brother the Marquess opposed it. Lord James would not change his opinions to suit his brother, so, at the next election, his brother put in a candidate opposing him. Lord Bute's candidate won, and Lord James was out of Parliament until he was elected for Ayrshire (his home county) in 1835.[14] In private, relations between the two men steadily worsened, and there is ample evidence that Lord James had lost his brother's trust.[15] Now, for the first time in his life, Lord James was no longer heir presumptive to the Bute Estates. To his sister-in-law's disgust, he regarded the child as only a temporary disruption to his prospects; he did not expect the late-born child of two ageing parents to survive.[16] John Patrick grew and throve.

Lord Bute naturally wanted to take his son to Cardiff, the town he had created. Lady Sophia thought he intended to spend the whole spring there.[17] He arrived in Cardiff with his wife and child early in March 1848. He was worried by business matters, including 'the Dowlais lease'.[18] He also received a letter from his brother which deeply distressed him. Nevertheless, his death from a heart attack on 18 March was without warning. He had been entertaining friends at dinner. The party broke up at 10 o'clock and he retired to his room. His wife called to him from an adjoining room and receiving no reply, she went into his bedroom and found him lying dead in bed.[19]

In the wake of his unexpected death, a horrible legal tangle ensued. The Second Marquess had made a will in July 1847, when it must have become apparent that his wife was likely to carry her second child safely to term. Despite naming separate trustees for the English estates (O. T. Bruce, J. M. McNabb and Lord James), and the Welsh (Bruce and McNabb only) it made no mention of the Scottish estates, which were later found to be intestate. The main thrust of the will was to provide for the management of the Welsh estates until any heir of the Second Marquess was of age, and to arrange the sale of the English lands to finance the expansion of

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[14]JD, pp.116-125.

[15]*Cf.* NAS GD 152/196/16/2 McNabb to Bruce, May 1848.

[16]NAS GD 152/196/8-14 Lady Bute to Tyndall Bruce, letters in the April and May of 1848.

[17]NAS GD 152/196/8/7 Lady Bute to Bruce, 21 April 1848.

[18]The lease to the Dowlais Iron Company had been granted in the eighteenth century upon terms most disadvantageous to the Bute Estate, and the Dowlais Company had also been guilty of a variety of malpractices (JD, p.39.) It was the subject of renegotiation at this date. Sir John Guest owned the company. His wife Lady Charlotte is famous for her translation of the Mabinogion. Lady Charlotte Guest, *The Mabinogion, from the Ilyfr Coch o Hergest, and other ancient Welsh manuscripts, with an English translation and notes* (London 1848).

[19]Mount Stuart mss. Note in regard to the domicile of the Marquess of Bute, prepared for the Court of Session 1860.

Mount Stuart house and the purchase of a further estate in Scotland. Later, the trustees of the Welsh estates found that their powers were not sufficiently well defined, and the provisions of the will for the English estates were never put into effect. Several dates in the will are left blank. The disposal of the carriage horses was covered, but no arrangement made for a guardian for any under-age heir to the estate, nor was there any financial provision for the young Third Marquess. Nor was a house provided for the widowed Lady Bute. In short, it was a most provisional and inadequate document.

Worse than all the rest, the will made no proper provision for the failed politician in his fifties with a family to support, who had spent all his life in his brother's shadow, subsidised by him, and in expectation of great wealth and a title upon his death. Now, seeing his prospect of inheriting a great estate go down before the interests of a baby still not in short frocks, Lord James appears to have been furious, and he was certainly desperate.

He was convinced that his brother must have made provision for him somewhere, and went through every drawer to find some paper which would give him a secure claim on the estate. When he planned to go to Scotland, Lady Sophia commented: 'if he is to ransack the Bureaux I do not know what will be the consequence....I know there are many relics of those who have been loved and cared for.'[20] His urgency led to disorder and breakages. Lady Sophia wanted a factor present as he searched.

Once the first shock of bereavement in the honeymoon period of her marriage had passed, Lady Sophia behaved with great determination and self-reliance. She chose as confidant her late husband's agent, an executor under his will, O. Tyndall Bruce.[21] It seems she began to write to him on April 16th 1848, because she did not know to whom else to turn for help and advice.[22] After that she wrote at close intervals, at least weekly, and in times of stress daily. Her letters became markedly more informal and personal as the correspondence continued. Normally neat, her handwriting disintegrated into a scrawl at times of stress, though her style remained forceful and coherent. Of stress, she had plenty. Her brother-in-law did little to make her life easy. Her son had not been left any proper provision for his minority, and Lord James was a great deal more concerned with resolving his own position than making his sister-in-law feel secure, or making the life of the young Marquess comfortable.

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[20]NAS GD 152/196/8/6 Lady Bute to Bruce, 21 April 1848.

[21]Onesiphorus Tyndall later assumed the name of Bruce, ?-1855. M. F. Connolly, *Biographical Dictionary of Eminent Men of Fife* (Orr: Cupar, 1866).

[22]NAS GD 152/196/8/1 Lady Bute to Bruce, 16 April 1848.

Lady Sophia was not in an enviable position either. She was the young widow of the creator of one of Europe's busiest ports, and the mother of a son who must be reared as heir both to an ancient line and a modern fortune. Given this, her jointure of £3,500[23] was not large. A house, and a separate allowance for her son, would have brought it into line with the provision made for other widows.[24] Without these, it seemed inadequate. Bruce's advice to her was to argue for a more handsome settlement for herself, to be secure even if her son were to die, especially as her husband had promised to make better provision for her. Bruce did not want her to jeopardise her position by agreeing to terms that would be suitable while her son lived, and untenable if he died, so he and her other advisors were bound to draw attention to the possibility of his death.[25]

At the same time, Lord James seems to have been tasteless enough (given his obvious position) to hark on the same theme.[26] Naturally, Lady Sophia rebelled. She had buried a beloved sister, her Marquess brother, both parents, her first child and her husband. She was not going to build her current position on the surmise of the death of her healthy child. She fought determinedly for a suitable settlement for her 'child', not unreasonably, since this child was already the inheritor of his father's wealth, and the Third Marquess of Bute. As 'it has pleased God that Lord Bute has a child of his own I feel I am bound to expect for that child what I should have no right to for myself', wrote Lady Bute, continuing a little desperately, '& tho' he may not live I do not think his death should be assumed as probable, for any of the arrangements. The better taste would be for everything to go on as far as possible as it did in Lord Bute's lifetime.'[27]

With the Scottish estates intestate, Lord James, as the new Marquess's nearest male relative, became 'Tutor-at-Law', that is to say, responsible for managing and administering those estates.[28] He was not generous. He refused Lady Bute the right to use as her own home either of the two houses he now controlled. One of these was Mount Stuart, the Georgian home on the Isle of Bute. Set in pleasant woodland, facing to the east, with its lands rolling down to the

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[23]JD, p.69.

[24]The Dowager Duchess of Northumberland had a jointure of the same sum, but actually received £12,500. The proposed jointure for the Marchioness of Guilford was £2,500. F. M. L. Thompson, *English Landed Society* (Routledge & Kegan Paul: London, 1963) pp.102-3.

[25]NAS GD 152/196/16/6/9 McNabb to Bruce, 17 May 1848.

[26]NAS GD 152/196/8/14 Lady Bute to Bruce, 15 May 1848.

[27]*Ibid.*

[28]The Tutor-at-Law is always the 'agnate', the closest relative to the father. John Erskine, *Principles of the Law of Scotland* (19th edition, ed. John Rankine: Sweet & Maxwell: Edinburgh, 1895) p.73.

sea, it was where the dowager Marchioness had borne both her sons, and buried the first. The second, Dumfries House, which was much superior architecturally, was not in Dumfriesshire but in Ayrshire, near Cumnock. Nor was Lord James generous financially. Bitterly considering his suggestion of £1400 *p.a.* for the young Lord Bute, Lady Sophia commented 'I consider his offer as miserable'.[29] With her usual directness, Lady Sophia encapsulated the position thus: 'I do not see why the child should be pinched when, if he live by God's mercy, he is likely to be very rich at the end of such a minority. Nor, if it be God's will that he die, is there any reason that he and I should be pinched that Lord James and his family may have the more to squander hereafter.'[30]

Lady Sophia was undoubtedly right in her summing up of Lord James's position. Whether such directness was generally admired by its victims, and more especially seen as an admirable quality in women, may be doubted. Lord Bute's distant cousin the Hon. James Stuart Wortley found on meeting Lady Sophia for the first time that 'she does not seem easy to get on with.'[31] It is not hard to see why. Although she consistently appears as a happy, sprightly person, she was also very direct, and very happy to reject male advice when it suited her (as Bute's distant cousin, Charles Stuart, complained bitterly after her death).[32] She had a very witty, accurate way of assessing people, as in her summing up of 'Mrs. Grant's niece - a very pretty, languid, ladylike, mindless person, of sweet temper and no sort of companion to an intelligent person.'[33] Commentators have not much liked her either. Bute's friend, later his biographer, Sir David Hunter Blair, whose family were neighbours of the Dumfries Estate of the Bute family, found it difficult to say anything positive about her. Considering John Patrick's unconventional childhood, he just about managed to excuse it as 'force of circumstances'.[34] John Davies, who read her letters to Bruce, found her querulous and obsessive.[35] Yet it must be remembered that she was writing within weeks of the death of her husband, with speculation on every hand about the imminent death of her son, her only living child. Her

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[29]NAS GD 152/196/8-16 Lady Bute to Bruce, 23 May 1848.

[30]*Ibid.*

[31]Caroline Grosvenor and Charles Beilby, *The First Lady Wharncliffe and her Family,* vol.2 (William Heinemann: London, 1927) p.346.

[32]Mount Stuart mss. Charles Stuart to Lady Elizabeth Moore, 14 Feb. 1860.

[33]NAS GD 152/198/1/7 Lady Bute to Bruce, 26 Aug. 1850.

[34]HB, p.4.

[35]JD, p.16.

position was not very secure. When the correspondence opened she did not even have the guardianship of her own child:[36] this was granted two months after her husband's death.[37]

One thing which most enraged her contemporaries was that she did not have any inhibitions about dealing with areas of life generally left to men. One of these was the law, of which she had a much better grasp than many of the men around her. During her bitter struggles over a place of residence, she pointed this out to Lord Harrowby,[38] himself a lawyer, and yet another of Bute's cousins, being descended from the First Marquess of Bute. 'My family' she commented, a little smugly, 'are a legal family in Scotland, and I know from my own knowledge [Lord James] has already incurred deep responsibility in his breach of the law.'[39] Lord James was shown this letter, and furiously retorted that Sophia was 'possessed of eight fields recently purchased by herself in the island of Bute ... but neither a small property nor extensive estates gives the proprietor any knowledge of the law of Scotland.'[40] However, James Stuart Wortley, for all that he did not much like Sophia, was inclined to think she was right: 'I could hope that Lord James would cease to insist upon shadowy rights which he has been led by indiscrete admirers to tenaciously pursue.'[41] Lady Bute had been thinking not so much of her personal possessions as of her family's considerable estate at Loudon.

Lady Bute's attitude to Lord James was undoubtedly coloured by the letter her husband had received about ten days before his death. It has been suggested that it was uncommon for Victorian widows to experience the anger and desire to blame someone for their husband's death which is now an accepted part of mourning,[42] but Sophia blamed Lord James wholeheartedly: 'the immediate cause of [Lord Bute's] death was a letter written by his brother Lord James Stuart'.[43] She was convinced, too, that he was mad; it had been her husband's judgement, after that same letter.[44] Consequently, she had a very poor opinion of his abilities

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[36]Lady Bute was fortunate that she was under English law, and that Lord James had no real interest in her child. Under Scottish Common Law 'the mother was never guardian of her child'. W. Glong & Robert Candlish, *Introduction to the Law of Scotland* (W. Green: Edinburgh, 1927) p.534.

[37]HB, p.5.

[38]Dudley Ryder 2nd Earl of Harrowby 1798-1882. The then Dowager Lady Harrowby was the daughter of his second marriage to Frances Coutts, SP vol.II.

[39]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII f72, 21 Sept. 1854.

[40]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII ff204-9 Lord James to Ld Harrowby, 27 Oct. 1854.

[41]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII f253 Wortley to Harrowby, date illegible.

[42]Pat Jalland, *Death in the Victorian Family* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1996) p.237.

[43]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII ff85-6 Lady Bute to Lord Harrowby, 23 July 1855.

[44]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII f72 Lady Bute to Lord Harrowby, 21 Sept. 1854.

in areas other than the law. Early in her widowhood she commented to Bruce, referring to the Tutor-at-Law status granted to Lord James at about this time, 'I expect him to assume the power and to make a mess of it by his careless habit of providing for anyone he wishes to oblige whether they be competent people for the place or not.'[45]

She was still struggling to be fair to Lord James: 'I believe he means to be kind but his letter is written in his most disagreeable style of inflated pompous condescension and self importance.'[46] She added a little pitifully that it was not at all the style she was accustomed to. Presumably, the admirable Second Marquess added to the known merit of a terse literary style, another of not talking down to his wife.

Lady Bute was not alone in her poor opinion of Lord James. McNabb was the other executor of her husband's will. He picked his words with a lawyer's caution when he put pen to paper, but that did not hide his opinion of Lord James. He told his fellow executor,

> I can already discover a feeling of apprehension lest Lord James should accept a position ... that would enable him to exercise any degree of active interference with the affairs of the English estates. If the responsibility devolve on us of assigning him an allowance in that capacity we shall, I presume, be entitled to require from him a formal guarantee against all pecuniary consequences to ourselves of such a procedure, if hereafter questioned by any party.[47]

Plainly McNabb feared that he himself might have to answer for, and indeed pay compensation for, the maladministration he assumed to be inevitable if Lord James was involved in running the estates. Later, the question arose of appointing Lord James as auditor to the Glamorgan estates, which would have given him an income. McNabb was happy to do so, if only he could be sure of keeping Lord James's role in check: 'his duties should be distinctly defined - and that will be in accordance with the spirit of Lord Bute's will, which excludes him from the Trust which it confers on ourselves, and conductive to our effective and <u>harmonious</u> administration ... if Lord James's interference is confined to receiving <u>from us</u> the monthly and periodical accounts.'[48]

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[45]NAS GD 152/196/8/12 Lady Bute to Bruce, May 1848.

[46]NAS GD 152/196/8/14 Lady Bute to Bruce, 15 May 1848.

[47]NAS GD 152/196/16/2 McNabb to Bruce, 10 May 1848.

[48]NAS GD 152/196/16/7 McNabb to Bruce, 17 May 1848.

With a great lack of tact, Lord James had already ruffled McNabb's feathers. He had called on Lord James, and in reply to some of the latter's remarks, stated his general willingness to agree with Bruce on a settlement of Lord James's 'position or allowance.' Given an inch, Lord James promptly took an ell. He wrote back to McNabb at once that he considered that he had 'arranged with you and Tyndall Bruce that I am to continue to occupy Cardiff Castle.' What was more, he was letting this decision be known publicly, and McNabb clearly suspected that this was in an effort to force the hands of the executors. Plainly harassed, McNabb wrote to Bruce 'I have today written to his Lordship that I have not hitherto received any final intimation of your views.'[49] In fact, Lord James got his way, and continued for some time to live in Cardiff Castle. Sophia was right in thinking she was up against a very determined man, and that he was a very poor administrator.

Much else that she wrote has the ring of determined level-headedness about it. She planned to take over administration for the annuities of (as she pungently expresses it) 'poor relations, old servants or old servants' children.'[50] She was 'inclined to think it would be more wholesome for my own mind to be obliged to think of some sort of business and not to be too much at ease.'[51] She was quite at home, if sometimes exasperated, negotiating for her own jointure and the allowance for her son. None of her arguments relies on emotion; they all rest on well argued logic.

She told her confidants, too, about her 'Child', as she usually referred to him. In answer to Bruce's queries she always responded that he was well; no ailments, real or imaginary, were mentioned. Obviously devoted to him, she retained her sense of humour: 'He continues, thank God, to thrive so well that I can scarcely hold him for his weight - He is quite well & did I tell you? he has said "Mamma." He is growing so interesting to me that I am fearful of tiring my friends with details of him.'[52] The nearest she came to any sign of neurosis was in an early letter to Bruce. Just a month after her husband's death, Lady Bute explained that she was giving Lord James a sword of her husband's as a remembrance of him: 'I had a superstition not to give <u>him</u> anything with a coronet and cipher - and yet I knew not what to chuse & could not pass him by without the offer of a remembrance -and Baby could not value the sword <u>at present</u>. Thank you - He is quite well and very hearty.'[53]

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[49]*Ibid.*

[50]NAS GD 152/196/8/16x Lady Bute to Bruce, 23 May 1848.

[51]NAS GD 152/196/8/7 Lady Bute to Bruce, date obscure.

[52]NAS GD 152/196/8/19 Lady Bute to Bruce, 3 June 1848.

[53]NAS GD 152/196/8/4 Lady Bute to Bruce, 20 April 1848.

The only way Lord James could legitimately hold such a coronet was, of course, by the death of the baby. It is easy to feel sympathy for Lord's James's position, but there was a spitefulness about many of his actions. He insisted that, whilst she might visit the Scottish family seats, Sophia was to give no orders to any of the servants there, and to move none of the furniture, which seems simply designed to make sure she could not feel at home.[54] The only recorded way he ever referred to his nephew was as 'Lady Bute's son' or 'her son', which seems especially ungenerous. Most petty of all, he refused for years to surrender to her the family plate left for her use in her lifetime. He alleged that he was not sure which set of plate it was, and when eventually forced to hand it over, refused to accept the assurances of all involved that the correct plate had been identified.[55] He made snide remarks about her in nearly all of his letters, occasionally implying that she was verging on madness: 'I fear Lady Bute is in a very nervous state.'[56]

His own friends lost all patience with him, and repeated attempts were made to allow Lady Bute one of the Scottish homes as her own. James Stuart Wortley articulated the views of everyone concerned: 'I told him frankly that if I had been in his place, I should have thought it right to have given the mother one of the places outlined to bring up her child at, and I believe this to have been ... the opinion that has been expressed by every friend at all he has consulted, but of course it is no small sacrifice of face to change his course now.'[57] A great many papers concerning this were lost in a bonfire after Sophia's death, but it appears that from about 1852 or 1853 she was finally allowed Mount Stuart as her Scottish home, or, rather, that her son was finally allowed a Scottish home, for he, not his uncle, was the owner of all these properties.

Difficulties continued over an allowance for the Third Marquess. As Tutor-at-Law, Lord James was responsible for any money the boy might receive from his Scottish estates. In 1850 he proposed that an additional payment of five or six hundred pounds a year might just possibly be made.[58] From later references it seems that payments stopped altogether for a time in 1857.[59] In 1860, the Scotch estates were bringing in an income of £17,000 *p.a.*.[60]

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[54]NAS GD 152/197/2/14-15 Lord James to Bruce, 6 Mar. 1849.

[55]*e.g.* NAS GD 152/198/2/32 Lord James to Bruce, 5 Oct. 1850.

[56]*e.g.* NAS GD 152/197/2/33 Lord James to Bruce, 4 July 1849.

[57]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII ff257-262 Wortley to Harrowby, date illegible.

[58]*e.g.* NAS GD 152/198/2/8 Lord James to Bruce, 6 May 1850.

[59]Mount Stuart mss. Stuart's diary, 9 Jan. 1860.

[60]BU/21/1/24 Transcripts of the Court of Session hearing, 18-20 July 1860.

Lady Bute fought back with vigour. Determined to have her own home, and with the south Wales trustees on her side, Lord James was forced to leave Cardiff Castle in the summer of 1849.[61] Lady Sophia complained bitterly that 'Lord and Lady James left the house in a disgraceful state of filth and ruin.'[62] She rented Dallars House, a small country house in Ayrshire, near to both Dumfries House and her old home at Loudon, which gave her a Scottish base. She also leased Largo House near St Andrews for the summer months, where her son was 'enchanted' by bathing in the sea.[63]

Between 1847 and the early 1850s Sophia became increasingly bitter against Lord James:

> I have had to endure since I came to Scotland the expression of surprise and reproaches of an old friend of my mother's and Lord Bute's mother 'that Lord Bute should have acted so ingenerously towards me and made such a miserable provision for me.' Lord James forgot to mention that he had abused the confidence that his brother unfortunately reposed in him by making him an executor to persecute me in every way since Lord Bute's death and used his power to deprive me as far as possible of all Lord Bute bequeathed to me ... I have come to the determination to go on as if I had no interest in Lord Bute's properties in Scotland ... It appears very extraordinary that Lord James cannot comprehend the difference of being a trustee instead of being a proprietor - though property is one thing and administration another![64]

Furious at her treatment, Lady Sophia chose a foolish way of retaliating. After her husband's death she had surrendered the keys to the houses to Bruce, who had later handed back to her the key of her husband's writing desk. This was kept in Dumfries House, which was occupied by Lord James and his family. He demanded the key to see if any other of Lord Bute's papers was in it. Sophia refused to surrender the key. The action placed her in the wrong, with no benefit to herself. Pressed again and again, she finally told Lord Harrowby her reason. It was

> because ten days before he died Lord Bute had told me in a solemn and confidential conversation that he was fully convinced that Lord James was unsound in mind and it is this conversation indelibly fixed in my memory (with

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[61]JD, p.69.

[62]NAS GD 152/198/1 Lady Sophia to Bruce, 14 Feb. 1850.

[63]NLS 3447 f148 Lady Bute to Dr Hood, 26 Aug. 1853.

[64]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII ff64-8 Lady Bute to Harrowby, 1 Aug. 1850.

the reasons he gave for his conviction) which has ruled my conduct towards Lord James and his family. I told Mr Bruce the whole conversation after Lord Bute's death - He and Lord James went to Scotland and ransacked every place, because Lord James had an idea that Lord Bute had left some testimonary paper for his advantage. As Lord Bute had not had time to fulfil his spontaneous promise to provide more amply for me, I never believed such a paper existed in reference to his brother.[65]

Inevitably, Lord James eventually broke into the drawers and found nothing. Sophia's petty act had done nothing but exacerbate tempers all round.[66]

While her husband's family offered her neither practical nor emotional support, she was helped by being part of a close family of her own. George and Flora were dead, but her sisters Selina[67] (by now married to a Mr Henry) and Adelaide[68] were intimates, especially Adelaide who was unmarried. It seemed as though the Hastings family could not escape tragedy. In 1851, the young Third Marquess of Hastings,[69] a Rifle Brigade officer and not yet twenty years old, died after falling into Birkenhead Dock.[70] As Lady Bute told a friend: 'My sister and I have been overwhelmed by the calamity of my nephew Ld. Hastings death & it is a weight we cannot rise from.' The new Marquess of Hastings was his young brother Harry,[71] still only nine years old. His eldest sister Edith[72] was eighteen, and virtually took the place of their dead mother.[73]

Very conscious that she was already being criticised by her brother-in-law, Lady Bute was scrupulous to avoid scandal, remarking 'one cannot be too prudent in my position as to character.'[74] In the case of a widow still of marriageable age this included avoiding the company of men. She compensated by a wide circle of woman friends, all approximately in

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[65]*Ibid.*

[66]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII ff85-6, 23 July 1855.

[67]Selina Constance Rawdon Hastings 1810-1867, SP vol.V.

[68]Adelaide Augusta Lavinia Rawdon Hastings 1812-1866, *ibid.*

[69]Paulyn Reginald Sero Rawdon Hastings, Third Marquess of Hastings 1832-1851, *ibid.*

[70]*The Leicestershire Chronicle,* 14 Nov. 1868.

[71]Henry Weysford Charles Plantagenet Hastings 1842-1868, SP vol.V.

[72]Edith Maud 1833-1874, *ibid.*

[73] Barbara, Baroness Grey de Ruthyn m. George 1831, m. 1844 Admiral Sir Hastings Yelverton d. 1848, *ibid.*

[74]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII ff64-8 Lady Bute to Lord Harrowby, 1 Aug. 1850.

their middle years, mainly unmarried, and all able and intelligent. Lady Elizabeth Moore,[75] a distant cousin, some six years older than Lady Bute, was a particular friend, spending time with her in Scotland. Lady Elizabeth, like Lady Bute, was strong-minded, witty and interested in almost everything. But Sophia's own son was her greatest companion, and her greatest delight. From the very beginning she took pleasure in teaching him herself. The first letter of Bute's still preserved was written when he was four years old. Lady Bute included an account of its composition and despatch: 'They are his own words & I held his hand as he is particularly fond of writing letters, which he folds, puts the seal on the wax & the stamps on himself & then gives with sedateness to the servant "for the post".'[76]

This letter of Bute's was short and to the point: 'I am very happy & Mama is pleased with me.' A year later he was writing rather more: 'I was in my nursery picking some wheatheads out of the corn I had picked in my walk in the morning & putting it into a bowl ... Afterwards I meant to get a pestle and mortar ... and make a little bit of bread.'[77] Although most of the letters still preserved at Mount Stuart from the Third Marquess's first ten years were written to him and not by him, they give a vivid picture of his life at this time. One from the well known authoress, Agnes Strickland,[78] enclosed 'horses, dogs, foxes hares and a cat-a-mountains' cut out by 'my sister Elizabeth'. She continued 'ask Mrs Lamb, your kind nurse to read you the description of them all from some pretty book of natural history,' and advised him to learn to read 'at once, and beg your dear Mamma to allow you to devote half an hour twice a day to learning to read.'[79] Did 'Mamma' in fact put the letter-writer up to this request? It does read a little like a sugar-covered pill. Certainly, as he learnt to read, either Bute or his mother requested printed letters so that he could read them himself.

Some were bent upon improving the young Bute. He was sent two bottles of water, one from the Dead Sea 'which will remind you of the fearful judgements of God upon sin & wickedness of those who obey not his will'.[80] In contrast there was a bottle of water from the Jordan, where the obedient Jesus was baptised. Others had the measure of a small boy a little more realistically. One did not have 'time to write you a printed letter, but ... I daresay you won't

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[75]Elizabeth Anne Moore was one of six children of Stephen Moore, 2nd Earl Mountcashell. Her date of birth is not recorded, but she was 88 when she died in 1892.

[76]Mount Stuart mss. Lady Bute to Mrs. D. Boswell, 10 Feb. 1851.

[77]Mount Stuart mss. Bute to Mrs D. Boswell, 22 July 1852.

[78]Agnes Strickland (1796-1874), historian, authoress of *The Lives of the Queens of England* 12 vols. (1840-8) and editor of *The Letters of Mary Queen of Scots,* 5 vols. (1864). See DNB.

[79]Mount Stuart mss. Agnes Strickland to Bute, date unclear.

[80]Mount Stuart mss. Yarbrough to Bute, undated.

mind having this read to you.'[81] Also highly improving were the letters from 'Godmother Aunt North'.[82]

Lady North was the last surviving North child. Maria, Lady Bute had been her eldest sister, her half sister. She was genuinely devoted to Bute, as though he were her nephew and not her half brother-in-law's son by another wife. She wrote regularly twice a year, once to Bute on his birthday, and also thanks for the good wishes Bute sent her on her birthday. She had very little idea how to interest a child, but she was very faithful. 'I am very sure that you do wish me many happy returns of my Birthday but perhaps you do not think that not a little part of my happiness depends on your being a good boy.[83] Bute was to give his mother a kiss from Aunt North, and Mamma was to kiss Bute from Aunt North. There was news of Willie, Aunt North's son, and that the tenant farmers at Wroxton, the North home, had drunk Lord Bute's health on rent day most heartily. As both dinner and the wherewithal for the toast would be provided *gratis,* they would have drunk any toast heartily. There is no evidence that Bute gave even Aunt North cause for concern. Others correspondents were more light-hearted. There is a charming letter with an indecipherable signature where selected words have been omitted, and little printed pictures have been cut out and glued in. Just in case the code was not broken, a separate envelope gave the solution. Thus the sheep turns out to be a wether, for weather.[84]

Sir Francis Hastings Gilbert,[85] later appointed guardian to Lord Bute, looked forward to meeting Bute in St Andrews, to: 'renew our games of cricket, though I believe golf is the great game there, of which however I never yet could understand the science, so you will have to teach me.'[86] At St Andrews there was sea bathing,[87] shell collecting, visits to Principal and Mrs Lee, and to see the mechanical toys of Sir Hugh Playfair. Bute remembered also the spectacular three-tailed Donati's Comet of 1858.[88]

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[81]Mount Stuart mss. Flora Yarbrough to Bute, 16 Dec. 1853.

[82]Susan Lady North 1797-1884, CP Vol. IX.

[83]Mount Stuart mss. Aunt North to Bute, 7 Feb. 1857.

[84]Mount Stuart mss., 12 Feb. 1857.

[85]Sir Francis Hastings Gilbert, 2rd Baronet (1816-1863). Vice-consul and Consul at Scutari (1853-1863). See Boase vol.V, cols. 405-6.

[86]Mount Stuart mss. Hastings Gilbert to Lord Bute, 21 May 1850.

[87]NLS Ms. 3447 f.195 Lady Bute to Principal Lee, 26 Aug. 1853.

[88]Discovered by Giambattista Donati at Florence on 2 June 1858, it remained visible to the naked eye for over three months and was judged to be among the most beautiful comets ever observed. Patrick Moore, *The Comets* (Keith Reid Ltd.: Shaldon, 1973), pp.59-60.

Hunter Blair, with his determined insistence that no good thing ever came from Lady Bute, attributed Bute's generosity to the example he received later in his life from the Galloway family,[89] but Bute showed an early delight in giving. Already in March 1853, his dutiful Aunt North remarked, 'I am sure the servants must have been pleased with all the nice things you gave them on your Mamma's birthday.'[90] Bute sent Henry Hunter Blair (uncle of Bute's biographer), who was going to Australia, 'the stuff for a coat' and a book. The book seemed a 'good one', a phrase capable of two interpretations, and Henry added 'I have no doubt I shall profit very much by the reading of it.'[91] There were gifts to young friends, or servants, as might be expected. But others were definitely not in this category. Mrs Tyndall Bruce got a surprise: when Bute had promised her a travelling suit she had thought the boy was joking. Then one morning her servants brought in a brown paper parcel, which, unwrapped, showed foxes' heads. She had been given furs. Her astonishment and delight were real.[92] Unlike most children, little Lord Bute could afford serious presents, and he delighted in giving them. Equally evidently, he must have had adult help to choose well for his mother's friends.

A regular member of Lady Bute's close circle of woman friends was Miss Eleanora Boyle,[93] or Nora as she was usually known. The large Boyle family were the children of the late Lord Justice Boyle of Scotland. John Boyle[94] was one of the Trustees of the Welsh estates and his sisters were both 'intimate friends'[95] of the Marchioness. Hunter Blair created the image of Bute as a very lonely, quiet child at this period of his life.[96] An early letter from Nora was full of fun, and suggests a thoroughly healthy little boy: 'Dear old man, Lady Mary[97] & I miss somebody screaming on the stairs very much, and we have no one to hug us except each other, and she hugs Pincher, but you know I never do that.'[98] She objected to his calling her Snora, and suggested Noracula instead. "Dear man" or "dear old man" were the usual affectionate terms for Bute in the Boyle family.[99] Nora's dislike of Pincher, Lady Bute's dog, was another

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[89]HB, p.13.

[90]Mount Stuart mss. Aunt North to Lord Bute, 5 Mar. 1853.

[91]Mount Stuart mss. Henry A Hunter Blair to Lord Bute, 2 Nov. 1857.

[92]Mount Stuart mss. Mrs Tyndall Bruce to Lord Bute, 4 Jan. (no year).

[93]Eleanora Boyle 1816-1891, SP Vol.II.

[94]John Boyle 1819- , *ibid.*

[95]NLS Ms2851 f.145 Lady Bute to General Sir George Brown, 26 Nov. 1852.

[96]HB, pp.4-13.

[97]Lord James's daughter, Lady Mary Anne Frances Crichton Stuart d.1886, SP Vol.II.

[98]Mount Stuart mss. Nora [Boyle] to Lord Bute, 1 Mar. (no year).

[99]*cf.* Mount Stuart mss. A. Boyle to Lord Bute, 12 Mar. 1861.

standing joke. Her elder sister, Hamilla Augusta,[100] mercifully known as Augusta, was also a close friend.

To almost all his regular correspondents, the little boy was "Bute", and only to one was he 'dear Johnnie'.[101] Most people did not have enough rank themselves, or enough of a blood tie, to address the child by his Christian name. Whilst it was, of course, perfectly correct, reflecting a period more concerned than ours with rank, and more inclined to use surname and title than given name, there is something of the distance in it which led his later guardian, Charles Stuart, to refer to him as a 'young potentate'.[102] Though other young boys of much lesser rank than his, indeed all with a claim to be 'gentlemen', might hide their Christian names from each other, they were usually well provided with brothers, sisters and cousins who would use the familiar first name. Few indeed were the children so exclusively called by their title.

A shared interest of the Bute circle was in natural history. Adelaide encouraged him to keep a fresh-water aquarium. 'Cousin Edith' was much concerned with stuffing a lobster at Bute's direction.[103] All these letters are pleasantly informal in character, as though one relaxed adult were writing to another. It would seem that young Bute was perfectly at ease with the companionship of adults. There is a painting of him and his mother made when he was five years old, and formally dressed in Highland costume. He lolls back on his mother untidily, one foot crossed behind the other. At their feet the family pets appear: a small terrier and a hedgehog. Mother and child seem completely at ease with each other, although Bute eyes the outside world with a hint of reserve. Lady Bute and her son valued this painting by Swinton; she left it outright to him in her will. The painting is reproduced in Hunter Blair's biography, where he suggests Bute is nine years old. The young boy was not only healthy, but very tall for his age.

In 1854 there was a serious rift between Adelaide and Sophia, the more painful as family and friends were dragged in to side with one or the other. It seems to have been sparked by Lady Adelaide's marriage to Sir William Keith Murray of Ochtertyre, and Lady Bute's intense dislike of Sir William may have caused a rift between the sisters. On the other hand there were

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[100]Hamilla Augusta Boyle 1813-1875, SP Vol.II.

[101]Mount Stuart mss. "Cousin Eliza" to Lord Bute, undated.

[102]Mount Stuart mss. Charles Stuart to Lady E. Moore, 14 Feb. 1860.

[103]Mount Stuart mss. Cousin Edith to Lord Bute, 11 June 1858.

allegations that it was 'Lady Adelaide's want of truth'[104] which caused the problem. Lady Sophia, who had been very close to her sister, was miserable: 'my distress about my sister and my fear that no remonstrance will turn her from her purpose. ... I cannot clear myself without throwing blame on others so I do not care to do it while there is a chance of her returning to me. But .... I am sorry to say amongst my own relations and former friends the business is likely to make a great feud and some support one sister and some the other; but I do not mean to contest the point. Those who can trust my principles will do so.'[105] Sophia caught scarlet fever, which she attributed to her unhappiness. No sooner was she well than Bute caught German measles, followed by measles. Perhaps it was to aid their convalescence that they embarked on a trip to Belgium and Germany that was to be a highlight of Bute's early life.

So in August 1855, just before his eighth birthday, Sophia took her son to the continent for the first time.[106] From the moonlight drive to the ferry at Folkestone, it was an enchanted time for the young Bute, so much so that themes from it were to haunt his adulthood. His diary was dictated, largely (to judge by the handwriting) to his mother herself, so he was not deterred by the labour of writing from making long entries. Yet she seems to have given him a remarkably free hand in what he said. Despite her legendary dislike of Roman Catholicism, she had no qualms about visiting Catholic churches. On one occasion, staying too long to enjoy a church, she found herself, with her son, in the service. Did she not want to make a disturbance by leaving, or did she actually think it would be no bad thing for her son to experience this different (and, to her, inferior) way of worship? Either way, Lord Bute saw his first Catholic Mass:

> we had not been there long, when the bells began to ring and soon after the organ began and a man took a long taper and lit more of the candles, and the people began to come in a considerable number. A priest in his robes walked down the aisle and went into a confessional whispering-box. Then a lady in black went into it, but while I was staring at the marble monuments I was told to look at the high altar and I saw ... a priest in white robes with a golden kind of hood ascending ... the organ played very loud and made a disagreeable mixture of sounds ... then came various kneelings and prayings ... then the voices grew louder and the censer was flung in the air, and the bell was rung furiously.[107]

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[104]Mount Stuart mss. Charles Stuart's diary, 12 Jan. 1860.

[105]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII ff69-70, 30 June 1854.

[106]Mount Stuart mss. Bute's Journal, begun 29 Aug. 1855.

[107]Mount Stuart mss. Journal, 1855.

This account was a mixture of the standard Evangelical phrases of dismissal ('kneelings and prayings'), of childish curiosity (the lady and the confessional box), of genuine observation (the 'white robes with the golden kind of hood'), genuine dislike (of the 'disagreeable noises' of the organ) and of something like real appreciation (of the censer flung in the air and the furious bell). Just as Lady Bute had encouraged her son to find his own words for his letters, so, doubtless within strict limits, she encouraged him to find his own words in this journal, recording his approval without comment. Later, at Munich, Bute was to record another beautiful church: 'It is a Protestant church now I am glad to say.'[108] He approved of the sixty four splendid marble columns.

Bute gave three pages of description to his first Catholic service, whereas the zoological gardens, despite of his fondness for them, got only half a page. Later, however, his first theatrical performance, the play *Aladdin*, earned five rapturous pages. After this, until his mother's death, miniature theatres were to be a regular entertainment, giving the lie to suggestions that Lady Sophia's religion was joylessly narrow, since the really strict disapproved of the theatre at this date; even if the moral content of a puppet theatre is a good deal more easily policed than the public stage.

Every day was a round of new pleasures; provided, like the little Bute, you were able to find your pleasures in churches, museums, battlefields and castles. Many eight year olds would have found it tedious. Bute was well used to a quiet life surrounded by adults. The marble pillars, inlaid floors, painted ceilings, pictures and ancient silver came to him with great freshness. He had, too, one great advantage over most little boys. The adults who surrounded him made it their business to interest him in everything he saw. Gradually, the *dramatis personae* of the trip emerge. Apart from 'Mamma' there were 'Mrs Lamb, Dr Hood and Nora'. Dr Hood,[109] by this time 74 years of age, was an Englishman who had spent most of his life in Scotland. He was the redoubtable first Rector of St Paul's Episcopal Church, Rothesay, newly built to serve the Episcopalian congregation on the island. Both his age and the fact he was a man of the cloth rendered him an unexceptionable companion for Lady Bute, and gave Bute some contact with an adult male who was not a servant. Hood was an energetic man, who not only saw his own church transformed from a wooden to a stone building, but worked tirelessly throughout Argyll for the Episcopalian cause. Nora is sometimes a companion for Bute, and sometimes for his mother. Mrs Lamb was Bute's much-loved nurse.

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[108] *Ibid.*

Museums could provide a small child with a satisfying shudder. One had a drum 'covered with human skin'.[110] Dr Hood was happy to escort him to various torture chambers, although most were disappointingly bare: 'There was a torture chamber there but nothing to be seen except for the beams on which the wheel was said to be suspended.'[111] At Brunswick in 'a church' he saw numerous coffins 'one of them contained Queen Caroline of England. There were many cushions attached to the coffins with metal bases, containing I was told the heart of those within. One of these hearts was taken out and shown to me. It was that of duke Leopold.'[112]

Chance acquaintances also interested him, from the man who spoke such perfect English that Bute found it hard to believe he was indeed German, to the green tree frog 'we caught ... that afternoon. We put him on a tree and he climbed beautifully. Every little projection he seized with his little paws, just as a boy would with his hands and we saw his pulses beating in his back. He was very neatly made, but we let him go away.'[113] Some pleasures were typical of those enjoyed by most children: 'I dined up at an actual dinner party at Mr Forbes! ... I am sorry now that I did not take more sugar plums than one, for Mama says it is the custom to carry away some.'[114] The party turned and headed for home, taking a boat down the Rhine, and telling legends of the river as they sailed. At Cologne, Bute summed up the mood of the trip: 'Dr Hood finished the drawing of me which he had begun at Baden & Nora played on a very fine piano-forte. Mama had a cup of coffee & I had my tea & we were all very happy.'[115]

For the rest of his life Bute was to associate happiness with such sightseeing as he had enjoyed on this trip. Hunter Blair considered it a remarkable feature of his 'reverence of sacred things' that re-visiting his prep. school whilst at Harrow, on being 'asked where he would like to drive to, he chose to go and inspect an interesting old church in the neighbourhood.'[116] But visiting old churches brought Bute simple, reassuring, secular happiness as much as a religious thrill. It was a return to the comfort of childhood.

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[109]Rev. Samuel Hood 1782-1872, ordained 1826, Rector of St. Paul's Rothesay 1838-72, Dean of Argyll and the Isles by 1854, D.D. 1870; *St. Paul's Scottish Episcopal Church, Rothesay, Isle of Bute: A Short History,* Ivor Dowse, undated, pp.6-7.

[110]Mount Stuart mss. Journal, 1855.

[111]*Ibid.*

[112]*Ibid.*

[113]*Ibid.*

[114]*Ibid.*

[115]*Ibid.*

[116]HB, p.14.

There were still delights in store. Bute had his first view of the tomb of Charlemagne at Aix-la-Chapelle with its 'immense slab of stone with CAROLOMAGNO simply placed on it' and 'three rows of arches one above the other with marble pillars.'[117] There was a parting from Dr Hood, and a photograph taken for him 'with my head in a vice'.[118] There was a visit to a toy-shop to buy presents for Bute and for his friends and relatives. There 'the people were very cross' and 'we were glad to get out of that scolding house.'[119] Bute was used to content and cheerful people. This was the first of three such trips, but the only one for which there is a complete record. There is a fragmentary journal for the second, scribed by Nora Boyle. In 1857, a correspondent was hoping that Bute's third trip to Brussels afforded 'as much pleasure as the first did.'[120]

At the end of the first trip the party visited Cousin Edith who had married Charles Clifton in 1853, and started a family, of whom Bute met the two eldest children, Charles[121] and Flora.[122] It very soon became plain that Edith's husband was difficult and unreasonable. In the many surviving documents referring to him, not one voice is raised in his praise. The usual verdict on Edith's marriage was voiced by Lady Selina: 'Poor soul, she has had much to bear.'[123] There were tensions between Sophia's friends and relatives, especially Lady Selina and Lady Elizabeth.[124] There were problems in Lady Selina's marriage, too of which her sister was well aware.[125] Yet despite this, these remarkable women continued to take a lively interest in politics, especially Scottish home rule,[126] law,[127] and natural history. Lady Bute entertained a good deal, and her young son was often 'kept running about, charging ladies' plates at

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[117]Mount Stuart mss. Journal, 1855.

[118]*Ibid.*

[119]*Ibid.*

[120]Mount Stuart mss. ? to Bute, 12 Aug. 1857.

[121]Charles Edward Hastings 1855-1920, SP Vol.II.

[122]Flora 1854-1887, *ibid.*

[123]BU/21/10/7 Lady Selina, undated.

[124]BU/21/10/1 Lady Selina, 5 Jan. 1861.

[125]*Ibid.* Sophia left her bequests to her sisters with the instruction that their husbands were not to be informed of them without their wives' express consent, an ingenious circumvention of the law before the Married Woman's Property Act of 1870 allowed them to hold in their own right such property as they had acquired since their marriage.

[126]Mount Stuart mss. Weekly Journal, 24 Dec. 1858.

[127]*cf.* Mount Stuart mss. Lady Selina to "my dear cousin", 12 Sept. 1861 & Mount Stuart mss. Weekly Journal, 12 Feb. 1859.

luncheon.'[128] He grew up assuming that it was normal for women to be interested in all the subjects that men were. His male relatives, by this time, were putting pressure on his mother to get him a tutor,[129] and for a long while she prevaricated. Even when he did appear (apparently at the end of 1858), Bute had frequent and lengthy holidays, and days spent 'running about.'[130] Lady Bute continued to have her own ideas about his education.

Sophia had edited her father's journals and her sister's poems. Now she assisted her son to start a small newspaper. The *Mount Stuart Weekly Journal* was begun at the end of 1858 to 'convey to our absent friends some knowledge of how we are occupied' in which it succeeds now as then. Bute was the editor, and he copied the whole out in his own hand, and as a good editor should, he solicited contributions from all the talented associates he could find. Occasionally, however, he was forced to note that 'No contributions have been sent in, not withstanding the repeated prayers for them.'[131]

There was a serial, a pastiche of melodramatic Victorian historical novels, contributed anonymously (in fact written by Lady Bute), which followed the breathless adventures of the loyal Marie, lady-in-waiting to Empress Maud (of Stephen-and-Maud fame). The subject was, of course, chosen because of the connections of Cardiff Castle with the story of the Empress. Her beleaguered position must have appealed to Lady Bute and each short episode is full of strong women characters. The Misses Boyle acted as sub-editors, something the publication needed; Bute had a somewhat shaky grasp of spelling. On the other hand, he could hit the exact stylistic note for every feature of the paper. A dead bullfinch got the full treatment for his obituary: 'every effort was made to restore the vital spark but in vain ... he was a Bird much admired, loved and respected.' In true Victorian style, there followed details of the funeral. Wrapped 'in silk he was deposited in [a wooden box] & the whole sewn up in calico, the seams of which were covered in wax. He was placed beside the body of his talented friend 'Paris' in the vault of particular pets.'[132] The whole is surrounded by a carefully ruled and inked black border.

Shortly after this, Lady Bute and her son travelled to the other family home in Scotland, Dumfries House, and the publication was re-named *The Pilgrim's Weekly Gazette and Mount*

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[128]BU/31/2 Bute's diary, 12 Aug. 1866.

[129]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII f79 Lady Bute to Lord Harrowby, 3 June 1855.

[130]Mount Stuart mss. Lady Bute to Mrs Boswell, 22 July 1858.

[131]Mount Stuart mss. Weekly Journal, 22 Jan. 1859.

[132]Mount Stuart mss. Weekly Journal, 17 Dec. 1858.

Stuart Weekly Journal. From this issue, comes a piece of editorial comment that sets the tone for the fervent Scottish nationalism of the circle.

> That eminent man, Mr A. J. Boyle,[133] we rejoice to say, has returned to his native country. In these days of centralisation, Scotland cannot allow all her sons to be absorbed by the sister country. If 'Scottish rights' are not to be for ever abandoned, if her identity as a nation is not to be wholly lost sight of, let her rouse herself to cherish those who can best uphold her.[134]

It was not Christmas that was celebrated, but the New Year, and amongst other presents, Lady Bute had given her son a 'Lilliputian Theatre'. Celebrations included performances of *The Miller and his Men,* and 'the whole play was gone through very successfully, including a tremendous explosion in the last scene, the appearance of which was artfully managed by a device of Lord Bute's; while the sound was produced by the bursting of a large biscuit bag, procured for the purpose.'[135]

Regular book reviews appeared, one being of Catherine Sinclair's *Beatrice, or The Unknown Relatives*[136] which contained 'a discovery of Popish wickedness, with a harrowing interist [*sic*].'[137] It had been published in 1852, in the wake of the Protestant No Popery furore over the restoration of the English Catholic hierarchy, and had outsold *Uncle Tom's Cabin.* If Lady Bute had been concerned that Bute was not quite hostile enough to Roman Catholicism, this book would have possibly been a suitable corrective. Only possibly, since a sceptical reader might have found it far-fetched enough to promote more hilarity than disgust. The Protestant heroine, foully entrapped in a convent with 'never-to-be-sufficiently-avoided female Jesuits' learnt how Popishly-trained governesses were set loose upon the unsuspecting mamas of Britain to subvert their innocent charges into the clutches of the Catholic Church.[138] The horrors of starvation in a convent were well set forth, with the general misery and ill health of its inhabitants. The chief villain of the piece was Father Eustace, neatly summed up in the

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[133]Archibald Boyle 1822-1874, SP Vol. II.

[134]Mount Stuart mss. Weekly Journal, 24 Dec. 1858.

[135]Mount Stuart mss. Weekly Journal, 8 Jan. 1859.

[136]Catherine Sinclair, *Beatrice or The Unknown Relatives* (Simpkin, Marshall, and Co.: London, 1855). Catherine Sinclair was sister to Lady Glasgow, whose property Kelburn faces Bute across the Clyde. *The Blackwell Dictionary of Evangelical Biography, 1730-1860*, Vol. II (Blackwell: Oxford, 1995).

[137]Mount Stuart mss. Weekly Journal, 5 Feb. 1859.

[138]Sinclair, *Beatrice,* p.408.

frontispiece:[139] 'The face of Father Eustace had become livid with rage at this unexpected defeat; but the dying old man feebly held out his hand to Beatrice, and whispered, with a terrified glance at the dark and working face of the priest "will he go away? I die a Protestant."' Beatrice remains steadfast, and, having converted the hero, her cousin, to her faith, inherits the family lands, marries him, and looks forward to a future with 'every domestic blessing.'[140]

The paper acquired a proper printed mast-head with an engraving of Mount Stuart House. In the same issue, Bute tells of his first visit (with Mr A. Boyle, who was a barrister) to the criminal courts in Edinburgh. As well as his own version of the cases, Bute glued in reports from the newspapers. The edition of 12 February carried an account of another trial, this time of Donald Chance Infatuation, commonly known as Downy. Not this time in the High Court, but 'in the renovated hut, we mean fort, we say renovated because it was fitted out expressly for the occasion, having a glass window, table covered with green baze[*sic*], desk and 3 stools.'[141] There was a little difficulty in persuading the accused into this court, and he did not, because he could not, reply to the charge in his own voice. He was a dog. A visiting minister from Bute was the judge and Bute was counsel for the prosecution. The documents for the case still survive. The indictment is carefully laid out, using as a model the indictment of one of the 'real' criminals Bute had seen tried in Edinburgh. Not only the language but the exact form and shape of the documents is reproduced. A long document in Bute's writing directs the court on the proper way of proceeding: 'Before the examination of a witness, and just after the promise, he must be asked the following questions. 1 What is your name? ... 6 Have you been promised any reward to give your evidence towards any side?'[142]

The main surviving evidence for the prosecution is a statement from John P. C. Stuart, as on this occasion he correctly styled himself, equally correctly supplied to the 'advocate for the panel' (as the accused is known in Scottish law.) This must, of course, be supplied to the defence before the trial, to allow them to decide upon plea and defence or mitigation. 'Master Carter, Master Jessop, and myself were playing at "Tom Tinkers ground" in the Flat Holms on the 5th inst. Master Carter had walked quietly away in the direction of the cowshed and Master Jessop and I were following at some distance, when, without the least provocation, the

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[139] which illustrates p.203.

[140]Sinclair, *Beatrice* p.476.

[141]Mount Stuart mss. Weekly Journal, 12 Feb. 1859.

[142]Mount Stuart mss. Trial of the dog.

prisoner and his father rushed upon and barked at him (Master Carter) - this is the whole thing.'[143]

The incident is in fact explained in the only other surviving statement, that by Jane Chapman. She had deponed that 'he never hurts fowls, ...[but] barks at and assaults everybody who is not well clothed.'[144] Master Jessop was the butler's son and he would have been respectably dressed. It was Master Carter who was attacked by the dog because he was roughly dressed.

This incident shows that Bute was not as much guarded as Hunter Blair supposed. He was allowed to play with children from other backgrounds. He could cajole adults into his pastimes, in this instance to act as judge in the little court. He enjoyed taking on very different roles and playing them out, just as he liked mastering the pastiche of various literary styles. It shows his ability to get to the essence of something as complicated as a legal trial, and in a short time. Every element of this little case is punctiliously correct. And there is another aspect. Bute would not allow his friends, however roughly dressed, to be attacked by the estate dogs. The reporting of the outcome of the trial was left to the next issue. But this did not appear until July when the court was forgotten.

Bute recorded the end of his winter holidays in this last winter edition of his paper.[145] It was about this time that he himself printed a bill (advertising a lecture) at Duncan Ballantyne's printers. Modern educational theorists would applaud his appreciation of all the aspects of producing and printing. Certainly Bute's breadth of general knowledge was rarely to be equalled. He had time and means to follow up anything that interested him. But he was still living amongst his mother's friends, and as she had married late, few of her friends had children of his age, whilst those of the next generation, like his cousins Charley and Flora (the children of his Cousin Edith), were all younger than he was. Of his fondness for many of these older people, and especially the Misses Boyle, there is no doubt. Goings and comings are recorded with energy. It was not enough. In the 19 February issue of his little paper he complained of 'the very monotonous life enjoyed (?) by the Editor.'

The next issue of the paper did not appear until July, when apologising for 'our long silence' the Editor explained that they had been in Edinburgh, Ayrshire, and Peebles before travelling to Cardiff, where 'the pleasure and excitement of arriving ... has been sadly marred by the illness of the Marchioness of Bute.' In fact, she had probably been aware of being ill before

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[143]*Ibid.*

[144]*Ibid.*

[145]Mount Stuart mss. Weekly Journal, 19 Feb. 1859.

this, as on 2 June, in Edinburgh, she had made a new will, arranging the guardianship of her son. Lord James Stuart's death from heart disease in September came too late to change her plans. She liked his eldest son, James Frederick,[146] known in the family as Jas. Fred., a great deal more than his father; a judgement which events were to prove sound. Following the conflict with her sister Adelaide, and in the light of her cousin Edith's unhappy marriage, she turned to new guardians. She probably hoped for most from Sir Francis Gilbert, but lacking one overwhelmingly obvious choice, had the good sense to appoint three, which would ensure that a majority opinion would always carry the day. The others were her redoubtable spinster cousin Lady Elizabeth Moore, and Charles Stuart,[147] already trustee of the South Wales estates. Bruce had died in 1855, and McNabb had retired. Their places had been taken by Stuart and John Boyle,[148] another of the numerous Boyle siblings.

Charles Stuart was descended from the third Earl of Bute's third son Charles. At this time a Colonel, Stuart had served as 'military secretary to his relation, Lord Canning, the first Viceroy of India.'[149] He had been warned of the seriousness of the Marchioness's condition by John Boyle, and came to Cardiff to resume his duties as Trustee. A very conventionally minded man, he was less occupied by the estate than by the way Bute was being brought up, which horrified him. Bute, now twelve, was still not at school, when most boys left home at the age of eight. He was being taught (when he was taught) by an inadequate tutor, whom the boy despised ('understandably' recorded the fair-minded Stuart). His religious education was still wholly in the hands of his mother. Boyle thought that Bute would soon rebel against his mother's rule, perhaps not reckoning how deep Bute's love of her was, or how strong his impulse to please her. Lady Bute had, it seems, done her best to give him more freedom, but there is no doubt that Bute was yearning for a wider life and for adventure.

Cardiff brought some, but they were not enough. Bute was having dancing lessons, and there was a trip to see the last portions of the East Bute dock and its canal opened to the public. This was illustrated by a pen drawing by Bute,[150] whose illustrations increasingly enlivened the paper. He had a strong, concise style of drawing, able and lively. News of the family pets continued to be a mainstay, with a new hedgehog causing much anxiety: 'He resorted into the chimney in his apartment and remained there for more than two days ... many means had been

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[146]James Frederick Crichton-Stuart (1824-1891), Lt. Col. in Grenadier Guards, SP Vol.II.

[147]Charles Stuart 1810-1892, SP Vol.II.

[148]John Boyle 1819-?, SP Vol.II.

[149]JD, p.70.

[150]Mount Stuart mss. Weekly Journal, 17 Sept. 1859.

resorted to in order to hint to him that his presence was strongly desired either above or below.'[151]

This piece was probably by Nora, who wrote with a somewhat fey humour. An old joke, dating right back to the early days of Bute's childhood, was her dislike for the Marchioness's dog Pincher, whom Bute described as a 'man of the world.' The proximity of the Castle to the town was a temptation to local urchins. Bute recorded with unqualified delight that 'two sons of Davis the coal merchant are to be flogged by their father for stealing chestnuts.'[152]

In every issue, now, there was reference to her Ladyship's health. She tried drives out, a short break down the coast from Cardiff, and once it was possible to record that 'Her Ladyship has had no attack of breathlessness the last three days.'[153] In October readers were told that 'Lady Bute proposes to proceed to London via Cheltenham and thence by easy journeys to the Isle of Bute where her Ladyship will spend the winter.'[154] The very last issue of the journal in late November commented that she was 'at present still suffering from astha [*sic*] & cough.'[155] The newspaper did not record the cause, probably because nobody thought Bute should know that his mother was suffering from Bright's Disease, the Victorian name for all forms of kidney failure, one of the effects of which is that the body cannot rid itself of water. It was this which would have caused Lady Sophia's breathlessness.[156]

By December, the Marchioness had reached Edinburgh. Bute wrote to his 'own dearest cousin Charley' (Edith's son) that Mama had a 'brutal cold.' He complained of the 'softness' of Mr Bruce, who had tolerated a hanger-on. The last entry, on 22 December, still cheerful and unconcerned, recorded: 'Mr Bruce and I threw a little loose snow at each other in the Meadows.'[157] There is something a little pathetic in the picture of a boy so bereft of companionship of his own age that he has to turn to a father-figure to play in the snow with.

The letter to Charley was never finished or signed. Lady Bute's health worsened, and it could no longer be hid from anyone that she was seriously ill. The monotony and the happiness of Bute's life were alike at an end for many years.

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[151]Mount Stuart mss. Weekly Journal, 13 Aug. 1859.

[152]Mount Stuart mss. Weekly Journal, 17 Sept. 1859.

[153]Mount Stuart mss. Weekly Journal, 20 Aug. 1859.

[154]Mount Stuart mss. Weekly Journal, 22 Oct. 1859.

[155]Mount Stuart mss. Weekly Journal, 26 Nov. 1859.

[156]David Hamilton, *pers. com.*

[157]Mount Stuart mss. uncatalogued Bute to Charley, 22 Dec. 1859.

II

Custody

'a susceptible and excitable young person'

Lady Bute was dying, and her family and friends began to gather round her in the Edinburgh hotel.[1] Adelaide came, and though Sophia never overcame her 'ill opinion and dislike' of Sir William,[2] the sisters were reconciled.[3] Her cousin Edith joined her, along with Mr and Mrs John Boyle and John's sister Augusta. The Church of Scotland minister at Loudon had been Dr Norman Macleod.[4] He had buried her sister, Flora, and her mother, for whose deaths the family still blamed Victoria. Now he came to her bedside to console Sophia.[5] Ironically, he was later to comfort the widowed Queen.

Christmas Day was not a holiday in Victorian Scotland. News of Lady Bute's approaching death was telegraphed to Charles Stuart who lived in Hampshire, and did not consider joining the circle in Edinburgh in time to see her alive, despite knowing she wanted to see him. Nor did he think of going to support Bute at the time of her death.[6] On 27 December she was "insensible after two terrible fits".[7] She rallied, regained consciousness, but died at four o'clock on the afternoon of 28 December. Bute, occasionally overcome by storms of grief,

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[1]Gathering to help nurse her (though much of the work probably fell on her maid Locke) and to participate in a 'good death'. Jalland, *Death*, p.100.

[2]Mount Stuart mss. Stuart's diary, 30 Dec. 1859.

[3]Her reconciliation with all her relatives was part of her preparations for death, the 'good death' so much longed for by Christians like herself. *Ibid.*, p.166.

[4]Norman Macleod 1812-1872. See DNB. Ordained and called to the parish of Loudon 1838. In 1851 he moved to a Glasgow parish. In 1857 he became chaplain to Queen Victoria. In the next year he received his D.D. Dr Macleod was the editor of *Good Words,* a magazine so strict that three years later, Macleod rejected Anthony Trollope's *Miss Mackenzie.* Anthony Trollope, *An Autobiography* (Penguin books: London, 1993), p.173.

[5]Stuart's diary, 30 Dec. 1859.

[6]*Ibid.*, Christmas Day 1859.

[7]*Ibid.*, 27 Dec. 1860.

took his place as head of the family, and began making the appropriate arrangements for the funeral, the coffin, and all the other details. Within two hours of her death he had given instructions for a cast to be taken of her face 'with view to a future bust',[8] ordered a 'leaden coffin',[9] arranged the inscriptions to go on it, requested a *post mortem* examination and made arrangements for 'Locke & other servants about his mother to be cared for.'[10]

That same day Stuart was informed that she had died, and was asked to travel to Scotland at once.[11] He left not that evening but the following one by the overnight train. The first person he met at the hotel was Lady Edith, whom he disliked. This made him a good deal more gloomy than Sophia's death. What really confused him was Bute's emotional state.

> His grief was violent & returns in fits and starts, he is often quite cheerful and laughing ... I went up with [Miss Boyle] to see poor Lady Bute's body. The face was placid and serene in expression. The boy followed us in & kissed her face, then uncovered her hand & kissed it & left the room in quiet tears.[12]

Stuart dismissed the weight of arrangements Bute had taken on as 'The boy busies himself much about the vault & coffin.'[13] The post-mortem confirmed what they already knew; she had died of Bright's Disease.[14]

Stuart then left the melancholy hotel in Edinburgh to bring in the New Year with friends at Ford in the English Borders.[15] At the time, he was utterly unaware that leaving the mourners in order to join a cheerful celebration would cause offence. The disruption of the New Year holiday meant that the body could not be moved until 2 January. Early on that day, Lady Elizabeth Moore arrived. She had intended to spend the winter on the Mediterranean. Telegrammed with the news of Lady Bute's death, Lady Elizabeth started for home, not breaking her journey of three days and two nights, and arrived in time to accompany the coffin

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[8]*Ibid.*, 6 March 1860.

[9]Lady Bute was to rest in the family vault so required a lead-lined coffin. Julian Litten, *The English Way of Death* (Robert Hale: London, 1991), p. 114. These coffins were so effectively sealed that the body was frequently preserved floating in liquor - probably not embalming fluid, p.52.

[10]*Ibid.*

[11]*Ibid.*, 28 Dec. 1859.

[12]*Ibid.*, 30 Dec. 1860.

[13]*Ibid.*

[14]*Ibid.*

[15]*Ibid.*

to Bute.[16] Stuart remained in the Borders, still celebrating the New Year, still oblivious of the offence he was causing.

The funeral party left Edinburgh early, and travelled by rail to Glasgow

> where the coffin was placed in a handsome hearse belonging to Messrs Wylie and Lochead of Glasgow and thence transferred to the 'Dolphin' steamer at the Broomielaw which was specially engaged for the passage, arriving at Rothesay about 3pm. The whole party preceding the hearse moved speedily on to Mountstuart where the body remained without any special lying in state till Thursday.[17]

Bute bitterly recalled how Stuart had left him alone with the dead Marchioness: 'He left [my mother's] body ... to be attended on that long and troublesome journey, in the depth of winter, only by women, servants, and myself, a child of twelve.'[18] Bute dated his disgust at Stuart from this incident, feeling the 'gross disrespect'[19] to Lady Sophia implied in it. He did not add that Stuart had absented himself to celebrate the New Year, but he surely felt it.

There is a little difficulty now in recovering who did accompany the hearse that wintry day. *The Scotsman* gave the funeral party as 'the Marquis of Bute, Colonel Charles Stuart and Mr A. T. Boyle, Dr. Matthews Duncan, her Ladyship's physician and Mr A. Bruce, S.S.C.' Presumably these were the persons the Bute household expected, but Stuart's own diary shows that he was not there. Stuart kept a personal journal and the volume covering this period has survived, and offers an invaluable insight into his day-to-day thoughts and actions. If Stuart failed Bute, others expected may also have avoided the gruelling journey. Whether or not Bute was really alone except for servants, there is no doubt that his guardian was comfortably with friends, while Bute made the most traumatic journey of his life.

Bute arranged for his mother's body to rest in the ground floor sitting room, with candles around, a nice compromise between his own love of ceremony and her dislike of ostentation. Charles Stuart finally arrived on 4 January with Bute's cousin, James Frederick Crichton-Stuart, and stayed to attend the funeral. The next morning at 'About 11½ the company began to arrive, Bute came downstairs & received all kindly and composedly - though he looked pale

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[16]BU/21/1/7/3 Lady Elizabeth Moore to Bute, 1 Jan. 1861.

[17] *The Buteman,* 6 Jan. 1860.

[18]HB, p.8, footnote.

[19]*Ibid.*

and nervous ... then Dr Norman MacLeod ... prayed most beautifully. Bute fidgeted to the window afterwards to see the hearse & the coffin put into it.'[20] It was beyond Stuart to see how far Bute felt himself responsible for the ceremony, or how much comfort he derived from such things.

Under lowering skies, the procession moved the five miles by the shore road to Rothesay. As well as the extended Stuart clan, island notables and clergy of all denominations came to pay their last respects, as did the Bute tenant farmers. In all there were 250 in the cortege, and almost every vehicle on the island was pressed into use. The day was cold and overcast, but no rain fell.[21]

'In the same carriage as chief mourners with the Marquis were his cousins, Col Stuart and Mr Villiers Stuart'.[22] Colonel Stuart, a simple soul, was amazed at Bute. 'The boy seemed happy to be with young men and really was as outwardly cheerful as if he were going to a wedding, though he may have been feeling much inwardly. I felt grieved that the crowds of people who stared into the carriage should see him grinning.'[23] The possibility that Bute felt triumphant in the face of his mother's well-made death, and his own successful arrangements for her appropriate ceremony of exit from this world did not occur to him. Stuart's religion, sincere as it was, did not allow exultation in faith following a death.

The coffin was carried to the mausoleum in the grounds of the parish church (known as the High Kirk), with family members bearing the pall above it. Charles Stuart was not accustomed to the stark simplicity of a Presbyterian funeral, or much impressed by it. 'The coffin was simply laid down without a word by the bearers. The ladies with Lamb and Locke were ranged along the wall of the Mausoleum.[24] Bute peered about him till all was settled, then knelt & I hope prayed beside the coffin & again returned and kissed it.'[25]

Stuart could not imagine the disposition that needs to put its innermost emotions into a fitting outward form. Just as he had earlier misunderstood Bute's feelings of exultation and thought

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[20]Stuart's diary, 5 Jan. 1860.

[21]*The Buteman*, 6 Jan. 1860.

[22]*Ibid.* Henry John Villiers Stuart, 1837-1914, BP. The Villiers Stuarts were also Bute's distant cousins.

[23]Stuart's diary, 5 Jan. 1860.

[24]Despite the general perception that Victorian women did not attend funerals, the way the close relatives and servants made their way separately to the grave site was typical for the burial of a woman of Sophia's class at this period. Diane Walker, *pers. com.*

[25]Stuart's diary, 5 Jan. 1860.

them mere happiness, he now doubted the sincerity of his grief. Yet the feeling, the prayers, were not less real for being acted out. Onlookers other than Stuart were more impressed. *The Buteman* described the scene.

> Within the vault were several ladies in company with the deceased's sister, Lady Adelaide, witnessing the last duty being silently performed. The coffin, which was covered with rich black velvet, and plainly mounted, bore a brass plate simply recording her Ladyship's name, date of birth and decease ... [when] the funeral party in numbers entered the vault the touching spectacle was witnessed of a motherless and fatherless boy with his right hand upon his mother's coffin kneeling to bid a last adieu.

The ceremonial over, Bute suffered the inevitable reaction as the gravity of his loss hit him. 'He went home with Lady E. Moore, Miss Boyle & Lamb, quite overcome',[26] recorded the bemused Stuart.

After luncheon, Stuart at last had his interview with Lady Elizabeth: 'She does to be sure "multiply words" but I think that we understand one another.'[27] The next day, Lady Elizabeth found an opportunity to try and impress her view of Bute on Stuart: 'she opened & gave us her opinion of Bute's talents, peculiarities, precocity & determination at most tedious length. But I think there was much truth in what she said.'[28] Although Stuart personally disliked Lady Elizabeth, he tried hard to be fair to her. On her part, she later confided that at this time she found that whilst 'he was not to my view agreeable, I fancied him a stern, high-minded strictly "honourable man" incapable of any meanness trickery or falsehood.'[29] At that moment they were fairly well in accord. Ominously, however, Stuart added that he feared Lady Elizabeth would humour Bute too much, 'for he must learn to obey & not merely to reason.'[30]

The usual practice in Scotland was to have no sermon or eulogy on the day of the funeral, but to preach one the following Sunday. Accordingly, the Rev. John Robertson, minister of Scoulag, the little church by the shore in the Mount Stuart policies, which served the locals and the servants of the big house, preached a fine, direct sermon. A 'dark dispensation' had

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[26]*Ibid.*

[27]*Ibid.*

[28]*Ibid.*, 6 Jan. 1860.

[29]BU/21/48/10 Lady Elizabeth to Bute, Nov. 1866.

[30]Stuart's diary, 6 Jan. 1860.

deprived the mourners of one firm yet gentle, loving and wise: 'May he who met the two disciples on their sad way to Emmaeus ... join Himself to us ... to give us ... consolation and peace.'[31] Stuart was again bemused: 'The extraordinary boy remained to all appearance totally unmoved, only decently attentive.'[32] He might not have been any happier with a wild out-pouring of grief, which would probably have been the result if Bute had not to some degree distanced himself and assumed a formal mask. Sitting in his father's pew, leaving his mother's seat empty, he was firmly embarking on a more adult life, containing the distress to which he had given way after the funeral.

That afternoon, Stuart interviewed Bute about his future. He began with the essential aristocratic sport of horse riding, in which he probably suspected (unfairly) that Lady Bute had not tried to interest her son. Riding was very much the mark of the quality. A good seat and above all courage on a horse were inextricably bound up with the image of a gentleman. Stuart was not delighted that 'evidently he has no taste for [riding.] He asked if he might learn to fence to which I at once assented. He asked if he might learn navigation (which he wishes to know because there are technical phrases, he told me, in Peter Simple, which he does not understand!)'.[33] Stuart had little sympathy for Bute's eclecticism.

Stuart left Bute on 11 January. Of the three nominees in Lady Bute's will, Sir Francis Hastings Gilbert was consul at Scutari, so was not available to be guardian to Bute. This left Lady Elizabeth and Charles Stuart. The two guardians were formally appointed by the English Court of Chancery on 18 January. Stuart and Elizabeth Moore began a fraught correspondence. The originals do not survive but, due to the legal battle that followed, there are numerous official copies. Just a month after Lady Bute's death, Stuart wrote to Lady Elizabeth with plans for taking the boy, his tutor Mr Stacey and his servant Meikle into his own house.[34] A regular theme of Stuart's was the need to remove Bute from the care of his nurse, Mrs Lamb.

Stacey was a new addition to the household. He had been picked by Lady Bute, and seemed in every way a sensible choice of tutor for her son. The son and the brother of Cardiff clergymen, he was a Fellow of King's College, Cambridge, and probably some fifteen years older than

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[31]Rev. John Robertson, *Sermon preached on the Occasion of the death of the Marchioness of Bute* (Richard Griffin & Co.: London and Glasgow, 1860.)

[32]Stuart's diary, 8 Jan. 1860.

[33]*Ibid.*

[34]BU/21/1/15 Stuart to Lady Elizabeth Moore, 1 Feb. 1860.

Bute. He was a former cricket 'blue', just the man to encourage Bute to develop an interest in sporting pastimes. He was also a barrister, and Bute had an interest in legal matters.[35] Meikle, formerly butler at Dumfries House, was Bute's private servant, and a replacement for Lamb. Stuart did not propose any regular contact with Lady Elizabeth. In effect, Bute was to lose not only his mother but every trace of his life with her: his nurse, his home, his adult friends.

Lady Elizabeth replied, urging caution. She began in a conciliatory way: 'with regard to the subjects you have named respecting a boy's Education "Public & Private schools" tutors etc. I feel that this is so entirely your concern that I hardly venture to hazard an opinion upon topics I have never been accustomed to think of.'[36] Lady Elizabeth was showing traditional female deference to the male areas of responsibility, but she was only backing off to make her claims elsewhere.

> From my intimate knowledge of his (Bute's) singular character ... I do not think it is for his advantage (or yours) to remove him hastily from my care. ... gradually accustom him to the necessity of a change. ... If conversed with rationally, he is far too wise not to see and understand the real state of the case. I have talked to him of school, of young & pleasant companions. I have told him he must work hard at Latin and other languages and that he cannot pass the whole of his childhood at Mount Stuart.[37]

It is easy to read between the lines of this that Bute was fiercely resisting leaving Lady Elizabeth in order to go to school, and yet she was trying to encourage him. The other great battle Lady Elizabeth had undertaken was to persuade Bute to like Charles Stuart, who was doing nothing to make her task easier. Lady Elizabeth urged him to come back to Mount Stuart and to win Bute's confidence: 'it will not be accomplished in five minutes for he has a great deal of Scotch caution (and reserve when he pleases) and childlike as he naturally is in some ways he is as old and shrewd and long headed as a grown up man in other ways.'[38]

Instead of attempting co-operation, Stuart went at once on the offensive, and fired the first shot in the oncoming war. He pointed out that the role of guardian was so onerous that no one 'who has bread to eat would undertake the task except from a feeling of duty and humanity ... but if

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[35]Francis Edmond Stacey was admitted to King's from Eton in 1850, became a Fellow in 1853 and was called to the bar in 1857. He died in 1885. AC, Part II, Vol. IV.

[36]BU/21/1/15 Lady Elizabeth Moore to Stuart, 2 Feb. 1860.

[37]*Ibid.*

[38]*Ibid.*

I am to hold it my judgement must be altogether unfettered.'[39] Lady Bute had left a careful balance of power. With Sir Francis out of the running, the balance was disrupted. By insisting that he hold all the power and influence, Stuart was making a nonsense of Lady Bute's will, as Mr Bruce[40] gently pointed out when he told Lady Elizabeth that he regretted what Lady Elizabeth told him about Stuart's arrangements (which did not include any role for her) and spoke of 'Lady Bute's wisdom in selecting ... another in whom she placed equally great ... confidence.'[41]

Stuart was mainly motivated by a strong desire to ensure that Bute learnt to see himself as simply one boy amongst many; and this at a time when Bute, freed from his mother's stifling care, was taking on himself an essentially grown-up role. Contrary to the expectations of the adults around him, he made no fuss about parting from his nurse, and sleeping in his own room. He was to some degree compensated for his terrible loss by his growing power and responsibility. Yet Stuart wished Bute to lay these consolations aside.

Stuart believed Bute had 'ideas of importance' and wished to educate him 'morally'.[42] He harked obsessively on this theme. When Lady Elizabeth passed on Bruce's suggestion that it would help Bute to acclimatise to the society of children to invite to Mount Stuart some distant relatives whom Bute knew, Stuart replied 'I thought over Mr Bruce's suggestion about the young Corbetts but I think that it is the society of thoroughly independent boys who do not know him as a young potentate that Bute requires.'[43] Stuart did not want Bute acclimatised, he wanted him shocked.

When Bute himself invited Stuart to Mount Stuart, the latter wrote to Lady Elizabeth of 'a little misapprehension in Bute's mind when he asks us to visit him ... & it is perhaps a pity that he should not know that whilst underage his guardians occupy exactly the position towards him..(of) his poor mother ... I should not notice it at all if I did not think it was so essential that he should not become or continue self important.'[44] He reported that 'Doctor Duncan is

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[39]BU/21/1/15 Stuart to Lady E. Moore, 8 Feb. 1860.

[40]Alexander Bruce was a solicitor to the Supreme Court of Scotland. He had inherited Falkland House and Palace from his mother, Marjorie Bruce, a considerable heiress. His father O. T. Bruce had taken his mother's surname on marriage, to keep an unbroken connection with the great king. His name and details are not to be found in any of the lists of Scots advocates.

[41]BU/21/1/14 Stuart to Lady E. Moore, 4 Feb. 1860.

[42]*Ibid.*

[43]BU/21/1/14 Stuart to Lady E. Moore, 14 Feb. 1860.

[44]BU/21/1/14 Stuart to Lady Elizabeth, 8 Feb. 1860

convinced that wine is bad for Bute.'[45] In short, he objected strongly to the fact that Bute behaved more like an adult than a boy. He wanted to change him, and change him radically. Bute had in some measure come of age in arranging his mother's funeral; he had borne the brunt of the terribly sad journey from Edinburgh to Rothesay, had arranged the funeral and taken his father's seat. He was far less prepared to be a boy after his mother's death than he had been before it.

Just how desperate Bute felt about the prospect of being delivered into Stuart's care is revealed by the fact that about the end of January he wrote to Mrs Stuart asking her to intercede with her husband to allow him to enrol as a midshipman in the Navy. Stuart's reply is balanced and reasoned - and utterly ungenerous. He explains very fairly that his guardians would bear a heavy responsibility in sanctioning such a hazardous course, and that Bute, who has been tenderly cared for by his nurse until the present, is quite unprepared for the tough life of a 'middy'. So far, so good, but then Stuart goes on the attack, assuming that Bute feels he would 'pass five or six years of [his] life more pleasantly and idly ... than ... at school and college.' The possibility that Bute, fired by Captain Marryat's tales, would rather have relied on his wits and abilities, and sought adventure with men, than go into the care of one who was determined to belittle and reduce him never seems to have occurred to Stuart. Nor does he seem to understand the terror felt by one wholly accustomed to the adult world upon being faced with a mass of other boys at school. Stuart put salt into this wound, speaking of 'the daily rubs you must meet with [at school] & the knocking about of boys older and bigger than yourself.'[46]

He refers again to the need for Bute to be free of the care of a nurse: 'neither I nor any boy that I knew was ever touched by a female servant after eleven years of age.' This was, of course, the convention,[47] but the hysterical tone, and the ceaseless references to the subject, suggests there was more emotion than rationality behind his references to the 'uneducated servant's influence'[48] and to the need for Bute to avoid the scorn of his fellows (a reasonable theme). The most curious passage speaks of himself when he was Bute's age: 'Boys of my age then

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[45]BU/21/1/22 Stuart to Lady E. Moore, 12 Jan. 1860.

[46]BU/21/1/14 Stuart to Bute, 4 Feb. 1860.

[47]Tom Brown, that exemplary hero, threw off for himself all traces of female rule: 'none of the women now, not even his mother's maid, dared offer to help him in washing or dressing ... he would have gone without nether integuments altogether, sooner than have recourse to female valeting.' Thomas Hughes, *Tom Brown's Schooldays* (first pub. 1857: Parragon: Bath 1999) p.37. Stuart was simply reflecting the standards of his day in seeking to impress Bute with his superiority to everything female. Yet the intensity with which he did it suggests much about his state of mind.

[48]BU/21/1/15 Stuart to Lady Elizabeth Moore, 1 Feb. 1860.

(and I believe now) used to be trusted to make long journeys alone.' Is this an oblique reference to Sophia's funeral journey that bleak January? Perhaps he needed to justify himself for such an action. Given Stuart's preoccupation with educating Bute to independence and a better sense of his own lack of status, it seems hard that he should not have given Bute credit where it was due, even if he could not possibly accede to such a wild and dangerous request.

It was perhaps not just a desire to free himself from Stuart that motivated Bute. Writing in 1866, Lady Elizabeth recalled writing to Stuart when 'Lady Adelaide Murray with the "Viper" were scolding and ill treating the lonely Orphan child left in my charge, so that I became miserable & would gladly have placed you anywhere to be quit of them.'[49] The 'Viper' was Miss Augusta Boyle. Stuart had taken the unwise step of employing Lady Adelaide and Miss Boyle to provide an unbiased account, as he thought, of what was toward at Mount Stuart. Both ladies were engaged in a desperate power struggle with Lady Elizabeth, who, left as guardian where they were not, unsurprisingly felt it was her role to direct Bute and the household. Thus the information Stuart got was far from impartial. Worse, his spying system was soon discovered[50] and so he became associated with the worst behaviour of one faction. As he liked Augusta and disliked Lady Elizabeth, he was very late in coming to see that she might have some right on her side.[51] Even without his conflict with Stuart, Bute was already caught up in battles between adults who had very different ideas of the way he should behave, and 'susceptible and ... excitable'[52] as he was, it is not surprising that he should have longed for escape to a world that seemed at once simpler and more challenging.

Stuart's next letter quite literally damned him in Bute's eyes. He had been speaking to Sir John Stuart the Vice-Chancellor about the forthcoming petition to the Court of Chancery which would see the two guardians officially appointed over the young Marquess. After covering the familiar themes of the need to separate Bute finally from his nurse, and his lack of formal education, Stuart laid out a sensible plan, that Bute should travel to Geneva or 'some other Protestant place'[53] for the summer, to learn French from native speakers and classical

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[49]BU/21/48/10 Lady E. Moore to Bute, Nov. 1866.

[50]Stuart's diary, 1 Mar. 1860.

[51]*Ibid.*

[52]BU/21/1/123 Counsel for Stuart describing Bute at the Court of Session.

[53] BU/21/1/15 Stuart to Lady Elizabeth Moore, 14 Feb. 1860.

languages from his tutor. Bute would then go to a private school for 'eight or nine months'[54] and then in midsummer 1861 to Eton or Harrow. So far, so good.

Then Stuart broached the question of money for himself to support the Marquess:

> I should suppose that about £5000 per annum will be allowed. It is right I should tell you that the Court have in other cases ruled that maintenance is in some degree to be looked upon as the salary of an office ... some pecuniary advantage (I might say compensation) in the way of saving a portion of the guardian's private income may be fairly made by the person who has custody of the 'infant'. .... The Custody does involve in many respects a scale of living & establishment more expensive than I have been accustomed to, and at the end of nine years to reduce again materially may not be altogether pleasant.[55]

A reader predisposed to put a good complexion on these words would see no more than an innocent desire to keep the young Marquess in the style to which he was accustomed. It does not require a particular prejudice against Stuart to see a man determined to feather his own nest a little, whilst carrying out duties he was bound by conscience to perform but for which he had no taste. One prejudiced against Stuart would see a man undertaking the charge of a small boy solely for financial gain. Bute was prejudiced against Stuart, and he read the letters. 'I can trust no one', he cried.[56] Lady Elizabeth replied promptly that she 'did not understand ... regarding Bute's future "maintenance" ' but she would be glad for Stuart to have the money for his own sake. She herself did not want to claim anything unless she had actually parted with money on Bute's behalf.

The guardian of Bute's person did not control his wealth. Lord Bute's came mainly from the South Wales estates. These were run, as they had been since his father's death, by two trustees; at this time Charles Stuart and John Boyle. The wealth from Wales was gradually accumulating, as was wealth from the Scottish estates, administered by the Tutor-at-Law, who was now James Frederick Crichton-Stuart. The income from the English and Welsh estates was estimated at 'upwards of £76,000 *p.a.* and the income from the Scotch estates as about £17,000 *p.a.*'[57] Yet the trustees, whilst they were responsible for Bute's wealth, were not in a

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[54]*Ibid.*

[55]*Ibid.*

[56]BU/21/48/6 Mrs Stuart to Bute, Nov. 1866.

[57]BU/21/1/24 Transcripts of the Court of Session hearing, 18-20 July 1860.

position to benefit from it to any extent. As trustees, they were essentially salaried servants. A guardian could only draw on these monies for the support of his ward as the court approved, yet a guardian could benefit from this money in the way a trustee could not.

In fact, Stuart had considered carefully how he might benefit from the guardianship, and how far. In his meeting with Sir John Stuart he

> went the length of asking how far it might be right for a guardian to put by his own income & live on his ward. He replied that it would not be right in a guardian to live entirely upon his ward, but that it had been ruled that the office was in the nature of a salaried appointment - that I might keep up an increased establishment & probably save out of my private income. In short, the court gives what it thinks necessary having regard to the minor's income & the guardian only has to keep his ward properly provided for.[58]

Stuart, with the highest legal opinion behind him, felt quite comfortable at the prospect of gaining from his guardianship. With his very considerable income, Bute would hardly miss what went to better Stuart's position, or that of any other guardian. The Court of Chancery felt that some remuneration for the job was reasonable. Stuart might save, not the money he got for Bute, but (a nice distinction) his own money, which he need not spend, because he had money for looking after Bute. The only concern was to see that neither Bute's loss nor Stuart's gain was out of proportion. In addition to saving out of his private income, extra servants would wait upon the guardian as well as on Bute, and the guardian must ride out with his charge and be appropriately mounted. Clothes, food, carriages, the whole style of the home must reflect the nobility and wealth of the young charge. The necessary funds drawn to keep Lord Bute in a suitable style could easily be made enough to allow other, less wealthy persons to live more comfortably than they had dreamed possible. Since this was sanctioned by the Court of Chancery, Stuart considered it wholly moral and honourable.

Even unfavourable descriptions of Lady Bute emphasise her strictly honest and honourable character, and Bute adhered absolutely to her values: he would have been sincerely shocked at any suggestion of profiting from a labour of love. This was more than abstract ethics. It is not hard to see how deeply Bute's feelings were hurt at suddenly seeing himself as a desirable commodity, valued not for himself, but for the money he brought. His company, his care, was now a burden so great that it could only be sweetened by a whole new standard of living.

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[58]Stuart's diary, 10 Feb. 1860.

Yet Bute was not solidly hostile to Stuart when at last he arrived back at Mount Stuart: 'Agreeably surprised by Bute's rushing down to welcome us full of excitement about the volunteer uniform ... a lucky thought of mine.'[59] His manner to Stuart was 'frank and affectionate'.[60] If Stuart had only been able to compromise in his way of managing Bute, if he had been prepared to reason, instead of insisting on obedience, and had taken the time to win his confidence, as Lady Elizabeth urged, he would have had a much easier time. 'I see clearly ... that everyone & everything gives way to him, & he naturally expects this to be the case,' said Stuart. 'The inevitable struggle depresses me, because I cannot (not naturally liking young people) depend on my temper in carrying it through.'[61]

Failing all else, the carrot of another trip to the continent might, like the volunteer uniform, have helped to win Bute round, but on this visit Stuart found out some surprising facts about Bute that made him cancel the projected trip abroad. The facts were surprising because Lady Bute, who had a reputation for being a staunch Protestant 'of an uncompromising kind' had always been responsible for Bute's religious education.

Walking in the grounds of Mount Stuart, Stuart fell in with Lady Elizabeth, and he stayed to hear her out for once, because he simply could not escape.

> She talked most excellent & Christian sense & told me much it is important I should know about poor Bute ... There is everything about the child, which but for God's grace renders him a party to Rome. Great interest in R.C. doctrines and ceremonies, a tendency to voluntary humiliation & fasting, & strong aesthetic tastes especially for churches and pictures. Added to this a great love of theological argument & reasoning, & at present mighty little [balance?]. No abroad for him at present but a sound English and Classical education, letting the French take care of itself.[62]

There were other troubles to face. '[Bute] says it is hard that he may not live at one of his own houses, and sneers at Hampshire. He told Miss Boyle that Stacey will have no shooting at Hubborne, so one sees which way the cat jumps & that Stacey is not likely to be long in my

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[59]*Ibid.*, 29 Feb. 1860.

[60]*Ibid.*

[61]*Ibid.*, 5 Mar. 1860.

[62]*Ibid.*, 17 Jan. 1860.

service.'[63] In fact, no servant was ever long in Stuart's service. He was not enough at ease with any to keep one long. His diary reveals a succession of them arriving, seemingly good and industrious, only to be dismissed as they proved unsatisfactory. Poor Stuart acknowledged his failings. 'How I wish I had more energy & temper in my dealings with my own servants. I do dislike speaking & when I do speak express myself so angrily & in this fear I ever deteriorate.'[64]

Bute's relationship with his servants was a relaxed and carefree one. Stuart was right that the imperious boy had no doubt that he would be obeyed, but equally he was quite at home with those from social strata other than his own. 'Found Bute skylarking with Stacey & some of the servants - he says for himself - for the last time.'[65] This simplicity of manner with servants made Stuart uneasy, as did Bute's obedience to his nurse. Stuart, who so desperately wanted Bute to learn to obey and not reason, saw sinister overtones when Bute obeyed Lamb.[66] But then, with all his imperiousness, it never occurred to Bute to doubt that he was a gentleman, and all the others in his young life, from his school master to his contemporaries, remarked on his 'gentlemanly tone.' Stuart, in his own case, despite his descent from the 3rd Earl, did have doubts. When he offered assistance to a lady and gentleman on a train, it was not very graciously received. Stuart's insecurity surfaced at once: 'I always fancy that I look like a gentleman, when dressed as one, but I wonder if I really do?'

Bute was very much the young potentate, not questioning the rightness of his own judgements, and with a self-centred view of his universe. While Stuart struggled to think well of Bute and Lady Elizabeth, Bute assumed the worst of Stuart with no struggle. In time, Bute forgave Stuart, but never doubted that he had been wronged. Shy as he was, Bute was at ease with his own role and his fellow men. Stuart failed to understand Bute's emotional swings, and Bute would have been equally puzzled by Stuart's reaction to a visit to the National Gallery in London, which 'has a dingy appearance. The company today contributed. What can the shop keepers & artisans really think of the grotesque saints and martyrs of the tre- & quattro cento masters?'[67] The twelve year old Bute was better placed to appreciate both the art and the artisans.

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[63]*Ibid.*

[64]*Ibid.*

[65]*Ibid.*, 3 Mar. 1860.

[66]*Ibid.*, 5 Mar. 1860.

[67]*Ibid.*, 11 Mar. 1860.

Yet Stuart was not the monster Bute made him. In February *The Gazette* had brought Stuart the news he had long hoped for: 'I am a pucka Major General. May God make me & keep me humble and grateful for it. I have now the title I must die under (I cannot be a Field Marshal!) & can never profit by the death of a fellow creature in the way of advancement!'[68] For a regular soldier at this period advancement usually came when a vacancy was created by death, usually death in action, and it troubled Stuart that he might have benefited by this.

Stuart returned home to Hampshire, and Lady Elizabeth, Stacey and Bute travelled south by stages to join him. In Edinburgh, on the journey, Bute had a bout of influenza. He was still unwell in London. Lady Elizabeth believed that from his 'agitation & alarm ... he could neither take food or sleep soundly.'[69] She tried hard to persuade Stuart to visit him there, probably hoping that the bogey-man would seem less horrible in the flesh than in the imagination. She cannot have been helped by a letter Bute received from the Colonel's wife, which was supposed to welcome him into her care. It began well enough with regrets for his poor health and her own warm feelings towards him. She knew that he had

> gone through a great trial in parting from so many whom you love ... and coming to comparative strangers. But it is God who has sent you this trial ... who took away your dear mother to make her happier than she could have been even with you ... you must try to think of me, for you know dear Bute it is a great change in my life to have a little stranger boy coming to live with me, of whose ways and temper and habits I know nothing.[70]

There is something unkind in the emphasis on Bute's dereliction as God's will. The Rev. Mr Robertson found it a 'dark dispensation'; other theologies might have thought it the work of the Devil. Mrs Stuart's words suggested strongly she thought it a good thing Bute had lost his mother (which is not surprising, as Stuart undoubtedly thought this) and that she was just as much to be pitied as Bute. He was an unwelcome intruder in her home.

As Bute wrote: 'I prayed, I entreated, I agonised, I abused the general; I adjured [Lady Elizabeth] not to give me up to him. She was shaken but not convinced. ... [In London] my prayers and adjurations were trebled.'[71] Added to this was his determination to avoid a private

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[68]*Ibid.*, 15 Feb. 1860.

[69]Mount Stuart mss. Memorandum for Lady Elizabeth, undated.

[70]BU/21/1/22 Georgina Stuart to Bute, 18 Mar. 1860.

[71]HB, p.6, quoting a letter from Bute to Charles MacLean.

school. Probably he coached Lady Elizabeth to accept the necessity of his going to public school (she favoured Eton,[72] where the Second Marquess had been) but to reject the idea of a private school. Bute must have known from his cousins and friends that, whilst public school offered a good deal of freedom, and a certain eccentricity and independence were the rule, a private school offered an arbitrary authority, beatings for very minor offences and an extreme regimentation of all aspects of life. Given Bute's taste for 'voluntary humiliation', the beatings were probably a less daunting prospect than the loss of autonomy.

It is possible to feel heartily sorry for all the parties in this conflict. Stuart did not want the charge that was thrust on him, but he was prepared to carry it out to the best of his ability. If his letters in the Bute custody case were the only record of him, it would be easy to view him as an unsympathetic man with especially harsh views who was on the make: this is undoubtedly how Bute viewed him. As a young man, however, he had been private secretary to the Ambassador to the Turkish Court, and he published a journal of those days.[73] The figure who emerges is humorous and tolerant, except for his dislike of Jews. His footnotes laugh ruefully at the younger man who wrote the journal. The problem seems to have been partly that he was not the best man to have the care of a boy of Bute's age,[74] and that he was incapable of understanding that it was intolerably painful and unhealthy for Bute to surrender all his links with the past. His idea that no boy of Bute's age should be allowed any voice in his treatment was too fixed to allow any negotiation, even when it was clear to everybody else in the case that Bute, accustomed to being consulted on every point, could not return to the ranks of properly subservient boyhood.

Stuart's attitude to Bute's nurse, Mrs Lamb, is particularly difficult for modern minds. He was undoubtedly right in thinking that other boys of Bute's age would have mocked him for still being in her care, and he could not see how a servant could ever be a mother substitute. Mrs Lamb was uneducated. She wrote to Bute when he was about to leave Harrow. She was finally seeking another post, nearly five years after she had ceased to care for Bute. She promised that at any time she would come to visit him, or he could come to her. It is a semi-literate letter, full of spelling mistakes (sea for see) but it is warm, well-balanced and there is no hint of the 'toadying' of which Stuart made such an issue. 'I was very unhappy to give

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[72]A 'respectable private school proprietor' reckoned that at Eton the boys were 'dissipated gentlemen', whilst at Harrow alone were they really gentlemen. Thompson, *English Landed Society,* p. 82.

[73]Lieut.-Colonel Stuart, *Journal of a Residence in Northern Persia and the Adjacent Provinces of Turkey* (Richard Bentley: London, 1854).

[74]BU/21/48/11 Lord Harrowby to Bute, 19 Nov. 1866.

myself a way *(sic)* from my dear Lord Bute but you sea *(sic)* you are to be the same after as now my dear.'[75]

Stuart's generation, gender and class were not well placed to recognise a learning beyond that of books and class and gender. The boy was to be plunged from comfortable monotony, and a wholly eccentric way of life where he was treated as part baby and part adult, into a life where he was hardly to be consulted. He had been reared very much as a Marquess, very conscious of his position, and was now asked, overnight, to be simply one schoolboy amongst many. His best intentions were ignored. All his life he had conformed, and been a good and dutiful son. For the first time, there was an authority-figure he could hate, and hate him he did.

Lady Elizabeth was undoubtedly highly intelligent, and well educated. She was always sharp to catch an inference, to make a connection, as she had done when Stuart was first accused of taking the post of guardian to feather his own nest. It would be impossible to accuse her of being obsequious; she always had a sharp word for any action of which she disapproved, and like Lady Bute was one of those women with the unwelcome gift of saying what others thought in private. More than anything else she lacked the knack of living on an even emotional keel. She was cordially disliked by Lady Selina[76], who believed that she was deeply hostile to her, and also spiteful. Bute, however, was to love her for all of her long life. With her growing mistrust of Stuart on one side, and pressured by Bute on the other, Lady Elizabeth did not have it in her to bow to the inevitable. She could not see that Stuart had the entire English male establishment behind him. Every man in the Court of Chancery would have felt that the best course for Bute was to follow what had become the inevitable path for upper-class boys; private school followed by public school. In their eyes, the necessary corrective for having been allowed to live an eccentric life too long under too feminine a care, was to be plunged as far away from such care as possible. In those circumstances the most practical option for Bute, and Lady Elizabeth's best chance of influencing events, was to persuade the boy to overcome his dislike of Stuart as far as possible. She chose instead to make a fight of it.

By 3 April 1860, Stuart's not-very-extensive patience was at an end. He had already warned Lady Elizabeth that he could only be guardian if not required to compromise. He was tired of excuses for the delays in handing Bute over. Probably unfairly, he blamed Lady Elizabeth for Bute's fear of him. He decided that 'Our ideas of the proper manner of bringing Bute up differ so widely' that he was going to ask the Court of Chancery to decide that one guardian should

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[75]BU/21/33/3 Mrs Lamb to Bute, 8 May 1865.

[76]Mount Stuart mss. uncatalogued. Lady Selina to 'my dear cousin', 5 Jan. 1861.

have exclusive charge of him. To make certain that she understood this was not simply a dispute about schools, but was about the way Bute should be handled, he added that Lady Elizabeth seemed to feel 'that Bute himself ought to be consulted, a point on which I regret to feel compelled to differ with you entirely.'[77]

On 11 April there were meetings between the Vice-Chancellor and Lady Elizabeth and her counsel, which did not go well for Lady Elizabeth,[78] although Sir John was still advising the parties to settle out of court. Stuart refused to meet Lady Elizabeth; although he was beginning to wonder if Bute's dislike of him was being prompted by Stacey.

A court hearing was set for 17 April. The preceding night, Lady Elizabeth and Bute, with Stacey, fled by train to Scotland. Undoubtedly their destination was chosen by Bute, who was bolting for the place he felt safe. Ironically, if they had gone to Lady Elizabeth's native Ireland (as Stuart at first thought they had) they would have been safe from all further proceedings. Stuart reacted by drawing every penny out of the joint account set up for the guardians, and leaving Bute dependent on Lady Elizabeth's private money for everything, even his pocket money (which was 2/6d a week).

Lady Elizabeth and her legal adviser (George Maclachlan, an Edinburgh-based lawyer) believed that as Bute was a 'domiciled Scotchman' and was out of the jurisdiction of the English courts when their decision was taken, they had no further hold on him. Bute and Lady Elizabeth lived quietly at The Granton Hotel in Edinburgh, while Bute continued his studies with Stacey.

In May, the General came forward with a fresh suggestion. A new guardian should be appointed, who would have care of Bute, arrange his education and receive the maintenance for him. Whilst a suitable person was located, Bute should be placed either with Lady Adelaide, or with General or Mrs Stuart, or Mr Stuart Wortley, or Mr John Boyle, and live at Dumfries House, thus preserving his Scotch domicile.[79] Lady Elizabeth wondered if this was the first step towards a compromise. Maclachlan thought it was 'a scheme to effect the total separation of the Marquis from your Ladyship.'

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[77]BU/21/1/22 Stuart to Lady E. Moore, 3 April 1860.

[78]*Ibid.*, 12 April 1861.

[79]BU/21/1/67 Memorandum from Stuart, June 1860. The original suggestion seems to have been made in May but is preserved in a later document prepared for the Court of Session.

Stuart and his wife came to Scotland, to try and persuade Bute to surrender himself to them. The General did not feel he was getting the support he deserved from James Frederick Crichton-Stuart, Bute's Tutor-at-law. Jas. Fred., as Stuart called him, was counselling compromise, and was dismissed as 'a dish of skimmed milk'.[80] Mr Bruce, with whom Lady Elizabeth and Bute stayed for a time at Falkland, succeeded in giving both parties the feeling that he was on their side. The most charitable judgement on his conduct is that, as he disliked being at odds with anyone, he tried to act as a peace-maker. It was through Bruce that Stuart eventually heard that Bute had first been offended by Stuart's not accompanying his mother's body to Bute, that Stacey was not stirring Bute up against Stuart, though the former did side with Lady Elizabeth and not Stuart, that the flight to Scotland had been planned and executed in a few hours, following Stuart's refusal to meet Lady Elizabeth, that Bute disliked Lady Adelaide more than anyone else, and that Bute was beginning to think 'petticoat government' unmanly.[81] Bute did not want to be in the care of those he neither liked nor respected, nor did he really want to become a boy. He wanted to move straight into adulthood.

The fact that the Stuarts were Low Church did nothing to help. The Low Church dislike of 'balls and theatres' (the young Bute loved dancing) was a further difficulty.[82] Now anonymous letters started arriving at Lady Adelaide's, and Stuart anxiously mulled over their contents: Lady Elizabeth was working Bute up against his relations until he was frightened. Stuart suspected the writer was Miss Tyndall,[83] who, as later events were to prove, would have had her own game to play. Miss Tyndall was Bruce's adult cousin.[84] Factions were developing. Meikle, Bute's servant, was supporting Stacey, and was against Lady Elizabeth. Stuart, who could clearly see the damage done to Bute by any encouragement to him to think ill of himself, could not see the danger to him of living in this web of deceit and faction.

A revealing little episode took place. Mrs Stuart wrote to Bute reminding him 'of our plan for visiting the Antiquarian Museum - which you know so well.'[85] She hoped he and his tutor would come on the arranged day. Bute, always shy in person and much bolder on paper, felt a

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[80]Stuart's diary, 18 May 1860.

[81]*Ibid.*, 9 July 1860.

[82]*Ibid.*, 15 May 1860.

[83]*Ibid.*

[84]Theodosia Tyndall was the daughter of Charles Tyndall of Bristol.

[85]BU/21/2/56 Mrs Stuart to Bute, 3 July 1860.

definite refusal was easier when not face to face. 'I was not aware that the latter was a definite arrangement ... I have got an arrangement that will prevent my complying.' he wrote.[86]

When crossed, Mrs Stuart attacked with hurt and martyred innocence. Instead of calmly pursuing the plan, which might well have won Bute over, she at once went on the offensive: 'I am very much grieved & surprised at the note you have written ... It was not like the son of parents such as you had. When you are older, I am sure you will feel this.'[87] As if this was not enough to set Bute's teeth on edge by deliberately loading him with guilt, she added a post-script. 'There was not, perhaps, any "definite arrangements" (those are very long words!)'[88] By Bute's standards, they were perfectly ordinary words; from the age of eight, at least, he had been mastering the technical terms for everything that interested him. He must have been aware that Mrs Stuart was implying they were in fact Lady Elizabeth's words (which is what the Stuarts at first believed)[89] and have been doubly annoyed, firstly that he was not getting credit for his intelligence and grasp of vocabulary, and secondly that he knew his own mind so little that he was being manipulated by Lady Elizabeth. Too late they came to accept that it was Bute's own letter.[90] Even when they did, Stuart's temper was not improved: '[Bruce's] account of him [Bute] is rather discouraging - he so evidently wants the sound thrashing that may be too long delayed to do good.'[91]

While the two parties were so far apart, the Stuarts massively underrating Bute's intelligence, maturity and independence, and Bute unable to tolerate even an afternoon showing Mrs Stuart round a museum, talking of his beloved Scottish history, it was impossible to imagine any satisfactory compromise. One party had to be outright victors.

Stuart went back to the Court of Chancery, which did not accept Bute was outwith its jurisdiction, and in that court in July Lady Elizabeth was removed from the office of guardian, and ordered to deliver up Bute into Stuart's custody. The legal advisors for Lady Elizabeth had done their best. As telegrams buzzed back and forth with increasing urgency, Mr Rodgers (Mr Maclachlan's partner) stayed to advise Lady Elizabeth in Edinburgh while Mr Maclachlan

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[86]BU/21/2/57 Bute to Mrs Stuart, 4 July 1860.

[87]BU/21/2/60 Mrs Stuart to Bute, 5 July 1860.

[88]*Ibid.*

[89]Stuart's diary, 4 July 1860.

[90]*Ibid.*, 9 July 1860.

[91]*Ibid.*, 10 July 1860.

dashed down to London. 'Come up immediately'[92] had been the cable from London. As Lady Elizabeth complained: 'an amiable, intelligent & noble-minded youth ... has met with no more consideration than an American slave.'[93]

This is not surprising, as English establishment attitudes, severely alienated from Scotland a hundred years before during the Jacobite rebellions, and only slowly thawing under the waves of the picturesque mediaevalism let loose by Sir Walter Scott and fashionable 'Balmorality' promoted by Victoria, still had little sympathy for the independent rights of the Scottish people, or understanding of the profoundly different culture which they cherished. One difference was the very attitude to youths, of which Lady Elizabeth so bitterly complained. The age at which a young person was deemed to be able to make sensible decisions on their own behalf was (and is) considered to be much lower north of the Border. In Scotland, for instance, no parental consent was needed for the marriage of those aged sixteen or older, whilst in England, consent was needed up to the age of twenty one.

Most importantly, from Bute's point of view, the Scots legal system (based on different principles from the English) gave particular rights to a parentless minor from the age of fourteen, when they could appoint their own 'curators', nominated by the minor and endorsed by the Court of Session, the highest civil court in Scotland. From among them, the minor was entitled to chose one to care for and supervise him. If Bute could keep out of the jurisdiction of the English courts until he was fourteen, he would be free to choose any guardian the Scots courts could be persuaded to approve. As he was now rising thirteen, his date of freedom was not far away.

Lady Elizabeth had been removed from her position of guardian by an English Court. In Scotland she believed, as did her advisors, that she was not under its jurisdiction. She had absolutely no intention of complying with the order to surrender Bute. The simplest way to avoid complying with any court order is to avoid being served in person with the papers of the court. Various attempts were made to serve the papers, and Lady Elizabeth always evaded them. Bute and Lady Elizabeth were, of course, accompanied by servants, one of whom was Jack Wilson, afterwards gamekeeper at Mount Stuart. It was they, and especially Wilson, who bore the brunt of this constant vigilance. On one occasion he knocked a writ-server down the

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[92]BU/21/2/177 Powel to Maclachlan, 5 July 1860.

[93]BU/21/2/37 Lady Elizabeth Moore to Maclachlan, 16 June 1860.

hotel stairs, and he slept outside Bute's door at night, lest anyone crept up on him.[94] For a sensitive boy like Bute, these conditions of virtual siege were very disturbing.

Repeated and devious attempts to serve the papers of the English Court having been evaded, General Stuart petitioned the Scottish Court of Session to enforce the order of the Court of Chancery. This was what Lady Elizabeth had been waiting for, and she at once accepted the papers served by the Court of Session. She wished to present her case under Scottish law. The petition was finally heard on 18 July 1860.

It springs to life under General Stuart's pen. Mr Dundas presented the case for Colonel Stuart, 'not fluently'[95] describing the Marquess as a 'susceptible and excitable young person'[96] and arguing that Lady Bute (who had herself been appointed a guardian under English law) had intended an English guardianship and English education for her son. Lady Elizabeth Moore 'has not the shadow of a legal title or right, either natural or derived, for retaining custody of the child.'[97] That is, she had acquired her guardianship from her appointment by the Court of Chancery, which had now withdrawn it. Lord Bute drew the bulk of his wealth from English estates (Wales is part of the English legal system) and held a British title. He was not a Scotchman.

Mr Gordon, 'a younger man of reddish hue'[98] attended for Lady Elizabeth, who was 'the grandniece of the first Marquis of Hastings,... maternal grandfather of the present Marquis of Bute'[99]. A relationship which prompted the Lord Justice Clerk, presiding, to remark to laughter: 'She is at all events a Scotch cousin.'[100]

Gordon pointed out that Lady Elizabeth had encouraged Stuart to try to meet Bute. When this had failed, and she became aware of the need to preserve Bute's 'Scottish rights', she had 'restored him to Scotland.' Gordon described as 'a little strong' Stuart's withdrawal of all the funds deposited at the Union Bank 'subjected to the drafts of both guardians' and his paying

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[94]HB, p.7.

[95]Stuart's diary, 19 July 1860.

[96]BU/21/1/124 Transcripts of the Court of Session hearing, 18-20 July 1860.

[97]*Ibid.*

[98]Stuart's diary, 19 July 1860.

[99]BU/21/1/124 Transcripts of the Court of Session hearing, 18-20 July 1860.

[100]The Scots are notorious for their keeping track of all cousins, no matter how distant, hence this proverbial expression for one held in esteem and acknowledged despite a distant relationship. As Mr Gordon hastened to point out, Lady Elizabeth and Lord Bute had great grandparents in common.

these into his own account. Gordon drew attention to the impeccable Scottish antecedents of both of Bute's parents, and to his Scottish titles, including the Earldom of Bute (which he held as well as the later British Marquisate). Lord Bute had been born in Scotland of two Scotch parents. He added 'when the order of 7th February appointing Lady Elizabeth Moore and General Stuart as guardians was pronounced the Marquis was in Scotland, he was not within the jurisdiction of the Court of Chancery.'[101] 'Before Gordon had finished, it became pretty clear by the remarks and questions of the court ... that there would be little chance of the prayer of the petition [Bute's removal to England with Stuart] being granted, but it seemed still likely that Bute might be placed in my hands to be kept in Scotland.'[102]

'Old Mr Patton' was James Frederick's counsel and he 'expressed J.F.'s anxious desire the infant should be consigned to me'.[103] Poor James Frederick, who had throughout done his best to keep the peace, and to be fair both to Stuart and to Bute, found himself in trouble. He not only inherited the duty of managing the Scottish properties, but was (by definition, since the post of Tutor-at-Law fell to this person) the nearest male relation on the male side. There would be a presumption, in normal circumstances, that he would be the natural guardian of the Marquess, and, as the Lord Justice Clerk pointed out, he had duties under Scotch law he had not fulfilled.

The Lord Justice Clerk (unfairly) felt that the Tutor-at-Law had taken little interest in the case. He was even less impressed that the latter appeared to be considering sending his pupil out of the jurisdiction without consulting the court. If he did do that 'he would be immediately removed from his office - That has been done over and over again.'[104] Naturally, the Scottish courts tended to side with the desire of any Scot to remain within the country and the legal system. That Bute was a very rich nobleman only added to this.

In view of the allegation that Stuart wanted the custody of Bute only for the money, it was unfortunate he appeared so anxious to gain custody of him even if it meant remaining in Scotland. When Stuart overheard the opposing counsel say as much during the recess, he was anxious to refute the charge. ' "The only thing I care for" I said "is that he should be taken

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[101]BU/21/1/124 Transcripts of the Court of Session hearing, 18-20 July 1860.

[102]Stuart's diary, 19 July 1860.

[103]*Ibid.*

[104]BU/21/1/124 Transcripts of the Court of Session hearing, 18-20 July 1860.

from Lady Elizabeth. I should rather he should be consigned to some other person but to me - but I am prepared to take him and stay with him." '[105]

But when Bell tried to put matters right in this way, he unfortunately lost his temper, and in an enlightening outburst let his client's true estimate of Lady Elizabeth appear: 'I am entitled to say, and I do say, that if the Marquis is left in the custody, and under the control and influence of this lady, which is what she proposed, then General Stuart assures the court that there is danger of very great injury to the morals, it may be morals and habits, and at all events very great obstruction and injury to the course of education of the Marquis.'[106] But to make any such claim in court, Charles Stuart would have had to have made an earlier affidavit to that effect. The Scottish Court took no charitable view of a respectable Scottish spinster in middle age being described as immoral, and Mr Bell offered an immediate apology. Too late, for he had sunk the last of Stuart's case. In summing up

> the Solicitor General came to my willingness expressed, now suddenly, to take charge of Bute in Scotland & bind myself by recognisances not to take him back into the jurisdiction of the Court from which alone I derive authority & contrasted it with Bell's assertion that I was not anxious for the charge, he had me on the hip completely, and elicited laughter even from the grave judges. And yet, if truth were known, how perfectly true Bell's statement was, for if I do deserve credit for disinterested desire to do my duty, it is in this.[107]

Stuart believed absolutely in the purity of his own motives. The court decided that further investigation into the views of the Tutor-at-Law, and the appropriate future care of the Marquess, should be made. The question arose of whether it would be necessary to appoint a *curator-ad-litem* to represent to the court the views of the Marquess, especially if the court was not satisfied that the Tutor-at-Law was fulfilling his role properly. Rejecting Charles Stuart's suggestion that he care for Bute in Scotland, they fully accepted that Bute was a Scotchman with all the rights that entailed. They ordered that he should remain in the care of Lady Elizabeth until the Court met again to consider his future.

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[105]Stuart's diary, 19 July, 1860.

[106]*Ibid.*

[107]*Ibid.*, 19 July 1860.

Bute and Lady Elizabeth had won the first round. They went with Mr Stacey, and a number of servants including Meikle, to Dumfries House. Bute was to work hard to prepare himself for school.

III

Education

'an engine ... kept at high pressure'

Life for Bute soon fell into a more relaxed pattern. In theory, he was supposed to be working hard to reach the standard of formal education demanded by public school. A few of his exercises still remain, probably from this period. In Latin he was working on Caesar's *De Bello Gallico*, a straightforward original text. The mathematical problems he resolved were quite simple ones: if soldiers take 75 steps, each of a yard, in a minute, how far would they travel in two and a half hours?

He was also working on exercises designed to improve his English style, simplifying 'John signed. John was a King. It was a document called Magna Charta that he signed. John was afraid of his barons, he did not care about liberty. He signed it at Runnymede. Runnymede is on the Thames. It is not far from Windsor.'[1] He turned this into: 'At Runnymede upon Thames near Windsor King John signed Magna Charta, from fear of his barons, not from love of liberty.'

Bute actually did very little work at Dumfries House. After the tremendous sorrow and excitement of the months following his mother's death, he was at last in a place he loved, and did not face any more upheavals for the next four months. Tired out, he spent much of his time reading novels and writing nonsense verses.[2] Alas, not one of these has survived. Lady Elizabeth invited the young Corbetts to stay, and did not interfere with Bute, believing the good reports from Mr Stacey.

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[1]Mount Stuart mss. uncatalogued.

[2]BU/21/2/102 Lady Elizabeth Moore to her brother Richard Moore, 22 Oct. 1860.

It would appear that Charles Stuart had continued to pay Stacey's wages after the flight to Scotland, presumably because he recognised that Bute needed a tutor. He himself might not have cared much for Stacey, but at least Stacey was academically competent. After the Court of Session hearing, Stuart told Stacey that 'no further sums will be paid by the Trustees of Lord Bute's property on account of maintenance. You must I conclude look to the tutor-in-law in Scotland for future payments.'[3] Stacey replied somewhat cockily that 'it is immaterial to me who I am to look to for future payments as I have no doubts of my position being duly recognised by those who are entrusted with the disposition of Bute's maintenance.'[4]

Did Stacey feel that James Frederick would be an easier man to give a good account to than Stuart? Perhaps the life at Dumfries House opened up new vistas before him, or he already had a plan of his own. A sportsman, he 'went out fishing & shooting & diverted himself.'[5] Lady Elizabeth settled to herself 'that he was a vain trifling young man, spoiled by the easy life at Dumfries House ... by not having a head over him.'[6] A bill shows he also diverted himself by buying a good deal of new saddlery at Lord Bute's expense. Lady Elizabeth noted the young Marquess's good health and his obedience to herself. It was only when the visitors left Dumfries House that she began to be 'astonished & dissatisfied'.[7]

All the principals in this case were now clearly aware of being, as it were, on show. Their letters to each other, both foes and allies, could be produced, neatly copied, in court. Inevitably, there came to be two versions of events - allies sent each other frank letters, and also guarded ones; the latter being retained as copy letters. Foes, of course, were sent only carefully considered official letters, and most of Lady Elizabeth's were written following advice from Maclachlan.[8] She composed a careful account of Stacey's misdemeanours for the court,[9] but she wildly poured out the whole matter to her brother.[10]

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[3]Mount Stuart mss. uncatalogued.

[4]Mount Stuart mss. uncatalogued.

[5]BU/21/2/102 Lady Elizabeth Moore to Richard Moore, 22 Oct. 1860. He might have been forgiven if he had succeeded in taking Bute with him, but Bute retained his dislike of the hunting, fishing and shooting so ubiquitously enjoyed by the nobility, gentry and, increasingly, the middle class. Thompson, *Landed Society*, pp. 136-40.

[6]*Ibid.*

[7]*Ibid.*

[8]Most of the official letters of this difficult period are now catalogued as BU21/1/ff. and most of the unofficial ones as BU21/2/ff.

[9]BU/21/1/149, undated.

[10]BU21/2/102 Lady Elizabeth Moore to Richard Moore, 22 Oct. 1860.

She remarked that Bute should do more work. 'The lessons were carried on in such earnest that B was always engaged ... but one thing did strike me - that the more he was left alone in the society of his wise tutor the more silly his conversation became!' From being mature, gentlemanly and charming, Bute '... was changed!! Anything so insolent so abusive so insulting you never heard. ... It only convinced me some frightful devilry had been going on. His intellect is so weakened, that it was as if I had been talking to someone half drunk.'[11]

Lady Elizabeth was always suspicious that any event might turn out to be the iceberg-tip of a conspiracy: this time she faced a real one. Later Bute wrote an account of what Stacey had said, and it included a remark Lady Elizabeth hotly denied making: 'The mother insulted me and I suppose the son is following in her footsteps.'[12] Stacey had plainly engineered circumstances in which Lady Elizabeth could be blamed that Bute had been given an excessively heavy workload, and Stacey made Bute feel she was dissatisfied with him, rather than with Stacey. Having caused much upset to Bute, Stacey then committed what, to Victorians, was a cardinal sin. He encouraged Bute to write and receive 'clandestine correspondence.'[13] Behind Lady Elizabeth's back, Bute wrote letters to George Maclachlan complaining about her, letters that were designed to get him transferred from her charge to Stacey's.

Stacey had brandy smuggled into Dumfries House, and from references to Meikle's being a drunkard,[14] and drunkenness in the stable department, it seems the men servants were easily bribed to side with Stacey.[15] Bute was told that Lady Elizabeth had approved the brandy. Bute had appeared 'half drunk'; maybe he was. This might just have been too difficult to write down, too damning to Bute, and also to Lady Elizabeth, who should have safeguarded him more carefully. Given that Bute's glasses of wine (approved by Dr. Gibson) had already been a subject of contention between her and Stuart, it is quite probable she would refrain from

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[11]*Ibid.*

[12]BU/21/2/149 Bute to George Maclachlan, undated.

[13]BU/21/8/221 Charles Stuart to Anderson, 27 July 1861.

[14]BU/21/1/149 Lady Elizabeth Moore to Maclachlan, 4 Nov. 1860. This of course broke the rules of both honesty and obedience so important in the pantheon of Victorian childhood virtues. F. M. L. Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society* (Fontana: London, 1988) p. 126.

[15]The 'drink problem' of the lower classes was far from imaginary. Official sales figures for spirits in 1875 were 1.30 gallons per head, and in 1876 34.4 gallons of beer. 'Nothing more disheartened the Victorian worker's friend than the calculation of how much money went on beer and spirits that might have been put to "better" uses.' Geoffrey Best, *Mid-Victorian Britain 1851-75* (Fontana: London, 1979) p.240.

putting this in writing. She was forthright but intelligent. If Stacey had introduced Bute to brandy, it would make perfect sense of her allegations that he planned to 'weaken [Bute's] mind - to destroy his principles - to introduce him to vice gradually in order to have complete power over the unfortunate Child.'[16] Bute himself, when he came to this area of Stacey's wrong-doing, said only that 'Mr Robertson will tell you about the Brandy.'[17]

Lady Elizabeth laid out clearly and simply the course of action which should be taken: 'The Blackguard Tutor must be got rid of quietly. By joining Colonel Crichton-Stuart in recommending Glenalmond to the Court of Session next month, the Edinburgh Academy will be finished and Mr S. naturally thrown out.'[18] Whether because Bute was difficult and disliked the idea of Glenalmond, or because she feared that the Tutor-at-law would take Bute into his or Mr Stacey's hands following Bute's complaints (of which she may not have known at the time of her letter), or because her brother advised her to act at once, she panicked. She fled from Dumfries House towards the end of October, abandoning the household of servants but taking Bute with her. It was a bad mistake, and one for which she and Bute were to pay dearly.

With or without Dutch courage, it seems possible that Bute needed little encouragement from Stacey to become a different boy. He was now thirteen, and although Lady Bute had given him tremendous freedom to choose his own way in life, he had never enjoyed the long periods with siblings and friends away from all supervision which allowed most boys to develop their own views and patterns of behaviour, which adults might not consider desirable. Constrained to be a dear obedient boy, there is little wonder if he was able to be somebody rather different with a sportsman in his twenties, and it is not surprising that an elderly spinster found this *persona* disagreeable.

Both parties turned at once to George Maclachlan. Stacey saw him on 24 October, and on returning to his office, Maclachlan found a telegram from Lady Elizabeth, who had gone to the George Hotel in Glasgow, summoning him to her side. Next day Mr Stacey arrived at the George in a very excited state which seems to have convinced everybody he was not fit to have charge of Bute. 'His language & deportment were maniacal. He forced himself into Lady Elizabeth's private room & behaved with the greatest rudeness & violence & in the course of an excited conversation with Mr Maclachlan he said that he could stab Lord Bute to the

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[16]BU/21/2/102 Lady Elizabeth Moore to Richard Moore, 22 Oct. 1860.

[17]BU/21/2/149 Bute to George Maclachlan, undated.

[18]BU/21/2/102 Lady Elizabeth Moore to Richard Moore, 22 Oct. 1860.

heart.'[19] Maclachlan admitted that Stacey just might have meant Lady Elizabeth, which would have been a little less bad.

Stacey had been deliberately alienating Bute from Lady Elizabeth, bribing the servants to side with him. He intended to marry a 'young lady', Miss Tyndall,[20] which would of course, require him to surrender his Fellowship and the income that went with it. The plan was for Stacey, with his new wife, to take over the charge of Bute, and with him a handsome allowance for his upkeep. Miss Tyndall was undoubtedly in on the plot. Stuart had already guessed that she was responsible for the anonymous letters condemning Lady Elizabeth which had been received in July. Little wonder the letters were biased propaganda, as she stood to gain as much as her fiancé by getting Bute out of Lady Elizabeth's hands. Their relationship was established at Falkland that summer, for Stacey had been flirting with her then. The other conspirator was Meikle. As long as they stuck together, these three had a strong case to make, especially as Stacey was the nephew of E. P. Richards, 'the co-architect with the second marquess of the fortunes of the Bute estate'.[21] If Lady Elizabeth was found wanting, who better than a Richards, allied to a Tyndall, and in the person of a Cambridge scholar into the bargain, to care for Bute, especially with Bute's personal servant, a man formerly his mother's trusted butler, on their side.

With the plot discovered, and the fabric of the little conspiracy apparent, all hope of winning Bute's trust or acquiescence was gone. Stacey saw his prospects of future happiness crumbling. Lady Elizabeth believed that Stacey had been conspiring with both Stuart and the Tutor-at-Law. Stuart was not involved; he had for some time mistrusted and disliked Stacey and he later repeatedly condemned him for encouraging a 'clandestine correspondence'. It seems unlikely that James Frederick would have involved himself, but he made repeated efforts to get Bute to accept Meikle back into his service, although the latter had been from the first implicated in 'the Brandy' and the 'clandestine correspondence.'

Any normal person would have recognised that they had played their hand and lost. But for weeks after this incident, Stacey made various furtive efforts to get back into contact with Bute, and was once stopped by Sheriff's officers, behaving oddly outside Edinburgh.[22] James

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[19]Mount Stuart uncatalogued. Memorial prepared for Lady Elizabeth by Maclachlan.

[20]Stacey married Theodosia Tyndall in 1862. AC.

[21] JD, p.50. Richards wholly identified himself with the 2nd Marquess's interests, and was his most trusted ally in south Wales.

[22]BU/21/2/152 Lady Elizabeth Moore to Maclachlan, undated.

Frederick having presumably dismissed him, he tried hard to get his salary for some or all of 1861 from Stuart, who refused, telling him that his conduct in encouraging Bute to write behind Lady Elizabeth's back was more than enough to secure his instant dismissal.[23] The crisis over, Stacey became a sober lawyer, a partner with his 'rich uncle', married his fiancée, and seems to have led a blameless life.

Bute and Lady Elizabeth both lost heavily from this incident. Bute had it deeply underlined, once again, that it was his wealth, rather than himself, which attracted people to him. First, Charles Stuart had declared that taking charge of Bute was so onerous that it could only be undertaken for a hefty profit, and now his tutor, whom he liked and trusted, had invented what was almost a comic opera plot in order to marry and live comfortably. Bute lost Lady Elizabeth as well.

Mr Maclachlan, upon whom Lady Elizabeth had leaned throughout, wrote at once to her 'If you had remained at Dumfries House & everything had gone on quietly & smoothly the Court would have been very disinclined to have interfered & yr. Ladyship would have had the charge of the Marquis of Bute until he was fourteen ... the probability is now that the Court will take the matter into their own hands.'[24] The fact that this is in the 'official' bundle of copy letters shows that things had gone so badly wrong that a dignified admission of defeat was the only course of action. The best that could be said of Lady Elizabeth was that she had not been able to manage to provide a good education for Bute even with the help of a Fellow of King's College Cambridge engaged as his tutor. The worst was the horrible choice between the position that she was so hysterical that she imagined harm where there was none, or else that Bute had been in real moral danger. Her dignified official comment that 'She is not struggling to keep the Marquess of Bute in her possession'[25] was a little ingenuous.

James Frederick had stopped trying to compromise with Stuart. He suggested that Bute should be sent to 'a Scotch Nobleman who is highly respected ... I do not mention his name until the matter is settled ... I can confidently assure you that you will be treated as one of his own children.'[26] Bute now told Maclachlan that he would rather stay with Lady Elizabeth Moore until he was fourteen; it was too late. He hoped 'the High Court will not think me ... fickle.'[27]

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[23]BU/21/8/221 Charles Stuart to Anderson, 27 July 1861.

[24]BU/21/1/137 Maclachlan to Lady Elizabeth Moore, 2 Nov. 1860.

[25]BU/21/1/149 Note for Lady Elizabeth Moore, 7 Nov. 1860.

[26]BU/21/1/137 Col. Crichton Stuart to the Marquess of Bute, 3 Nov. 1860.

[27]BU/21/1/161 Bute to Maclachlan, 13 Nov. 1860.

The damage had been done, and in fact there was nothing left to do but surrender. By the time the Court of Session resumed consideration of the case on the 20 November, the Tutor-at-Law and Lady Elizabeth had agreed that Bute was to be placed under the charge of James Frederick's 'Scotch Nobleman', the Earl of Galloway.[28]

Maclachlan told Bute he rejoiced 'to think that you will now enjoy a life of tranquillity undisturbed by vexations.'[29] As one who knew him well, and had earned his unqualified trust, Maclachlan was well placed to know just how distressed Bute had been by the whole train of events after his mother's death. It seemed that the ideal compromise had been reached. Bute escaped from the hands of the dreaded Stuart, and was placed in an aristocratic family where he could have the benefits of a conventional up-bringing whilst staying in Scotland. Above all, the constant sense of embattlement, the stress and the uncertainty had been resolved. As a Scottish orphan, he knew that, at the age of fourteen, his fate would be largely in his own hands, anyway.

Meanwhile Stuart had been considering his position. He was besieged with advice that he should abandon his determination to take Bute into his personal care. At the time of his last diary entry, at the end of August, he had determined he would 'not now take charge of Bute unless he should earnestly ask me.'[30] A family council was, however, to be held. Sadly, the notebook was full, and although Stuart doubtless continued his journal, the volume does not survive.

The Scottish Court was about to consider the claim of General Stuart and settle it, almost certainly against him, when the House of Lords, on 13 December, issued an injunction prohibiting the General from proceeding further, and all consideration of the case had to be stopped.[31] It is not known what prompted this intervention, though the most probable reason must be that Stuart had used his influence behind the scenes. If this is so, he must have changed his mind once again and decided to take custody of Bute. Perhaps the family prevailed on him to continue his struggle, perhaps he was driven on by a sense of duty, or some other deep-seated motive, barely-understood.

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[28]Randolph Stewart 1800-1873. The family home was at Cumloden in Kirkcudbrightshire. SP Vol. IV.

[29]BU/21/6/1 Maclachlan to Bute, 3 Dec. 1860.

[30]Stuart's diary, 28 Aug. 1860.

[31]*Glasgow Daily Herald,* 28 May 1861.

Overnight, all the tranquillity that Bute and Maclachlan had hoped for vanished. Whilst Bute was to stay in the hands of Lord Galloway, and so have something like a normal life for the time being, all the legal battles, all the upheaval, mud-slinging and jockeying for position, were to start up again. Worse for Bute was the prospect of being wholly in the power of Charles Stuart, and the loss of his 'Scottish rights' and with them his power to decide his own fate once he was fourteen.

Never in his life had Bute been in a family like that of which he was now part. Randolf Stewart, 9th Earl of Galloway, had been married to Harriet[32] for twenty-seven years. They had six sons and seven daughters, of whom one son died in infancy. Deeply religious, Lady Galloway liked young people and had the gift for taking them seriously without forgetting their youth, and so was able to treat Bute with sympathy and good sense. Best of all, Bute was at once plunged into a large family, whose siblings were both younger and older than he was.

Bute took Mr Maclachlan's advice and wrote in terms suggested by him to James Frederick and Colonel Stuart: 'Lord and Lady G.[*sic*] did indeed receive me as a child of their own, which I felt deeply...'. He probably sent the same letter or a version of it to Lady Elizabeth, who replied with her usual candour: 'I like to think of your being surrounded with kind friends and in the midst of a cheerful party of young companions, for it is not improving to live alone or entirely with grown up people which has been too much your case all your life. Of the disadvantages of this, I became fully aware latterly.'[33]

She reassured him on the well-being of Mungo, Bute's own beloved little dog, whom she now had in her keeping. Whether because of the hostility of the Galloway family to her, or because Bute was too busy with his studies and his games with the Galloway children, Bute lost contact with Lady Elizabeth, who quickly took offence. 'His correspondence suddenly ended on the 19th of Dec. The very day that "a Tutor from Oxford" was expected to arrive (possibly an English Jesuit!!). I now feel convinced the child is prevented communicating with friends at a distance. I know he is forbidden to write to me or else he is ill & cannot write.'[34] From then on, her hostility to the Galloways was implacable, and she feared they would starve him, imprison him and shorten or end his life, as well as convert him to Catholicism. This was unfair. Lady Galloway was a High Church Anglican, and as opposed to Roman Catholicism as Lady Elizabeth herself.

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[32] Seventh daughter of the 6th Duke of Beaufort 1811-1885. BP.

[33] BU/21/2/156 Lady Elizabeth Moore to Bute, 4 Dec. 1860.

[34] BU/21/8/1 Lady Elizabeth Moore to ?(probably Maclachlan), undated.

Hunter Blair gives a happy picture of Bute at home in their midst, where he 'entered with zest' into their amusements. One of the Galloways told Hunter Blair that he

> was greatly attached to our brother Walter,[35] whose bright, cheery nature appealed to him. Walter was always full of fun and spirits and mischief; and Bute was delighted at this, and soon joined in it all. I remember our old housekeeper, after some great escapade, saying, 'Yes, and the young marquis was as bad as any of you!' One of his hobbies was collecting from the seashore the skulls and skeletons of rabbits, birds, etc ... With his curious psychic turn of mind he liked to conduct some kind of ceremonies over these remains after dark, inviting us children to take part, sometimes dressed in white sheets.[36]

The most likely informant is Lady Henrietta Stewart,[37] who was three years younger than Bute, and later married Mr Algernon Turner; the latter supplied stories of Lord Bute at Oxford to Blair. Of the Galloway boys Walter was the closest in age to Bute; naturally they became friends, and Lady Galloway later told Bute how much Walter was missing him.[38] The companionship of the other children was undoubtedly both good for him and highly enjoyable. Stories of his drawing the other children into his games of ritual burial show how easy he found it to mesmerise others into sharing his rich inner life, an ability which later allowed him to collaborate with artists and craftsmen in the creation of his fantastic buildings. They also show how deeply he was still preoccupied with death. This preoccupation can only have been intensified by the death of Lady Adelaide in December 1860. Despite his unwillingness to be handed over to Lady Adelaide, there had always been a strong sense of family, created in part by the terrible battle to clear Lady Flora's name, and this sense of family was in no way eroded by the fact that her three sisters had married and changed their names; they still passed their loyalties on to their children. Bute very much thought of himself as a Hastings, as well as a Crichton-Stuart. The loss of yet another member, and to the dreaded Bright's Disease, cut deep. He went to the funeral, his liking for technical terms producing a tragi-comic effect in his description of it. 'Sir William met us in the hall and took us to the drawing room - he seemed very much dejected ... We committed the Body to that grave from which it will rise at

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[35]Walter John Stewart, 4th son of the Earl, 1849-1908. SP Vol. IV

[36]HB, p.11.

[37]Henrietta Caroline Stewart 1850-1930 m. 1880 Algernon Turnor. SP Vol. IV.

[38]BU/21/16/1 Lady Galloway to Bute, 1 Jan. 1861.

the last day, in the form of the Church of Scotland without any other form besides the two ordinary reverences [*sic*] to the dormant member of Christ.'[39]

Lady Galloway's chaplain remembered his talking at length about 'the communion of saints - that subject so full of comfort to those who have dear ones "not lost, but gone before".'[40] That is, they spoke of the link between the Church of those on earth (the Church Militant) and those in heaven (the Church Triumphant). Depending on how High Church his views were, Mr Wildman[41] might have suggested that those in heaven would pray for those on earth.

More revealing than anything else is the account that Bute wrote of the Lord's Supper.

> Sunday March 3 1861. Janie and I were allowed to stay and see the Lord's Supper celebrated to-day. When everyone left the chapel I felt awed very much by the silence, broken only by the whistling of the wind, and the coming of Emma[42] and Mary [43] to their husband and mother's side respectively looked ['very' is crossed out] so lovely that it felt it too. It seemed as if they wished to be beside those they loved in <u>this</u> world when they all partook of the supper of their Elder Brother in the other. I felt quite excited and I know I trembled nearly all the time. The service but more especially the manner of the communicants seemed to carry me farther from the world and nearer heaven step by step. It was intensely solemn when Mr Wildman knelt alone before the table - the fall of a pin could have been heard - I could not <u>see</u> what he did but I <u>knew</u> what it was and I could hear the sound of the cup when he raised it and put it down. At last when he delivered the Bread into Lord Galloway's hand I cried. I cried silently and I was happy when I cried for though I grieved for sin, I thought more of that profound Love which has cleansed us from it. I could see the symbol of that Body, broken for us upon the cross and of that Blood which was shed there, and by which thousands have passed from grief and sorrow in the triumphant knowledge that

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[39]BU/23/4 Bute to Lady Selina, 25 Dec. 1860.

[40]BU/21/16/1 Lady Galloway to Bute, 1 Jan. 1861.

[41]Thomas Wildman T.C.D. and Hartford Coll. Connecticut, M.A. 1855 University of Nebraska, D.D. 1875. He was deaconed in 1845 and priested in 1847 by the Bishop of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane. He was domestic chaplain to the Earl of Galloway 1855-73 and subsequently to his widow. *Crockford's Clerical Dictionary for 1876* (Horace Cox: London, 1876) p.1049.

[42]Emma Georgina Stewart, second of the Galloway daughters, 1840-1869, m. 1858 to Wilbraham Frederick, 2nd Lord Tollemache. SP Vol. IV.

[43]Mary Louise Stewart, 1842-1929, m. Charles Cooke 1874. SP Vol. IV.

> Christ had died for them to see Him face to face. I never, never, can form a conception of Christ's love but trust that both in life and Eternity I may adore it.[44]

It takes the reader a little time to recover from shock at the maturity of the language, and the naked intensity of religious feeling in this passage. The next revelation is the emphasis on the drawing together of the human family, before in companionable solidarity it draws near the 'Elder Brother'. Emma, her husband, Mary and their mother together with Lord Galloway are joined in love and in physical proximity. The solidarity of the family communicants emphasises the loneliness of the thirteen-year old who has no earthly family at all, and at this point the account moves directly into a description of Bute's excitement and trembling. Given the intensity of his emotions, the fact that he was on the threshold of adolescence, and his longing for emotional closeness, perhaps it is not surprising that he fell in love with one of the girls, maybe Janie herself. The emphasis is on the redeeming sacrifice of Christ. Yet for those with a High Church doctrine of the communion, such as Mr Wildman shared with young Bute, what Bute called the Lord's Supper was not only the remembrance of Christ's last meal and death, but also a foretaste of the heavenly banquet, in which the Church Militant on earth and Triumphant in heaven are joined in worship. In other words, around this focus of worship, dead Christians like Lady Sophia, and living ones like her son, are together again in praise of their Lord.

Meanwhile, Bute's life continued on a more ordinary plane. The Boyle family had sided with Charles Stuart throughout the great contest of 1860. Now they were writing to Bute regularly, enclosing snippets about the Isle of Bute, from where he was exiled,[45] and remembering earlier happy days and Bute's old love of Valentines.[46] He replied to them. His aunt, Lady Selina, also wrote to him, with news of his cousins, Lady Edith, and her brother, Harry, the Marquess of Hastings. Being much older than him, she felt responsible for him, which was no easy burden. Edith was suffering from Bright's Disease, made no better by her constant anxieties over her brother: 'I have heard that Harry was expelled from Oxford not long ago. He has always been a mauvais sujet & idle. I fear he may have gambled as I believe he was so inclined before his mother's death. They do not expel for trifles. I hope for better things of you, my dear nephew.'[47]

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[44]BU/21/7/31 Bute, 3 Mar. 1861.

[45]Eleanora Boyle to Bute, 23 Mar. 1861.

[46]Archibald Boyle to Lord Bute, 12 Mar. 1861.

[47]BU/21/7/14 Lady Selina to Bute, 8 Mar. 1861.

Bute was doing a good deal of riding, which the Boyles were confident he would be enjoying.[48] His mother had tried to introduce him to the sport with a donkey and a quiet pony, and visits to an Edinburgh riding academy, but Stuart had found that Bute had 'no taste' for riding.[49] To some degree he mastered this essential upper class pursuit, and later he travelled over Iceland on pony-back. However the trenchant Lady Elizabeth was probably right in her summing up of Bute's attitude. 'There are few animals he cares for so little as for horses – an elephant would amuse him infinitely more – or almost any other beast you could name.'[50] As an adult, Bute occasionally rode, but usually preferred to walk.

The adults involved in the case were still deeply hostile, and blaming each other for their conduct, and soon the several indignations of the Galloways and Lady Elizabeth reached fever-pitch, with the unfortunate Bute caught in the cross-fire. She was unjustifiably convinced that the Galloways meant harm to Bute, or meant him as a prize in marriage for one of their daughters. In fact they were highly embarrassed by his love for their daughter.[51] The Galloways in turn indubitably did their best to break him of his regard for Lady Elizabeth, thinking that nothing 'is to be regretted which may loosen such a baneful influence over a child.'[52] One of the principal charges was that she had tried to poison Bute's mind against Stuart. It never occurred to them that they were also using undue influence. In the face of this onslaught, Bute seemed cool towards Lady Elizabeth, but by the time he was eighteen, he was once again relying on her for advice, and when he was twenty, an amazed contemporary saw his 'heavy' parting from her in Edinburgh.[53] Bute did come to see Lady Elizabeth's very manifest imperfections, but he always loved and revered her, and taught his children to do the same.

As the date for the House of Lords hearing got close, Bute became once again very nervous. The case was heard on 17 May 1861. It was not to be hoped that the Lords would have any sympathy for a middle-aged woman who was not supported in her views by a man. If they had hopes that because the Lord Chancellor, John Campbell, Baron Campbell, was Scottish, and had received a Scottish education, he would show more appreciation of the Scottish point of view, these hopes were soon dashed. He took the viewpoint of the legal establishment, which,

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[48]Eleanora Boyle to Bute, 23 Mar. 1861.

[49]Stuart's diary, 8 Jan. 1861.

[50]BU/21/8/197 Lady Elizabeth Moore to Maclachlan, undated.

[51]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII f204 Stuart to Lord Harrowby, 23 Oct. 1861.

[52]BU/21/8/120 Lord Galloway to Stuart, 24 April 1861.

[53]Mount Stuart mss. uncatalogued Journal of a Voyage on the Lady Bird. J. Dassent.

although in theory British, was in practice wholly English. Worse, the facts of the case were not even fairly presented.

The Lord Chancellor at once dismissed all suggestion that Bute had any right to an option on his future care: 'If a child is to be a fit judge of such matters why should he have a Guardian at all?' He accepted that Bute had 'been brought up without any sort of control, and had received no education whatever.'[54]

The Lord Chancellor went on to accuse Lady Elizabeth of forming 'the resolution of keeping the poor, ill-used boy entirely to herself and the nurse'[55] and having him taught at home. In fact, Lady Elizabeth had herself dismissed the nurse, and was a keen advocate of his going to public school. The Lord Chancellor then continued that the benefit of the infant is the foundation of the jurisdiction. 'Can any human being doubt that ... it would have been for the benefit of the infant' to have been removed from Scotland, and given into the care of an English Guardian and sent to an English public school?[56]

As *The Scotsman* pungently commented, on that reckoning, all Scottish orphans ought to be educated in England: 'the Lords says that ... it is for his benefit to be educated in England, and that he must be educated there, whether he will or not, until he reach the age of 21.'[57] Scotland has always prided itself on its schools and its universities of which it has four of mediaeval foundation. Bute was not to be allowed to try their riches.

Bute had had a long time to prepare himself for the outcome. He wrote philosophically to his aunt Lady Selina: 'Lord Galloway made me acquainted with the decision of the House of Lords ... which I had anticipated from the first. I shall be very happy to meet Walter at school though, of course I shall not like leaving [Galloway House] after being here so many months.'[58] He was sent almost at once to May Place, the Preparatory School in Malvern run by Mr & Mrs Essex, and favoured by the Galloway family. Lord Galloway was able to inform Stuart that 'Lord Bute entered upon his new school career very cheerfully & we must hope that, if all things are not quite to his liking ... he will fall in with what is prescribed for him

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[54]*The Times,* 7 May 1861.

[55]*Ibid.*

[56]*Ibid.*

[57]*The Scotsman,* 23 May 1861.

[58]BU/23/6 Bute to Lady Selina, 25 May 1861.

and improve more and more from an improved system of education & the companionship of boys of his own age.'[59]

Bute settled in fairly happily. In June he was writing to Lady Selina with no greater unhappiness than a sense of imprisonment, and a longing for release. If she or his cousins came over there was

> a tolerable enough inn ... with a nice garden full of old fashioned tulips ... Our holidays do not begin for four weeks (beginning next Wednesday.) ... As for friendships with two exceptions I have blundered in & out of about half-a-dozen. These are C. Romilly and W. Sinclair (the nephew of the authoress) ... Mr Essex has just got [an engraving] of 'Behold I stand at the door and knock' I have seen the original. I dare say my taste is ibominable[*sic*] but I cannot say that I admire it so exceedingly as other boys do. Can't you come and see me, it would be so nice?[60]

Mr Essex summed up the situation: '[Bute] is certainly happier at school than I hoped or expected, and if this shows a considerable power of adapting himself to circumstances it is a good augury for the future.'[61] Essex later added:

> Lord Bute is I am happy to say going on more comfortably than I could have expected. He is on excellent terms with his school fellows and though he prefers 'romps' to cricket or gymnastics yet I am glad to see him for the present making himself happy <u>with the others</u> in any way. More manly tastes will I trust come in time. His obedience & his desire to improve are very pleasing while his strong religious principles & gentlemanly tone are everything one could desire. His opinion on things in general are rather an inexplicable mixture. I was not surprised to find in him an admiration of the covenanters and a hatred of Archbishop Sharpe [*sic*] but I was certainly startled to discover on the other hand a liking for the Romish priesthood and ceremonies. I shall of course do my best (after a little time) to bring him to sounder views.[62]

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[59]BU/21/8/192 Galloway to Stuart, May ?

[60]Mount Stuart mss. Bute to Lady Selina, 30 June 1861.

[61]BU/21/13/4 Essex to Galloway, 12 July 1861.

[62]BU/21/13/5 Essex to Galloway, undated.

Essex's summing up of Bute's religious position was shrewd and well informed. He must have been a good listener. Hunter Blair remarked of this that Mr Essex trying to bring anyone to any religious view was not a feature of May Place.

It was originally intended that Bute would spend the summer with the Galloway family. Unfortunately Lord Galloway had been in some way offended, probably by Charles Stuart, who protested that he did not know what had happened to create his 'soreness',[63] but was the person most likely to have done it. Lady Elizabeth thought it was because Stuart was 'getting jealous of the horrid Galloways – that is what I expected and I rejoice in it.'[64] Stuart had also fallen out with the Villiers Stuarts, probably getting wind of criticisms of him by Mrs Villiers Stuart to Lady Elizabeth.[65]

Bute therefore was to spend his whole holiday with Charles Stuart on the continent. Mr Essex told Lord Galloway that he thought Bute 'looks forward to his continental tour. He certainly has a strong desire to see Switzerland and Italy and has sufficiently conquered his repugnance to General Stuart not to look upon his presence as a serious drawback to his enjoyment.'[66] James Frederick Crichton-Stuart was less sanguine. Whilst admitting that Stuart was 'much liked' by those who knew him well, James Frederick thought him 'not a man who would take any trouble for popularity and I believe it to be especially up-hill work for him to ingratiate himself with a boy'. He hoped Bute's quick perception of character would come to his aid, and he deeply regretted Stuart's quarrelling with the Villiers Stuarts.[67]

As it turned out, it was not Switzerland which made the most lasting impression on Bute. It was Paris, for there he saw and fell in love with Sainte Chapelle: 'I do not think I ever saw anything so beautiful, with possibly the exception of Cologne Cathedral.'[68] Bute kept a travel diary, in exactly the style of Stuart's diary, down to the formatting of the page headings. Later the Stuarts looked forward to reading Bute's travel diaries, which he plainly intended to be public documents. It is not surprising that this one has the literary and guarded air of confidences designed to be read by others. The point has been made that Bute was in some ways very mature, and his ability to use written English was exceptionally so. In his

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[63]BU/21/8/208 Stuart to Anderson, 22 July 1861.

[64]BU/21/8/222 Lady Elizabeth to ?Maclachlan.

[65]*Ibid. cf.* BU/21/13/3 James Frederick Crichton Stuart to Lord Galloway, undated.

[66]BU/21/13/2 Essex to Galloway, undated.

[67]BU/21/13/3 John Frederick Crichton Stuart to Lord Galloway, undated.

[68]BU/57 Bute's diary, 1861.

relationship with Stuart he was almost powerless. He must have had to be very careful with a man who was both short-tempered and a believer in a 'sound thrashing'. One power Bute did have was the power of his pen. He could with careful consideration arrange words to achieve the effect he wanted. He could provoke without damning himself. By wishing to see what Bute wrote, the Stuarts handed him a weapon against themselves; a weapon he used with adolescent zeal.

This was never more so than when Bute wrote, as he often did, of seeing the Host in Catholic churches: 'Walked back [from the English church] ... & went into the Madeline on the way. Mass was still going on so we stood near the door with a lot of other people who had come in to worship the Host for a few minutes.'[69] It is left provocatively unclear whether or not Bute also worshipped the real presence of Christ in the Host – challenged by Stuart, it would be easy to return to the ranks of a Protestant sight-seer. Yet the natural reading of the passage, and especially the capitalisation of Host, suggests Bute was one of those worshipping the Host. The technique seems to have been successful, for Bute recorded the presence and position of the Host in all the Catholic churches he entered. Stuart must have been dismayed; all the English and classical education of May Place had not dented Bute's love of Gothic beauty, continental churches and, worst of all, Catholic practice.

At Wildbad, Stuart and Bute met up with Mrs Stuart, who was taking a cure. 'In August 1860 [*sic,* actually 1861] you came to us. I dreaded your coming - & I pitied you for having to come! But I saw your poor, young, sad face in that room at Wildbad - & I thought that you were nobly struggling to behave meek towards us - & my childless heart reached out towards you with a warmth that surprised myself!'[70] Bute certainly had a better relationship with Mrs Stuart than with her husband. Although they disagreed about the death of Lady Flora so strongly that Bute wrote to his Aunt Selina, begging her to support his claim that 'my aunt [Flora] was stript by 3 men by Her Majesty's order', Bute was careful to add: 'Please do not think that we have any other topic upon which we differ so widely as my poor aunt. Mrs Stuart is very kind but of course cannot feel so strongly as we do upon that.'[71] Mrs Stuart had been at Court, and she and Charles were firm supporters of the Queen.

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[69]*Ibid.*

[70]BU/21/48/6 Georgina Stuart to Bute, undated.

[71]BU/23/13 Bute to Lady Selina, 20 Jan. 1862.

The party journeyed through Switzerland, where in a Catholic canton Bute found the road 'disfigured with bleached and broken crucifixes, carved in the worst possible manner.'[72] They crossed into Italy, where he enjoyed swimming in the lakes. He had indeed learnt to fence and walking had always given him pleasure; these and swimming were the only forms of exercise he enjoyed.[73] Then Bute had a serious illness, which the English doctor later diagnosed as smallpox. Before this Bute was rising at the early hours Stuart approved. After his illness was diagnosed, he went back to spending half the morning in bed. The party returned late to England, and Bute was not yet well for school. Before he returned, he sorted out the personal effects left by his mother and Lady Adelaide. Bute had a short term at May Place.

That September Bute was fourteen, and he duly chose the curators to care for his Scottish properties. They were Col. William Stuart (Charles' cousin), Charles Stuart, Sir Francis Hastings Gilbert, Sir James Fergusson, David Muire M.P. and A. T. Boyle. But what should have been a day of freedom, when he placed himself in the care of a guardian of his choice, was reduced to a business arrangement. Now, he was not choosing a protector for himself, but only his lands. Despite this, it was an occasion for further conflict. There was inevitably considerable discussion as to who the most proper persons would be. Charles Stuart told Anderson (lawyer for the Scotch Tutor): 'I have an insuperable delicacy in suggesting myself & the boy does not seem to think of me.'[74]

This delicacy in fact proved not insuperable. Lord Galloway, neither an intemperate man, nor a radical, and certainly not a partisan of Lady Elizabeth, was disgusted.

> I did and do complain of the <u>impropriety</u> and the <u>imprudence</u> of Genl. C. S.[*sic*] having <u>forced</u> himself into the office of <u>curator</u>, and of his <u>indelicate mode</u> of so doing - however he may attempt to shelter himself under the chancellery wing. This act ... was not in accordance with Lady Bute's wishes, of which I have the best evidence: and was so distasteful to Bute that he disclaimed it in his own act, though he signed the deed, which I ... accepted.[75]

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[72]Bute's diary, 4 Sep. 1861.

[73]It was very much part of the ethos of the Christian gentleman to be a sportsman and to 'glory in physical toughness': Mark Girouard, *The Return to Camelot* (Yale University Press: New Haven, 1981), p. 136. Bute never enjoyed shooting, and walking and swimming were as near as he got to 'physical toughness'.

[74]BU/21/2/239 Stuart to Anderson, undated.

[75]Harrowby Papers vol. LXII f198 Lord Galloway to Lord Harrowby, 21 Dec. 1862.

Galloway felt that if he had made the full circumstances known to the Court of Session, it would not have allowed Stuart to be appointed. Stuart had been 'indiscreet' and perhaps worse, and the whole thing had had a bad effect on Bute's mind, whilst adding to the expense of the estate and decreasing the efficiency of its management.

> Finally Genl. Stuart was [trustee?] of the boy's property in England and Guardian of his person. Wherefore force himself (in a most objectionable manner) into the office of curator in Scotland which has no reference to the person, but to the property?[76]

The large family, upon whom Bute had no call but that of unforced affection, continued to welcome him, despite the fact that Galloway felt 'painfully the awkwardness of his position'[77] since Bute was still in love with one of his numerous daughters, and he did not want to be accused of persuading Bute into a marriage.[78] Lady Galloway was the person closest to Bute at this time. He consulted her about his prayers. She replied warmly and humbly sending him '"the little Book of Prayers" you must tell me if you like them, for if not, I will try & get you another. I am very anxious you should use a book fr. Yr. Prayers, I am sure you will find it a help in keeping up your attention ... though alas! With all, how sadly remiss we are and how fearful the wanderings of one's thoughts – at least I know it is so with me.'[79]Whenever others needed some insight into Bute it was to Lady Galloway that they turned. Although his attraction to the Catholic Church horrified her, and she feared that it would pass to her own children, yet she was always ready to welcome Bute, to listen to him and to sympathise with him.

At the start of the spring term in 1862, when Bute was fifteen, he started at Harrow. He was reputedly happy there. For much of his time, he was in the House of the renowned scholar B. F. Westcott[80] whose most enduring memorial is the Greek New Testament he edited with Hort. Reviewing the earliest Greek manuscripts, they carefully considered the evidence for the

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[76]*Ibid.*

[77] Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII f204 Stuart to Lord Harrowby, 23 Oct. [probably 1863].

[78]It was not the slight disparity in title that mattered, any marriage between the aristocracy and the gentry was perfectly respectable. It was Bute's money, and the Galloway's lack of it that would have made the match unequal. F. M. L. Thompson, *The Rise of Respectable Society* (Fontana, 1988), pp. 103-7.

[79]BU/21/16/2 Lady Galloway to Bute, 3 Jan. 1862.

[80]Brooke Foss Westcott 1825-1901. He co-edited the famous Greek Testament which bears his name, and became Bishop of Durham. See DNB; Arthur Westcott, *Life and Letters of Brooke Foss Westcott* (Macmillan & Co: London, 1903).

various readings, and *Westcott and Hort* was for years the basis for scholarly translation, and remains to this day a classic. Westcott was a gentle man, more inclined to forgive than to punish, with a warm interest in nature and in art to set beside his formidable learning. Academically, Bute made progress. His 'scholarship' (that is to say, his grasp of classical grammar and the formal aspects of language) remained his weakest area. His writing in his own language remained outstanding, and great things began to be expected of him.[81] If the narrowly classical learning of his day was never to be Bute's *forte,* he did more than catch up with the minimum standard of his peers. He certainly learnt how to pick up a new language fast, and how to work hard. In 1860, he had had no French, yet one of the books he left behind at Harrow in 1864 was Hugo's *Les Misérables*, which implies a competent knowledge of the language.

A quiet, withdrawn figure, Bute only revealed his warm, impulsive side to a few real friends. One of these was the serious-minded George Sneyd, another the much more light-hearted Adam Hay Gordon, a fellow Scot, known as 'Addle'. Somewhere between the two he found the necessary outlet for his mercurial spirits, his deep seriousness, and his love of fun and joking. Another kindly adult was interesting himself in Bute's affairs. The generous public school holidays of the winter 1862/3 Bute spent at Sandon Hall in Staffordshire, the neo-Jacobean home of Lord Harrowby, who was descended from the 1st Marquess of Bute, the then Dowager Lady Harrowby being the daughter of his second marriage to Frances Coutts. In the following November, Lord Harrowby became his joint Guardian.

In the spring of 1863 Bute had a very bad attack of whooping cough. His Godmother Aunt North 'was concerned to hear of your ... illness & state of health and how much annoyance you endured from Lady Galloway.' It was as he was recovering from this illness that he wrote what was to be the prize-winning poem at Harrow that year. It cost a long day 'of headache and backache and ... many sheets of Hieroglyphics'.[82] An atmospheric piece on the set subject of Edward, the Black Prince, it alternates between mediaevalism and splendidly ringing descriptions of nature. The Headmaster, congratulating him, was unsure if he would be well enough to return to collect his prize in July.[83] In the same year, Bute also won a prize for translating a set piece of English verse into Latin verse.

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[81]Harrrowby Papers Vol. LXII f237 Westcott to Gen Stuart, 3 Nov. 1864.

[82]BU/21/16/5 A. Howe to Bute, undated.

[83]BU/63/2 H. Montagu Butler to Bute, 17 June 1863.

That summer he stayed with the Galloways, showing some signs of the stress he was under. Lord Galloway expressed it well.

> ... nothing will alter his deep rooted prejudice against the decision of the House of Lords, which he considered unjust and that a grievous wrong had been inflicted upon him - and still more that Genl. Stuart was dishonourable in accepting the office, when he knew it was disagreeable to him, and forcing himself upon him. The unfortunate personal intercourse with Genl. and Mrs S instead of drawing him to them has I fear increased the difficulty and the detriment to his character is very apparent of living in a state of forced submission, and concealment of his real feelings. It was not only to us that he spoke upon the subject, but he sought a private interview with a neighbour, a Scotch lawyer, ... and spoke in the strongest terms of the cruelty and unhappiness of his position, and evinced a depth of feeling which none could have an idea of but those who have seen him in this state, as I can testify - pent up feelings at length giving way.[84]

Having the Galloway family to show him what normal family life was like was essential for his development. He was welcomed and valued in an atmosphere where he felt confident enough to be himself. But the contrast between this and his life with the Stuarts must have been made even clearer and more bitter to him.

Harrow was, of course, a Church of England school, and it was usual for boys to be prepared for confirmation and confirmed whilst at school. The question of Bute giving his allegiance to the Church of England by taking this step was first raised at about this time. 'It was Mr Westcott pressing upon him the desirableness of his preparing for confirmation, as one was to be held in Harrow in the autumn, which induced Bute to make Mr W acquainted with the state of his mind, saying something to the effect 'that he feared the Reformation had been a great mistake.'[85]

This caused some real difficulties at Harrow, and perhaps the depth of his feeling surprised his school masters and the Stuarts. Lady Galloway, Bute's confidant on religious as many other matters, was not surprised. 'Neither Gen Stuart nor Mr Smith [a Harrow master] are, I think, sufficiently alive on the Matter. As to the former I was not surprised as he knows nothing of Bute's real feelings on any subject - but even Mr Smith is inclined to treat it too much as a

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[84]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII ff212-3 Lord Galloway to Lord Harrowby, 2 Dec. 1863.

[85]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII f215 Lady Galloway to Lord Harrowby, 5 Mar. 1864.

boyish ephemeral - alas! it is deep rooted and mixed with much devotion and in a moment he might be caught hold of by a priest.'[86] She thought, wisely, that pressing Bute on the subject was ill advised.

> I had several earnest conversations with him - I found that he was so deeply tainted with Romish errors, so adverse to Protestant ordinances, that I feared if the matter of confirmation were to be urged, it would only increase his prejudice and might drive him to some desperate act - I told Mr Smith, and begged him to represent it to Mr Westcott - by a letter I had from Bute in the autumn I rather fear another attempt was made by Mr Westcott on his return to Harrow, though fruitless.[87]

Westcott placed a great value on confirmation, and wrote earnestly to his own son on the subject when his time came to prepare for it. 'We shall all think of you during the time of your preparation. ... Confirmation is a very great opportunity, and we believe, of course, that the laying on of hands is much more. It is a kind of Christian ordination, with its consecration and its blessing.'[88]

But confirmation also meant choosing a denomination. The Presbyterian Churches did not confirm, and taking the step of joining the Church of England would both take Bute away from the Church of his childhood, and also from the Catholic Church. Pressuring Bute would make him feel so beleaguered that he might be driven to 'some desperate act' like clandestinely joining the Roman Church. It would make him fasten all his attention on controversies among the denominations, and draw him into more theological reflection. Lady Galloway was trying hard to avoid this.

> ... he managed to buy two of the [R.C.] devotional books (one a missal with meditations) which were his daily study. I did succeed however in getting him to give them up to me, for which I was very thankful - though there is much in them that is good, there is a great mixture of error very pernicious and deluding - what I urged upon him more than anything else was, to keep his mind free from any particular tenets, to remember how young he was, and how important it was he should not think of taking upon himself to settle this church or that was right until

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[86]*Ibid.*

[87]*Ibid.*

[88]Westcott, *Westcott,* vol.1, p.345.

> he was older; and to read his Bible for practical use and not controversially - something of this kind I said, and this view was a relief to him - hence my great desire not to have the confirmation question mooted again.[89]

So long as Bute felt he might leave his options open, he was content to take the path of least resistance pleasing to all the adults around him. He was willing to dwell on those central tenets of the Christian faith agreed by both Protestant and Catholic Churches. Pushed, he could only begin to consider their points of difference.

There were many reasons why Bute found the Church of England unattractive and possibly not the least of them was that it was the Church which had owned the allegiance of the Stuarts. Bute also disapproved strongly of the fact that it had been started, not from principle, but to give Henry VIII a divorce. It was unblushingly Erastian,[90] used to prop up the state, and this tended to become its chief purpose, rather than the true worship of God; for where God is put first, a constant criticism of human society and a challenge to its ideals must follow.

Perhaps another consideration weighed even more heavily. It was not just that the Crowned Head of England was head of the Church of England. It was that Queen Victoria was that head. Bute was half Hastings. He said repeatedly that he regarded his Hastings cousins as sisters, though he said as little as possible about his wild cousin the Marquess. In that family the cruelty done to Lady Flora was still a living issue. When Bute was fourteen he had seen Lady Flora's death as murder: 'Mrs Stuart ... talks about the giddiness of youth, and bad advice, and forgiveness. Quotes "Father, forgive them." and forgets that he also said "Thou shalt do no murder." And, as I tell her if the woman was not the queen one wouldn't hear anything but lamentations over such early blackness and cruelty of heart.'[91]

Later, when Bute was twenty nine, he wrote to his Hastings cousin Mabel Henry to explain that he had only accepted the Order of the Thistle out of obedience to Her Majesty, and that he had never sought the Queen 'except at her royal command'.[92] The issue perfectly focused his mind on the evil of a secular head of the Church of England.

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[89]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII f215 Lady Galloway to Harrowby, 5 Mar. 1864.

[90]HB, p.33.

[91]BU/23/13 Bute to Lady Selina, 20 Jan. 1862.

[92]BU35/1 Mabel Henry to Bute, 10 Jan. 1878.

His Hastings relations were much in his mind in the summer of 1864, for his cousin Marquess, Harry, caused a major scandal, and did his best to involve as many as possible of his family. Harry can easily appear simply as a spoilt and precocious trouble-maker, but since his teens, he had known that he was dying. The symptoms of Bright's Disease had appeared when he was fourteen,[93] and although it would not necessarily kill him quickly, kill him it undoubtedly would. No wonder he lived his life with reckless speed.

When Harry left Oxford, his main interest became horse racing. He owned and ran his own horses and betted heavily on them, allegedly with the intention of breaking 'the ring.' Like other young men with a sporting interest, he was bored by staid society, and plunged into the seamier side of London. Nevertheless he also mixed with the social circle into which he had been born, and he met a young girl so petite and beautiful that she had earned the title of 'the pocket Venus',[94] Lady Florence Paget, daughter of the Marquess of Anglesey. Harry had been attracted to a woman whose own reputation was also far from blameless.[95] With her beauty and her birth, however, she had attracted suitors, and was engaged to marry Henry Chaplin, another sporting young man, a friend of the Prince of Wales. Chaplin's relations were outraged,[96] but powerless. The wedding was fixed for early August 1864.

Accounts of why she changed her mind differ in detail, but the substance is unchallenged. On 16 July she went alone to the 'fashionable store of Messrs Marshall and Snellgrove in Oxford Street',[97] where somebody met her. Since she was quite definitely not met by either Harry Hastings or his sister, Lady Edith, it seems likely that it was either Freddy Granville or his new-wedded wife. The Granvilles had just made a run-away match themselves. She went from there to St George's, Hanover Square.

Harry had asked his sister to pick him up in her brougham at a quarter to eleven that morning. She was late. They went to a shop together, than back into the carriage. He asked her to take him to St George's. It was only as they drove up to the church that he told her that he was going there to marry Lady Florence. Harry did not wish to give his sister a chance to think through his course of action, or how she was damning herself by allowing herself to become involved in it. He calculated that the more his family shared in the wedding, the harder it

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[93]*The Sporting Gazette,* 14 Nov. 1868.

[94]Henry Blyth, *The Pocket Venus* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson: London, 1966).

[95]BU/23/13/19 Bute to Lady Selina, 9 Aug. 1864.

[96]*Ibid.*

[97] Blyth, *Pocket Venus*, p.116.

would be for them to condemn him, and that if Lady Edith had no time to think, she would react with sisterly love, and help him, as she did. She was, however, very taken aback to find that the bride did not have a single relative to support her.

The bride was already waiting at the church. Lady Florence had 'provided a marriage-bonnet for which a footman went as soon as she entered the vestry.'[98] The Granvilles were also there, and Lord Marsham had just arrived, 'summoned by Hastings "upon business of the greatest importance" and was almost at the altar before he knew what the business was.'[99] He was not happy, and refused to give the bride away, so this task was performed by Granville, the only other man there, except the clergyman. 'Edith was in mourning, which distressed her very much, as a bad omen.'[100]

In the Victorian era, Marquesses and their daughters attracted the attention which today is reserved for media celebrities - and Hastings, with his exploits in the taverns and gin palaces of London, and his public and expensive forays on the Turf, had made himself a huge following of those who idolised him. An equally interested body enjoyed deploring him. The romance of the clandestine marriage further increased the scandal.

In a great scandal, there is something pleasant in being one of the few to know the details beyond all speculation. Bute had an account from his cousin Lady Edith. He was very attached to her, and remained a close friend of her eldest son, Charley. He discussed the matter with Lady Selina, who was, of course, Harry's aunt as well as his own. He was convinced that only Florence and Harry, and a few of his friends knew anything beforehand of the wedding, and that the others had just been involved at the last possible moment. But he acknowledged that the wedding was not a matter of last-minute impulse. A special train had been ordered, triumphal arches had been prepared to greet the happy couple, and two cooks had been labouring for a week to prepare a banquet. Contracting a marriage while still affianced to a different man is bad manners by the standards of any period.

Bute also had the pleasure of having been consulted on the action taken next. He thought that 'the peculiar circumstances aside' the marriage was not a bad one. Bute never espoused

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[98]BU/23/13/19 Bute to Lady Selina, 9 Aug. 1864.

[99]*Ibid.*

[100]*Ibid.*

double standards for men and women.[101] It was widely believed that Lady Florence had borne at least one, and maybe two, children, but 'Hastings is probably tolerably foul himself, and they certainly are very much attached to each other.'[102] He thought the family should make the best of a bad job, and hoped that the marriage would cause both principals to settle down, and Harry to curb his excessive expenditure. He had promised to sell his racehorses. Lady Selina had passed some other information to the sixteen year old Bute. 'As to Lord Hastings, I had certainly heard it whispered that he was physically incapable of doing his duty to his wife. I never knew it for certain before.'[103]

By the autumn of 1864, Bute was seventeen, and the question of his entering University was being considered. The original idea had been that he would go to Trinity College, Cambridge, but Westcott thought that 'Bute would not distinguish himself at Cambridge and would not get his first class'.[104] He thought Bute capable of this and it would have provided him with 'an adequate object; a definite work for three years and with abundant subject matter for his thoughts to the exclusion of theological and controversial things - his desultory mind wants a very distinct kind of work: - his ambition wants a worthy aim; and his religious fancies want keeping in the background'.[105] At Oxford he would be 'sure of his first; because it is not a wide and accurate knowledge of language that is required; but the careful getting up of certain definite books in history: metaphysics and classics: and this he would do well.'[106]

Oxford had of course made a name for itself as the home of the 'Oxford Movement', and the last thing that those responsible for Bute wanted was to see him follow in the steps of Newman and his disciples Romeward. However, after earnest discussion over the character of Jowett, and his possible influence, it was thought that Balliol would be a safe option. The problem was to secure a place there for Bute.

That those in charge of Bute felt Jowett might be the answer to their problems showed how little they understood Bute. However much Jowett's wide learning might have appealed to

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[101]He was not alone in this; when Tennyson spoke of the power of the love of one woman to 'keep down the base in man' [Ann Thwaite, *Emily Tennyson: The Poet's Wife* (Faber and Faber London 1996) p.165] he was articulating the ideal of a cultural group of religious and idealistic men.

[102]BU/23/13/19 Bute to Lady Selina, 9 Aug. 1864.

[103]*Ibid.*

[104]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII f221 Smith to Gen. Stuart, 18 Sept. 1864.

[105]*Ibid.*

[106]*Ibid.*

Bute, Jowett's liberalism would have disgusted him. Only a mind as reverentially religious, and as open to the magical element in religion as his own was, could attract him.

What happened next is obscure, but it proved impossible for Bute to go to Balliol, unless he got a scholarship. Westcott reported Bute's reaction.

> When I told Ld Bute the substance of Dr Scott's note he was evidently very disappointed. After a few minutes reflection he proposed to offer himself for the scholarship examination ... the proposal at first surprised me, for he knows that the examination turns in a good measure upon scholarship which is his weakest point. I can only say that this resolution would involve the necessity for hard work, and hard work in subjects for which he has no inclination.[107]

Quite why Bute decided upon this self-sacrifice was unclear, perhaps even to those around him at the time. His Harrow masters thought he stood little chance of success. Stuart suggested 'placing him with a private tutor to prepare him for his struggle for the Balliol scholarship'.[108] Nobody thought that 'remaining on at Harrow ... Bute will stand much chance of passing such an examination as will induce the college to give him room'.[109] But Westcott did not feel that he could 'predict that a tutor would be sure to bring him up to the requisite standard of work.'[110]

Meanwhile, the battle for Bute's religious allegiance continued. His old friends the Galloways pointed out 'that his judgement could not be considered as matured at 17, and slightly hinting *inter alia* at [what] a hasty decision might seem to pass on the story of the Protestantism of his mother to whom he was very much attached.'[111] Either Stuart or Lord Galloway persuaded the Archbishop of Canterbury[112] to write, magisterially making the case for Anglicanism:

> let [Bute] plainly ask himself which is the most catholic - the Church of England or the Church of Rome? Which cuts itself off from catholicity by its innumerable

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[107]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII f237 Westcott to Gen. Stuart, 3 Nov. 1864.

[108]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII f250 Gen. Stuart to Lord Harrowby, 27 Jan. 1865.

[109]*Ibid.*

[110]*Ibid.*

[111]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII ff247-8 Lord Galloway to Lord Harrowby, 10 Nov. 1864.

[112]Charles Thomas Longley 1794-1868, see DNB; Edward Carpenter, *Cantuar.: The archbishops in their Office* (Cassell: London, 1971), pp.312-333.

innovations: which is really a new religion? That of the Church of England or the Church of Rome? Let him bear in mind that for 13 years after the reformation until the year 1564 those who afterwards adhered to the Roman ritual had no scruple whatever in holding communion and worshipping with the reformed Church, and did not cut themselves off from our catholic communion until the promulgations of the rule of Pope Pius IV.[113]

Bute spent Christmas at Sandon Hall, wretchedly unhappy. He was beginning, as he himself put it, to be 'very ill nervously'.[114] He found Sandon uncomfortable, and he complained bitterly.[115] Nevertheless, he returned to school. Undertaking a great deal of uncongenial work, and under fire concerning his religious beliefs, Bute became increasingly stressed and miserable. He revealed something of his feelings to Westcott.

Bute came to me as usual yesterday, and told me he has made up his mind to stay. At the same time he said he did not know how he shd get through next term. I told him that was no business of his - if he was only in the path of duty God wd help him through: and all he had to do was, to live each day by itself, and not fret about anything beyond. I then said that I should like to know the exact reason for his remaining here, and he replied that it was, because it was so distasteful to himself to remain. ... [I said that] if so he had better go at once: - he could not expect either blessing or satisfaction from any such self-inflicted misery. We discussed this fully: and at last he quitted very satisfactorily. He said he did really wish to bend his wish to the wish of God: and since he did not know for certain which path God wd have him take, he thought it best to take the one least pleasing to himself.

With this I was not only satisfied but thoroughly pleased: and I told him I felt that if he ought to leave us, God would make it plain before many weeks were over, but I have really no anxiety about his health ... I do trust the question is settled. I mentioned something about travelling if he left us here, but he did not go on with that subject, and therefore I said no more. If he feels at all jaded, [after this] conflict with himself, which must have been very severe, you may if you think fit,

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[113]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII f255 +Cantuar, 8 Feb. 1865.

[114]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII f284 Bute to Lord Harrowby, 21 Nov. 1866.

[115]BU/21/48/11 Lord Harrowby to Bute, 19 Nov. 1866.

propose to him to ... get a week more holiday at Easter, it might be a considerable relief to him.

I think we may all be very grateful for the way in which the question has been discussed:- after the boy's first outburst of passion, nothing could have been better than his behaviour throughout.[116]

Bute had learnt to assume the appearance of calm expected of a boy of his age and class, but he remained the same passionate person beneath the surface. When his appeal to Westcott failed, and the boy was not released by kindly adults from a burden beyond his strength to bear, he found the only honourable escape that he could - illness.

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Lady Edith was sure that Bute's problems were caused by overwork. 'You must be aware that even an engine can only be kept at high pressure for a certain time & up to a certain point', and Bute's head was not iron and steel. Just how ill she feared he was is revealed in a few telling words: 'I hope and expect to see you again ... you cheer up & "never say die".'[117]

Charles Stuart was more doubtful. Bute dwelt on 'his distressing mental condition during the last quarter of his Harrow life and the effects it had upon his health, and he shrinks from the idea of work. As however his morbid state seems first to have developed itself at Sandon, where he had no work, I do not myself believe that the usual amount of study exacted from a young man can be unwholesome for him.'[118] In a backhanded way, Stuart was probably right. It was the pressure of his relationship with the Stuarts which had pushed Bute towards illness once more, though the addition of an excessive work load finally tipped the balance.

For years Bute had been under great stress, first watching his mother die, then fighting the attempts to take him into Stuart's custody. He had acclimatised to family life with the Galloways, and then spent two terms at a private school, before starting another new school, Harrow. He had had to adjust to life with the Stuarts, and whether he had found it more exhausting to fight Stuart or to maintain cordial relations with his wife, only Bute knew. He was assailed by doubts about his religion, which caused great distress both to those he cared for and those he wished to annoy. He was subjected to further pressure to persuade him to change his beliefs. He topped all this by determining to follow a path of study for which

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[116]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII f260 Westcott to Lord Harrowby, undated (probably 1865).

[117]BU/21/33/6 Cousin Edith to Bute, 8 May 1865.

[118]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII f267 Gen. Stuart to Lord Harrowby, 14 Aug. 1865.

everyone agreed he was ill-equipped, which made no use of his talents, and demanded ones he did not have, and from which he was unlikely to achieve the end he sought. That he then collapsed is not surprising.

The project of travelling, instead of a final term at Harrow, had been mentioned by Westcott. One cure for illness popular with the better off was to seek a more favourable climate, preferably abroad. Bute, with a tutor, doctor and carefully selected friends (selected by Stuart that is, and not himself) set off for the Mediterranean and the Holy Land.

IV

Travel

'very much wrought up and excited'

Bute had been too ill to make a swift recovery. Slowly, he began to be active again. He did not have the diagnosis of depression, or any understanding of its possible phases, so he did not realise how hopeful a sign this was. Never a good sailor, he was seasick on the journey. Georgina Stuart was delighted by his

> more than welcome letters ... Churchman had recognised the writing & thought we couldn't get them too soon ... You seem to have discovered more to see and admire than we ever knew of! & better far, to have energy and strength to do it! Your day at the Pyramids made me gasp. What a full day it was for body and mind![1]

He sent his friend Sneyd an account of the day, too. 'At midnight started for the pyramids of Gheezeh, from there to Sakkara, thence to Memphis and home about five last night.'[2] Did he recognise that it was also a sign of his recovery that he was 'able to resume [his] habits of devotion'?[3] Lady Galloway was his *confidante*, because as she remarked, 'perhaps there is no one to whom you could [open your heart] but myself'.[4] Her long letter reveals that Bute had written that he believed 'we should aim ... to love our blessed Lord, and to pray that that love may be shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost.'[5] But even with her he was reserved, not able to say what he felt 'upon another subject' which he said he withheld because he knew she

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[1]BU/21/33/2 Georgina Stuart to Bute, 16 May 1865.

[2]Sneyd papers/2 Bute to Sneyd, 3 May 1865.

[3]BU/21/33/1 Lady Galloway to Bute, 30 April 1865.

[4]*Ibid.*

[5]*Ibid.*

was 'a better Christian' than he was. 'Oh Bute, you are sadly mistaken',[6] exclaimed Lady Galloway.

From Egypt, Bute went on to Palestine. Georgina Stuart put what Bute must have felt into words: 'the holy awe of knowing that there our Saviour trod! ... God grant you may all keep well & "able for" all you wish.'[7] It was a deeply significant time for Bute, and he turned to his closest friend Sneyd. 'You will see ... that I have lived to see Jerusalem, and one of the objects of my life is accomplished and over. When I thank God for this it is because His will has been done, for I wish I was in my grave before this. If this journey was intended to give me any taste for life it has hitherto failed utterly - what am I to say or do?'[8]

Alone in a foreign land, and with companions he had not chosen, his sense of isolation was overwhelming. Finally he let his misery out to Sneyd, painfully conscious at the same time that his friend might be distressed or disgusted by the very confidences that brought him relief.

> I do not know whether you care to read this. I must write to you. I only tell you I am not writing words to be read or repeated at No.1. These things are very sad and ghastly for me, though you may [or] may not, and perhaps cannot sympathise, with the ailing of a brain which has been overtasked. I am totally, utterly alone here, except that I sometimes exchange thoughts with a friar of the Franciscan convent here, whom I have become accidentally acquainted with.[9]

Bute followed this agony with a calm, elegant account of his journey, including a 'horrid French steamer'. Something more of his real feeling appears when he describes the Holy Places he visited, including 'the beautiful brilliant garden of Gethsamane - In the morning I went to Bethany. In the evening I went again to Sepulchre. On Friday we all had crosses tattooed on our arms.'[10] It was the Franciscan friar[11] who had taken him to the holy places of Christ's suffering. Together they walked to Bethlehem, Bute pouring confidences into his ear.[12]

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[6]*Ibid.*

[7]BU/21/33/1 Georgina Stuart to Bute, 16 May 1865.

[8]Sneyd papers/3 Bute to Sneyd, 22 May 1865.

[9]Sneyd papers/2 Bute to Sneyd, 3 May 1865.

[10]*Ibid.*

[11]His name was Aloysius Stafford, but it has not been possible to identify him further.

[12]BU/21/33/ A Stafford to Bute, Dec. 1865.

Did Stafford try to set Bute's feelings in the context of Jesus' suffering? 'I spent the afternoon with F. Aloysius who took me in the evening to Gethsamane and opened for me the Cave of the Agony'.[13] In the garden of Gethsamane Jesus faced his coming suffering on the cross. He asked his disciples to stay awake, but they all slept, leaving him utterly alone and in a mental agony so great that he sweated drops of blood. The resonances of this much greater suffering with Bute's life are plain to see. It is easy to make light of the pain of this rich young man, who appears to have had everything in the world to make him happy, but mental illness and pain are as real and as terrible as the physical variety.

Bute was moving ever closer to Rome. It has been argued that the attraction of the mediaeval, beautiful ceremonial and freely expressed devotion were drawing him in that direction, but if he discovered a context and an outlet for his pain there, he had found a basis for his Catholicism deeper than any sensual attraction.

He ended his letter to Sneyd with a bitter attack on Harrow, and a plea to keep the most revealing parts of his account private. It was very much part of the public school ethos that boys should love their time at school, and treasure their memories of the place.

> Before I see you again I may be well or not. It is hardly ten days since the memory of Harrow gave me fits of nervous pain which unstrung me for a minute or two at a time. Harrow itself I could and would curse every day of my life; if there is a thing I hate and loathe it is her. Perhaps I shall get better of it some day, but you must remember how nearly I was killed there. If I were there now, I think I should be dead.
>
> Please, dear Sneyd, remember me to Dawson very kindly. As I think it might amuse him perhaps you would read him most of this xcept the first part and the last few sentences.[14]

It is tempting to suggest a physical calamity, but almost certainly misleading. What nearly killed Bute was the emotional and moral pressure of conforming.[15] He kept Mrs Stuart posted, as well as keeping a journal for her to read on his return: 'On the night of May 24-25 I assisted

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[13]Sneyd papers/3 Bute to Sneyd, 22 May 1865.

[14]*Ibid.*

[15]Public School was designed to 'harden' the boys attending it. Philip Mason, *The English Gentleman* (André Deutsch: 1982) p. 170. Sensitive boys suffered disproportionately.

at the celebration of the Ascension on the very spot where it happened, the most curious and interesting Christian Festival I have ever seen.'[16]

He did not specify which denomination was celebrating the festival, and Mrs Stuart could believe, if she wished, that it had been a High Anglican celebration. It was almost certainly Roman Catholic. He received a certificate from the Franciscans of Mount Sion, certifying he had visited the Holy Places and describing him as *'devotus Peregrinus'*, a devout pilgrim. He was touched to think himself linked with pilgrims through the ages. Also, through the Hastings line, he believed he was descended from a schismatic Pope known as 'the Pilgrim of Treves'.[17]

It was safe for him to tell her, with a rather conscious artistry, of Samaria and the 'augustly miserable shrines where Christians worshipped in a poverty worthy of God.' Later he went to see 'what is called a *ziki*, performed by Darveeshes [*sic*] in a Mosque. This was the only Muslim function I have seen. It was very solemn & impressive.'[18] Intensity from the participants was what impressed him more than anything else in a religious ceremony.

Bute returned to England, and in the autumn went to Christ Church, Oxford, to enjoy greater autonomy than he had known before. He occupied the beautiful rooms later made famous through the photographs of his successor in them, Charles Dodgson, better known by his *nom-de-plume* of Lewis Carroll. He did not fit, by temperament or tastes, into the hard-drinking, riding and gambling set of young nobles to which he belonged by birth. Nevertheless, he made some friends among them, of whom the closest was probably Lord Dalmeny, later Lord Rosebery.[19] Dalmeny was enormously clever and very witty, with an acid, biting tongue, and, like Bute, a man with few intimates.[20] His company must have encouraged Bute to sharpen his wit. Bute was still shy with strangers and preferred the company of his few close friends, where he could be his unguarded self. How, then, did he spend his time? He certainly continued walking, fencing, and swimming. He covered a certain amount of the prescribed curriculum. His tutors urged him to work hard and hurry through what was tedious to him in hope of finding work more to his taste, but he did not. He was bored with the classics, and also worried that much study would plunge him back into the distress of serious illness.

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[16]Bute to Mrs Stuart, 29 June 1865.

[17]HB, p.27.

[18]Bute to Mrs Stuart, 29 June 1865.

[19]Archibald Philip Primrose, Fifth Earl of Rosebery 1847-1929, SP VII.

[20]Robert Rhodes James, *Rosebery* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson: London, 1963) p.46.

He was, of course, particularly ill-served by the narrow academic disciplines of his day. Today he could have won academic distinction studying comparative religion. As it was, his absorption in the Hindu scriptures was thought merely a distraction from real work. He loved the account of the death of Krishna: ' "Then the illustrious Krishna, having united himself with his own pure, spiritual, inexhaustible, inconceivable, unborn, undecaying, imperishable and universal spirit, which is one with Vasundera, abandoned his mortal body and the condition of the threefold qualities." To my mind this description of the great Saviour becoming one with universal spirit approaches the sublime', he commented.[21]

But he gave most of his energy to considering the merits of the various Christian denominations. At Oxford, he had another option forcibly presented to him: Anglo-Catholicism. The Anglo-Catholics were members of the Church of England, and among their most prominent representatives at Oxford were Professor Edward Bouverie Pusey[22] and Henry Parry Liddon.[23] Pusey was by this time leading a largely reclusive life. When his friend Newman had become a Catholic, he had stayed behind in the Church of England, viewed by many with a suspicion amounting almost to disgust. Just as intensely earnest, and deeply spiritual as Pusey, was his protégé at Oxford, Liddon. He was a little man, but blessed with an ascetic face many considered beautiful. Photographs show finely chiselled features, with a determined chin, a marked nose, and lovely, animated eyes. Here, perhaps, lay something of the secret of his charm and ability to attract others. Unlike Pusey, who had had a romantic and tragically short marriage, Liddon was celibate, and outside his family, his most intense relationships were with other men.

The Anglo-Catholic branch of the Church of England wanted to take personal and spiritual discipline seriously. In contrast to this was the indulgence of the ritualist element among them in the gorgeous forms and colours of the worship of the Middle Ages and contemporary Romanism, which earned them the most opprobrium. They re-introduced the traditional vestments and altar furnishings, which changed colour according to the time of year, measuring out the fasts and feasts of the Church: 'spiritual haberdashery' one irate bishop called it. A lot of anger was also generated by their re-introduction of the practice of 'auricular confession', that is, of the priest hearing the individual confessions of his parishioners. The idea of his

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[21]HB, p.34.

[22]Edward Bouverie Pusey 1800-1882, Regius Professor of Hebrew, Christ Church Oxford, a leader of the Oxford Movement, DNB; H. P. Liddon, *Life of Edward Bouverie Pusey*, ed. J. O. Johnston and R. J. Wilson, 4 vols., 1894-7.

[23]Henry Parry Liddon 1829-1890, later Canon of St. Paul's London. J. H. Johnston, *Life and Letters of Henry Parry Liddon* (Longmans & co.: London, 1904).

pretty young wife on her knees before another man, confessing her sins, possibly her sexual sins, upset many a husband.

The basic tenet of Anglo-Catholicism was that the Church of England was still a Catholic, and not a Protestant, Church. On Anglo-Catholic theory, there were three main branches of the Catholic Church: the Roman Catholic Church, the Anglo-Catholic Church (which was the Church of England) and the Orthodox, or Eastern Church. This last branch had been separate from the eleventh century, following controversy over the authority of Rome and whether the Holy Spirit proceeded from God the Father alone, or from the Father and the Son. What mattered to Anglo-Catholics was that the Orthodox Church was an undeniably ancient Church, reaching right back in an unbroken line to the very earliest days, and yet still not acknowledging or acknowledged by the Pope. Liddon himself wrote that 'if the East did not run out like a jetty, breaking up the advancing wave of the Roman argument, our position, I admit, would be a much less defensible one.'[24] For what the Anglo-Catholics did not want was to acknowledge the supremacy of Rome.

What they did want was all the beauty of the ritual of High Mass. The Anglo-Catholic church of St Barnabas' in Oxford was one of the very highest. The Rev'd Francis Kilvert was taken to worship there on a trip back to his old University, and his reaction was typical of those who were critical of the ritualists:

> As we came out of Church Mayhew said to me, '*Well,* did you ever see such a function as that?' No, I never did and I don't care if I never do again. This was the grand function of the Ascension at St Barnabas, Oxford. The poor humble Roman Church hard by is quite plain, simple and Low Church in its ritual compared with St Barnabas in its festal dress on high days and holidays.[25]

Unfortunately for those who hoped he would be satisfied with the Anglo-Catholic option, Bute, whilst a stickler for the absolutely correct in church services, did not particularly warm to the ornateness of High Church worship. He was already very familiar with the Roman Mass, and perhaps the High Church tendency to overdo ritual struck him as play-acting by amateurs.

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[24]Johnston, *Liddon,* p.127.

[25]Ed. William Plomer, *Kilvert's Diary 14 May 1874 -13 March 1879* (Jonathan Cape: London, 1969) p. 320. Kilvert was not particularly hostile to Roman Catholicism; he had an endearing habit of slipping into Roman Catholic churches to pray. *Cf. ibid.,* p.356.

Bute's anxious guardians had already approached those at the college who might, they hoped, be able to help keep him from Rome. H. L. Mansel[26] was their chief point of contact. Mansel, disturbed by the new and sceptical writings coming from Germany, argued that, whilst belief in God was reasonable, we could know little of him except what he chose to reveal. His metaphysics have been much criticised,[27] but he emerges from his encounters with Bute as a remarkable man with a profound understanding of the workings of the human mind. He took a lot of interest in Bute, and, hearing that he had been impressed by Dr Pusey's writings, Mansel managed to engineer a meeting between them. Whereas Bute's guardians had thought to keep him away from High Churchmen, Mansel felt that Bute might well find a compromise there that would keep him from Rome. He also had the sense to see that only those as serious, as sensitive and as concerned with truth as Bute himself could win his trust.

Mansel was soon able to assure Lord Harrowby that Bute 'is losing somewhat of the brooding turn of his mind and is entering more with relief here than he did at Harrow'. He was, however, still dwelling on his wrongs, and especially upon his financial wrongs. Bute was generous with his charities, and surrounded by sons of some of the richer British families. The old wrong which he felt had been done him by Stuart was still very real to him.

That Christmas he spent at Dumfries House, probably with the Stuarts. It was 'comfortable if not merry or ideal'.[28] To be ideal, it would have had to be spent as a communicant member of a Church. To be merry, with congenial companions and a warmth of shared interest. Bute had neither. He also felt himself short of money, which, given his riches, seemed to him to be 'absurd'. His allowance was £2000, which seems a generous sum for an undergraduate.[29] Hunter Blair adds that his 'lavish alsmgiving' had made him hard up, as much as any personal extravagance. Bute was approached all the time by persons seeking help, both individuals who had hit hard times, and more formal charities. Acutely aware of his privileged position, he found it difficult to turn any away.

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[26]Henry Longueville Mansel 1820-1871. See DNB.

[27]See W. R. Matthews, *The Religious Philosophy of Dean Mansel*, Friends of Dr. Williams Library, Tenth Lecture (Oxford University Press: London, 1956).

[28]HB, p.32 quoting Bute to Miss Skene, Christmas Day 1865.

[29]At Balliol, G. M. Hopkins was struggling to get by on £75 annually, though his father paid his college expenses and occasionally gave him extra money: Robert Bernard Martin, *Gerard Manley Hopkins, A Very Private Life* (G. P. Putnam's Sons: New York, 1991) p. 28. But the point of attending University was still to 'make a select acquaintance, as much in your own rank as possible' (Lord Monson, quoted in Thompson, *Landed Society,* p.86), and Bute's own rank was that of the very rich and free-spending aristocracy.

The servant and artisan classes could easily fall on hard times, and those who had served the family in the past would regularly approach them again when in need. Bute could expect his guardian to make provision for these. But there were others his trustees would not feel bound to help. It was easy for even a professional man to find himself nearly destitute.

> Investment in government securities, railways and real estate was no doubt how most [professional] men made provision for the worst ... But how much could they save? It was repeatedly stated to the Commons' Select Committee on Income Tax in 1861 that only the most fortunate and best-established professional men ever made enough to be able to insure their lives for a worth while amount ... a professional father's death could suddenly topple his family to equality with an artisan's.[30]

In practice, the situation was worse. The death of a slightly improvident father or husband, or, worse, his prolonged sickness, eating into provision made in times of health, reduced a family to near starvation. For those barely managing to cling to a respectable occupation, one false step could send them over the edge. Many then had no option but to write begging letters to anyone who might help them with employment or money. In addition, Bute also gave to those whom friends, like Miss Skene, drew to his attention. These were often the respectable poor and the lower middle classes, reduced by sickness or age to penury. Small wonder if he overspent.

After Christmas he returned to Oxford, and to his religious controversies. He was greatly interested in the *Eirenicon* debate. Pusey[31] and Newman[32] wrote a set of answering arguments about the proper status of the Virgin, and the devotion which should be paid to her. This was another great bone of contention between the Roman Catholics and the Anglo-Catholics. In 1854, the Roman Catholic Church had defined the dogma that the Virgin had been conceived immaculate without the stain of Original Sin. It was one thing to honour the Virgin, and to ask her for her prayers, but it was another to have old traditions about her made into fresh Christian doctrines. On the other hand, the Roman Catholic Church replied that it was pointless to claim that the Holy Spirit was guiding the Church if she had no authority to declare what Christian doctrine was.

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[30]Best, *Mid-Victorian Britain*, p. 97.

[31]E. B. Pusey, *Eirenicon* (Parker: Oxford, 1865).

[32]J. H. Newman, *A letter to the Rev. E. B. Pusey D.D. on his recent Eirenicon* (Longmans: London, 1866).

Liddon was at this time the mentor of a number of young men at Balliol College, to which Bute had tried so hard to gain entry and had failed. It is interesting to speculate what friendships might have followed had he succeeded, for amongst their number was Gerard Manley Hopkins. As it was, with Hopkins at Balliol and Bute at Christ Church, there is no record the two young men ever met. Liddon not only took his academic duties very seriously, but also his duties to the spiritual life of the students at Oxford. Examining his conscience, he asked himself:

> 1. Do I endeavour to teach my pupils the Religion of our Lord more earnestly and constantly than anything else?
>
> 2. Do I walk and talk with them as often as possible with this view?[33]

Bute first appears in Liddon's dairy on 17 May 1866, when Liddon

> walked out with Lord Bute. He talked incessantly about liturgies - he believes that he has specimens of every ancient one in Xtendom. He described his visit to Armenia.[34] I twice got near to the question of first confession but could not succeed in bringing it on.[35]

The fascinating, direct and emotional man met in his writing vanished when Bute was with a stranger, or even a comparative stranger. When he was ill at ease, he either said little or nothing, or else spoke incessantly on a single subject which he found both safe and appealing. Augustus Hare was later to complain that he wound himself into his theme like a serpent and 'almost loses himself, and certainly quite lost me, in sentences about 'the Unity of the Kosmos'.[36] It did little to gain him enthusiastic new friends and from the tone of this passage it would seem that Liddon did not warm at all to him. Yet the technique successfully avoided subjects he did not want raised. Liddon could not get Bute to discuss making his confession to him. If the Church of England was a Catholic and Apostolic Church, then Liddon had the authority to hear confessions and to pronounce absolution. If authority lay only in the Roman Catholic Church, he did not. Bute was dodging the question. That very evening, Liddon heard Hopkins' confession. It is only in retrospect that certain days seem to carry the full flavour of an epoch.

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[33]Johnston, *Liddon*, p.52.

[34]Bute had not been there; his flow of words must have confused Liddon.

[35]Pusey House Liddon's Diary, 17 May 1866.

[36] Augustus J. C. Hare, *The Story of my Life* Vol. IV (George Allen: London, 1900) p.270.

That summer Bute again set off for Constantinople and the Middle East. He was away for four months, sparing himself and the Stuarts a difficult summer. He went with the Rev'd George Williams,[37] an unnamed doctor, his cousin James Frederick, and his friend Harman Grisewood,[38] three years his senior. As Grisewood[39] later became a Roman Catholic, he was presumably a High Church Anglican, and would have seemed a suitable companion for Bute. He wrote back to Sneyd, who was relieved that Bute seemed to be finding them pleasant company. Bute made an 'intimate'[40] of George Williams, whose book *The Holy City* had been his guide on his first visit to Jerusalem. Williams should have been the perfect companion on such a trip, for he was an Anglo-Catholic with a deep interest in the Orthodox Church, and was later president of the Eastern Church Association, which was devoted to increasing understanding between the Anglican and Orthodox Churches.

The first hint of tensions to follow came in Sicily, where Bute reported he had been told that 'the English church here is most painful. Indeed I have hardly heard of anything so truly awful as something I was told by an eye witness today. Mr W. said "but that was not much"!'[41] Since Bute did not confide in his diary what the scandal was, it is impossible to judge if he was in fact making a fuss about nothing. Bute was very bitter against the Church of England, and he expressed this in a slighting, jeering way of speaking of it. Lady Galloway had been amongst those to be distressed by this: 'also I observed the sneer ... on certain subjects. It distressed me greatly, and I spoke to him about it and reminded him that formerly it would have distressed him to observe it in another.'[42]

Sicily was perhaps more of an experience than a pleasure. The party ascended Etna at night on mules with 'saddles more uncomfortable than words could describe. Their pace was about 2½

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[37]George Williams 1814-1878, was born in Eton, the son of a bookseller and graduated from Cambridge in 1837. He was for a time in charge of Cumbrae College within the Episcopal Church of Scotland on the Isle of Millport, Bute's sister isle in the Clyde. See DNB.

[38]BU/31/1 Bute's diary, 23 June 1866.

[39]Harman Grisewood 1844-1909 was educated at Harrow, and matriculated at Christ Church Oxford aged 18 in 1863. He was for a time a deacon in Anglican Orders, and did not become a Roman Catholic until 1871. W. Gordon Gorman, *Converts to Rome* (Sands & Co.: London, 1910) p.125.

[40]BU/21/42 Sneyd to Bute, 29 Aug. 1866.

[41]BU/31/1 Bute's diary, 23 June 1866.

[42]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII f299 Lady Galloway to Lord Harrowby, 4 Dec. 1866.

miles per hour, which it was too easy to reduce but impossible to accelerate.'[43] After midnight, they

> emerged upon the summit between the peaks, and at the same time the full moon, silver, intense, rose from behind the lower with a vivid light and shed a flood of radiance over the tremendous scene of desolation. As far as the eye could reach there was nothing visible but cinder and sky, the last starless, the former a plain of black dust in which we sank some 18 inches at every step.[44]

Descending, they rested at a local inn. 'G[risewood] was in his bed less than half an hour, in which time he killed 4 b-s, [*sic*] 3 fleas, 2 gnats, & a mosquito, after which he got up and lay on the floor, having two hours of repose altogether in the night. I saw nothing but felt – [*sic*]'[45] Two days later, Bute was 'so ill as to be nearly always insensible'[46] and the others did their best to protect him as he recovered.

> My bed was carefully divested of all clothes and the boards examined. Then it was carefully drawn out into the middle of the room, isolated as far as possible from everything else and the feet covered with insect powder, after which we spread on it the rugs and a carriage cushion and I lay down in my dressing gown. By these means I managed to pass a most hopelessly uncomfortable but safe night upon my three planks.[47]

The party sailed from Sicily to Chios, a Greek island off the coast of Asia Minor just south of Lesbos, where Bute was not impressed by his first experience of the Greek Orthodox Church. In each Roman Catholic Church, a consecrated wafer of bread, the Host, is kept in a tabernacle. There was a tabernacle in the 'Photian' churches, too, but Bute was dismayed that 'the daily sacrifice is taken away, the churches are closed and cold, save only for a few hours on Sunday and festivals. I believe visits to the B. Sacrament are unknown ... the perpetual Presence, to which no reverence at all is given, by genuflection or otherwise, does not obtain

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[43]BU/31/1 Bute's diary, 5 July 1866.

[44]*Ibid.*, 6 July 1866.

[45]*Ibid.*, 6 July 1866.

[46]*Ibid.*, 8 July 1866.

[47]*Ibid.*, 9 July 1866.

for its temples as much respect as we ordinarily pay to any place of worship whatever, meeting house or synagogue.'[48]

Bute also misunderstood the place of the icons in the Orthodox Church, speaking of: 'Pictures ... exposed to receive an exaggerated homage, unknown and undreampt [*sic*] of in the West'[49] At this stage he failed to realise that an icon is more than a picture to Orthodox worshippers; it becomes a window through which to experience the reality behind it.

Why Bute felt like this is an interesting question. This is something Williams should have been able to explain. Williams was a friend of J. M. Neale,[50] the Anglo-Catholic who had done more than any other to promote an understanding of the Orthodox Church in England. Neale wrote much about Orthodoxy, including a great history of the Eastern Church in three parts.[51] In his work, Neale tended to play down the place and importance of the icon in Orthodox worship. It has been suggested that this was in order not to alienate his readers, and so that they did not make the kind of mistake that Bute made.[52] Neale had not travelled widely, ill health and relative poverty preventing him. Is it possible that he did not properly understand the role of the icon? Or did Bute simply fail to take on board Williams's explanation?

Part of Williams's purpose in the trip was to visit the Metropolitan of Chios, in order to discuss the possible re-union of the Orthodox and Anglican Churches. The Metropolitan arrived to visit 'bringing six or eight clergy with him. These all sat in the hall while his Grace was entertained in the drawing room... He rose for me. I knelt down and kissed his hands then took a chair. Mr W talked with him about reunion, over which he is rather zealous.'[53] Bute shrewdly remarked that 'It seemed to me rather as if they just wanted to show the riches of the

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[48]*Ibid.*, 13 July 1866.

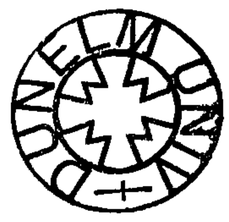
[49]*Ibid.*

[50]John Mason Neale 1818-66. Dr. Neale was the translator and populariser of many of the best-loved hymns of the Victorian period, and, despite ill health, a writer with a prodigious output.

[51]J. M. Neale, *A History of the Holy Eastern Church: General Introduction* (2 vols., London 1850). *A History of the Holy Eastern Church : The Patriarchate of Alexandria* (2 vols., London, 1847). *A History of the Holy Eastern Church: The Patriarchate of Antioch,* ed. George Williams (London, 1873).

[52]Leon Litvack, *John Manson Neale and the Quest for Sorbornost* (Clarendon Press: Oxford, 1994).

[53]BU/31/1 Bute's diary, 15 July 1866.



church to us & Mr Williams in particular, and to make an exhibition of friendliness, not to say triumphant condescension. They can afford to be generous.'[54]

Discussions did not go well. Bute reported gleefully that he heard

> that some of the proceedings of his Grace with the Anglicans, and especially that letter of his published in Greek and English in England under the title of Yearnings After Re-Union In The East, have been censured by the Patriarch of Constantinople. I confess that I am not surprised that His Holiness has seen fit to follow the example of the Roman Pontiff in this matter. On the occasion of our visit the conversation was all about reunion.[55]

When the party returned to England, Williams 'enlarged much on Bute's utter selfishness and duplicity.'[56] With Bute at once so punctiliously correct towards Orthodoxy, so plainly considering it more 'valid' than Anglicanism, yet so inferior to Roman Catholicism, it is not surprising that he irritated Williams. With Bute condescendingly taking the part of those interests in Orthodoxy opposed to the recognition of the Anglican Church, and with his own negotiations going badly, no wonder Williams felt the young man had a most unfair mind.

Yet, whatever reservations Bute had about Orthodox worship, he enjoyed to the full the experience of Greek hospitality. The Metropolitan entertained the visiting party to dinner, which 'was laid in the great corridor, out of which all the rooms seem to open, and which serves as a hall. The table was dressed with flowers. The windows being open at both ends there was a through draught. We sat down.'[57]

It was a fast day, and the dinner was various fish dishes splendidly cooked, enjoyed by everyone except Bute, who detested fish. 'Then we went back to the divan and commenced a grand smoke, which lasted several hours. It was carried on with chilbooks filled with the strongest and most delicate drugged Turkish tobacco, fresh pipes being brought in continuously as soon as the old ones were 1/3 smoked. At intervals we did cigarettes.'[58] He concludes the account tongue firmly in cheek: 'About 8.30 we had final Benediction, with more solemnity than usual.'

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[54]*Ibid.*

[55]*Ibid.*, 17 July 1866.

[56]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII ff278-287 Charles Stuart to Harrowby, 10 Nov. 1866.

[57]BU/31/1 Bute's diary, 18 July 1866.

After Chios, the party sailed to Constantinople. Bute records the approach to the city.

> I lay down to sleep in my clothes wrapped up in a plaid, on top of one of the paddle boxes. About 3 am we approached Constantinople and I sat up. It was intensely still, the light intense, but grey, the water as smooth as oil, the only sound the thud of the paddle wheels. Ahead was a great veil of silver mist shrouding all the waters and far away rose over this two vast domes with minarets clustering round them, all grey and shadowy, like the domes in a mysterious picture I once saw, with no apparent foundation on earth. They got afterwards clearer and clearer, and the last brighter and brighter orange and the people on board woke up and there was a smell of coffee and hot oil and what not.[59]

Bute was amazed at the contrast between the beauty of the ancient buildings, and the condition of the 'anything but throughfares'[*sic*][60] which were 'paved with a weak imitation of shingle ... which would have been disgraceful to the Borough[*sic*] of Rothesay in a back street'.[61]

He felt that viewed from outside for the first time, S. Sophia, 'the largest Byzantine building and one of the finest churches in the world', was an 'unimpressive bulk' of whitewashed walls and low grey domes',[62] but he was deeply moved inside, where they 'looked into the vast space of the interior between columns of priceless marbles, the plunder of the greatest heathen shrines.'[63]

More than anything, though, he was deeply stirred by the 'Dariveeshes' or Dervishes, dancing devotees of Islam.

> The Dariveeshes began to follow one another round the ring The dress (it was not very clean) was a long skirt like an alb but much fuller and longer, a shirt & over it a close linen jacket. They wore their common coloured waistbands and their tall caps, their feet being bare ... the first Dariveesh ... began to turn himself slowly round and round, moving slowly towards the centre of the room, the next did the same but moved round him ... till the whole space was filled with

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[58]*Ibid.*

[59]*Ibid.*, 21 July 1866.

[60]*Ibid.*, 25 July 1866.

[61]*Ibid.*, 21 July 1866.

[62]*Ibid.*, 26 July 1866.

[63]*Ibid.*

revolving figures, all moving round in a great circle except the one in the middle. As each one started the wind slightly inflated his skirt but they were so heavy that nothing could be seen above the ankles, and when fully blown out they remained like a carving without a fold altering. The faces of the Dariveeshes were fixed and their eyes shut, their heads thrown back or hanging to one side. ... The peculiar revolving motion is in imitation of the cherubim who revolve before the throne of God ... Among Christians I remember the manner in which many, and I have noticed the Copts in particular, walk round and round their altars. I should also like to know whether their religious dancing has any connection or resemblance to the solemn dancing ... before the most Holy Sacrament of the Altar ... at Seville ... to my mind it cannot be much more solemn than the Muslim one, as far as its actions go. I left the Mosque very much wrought up and excited. There are [*sic*] who are not impressed by this. There are also who always laugh at a service in a language they do not know, and who see nothing awful in the holy Mass.[64]

Perhaps it was Williams who did not see anything awful in the Islamic ceremony. He must have been aggravated by Bute's contrasting reaction to the Patriarch of Constantinople.

> His face did not inspire me with veneration. He has no forehead to speak of, which, with an unduly large nose, makes his profile pretty much the same as that of a wedge or a sheep, to which animal indeed he has a striking resemblance ... The talk was of reunion and our journey.[65]

After that, the party moved on to worship. Bute, unimpressed, and viewing the schism between East and West as wholly the fault of the Eastern Church, indulged in reflection on the Patriarch and his church. He was

> the most Holy Sophronius whose position is properly above all human beings, save only the Patriarch of Rome; he is the successor of St John Chrysostom and St Ignatius, but of Photius also ... As I looked about the church at the Vigil, and compared the whole thing with what the Great Temple of Eternal Wisdom [S. Sophia] was, in the days of its glory, I could not help feeling as if the evil spirit which tempted those most wicked and most wretched men to their ruin, and the

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[64]*Ibid.*, 27 July 1866.

[65]*Ibid.*, 31 July 1866.

> ruin of their church and people, were[*sic*] there gloating over the sin and misery he has caused.[66]

In fact Bute's preference for the orderly yet ecstatic Islamic Darvishees over the muddle of Orthodox worship was temperamental. What Bute looked for in an act of worship, more than anything else, was a mixture of intensity and good orchestration. He wanted to feel that everyone was sharing in the same experience, with a nice combination of passion and decorum. What attracts those who love the Orthodox rite is that those present are allowed to find their own ways and patterns of worship during it. Unity there is, but it is the liturgy itself that gives it. Bute did try repeatedly to worship in the Orthodox way. One Sunday, with Williams away, he rose early (with some difficulty) and went to 'the Greek Cathedral of Pera',[67] but he found the service

> was perhaps the most disagreeable function I have ever assisted at. The church was crammed with people, in a state of restlessness and irreverence apparently peculiar to the Photians. When I arrived the Divine Office was in full swing, the singing being really inexpressibly painful. A man lighted the glass chandeliers, of which there are literally as many as the church will hold. He did it with a bit of blazing cotton dipped in oil on the end of a long stick. Then he lit all the stand-candles which crowd every corner, and everyone apparently that could offered tapers at the shrines, and every candle, and every inflammable thing was lighted. The countless lamps were of course burning long before. I think I never saw so many lights - and all in the bright daylight of an Eastern morning. The heat, dirt, smell and streams and cascades of melted wax may be imagined. ... In my opinion the function was almost as much spoiled as slurring, drawling, irreverence, bad music and bad taste could spoil it. Everybody began to go out at the canon, so that the words of consecration were hardly audible for the noise.[68]

Williams was committed to a positive view of the Eastern Church. That Bute detested it must have irritated him profoundly. He might just have excused it if only Bute had been more positive to the Anglican Church, but of course he was not. He did attend the 'small function' in the Embassy chapel which marked St James's Day 'celebrated in the ordinary manner, using

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[66]*Ibid.*, 31 July 1866.

[67]*Ibid.*, 28 July 1866.

[68]*Ibid.*

the English rite. There were four persons present.'[69] Bute does not go on to comment on the lukewarmness of those members of the Embassy staff who were nominally Anglicans but could not be bothered to worship on special feast days, let alone daily, but that comment was perhaps too obvious to make. The greatest strength of Bute's writing is the way he places words and phrases where they will have the most impact, and refrains from further, basically tautologous comment.

The party travelled into the Levant, where they met the Maronite Bishop Bistani who invited them to stay in his palace. Bute accepted the invitation as soon as was polite. He liked the bishop,

> a remarkably handsome and reverend looking person, about 50, with a long silvery beard. He wore a cassock of reddish purple silk, under a coat of blue black cloth, and a large turban of black silk. His ring was a fine amethyst. His manner was perfect. The Chaplain - his name was Father John, Yohanna - was a dear old man with a long white beard, dressed in blue-black cassock, coat, and turban, like the other priests. He spoke French well.[70]

Bute also approved of the Maronite worship. Having been present at the Bishop's Mass in his private chapel he wrote that 'so august and moving a ceremony I never saw.'[71] Williams simply did not understand any of this. He continued to hold his own 'little Sunday service,'[72] which Bute attended 'only twice during the four months'. But of course not only was Bute still collecting liturgies; he was always one of those who travelled to experience as fully as possible the areas to which he went. He worshipped with the locals when possible, just as he liked to stay with them, rather than in the tents in which the rest of the party stayed. Bute was, in the end, more swayed by his reaction to the persons he met, than by the ideas they espoused. Williams did not understand this either and later he said that 'he never met with so unfair a mind.'[73]

Nor did Williams know, of course, that something significant had occurred for Bute at the end of the Mass in the Bishop's chapel: 'While the Bishop was at his prayers after b d q m s B M

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[69]*Ibid.*, 25 July 1866.

[70]BU/31/2 Bute's diary,. 11 Aug. 1866.

[71]*Ibid.* 13 Aug. 1866

[72]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII ff278-287 Charles Stuart to Harrowby, 10 Nov. 1866.

[73]*Ibid.*, quoting a remark of Williams's.

V'. Whatever happened was intensely private, and shielded with the cryptic letters. The final capitals must refer to Blessed Mary the Virgin, whose initials Bute usually gives in that order.[74]

Bute had hesitated to accept the hospitality offered by the Bishop, until it became clear that he would already be inconvenienced by a visitor, a cousin of the same name who was a teacher. Bute and Mr Bistani shared a room. 'My bed was intensely luxurious with all kinds of quilts and mattresses and featherbeds, some silk, and all the linen of the most delicate kind. It was put on boards on trestles. I slept well.'[75]

In hot climates, Bute slept naked, and he was much amused by Mr Bistani who 'took off nothing except his outer clothes, not even his stockings.'[76] Perhaps what struck Bute most in the palace, however, were the courtyards and rooms open to the air either above or through arches. The amazing mixture of room and open air fascinated him. The 'most perfect apartment' was the one

> where his Lordship receives. The far end was open in one great arch ... commanding a view of the most wonderful beauty, whether one looked down upon the valley when it basked in sunlight, or up into the sky, covered with stars. A stone divan spread all round these sides of the room. The centre of the floor was a tank about 7 inches deep, of a vescia piscis shape[77] with a small jet in the middle. The room was built in the purest and chastest oriental taste of white stone, relieved with dark red in the arches, and the shafts of the windows, and the floor of simply tessellated marbles. The roof was of plain, open timber.[78]

The next day, F Yohanna spent some time with him in this room, before taking him 'into the higher court of the palace',[79] an upper floor room 'which is laid out as a garden, apparently for

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[74] BU/31/2 Bute's diary, 11 Aug. 1866. The earlier letters may possibly stand for some such phrase as '*beata deigenatrix qua mater sancta*'.

[75] *Ibid.*

[76] *Ibid.*

[77] Bute gives a sketch of an oval with one straight end.

[78] BU/31/2 Bute's diary, 11 Aug. 1866.

[79] *Ibid.*

use as well as ornament, for the domestic cabbage is not excluded, and into a charming room off it where we sat and smoked in the window.'[80]

The peace, beauty, cleanliness and devotion of the Bishop's palace must have showed to the greater advantage, because tempers were becoming frayed. Williams was making long excursions into the countryside to visit things which interested him, leaving the others to wait his convenience, and meals were often long delayed by his non-appearance. The party not only comprised the two boys, but also the doctor and James Frederick, a former military man who was probably not amused by this behaviour. Things came to a head after a long day which ended with them stumbling around in the dark when confused directions led to the whole party missing their tents and having to back-track for some miles. Bute went to bed at once and 'fell into a sort of stupor or dead sleep. ... the others', he added, 'had a most terrific row of which I was happily unconscious.'[81]

Williams was plainly still angry long after he returned to Britain. Bute does not record in his diary the times that he had attacked the Stuarts for 'pocketing' his maintenance, but Williams had listened and been horrified. Bute had also revealed his attachment to the Roman Catholic Church, especially his devotion to the Virgin Mary.[82] Why this last upset Williams is a little hard to understand. In the view of Low Church Anglicans it was idolatry, elevating a human, Mary, and directing to her the reverence due to God alone. But Charles Williams was not a Low Church Anglican. He was not merely an Anglo-Catholic but one especially sympathetic to the Eastern Orthodox, who, like Roman Catholics, addressed her as an intercessor, who could pray for them and ask her Son to help them. They did not profess the Roman Church's formal doctrines concerning her. Nevertheless, she was of enormous importance in the Orthodox Church; hymns praising her were sung, and she was the focus of faith and devotion. Williams should therefore have been quite at home with Bute's attitude, even though to Bute she was 'B. Mary conceived without sin',[83] the dogma defined by Pope Pius IX in 1854, which Williams did not believe.

Bute's guardian Stuart, and those who took a kindly interest in him, like the Galloway family and Mansel, considered that Bute found the Catholic Church so wholly satisfactory that he could see no flaw in it. Bute himself, attracted as he was to Catholicism, felt bound to defend

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[80]*Ibid.*

[81]*Ibid.*, 16 Aug. 1866.

[82]*Ibid.*

[83]BU/31/1 Bute's diary, 28 July 1866.

it against the attacks of its enemies, not least because many of its critics would seem unfair or biased. The idea that all Catholic priests were deceitful, manipulative and insincere was accepted almost without question by many Protestants. The note of hysteria in parts of the English Protestant Establishment over the Church of Rome could only have disgusted him.

Yet the fact that Bute could and did ably defend the Catholic Church did not necessarily mean he was convinced by all his own arguments. It is one thing to defend the beloved to hostile detractors, another to feel that she is wholly worthy of that defence. To become a Catholic convert was a huge step, with many disadvantages. A convert was not the same thing as a Catholic born, either to Protestant high society, or to the ancient recusant Catholic families. Bute was sincerely religious. He was also in some ways a very worldly young man. One of the few who seem to have been aware of this was Sneyd, to whom Bute opened himself up in his letter from Constantinople. Sneyd in reply

> was really delighted to read the last part of your letter & to find that you are beginning to have a sort of idea that the gratification of the passions is not the only end worth living for & I hope & pray that the fear which is now backed by the sort of sullen assurance & intention which does not let the better nature interfere may by God's Grace be so gradually weakened & destroyed that it may at last be merged into a firm determination to the contrary & a deliberate resolve to abstain for believe me, my dear Bute, that with such a resolve & faith in God's help, we can contain & repress our passions.[84]

This is an interesting document in more ways than one. It has a clumsy Latinate sentence structure, which causes a log-jam of dependent clauses in the middle (an argument against too much reading and writing of Classics). Despite this, the main meaning is clear. While the rest of the world tended to see Bute as deeply religious, Sneyd saw him as a victim of his passions. There seems to be something more serious than the usual Victorian anathema against masturbation. Indeed, Stuart had been worried by Bute's 'extreme purity' because 'it is probable that at his time of life health may be impaired by resistance to temptation'.[85] Whilst it is hard to imagine that Bute ever thought sensual delight the <u>only</u> end worth living for, Sneyd, knowing Bute as well as any, was aware of how the sensual appealed to him. Bute was passionate and sensual to the depths of his being.

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[84]BU/21/42 Sneyd to Bute, 29 Aug. 1866.

[85]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII f267 Stuart to Lord Harrowby, 14 Aug. 1865.

Georgina Stuart was becoming worried by the amount he prayed: 'I cannot think it is needful to ingage [*sic*] so largely in prayer to our ever merciful, tender God! One earnest heartfelt supplication will reach him.'[86] To the British Victorian Protestant, bombarding God with prayers was suspect, suggesting a want of faith. Prince Albert had suggested to the Canons of Westminster that whilst they could not pray too heartily for the Queen's safe delivery in childbirth, they might pray too often.[87] Jesus's prohibition against using too many repetitions in prayer had struck home. In addition, Protestants tended to see prayer, as Georgina Stuart indicates, as first and foremost making requests to God, although confession of sins and adoration also bore a place. In contrast, the Catholic tradition drew on deeper roots, and placed much more emphasis on adoration and on meditation; disciplines which require time spent before God. Anyone spending a long time praying was moving towards the Catholic tradition. No wonder Mrs Stuart was quick to speak against it.

She would have been still more worried if she had known that, increasingly alienated by the Orthodox Church, Bute was worshipping as a Catholic, and mixing with Catholics. Whilst he worshipped at Orthodox churches, when there was also a Catholic church, Bute would attend Mass there as well. In Constantinople, he had turned to them with relief after Orthodox services which he had found so 'disagreeable'. Williams had been puzzled that 'Never the less he told both the Greek Orthodox Bishop of Chios and the Patriarch of Constantinople that he was a Presbyterian.'[88] But this was not, as Williams thought, part of Bute's 'duplicity'. It was a simple statement of fact. With the Orthodox Church out of the running, Bute had narrowed himself down to two possible Churches, the Presbyterian Church of his childhood, with its comparative social respectability and its freedom from queen and state, or the Catholic Church, which fulfilled his longing for colour and passion in worship.

Bute was nineteen in the September of 1866. In November Stuart went to see Williams, who was not well. Williams repeated to Stuart all that Bute had told him during the long summer abroad, doubtless with an added edge of personal animosity created by the tensions of the ill-assorted travelling party. Stuart understandably exploded.

> I have no answer from you to my letter of the 6th nor have you communicated with me in any way since your return to England. I have hitherto forborne to express myself strongly on your leaving my letters unanswered attributing your

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[86]BU/21/42/10 Georgina Stuart to Bute, 7 Sept. 1866.

[87]Elizabeth Longford, *Victoria R. I.* (Weidenfeld & Nelson: London, 1964), p.153.

[88]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII ff278-287 Charles Stuart to Harrowby, 10 Nov. 1866.

neglect to mere boyish, though culpable negligence, but I have now too much reason to fear that your silence is a mark of intentional disrespect.

I have heard on undisputed authority and from more than one quarter, that you [Bute] accuse me of appropriating to my own use the £7000 which is allotted for your maintenance. For your father's sake and in remembrance of his kindness to me, I have borne much from you, but this I will not. You must learn now that you cannot be allowed to outrage an honourable man & one who has been set over you by your mother's desire & the laws of your country. I will not resign from the Guardianship ... but I must now decline to furnish you any longer with a home, or to have anything whatsoever to do with the maintenance of which you think so much ... Lord Harrowby & other honourable men are fully acquainted with the expenditure of the maintenance & know how small a part of it is in any degree beneficial to me & how justly that is my due ... you will I hope find ... friends who will be able and willing to make Cardiff & Mount Stuart agreeable for you as we have hitherto endeavoured to do - you will not find any one like Mrs Stuart to whom you owe more than the gratitude and affection of a life could repay. I can scarcely bring myself to believe you are blind to this, although you leave her letters also unanswered and take not the slightest notice of her after your four month's absence.[89]

Mrs Stuart also wrote. Six years had not weakened Mrs Stuart's ability to feel injured, and she replied with truly histrionic flair.

> This is probably the last letter I shall ever write to you ... Sometimes I have thought you were liking us better, and my spirits rose, only to be crushed again. I bore (but with great effort) your ungracious ungrateful treatment of General Stuart. I strove to judge fairly between you, to weigh your difficulties (the difficulties of a poor, young, prejudiced mind) against his much graver ones! - knowing as I do his candid, liberal & generous spirit; hoping and praying yours might one day become such ...[90]

Bute answered him promptly, fully and provocatively. All the old hurts and battles were fresh to him.

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[89]BU/21/48/3 Stuart to Bute, 10 Nov. 1866.

[90]BU/21/48/6 Mrs Stuart to Bute, undated.

> Surely you must distinctly remember that, six years ago, talk was made of your turning some of the maintenance to your own benefit, founded on a letter wh you wrote to Lady Elizabeth Moore ... You cannot doubt that at that time the question was at least an open one in the mind of myself personally, & it is impossible that you can ever have supposed that from that hour to this I have for a single instant altered any of the opinions I had then ... time has only confirmed my beliefs. You conquered me, but my thoughts have always been the same.[91]

'You conquered me'; to Bute the conflict was personal and bitter. Any difficulties he had made for Stuart, all bad behaviour, Bute could justify to himself. It was as though he was a country under enemy occupation, where insurgency became a merit. He explained that he had spoken of these things only to those 'whom I foolishly imagined to be too much gentlemen to retail to you for my injury.'[92] He seemed unaware that it was Stuart who had been injured by being defamed in the eyes of the world. Bute added that

> I had best tell you out - I have at various times discussed the question or made known my suspicions to various persons whom I imagined to be friendly and honourable. That I went about 'accusing' you to everybody is untrue ... I am almost at a loss to conceive why you have selected the present time to attack me, as there has not been an hour I have been your ward not equally fitting ... your letter contains a message with a distinct declaration of what I have never distinctly asserted. You say 'a part' of the maintenance wh. you consider only too 'justly your due' 'is in any degree beneficial to you.' I own the utmost I ever hinted exceeded this by but little & I confess that till I had read this I had always mentally admitted the possibility of your explaining your letter to Lady E. M. in a sense different to that usually assigned to it ... I shall be very glad to make my 'home' altogether with Lord Harrowby.'[93]

One can only hope that the old scores Bute sought to pay off by these words were real ones. He added a postscript which caused yet more trouble: 'to Mrs Stuart I should be very happy to

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[91]BU/21/48/4 Bute to Stuart, 13 Nov. 1866.

[92]*Ibid.*

[93]*Ibid.*

write. I shall probably hear some news which may interest her at the dance at Blenheim in a few days.'[94] Bute had not received Mrs Stuart's last letter; that came by return.

> By General Stuart's desire I opened your letter, before sending it on to him at Cardiff. The whole tone of it - & the PS about myself caused me such exquisite pain (for your sake alone) that it brought on a severe spasm of my heart. Pray don't write to me - I should not read the letter. I am glad I wrote to you two days ago - you will see how little Ball gossip could accord with my present feelings ... Nor should I be justified in risking another attack for the sake of those who do value my life.[95]

Bute, who it is to be hoped did appreciate the times Mrs Stuart had been a peacemaker between him and Stuart, had meant no ill by the 'ball gossip' remark. Georgina Stuart's letters were full of harmless gossip. It is easy to condemn her as a silly woman, but she did care for Bute, and she was really ill after reading his letter.[96] She could never express any anger or sense of loss on her own behalf; she had instead to feel sorrow or pain on behalf of her attacker. However she felt constrained to view her emotions, it does not mean they were not deep.

Bute told Lord Harrowby of what had happened in a letter cocky with self-righteousness, which revealed his attitudes to the Stuarts very clearly.

> I write to you perfectly freely and friendly as I feel safe in your honour that any letter will not go beyond yourself. You probably know by this time that a crash that promises to be final or nearly final has been brought about by Genl Stuart between himself and me ... The good result is that I am to be forbidden his house and his acquaintance, and thus you will be the only guardian to whose household I shall come, probably not very often, for I shall likely often be travelling and paying visits. The history of this little arrangement is this. You must first please remember the position Genl Stuart and myself have always been in, of master and slave, jailer and prisoner, wild beast and hunter. I have noticed since I came up to ch. ch. the Stuarts both had intensified the dislike with which they always regarded me and increased its vulgar results in the way of insults, annoyance and abuse ... Then I went to Scotland again. Mrs Stuart said deliberately that I went

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[94]*Ibid.*

[95]BU/21/48/8 Georgina Stuart to Bute, 15 Nov. 1866.

[96]BU/21/61/1 Elizabeth Knox to Bute, 18 Mar. [1867].

there for the purpose of debauching, in the vilest manner, in the company with a great friend of mine, whom I went ostensibly and really to see. The storm brewed, getting thicker and thicker every week till ... I got from him I think the lowest blackguarding I ever had. Mrs Stuart wrote very kindly while I was in the East. But five days ago General Stuart sent me an extraordinarily violent letter even for him ... He bids me choose some one else to live with etc etc etc to the end of the chapter just as if you, my dear Lord Harrowby, with whom I should be only too happy to live, were not in being at all, or were not the natural and suitable person for me to go to - the letter is almost entirely abuse *ad hominem* so thick that you could cut it with a knife. Veracity has unhappily not been followed undeviatingly. From this pleasing mess I extract some shreds of matter like some strips of meat in a most repulsive piece of fat bacon. He admits that he remunerates himself for his trouble out of the £7500 given him to keep me with. (He calls it £7000.) But it is for talking about this to various people some of whom must have betrayed my confidence, or rather, shrugging my shoulders and wondering where on earth the maintenance all went to, that the present thunderbolt is declared to fall. He refers me to you to know how the maintenance has been spent, and also how little he takes, saying you know all about it. Please be so good as just to throw a little light on these points if it doesn't bore you, as it would be a great favour to me. In hopes of seeing you more in future, I remain your affectionate ward, Bute and Dumfries.

My answer to him was cold and quiet and will serve as a basis for exploration which he can use if he likes.[97]

Lord Harrowby offered measured good sense.

I have been shocked but not surprised, that matters have at last come to that pass, that Gen. Stuart has felt himself obliged to give up his part in regard to you ... I have long observed with pain your sentiments in regard to him, sentiments that have done little honour either to your sense or your feelings ... You very early adopted a notion, that Gen. Stuart was only activated by an interested motive to carry out your mother's wishes ... and you absurdly exaggerated the pecuniary advantages which he would derive from it ... He may not have pleased you ... he may possibly have been abrupt and peremptory on some of the many trying

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[97]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII f284ff Bute to Harrowby, 15 Nov. 1866.

occasions of intercourse with one who had set himself against him. But that was no reason why you should impute low notions to a man of honour ... You will hardly [think?] something like a surplus of 1000£ a year is an exceptional consideration for the trouble & anxiety & sacrifice of prospects & home comforts wh. a man in Gnl. Stuart's position had to make in your case. A mother would have been allowed the same advantage for the same charge.[98]

All this gives a very good picture of the hell that Bute and Stuart had succeeded in creating for each other between 1861 and 1866. Harrowby is undoubtedly right in his picture of an adolescent deliberately being difficult, and it is not hard for anyone with experience of this sort of situation to sympathise with Stuart. On the other hand, he was a man established in his role in the world, with a successful career and a wife he adored, and in the relationship with Bute he held (literally as well as metaphorically) the whip hand. Bute was a child, desolate and powerless. He was quite right in supposing that Stuart had deliberately considered the profit to be made from the role of guardian, but he was wrong in thinking that it was Stuart's sole or even principal motive.

Harrowby refused to offer Bute a home.

> The experience I had in a former year of your discomfort here, & of the way in which you complained of it, prohibit a repetition of the experiment ... Now you will think me very harsh and very angry ... my notion has been to take the opportunity of placing before you in plain colours the real wrongness, if you will allow the expression, of your feeling and conduct towards Genl. Stuart & to induce you to look back upon the history of your relations with him seriously.[99]

Mansel passed on to Bute Stuart's account of how he had spent the maintenance money. That document no longer survives, but Stuart gave Harrowby a somewhat rougher account of it. The maintenance, he says, had been made large so that

> poor friends and relations should be paid by the guardian and that poor on or near the estate should therefore suffer as little as possible from a prolonged minority. About £2000 per annum is about what I have spent in this manner, and of course in Bute's name. Then the partial keeping up of Mount Stuart, Cardiff Castle and Dallars, and the rent of the latter (a small place tenanted by Lady Bute and

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[98]BU/21/48/11 Harrowby to Bute, 19 Nov. 1866.

[99]Ibid.

retained at Bute's express desire) together come to about £1300 per annum. Bute's education and the expenses incurred by Guardianship in various ways, such as my own increased establishment by his residence with me by going to his own places and entertaining liberally there and various casual outlays of different kinds but always connected with Bute and his comforts and interests to near £3000 more (his late journey will cost me at least £800 probably £1000 beyond the £700 especially allowed for the purpose by the Court)

Altogether perhaps my Guardianship might have enabled to increase my private income something less than £1000 per annum, and this I have on the authority of both the Vice-C Sir John Stuart, and (after the Trial) of the Lord Chancellor Temple, for thinking myself fairly entitled. Had I not had the charge of Bute I might, (or might not) have sought and obtained professional employment ... but the charge has certainly rendered it impossible for me to do so and my claim to a regiment has thereby been materially weakened.[100]

Bute's reaction to all this was somewhat more subdued.

I have great pleasure in thanking you for your kind letter received today. Of course the position in which I am put is a difficult one, to say the least, but still I feel very grateful for the tone of your letter towards me - not unexpected. You have not the information for which I asked, but I have just heard Genl. Stuart's statement from Mr Mansel. I have nothing which I need here to say except that what I have meant is what it declares, and that I certainly did not know that such was lawful, as I am now informed that it is, I may perhaps say that I understand the remuneration taken to be about £1000 odd, counting a 500 that was, I believe added in at the end of 1860.

I am sorry, indeed, very sorry, that I left a bad impression on you the winter that I was at Sandon. I pray you to remember that at the time I was very ill nervously, which soon after became so bad that I had to be taken away from Harrow, in extenuation of any ill breeding I may have shown toward you, or any other; you all treated me far better than I could ever have deserved, and truly nothing could be further from my wishes than to repay your kindness with ingratitude and rudeness. It seems you are being shown some private letters which I wrote at the

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[100]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII f288ff Stuart to Harrowby, 15 Nov. 1866.

time, complaining of my extreme lowness. I think if you saw everything I wrote then the impression you receive might be different.

I must absolutely decline to ask for another guardian, while reserving the right of protesting against one or two persons. If there were one I think the more total stranger the better. As to the next vacation I have proposed myself to go and visit Sir James Fergusson at Dumfries House if he will like it, and Lord Galloway in Wigtownshire, and then go to Edinburgh. I have also an engagement to be in London for the Westminster play, which is some days before Xmas. I had originally intended to ask you to let me come to you till then. As it is, I shall not be away from here until about the 10th and my cousin Lady Edith Hastings has asked me to come to her at Ashby De La Zouche for a ball on the 12th, and I have also an invitation from the fellow undergraduate who is going to take me to the play from his home in Worcestershire. Of course you have a right to control my motions but I think you will hardly take exception to this programme.[101]

In time, Bute forgave Stuart. It is nowhere on record he ever came to feel he did not have much to forgive. Because Stuart had been so adamant that Bute should be treated as a child and never should seek or be given reasons for the actions of adults, he had never been able to give an explanation of how much of the maintenance he kept and why. If he had been able to do so, Bute's anger would surely have decreased, even if he had still felt hurt. All these letters have been carefully catalogued in Bute's own hand.

Whatever his feelings, he still had a champion in the redoubtable Lady Elizabeth. She pointed out that 'the maintenance is called £7000 omitting the additional £500 (when he became sole guardian) - in six years a trifling item of £3000.' She thought Mr & Mrs John Boyle would be the new 'babykeepers'. They were not. Either they declined to act because of their close association with Charles Stuart, or Bute declined them for the same reason. Sir James Fergusson of Kilkerran became his new guardian.

How far had trouble between Lady Elizabeth and Charles Stuart created the whole sad business? It seems that later in his life Bute came to feel that this was at least part of the problem. They both died in September 1892.

When I got [the] telegram [announcing Charles Stuart's death] I wrote a letter of condolence (a conventional decency, but it must have been a happy release to her

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[101]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII f284 Bute to Harrowby, 21 Nov. 1866.

as well as to him) to Mrs Charles Stuart. But it was only yesterday morning that I heard of Lady Elizabeth's death on the 6th. I had spent a good deal of time with her on Aug. 21, and I said afterwards, what I had often said before, that I would be surprised if she did not live to be 100. The 27th was her 88th birthday and I made my children send her a letter of good wishes, to which she replied cheerfully in that firm, clear, large handwriting, and in which age had effected no change.

She had talked to me a good deal about death, and the afterwards, and was much interested in a ghost which had appeared in Cheltenham, and eagerly accepted from me the loan of the latest number of the proceedings of The Society for Psychical Research.[102] The coincidence of the death of Gen. Stuart, she died on the Tuesday, he on the Wednesday - was most striking. I hardly see how they can not have anything to do with one another. I get more and more sceptical as to the existence of any such thing as pure accident. I know no theory that would account for it except astrology - which would do so by the theory of certain aspects between points in their nativities and directions (probably of Saturn) [Saturn given as symbol] which has brought them into collision at points during life and produced a coincidence in time of death. But after all these things and many more, we are like people feeling their way about in a strange place in total darkness. One feels as if they had not met just within the boundary of another life - and one cannot picture to oneself how there could ever have been peace even there. I feel a faint curiosity as to the contents of their wills.[103]

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[102]Bute's interest in psychical research lies beyond the chronological scope of this thesis.

[103]Harrowby Papers Vol. 1077 ff127 -8 Bute to Henry Ryder, 14 Sept. 1892.

V

Oxford

'a feminine tone about his ... mind'

Bute was not the only undergraduate at Oxford considering his religious position in the autumn of 1866. In October Liddon heard that 'Addis of Balliol, Garrett of Balliol and Wood of Trinity have just joined the ch. of Rome and that Hopkins of Balliol is on the point of following.'[1] He later added ruefully 'The Balliol secession had been entirely put down to my account. I "looked like" a RC and that sort of thing which does not matter, and will all be the same 100 years hence.'[2]

Bute walked with Addle Gordon to Wantage, and to the 'ancient Catholic chapel of East Hendred ... in which, it was said, the lamp before the tabernacle had never been extinguished, and Mass had been celebrated all through the darkest days of penal times; and he knelt so long in prayer before the altar that he had twice to be reminded by his companion of the long walk home they had in prospect.'[3]

It must be possible that Bute was aware of what had happened elsewhere at Oxford, and read it as a reproach to him. If Bute thought that his new guardianship would make those around him more sympathetic to his Catholic leanings he was mistaken. By November, Mansel, who liked Bute, though he had little responsibility for him at the University by now, was concerned enough about Bute's growing attraction to Rome to approach Lord Harrowby. He explained that the 'Eastern journey this summer' had set Bute against the Orthodox Church, which increased his attraction to the Roman one. He offered an extraordinarily perceptive diagnosis of the situation. It was not an intellectual attraction, against which there were plenty of good

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[1]Pusey House, Oxford. Liddon diary, 17 Oct. 1866.

[2]*Ibid.*, 28 Oct. 1866.

[3]HB, p. 43.

arguments, and, in the University, plenty of able men to put them forward, but 'much more a matter of feeling and taste'.

> The two first points of attraction in his mind seem to be first a taste for the rituals of Rome, and secondly what to most minds is a repulsion - the worship of the Virgin. There is a feminine tone about his own mind, owing partly to his early years being passed so much under female training, which seems by a kind of association to influence his religious feeling, and make him cling to the idea of a female protector, and I might almost say, mediator.[4]

The idea that Catholicism, with its devotion to the Virgin and female saints, and appeal to women, was feminine and intuitive while Protestantism was masculine and rational, was a standard aspect of Victorian No Popery polemic.[5] Bute had a deep personal devotion to the Virgin, but would have denied that Catholicism was an irrational and feminine religion. Yet in many areas of life beside religion Bute's judgments sprang from his intuition and sympathy. The whole cast of his mind was unlike that now seen as typical of the young Victorian male. He enjoyed female company of all ages, not just the young and attractive, and lacked interest in the traditional male pursuits of hunting, fishing and shooting.[6] Combine this with his passion for art, architecture and beautiful places, and the profile of Bute's interests was more typical of a woman of his period than of a man. It is striking that Mansel noticed this feminine aspect of Bute, and went on to hint that a woman whom he loved might have a better opportunity of changing his mind.

> I do not think any one can deal successfully with Lord Bute, unless it be one who by strong sympathies combined with firmer principles can gain influence over his taste and feelings. My own sympathies are in many points so different to his that I have little hope of doing anything. I have tried to put books into his hands that may be useful, but I must doubt whether he reads them. On the other hand he is

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[4]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII f291 Mansel to Harrowby, 24 Nov. 1866.

[5]Geoffrey Best, 'Popular Protestantism in Victorian Britain', in Robert Robson (ed.) *Ideas and Institutions of Victorian Britain* (G. Bell and Sons: London, 1967) pp.122-4.

[6]Mark Girouard identifies a category of 'earnest Victorians' into which Bute's sense of duty and responsibility fits him. 'The Prince Consort set the supreme example of domesticity, purity, religious seriousness and devotion to duty'. Mark Girouard, 'Victorian Values and the Upper Classes', in *Victorian Values, a joint symposium of the Royal Society of Edinburgh and the British Academy December 1990,* T. C. Smout ed. (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1992) p.52. Yet even Prince Albert was a keen sportsman. It is hard to imagine him sitting for hours watching the ladies embroider vestments whilst talking of religion as Bute enjoyed doing. HB, p.61.

> rather addicted to the study of ... second rate periodicals, either .... Roman or proselytising. He catches any sneer or taunt against both the body of the English Church or the Scots Episcopacy. An epigram which falls in with his prejudices has more weight than an argument, and an epigram and verses are not things to refute.[7]

In fact, Lord Harrowby did not intend to forbid Bute to visit Sandon Hall, and he stayed a few days there before spending Christmas at Dumfries House with Sir James Fergusson. Hunter Blair notes that at Christmas, he revealed to his guardian's wife Lady Edith (another of the outspoken women he loved so well) that he intended to become a Catholic in the spring. Quite possibly this is so. Bute tended to open his mind fairly unreservedly to his women friends. But it was not until just before Easter that he announced that he intended to take the definitive step of formally joining the Church of Rome.

He told his guardian of his intentions in April at Torquay where he was recovering from pneumonia. It is more than possible that he had been severely frightened by this illness. The lungs filling with fluid is one of the symptoms of Bright's Disease, from which his cousin Edith was suffering, and of which his reckless cousin the Marquess of Hastings was by now showing advanced symptoms. Thoughts of an imminent plunge into the 'afterwards' concentrate the mind wonderfully on what legend has it that Charles II, in similar circumstances, called 'fire insurance'.

Massed and massive disapproval met him. Sir James Fergusson arranged for him to meet with the Lord Chancellor, as the Court of Chancery still had jurisdiction over Bute, who was not yet twenty-one. Returning to Oxford, Bute spoke of it to Liddon on 10 April.

> Walked with Lord Bute to the top of Shelover. He told me that he had made up his mind to join the ch of Rome. He had never belonged to the ch of England: he had been brought up a presbyterian. He had refused to be confirmed in the ch of England because of Royal supremacy. He hoped to be admitted on Tuesday or Wednesday in next week & receive his first communion on Maundy Thursday at Edinburgh. I three times begged him to pause and to consider the claims of the ch of England. He said it was impossible. If he had been brought up a High Churchman he might have lived and died in anglicanism. As it was, he hoped on

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[7]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII f291 Mansel to Harrowby, 24 Nov. 1866.

> Thursday next to secure that which he has been hoping for all his life Viz.; his first communion.[8]

Bute had rejected the Anglo-Catholic option not so much because of any intellectual argument about the 'authority' or lack of it, of the Church of England. He had rejected it in good part because of his disgust at the idea of belonging to a Church whose earthly head was a foolish woman who thirty years ago had tormented his dying aunt. He then went to meet the Lord Chancellor. Whilst unwilling to actually forbid Bute, he succeeded in persuading him to wait until he was twenty one before taking this step. Sir James thought that Bute had 'given in with a very good grace and I really think is glad to be helped by a gentle persuasion out of his imbroglio.'[9] To Bute it seemed very different. He had found another *confidante* at Oxford, another middle-aged literary lady of ultra High Church opinions, Miss Felicia Skene,[10] the cousin and memorialist of the Tractarian Bishop of Brechin, A. P. Forbes. To her he poured out his feelings, describing Liddon as a Protestant, which would not have pleased him:

> On this day, which was to have seen my First Communion, I do not believe I should have the heart to write and tell you that it has all failed, if it were not for a sort of hard, cold, listless feeling of utter apathy to everything Divine which is new to me, but which has, as it were, petrified me since my fall.
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> The long and short is that the Protestants - *i.e.* the Lord Chancellor and his Court; my Guardians; my friends and relations; and Mansel, Liddon and Co. have extorted from me a promise not to become a Catholic till I am of age. They are jubilant with the jubilation of devils over a lost soul; but I am hopeless and weary to a degree.
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> There remains nothing to say now, except that I am utterly wrecked. I have not dared to pray since. I have heard Mass twice, but I looked on with an indifference greater than if I had been at a play. I feel no moral principle either. It is simply all up. Instead of feeling these holy days, the thought of the suffering of Christ simply haunts me like a nightmare. I try to drown it and drive it away.

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[8]Liddon diary, 10 April 1867.

[9]Harrowby Papers Vol. LXII f309 James Fergusson to Lord Harrowby, 13 April 1867.

[10]Felicia Skene 1821-1899 See DNB; Edith C. Rickards, *Felicia Skene at Oxford: A memoir...with numerous portraits and other illustrations* (John Murray: London, 1902).

> There is no use in going on this way. It is a triumph for which Mansel, etc. are *thanking God (!)*. I know what my own position is. It is hopeless, and graceless, and godless.[11]

Poor Bute. The misery of this letter is very real, a far cry from his conscious artifice in describing shrines possessed of a poverty worthy of God. It shows clearly his depression; the blackness of despair to which his volatile temperament could bring him. He was persuadable, and had been persuaded, to act against his own conviction, and his sense of guilt oppressed him. It is not perhaps surprising he chose female *confidantes*. His susceptibility to pressure, and the fact that his guilt was expressed in depression rather than anger were feminine traits, to which women would be more sympathetic and responsive. Men would be impatient of such freely expressed emotion, and tell him brusquely not to overreact.

In Felicia Skene, though, he had found a truly remarkable person. It was a friendship which, despite the disparity in their ages (she was twenty-six years his senior) was to last all of his life. She was deeply concerned with 'outcast women',[12] working not merely to persuade them into refuges, but to lighten their lot when they got there. She was a vegetarian, an anti-vivisectionist, and a tireless prison visitor. She nursed those sick of cholera and smallpox during epidemics, and was a friend of Florence Nightingale. Bute was only one of the undergraduates to whom she became a friend. Perhaps it is a mark of her influence on him, that he also became deeply concerned with the rescue of women and with the treatment of animals.

When *The Scotsman* got wind of Bute's conversion and carried the story, Sir James framed a contradiction himself.[13] He seems to have been surprised to have got a much more irritable and effective denial from Bute: 'Lord Bute begs to contradict the statement which appeared in The Scotsman of this morning to the effect that he has entered the Roman Catholic Church & is to "profess" (whatever that may mean) at Oxford next Sunday. Lord Bute thinks that before giving publicity to gossip of this kind some means might have been taken to ascertain its truth.'[14] Bute, who had mastered legal procedure as a child, and learnt navigation to

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[11]HB, p.46, quoting Bute to Miss Skene, Maundy Thursday 1867.

[12] Richards, *Skene,* p.133.

[13]NLS Ms. 1845 f.228 James Fergusson to Russell, undated.

[14]NLS Ms. 1845 f.229 in Bute's hand, undated.

understand *Peter Simple*, detested the shoddy and inaccurate use of technical phrases. How trying it was to receive opprobrium for an act, whilst losing all its benefits.

Bute's misery was real enough, but his predicament was one that time itself would solve. He could look forward to his majority in a very short time, and with it, not only liberty of conscience but the freedom of a large fortune at his disposal.

His cousin, the Marquess of Hastings, was facing problems with no solution, and behaving with all the recklessness of a man who knows he is doomed. Bright's Disease was closing its stranglehold on him. He had taken over the Mastership of the Quorn, the most prestigious of all the packs of foxhounds, to which the position of the Hastings family seat, in the middle of Britain's best fox-hunting territory, almost predestined him. It was famous for its long, open gallops. Harry did not have the strength or the lung capacity for such exercise, nor could he blow on the hunting horn. It was not laziness, nor 'slackness' as his contemporaries assumed: with his lungs filling with fluid, it was remarkable that half-drowned, he even attempted such punishing feats. Harry had lost nearly everything he had to lose, including the love of his run-away bride, whom he could never bed. He had lost nearly all his fortune.

Next to the Bute inheritance, the Hastings fortune was a poor thing. Considered in its own right it was substantial. Harry had gambled it away in his vain bid to break 'the ring.' With the Derby approaching, Harry saw his best chance. He had a wonderful horse, *Vauban,* and now the only real rival *Hermit* seemed to be out of the race. With his time at a premium, and with the desperation of a dying man, he determined on one last-ditch attempt. He backed *Vauban* to the hilt. It lost. That the race became one of the classics of all time, 'the most sensational Derby on record, perhaps, with one of the most exciting struggles ever witnessed, throughout which each horse ran as straight as a line and as true as steel',[15] and the victor, *Hermit,* one of the few racehorses whose name became immortal, can have been small consolation. The Marquess of Hastings had lost the race and his fortune. The added salt in the wound must have been that *Hermit* was owned by Henry Chaplin, the fiancé from whom he had stolen his bride, and whom his bride, it seems, still loved.

Bute, always aware of his Hastings heritage, did what he could to help. He bought Hastings' yacht *Lady Bird* and the Loudon estate, which was the Scottish property of the line, having come into the family through Lady Sophia's mother, who was Countess of Loudon in her own

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[15] 'Merlin', *The Sporting Gazette,* 18 May 1867.

right. Bute originally hoped that Lady Edith, who was heir to the estate, would purchase it. She did not, most probably because she could not afford to do so. The estate had been heavily mortgaged in order to raise money, and these sums had to be paid off, as well as the purchase price being found. Bute was warned that he would make a heavy loss, but in July that year, he made the decision to buy.[16]

The Loudon estates, so near the countryside around Dumfries House and Dallars where he had spent much of his childhood, were a logical purchase for a sentimental young man who was already a great landowner. The idea of a chronically sea-sick boy buying a yacht is a little comic, but the yacht had compensations. Bute was still a member of the Church of Scotland, which provided a set of services for laymen to use at sea. 'On Sundays in my yacht ... I am to conduct Presbyterian services. There is a book of prayers approved by the Church of Scotland for the purpose: instead of sermon, some immense bit of Scripture, e.g. the whole Epistle to the Romans.'[17]

That same July he made a voyage with three of his Oxford friends on the newly purchased yacht to Iceland, via Orkney. He kept his word on the services. His friends were, it seems, not very thankful for them: 'Bute gave us ... some prayers whose only merit appeared to be that they had been composed by John Knox & about 10 chapters from different parts of the Bible ... a tedious ceremony.'[18] They were better prepared for the next Sunday. Someone had a watch to time it: '86 minutes'.

Two diaries of this trip have survived, one Bute's own, and the other by John, later Sir John Dasent,[19] son of the great Icelandic scholar and translator, George Webbe Dasent.[20] It was he who timed Bute's services. To him, Bute was a somewhat remote, even august, figure, quite unlike the impulsive, confidential person who emerges from his own writing. The two young men make an extraordinary contrast. Bute was interested in everything from wildlife to the picturesque, and, of course, everything of religious or antiquarian interest. He moved like quicksilver from delight to disgust. Dasent was only interested in sport, and the greater part of

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[16]BU/21/51/34. Note of a meeting of 3 July 1867 between Bute and legal representatives to explain the purchase of the Loudon Estate.

[17]HB p. 48.

[18]Mount Stuart mss. uncatalogued, Journal of a Voyage on the Lady Bird. This ms. does not have any attribution. However, by comparing it with Bute's diary in the NLS it is possible to deduce that it was written by Dasent.

[19]John Roche Dasent 1847-1914 was later assistant secretary to the Board of Education. NLS Acc 9553.

[20]George Webbe Dasent 1817-1896, Boase Vol. V.

his diary is a record of what he either shot, or fished, or failed to shoot or fish. Although he was funding the whole expedition, Bute did not forbid the shooting, that would have been socially impossible, for it was the universal hobby of the well born, but he disliked and was heartily bored by it. Typically he recorded glumly that 'after a time we reached a river, but unhappily found some Ptarmigan.'[21]

The party sailed up the east coast of Scotland from Leith to Orkney, where Bute occupied himself with the local antiquary Petrie, and the others roamed about getting bored. Bute and Petrie went to look at St Magnus Cathedral and

> two stone figures said to represent SS Magnus and Olave. They used to lie in a window. S. Magnus? is represented with long hair and a forked beard, wearing his Earl's coronet, a jewelled circlet. His left hand is laid upon his breast, and his right holds a naked sword, sceptre-wise. He wears a long robe reaching to the feet and over it a sort of flowing cope or mantle, tied with strings before his breast. In this manner he is figured on one of the bells and on an ancient seal ... There has long been a tradition that the Reliques of S Magnus were concealed in one of the pillars. A few years ago in repairing the great pier on the north side of the choir a skeleton was found enclosed in it with the skull cut from behind, in the same way was done to the Saint.[22]

Wherever he went, Bute found the destruction of irreplaceable remains and ruins, and he was incensed. One of the six circular Churches known had been pulled down in 1829. He travelled the greater part of a day to view a broch standing in a manse glebe. It had been reduced from its original 50 feet high to provide the stone for building walls around the fields.[23]

They headed north to Iceland, still largely unexplored territory to the British. Lord Dufferin had visited in 1856, Sabine Baring-Gould in 1863. William Morris was to follow in 1871.[24] Morris was attracted by the romance of the Icelandic Sagas, and it is probable that the well-read Bute was likewise.

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[21]NLS Acc9553 Bute's diary, 29 Aug. 1867.

[22]*Ibid.*, 14 July 1867.

[23]*Ibid.*, 19 July 1867.

[24]Fiona MacCarthy, *William Morris: A Life for Our Time* (Faber and Faber: London, 1995) p. 287.

Again horribly sick during the journey, Bute provides the first glimpse of Reykjavik where 'most of the windows have white muslin blinds and flower-pots in them like cottages on the stage.'[25] While Dasent remarks that the ponies were 'quite decent', Bute adds that they 'are about 12-13 hands high, mostly light in colour, with big manes and tails, and no mouths worth mentioning. They rush waddling along.'[26] The sight of Bute, over six feet tall, on the little ponies, is something that, sadly, he was not in the best position to record.

Bute had plainly been reading Pepys, and at first many of his entries are somewhat mannered, and the famous catch phrase 'and so to bed' occurs a number of times.[27] As he worked himself further into his narrative, he increasingly forgot such devices. The party set off across Iceland on their ponies, and Bute was regularly offered hospitality in the houses, which he usually accepted.

> All the household were asleep long before but they left the door open for us. It seemed like going into a cave, entering a door in the side of a green hill. The rooms are cased with wood, but the passages and under parts of the house are all earth and stone, with earth floors and moss on the walls, and as their [*sic*] is not a glimpse of light and they are really several feet underground the effect is very like that of a natural cavern.[28]

All the young men learnt to drink the local corn brandy neat to alleviate the cold, Bute greatly preferring it to cognac. One remarkable feature of the two diaries is the huge difference in the levels of perception and writing ability of the two men. These are their entries for 21 August.

First Dasent:

> The place is awfully cold with rain almost all last night and a good deal today.[29]

Then Bute:

> It was a regular Icelandic summer morning. Rain poured from the sky in torrents. Clouds covered everything, and through them one could occasionally see looming

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[25]NLS Acc9553 Bute's diary, 31 July 1867.

[26]*Ibid.*, 3 Aug. 1867.

[27]*Ibid.*, 4 Aug. 1867.

[28]*Ibid.*, 12 Aug. 1867.

[29]Dasent, diary, 21 Aug. 1867.

the green & grey sides of the glaciers. It was bitterly cold, with wind off the snows.[30]

Bute saw the comic side of life: 'I was in front with the farmer, who guided us. We talked a good deal in our respective languages, without understanding each other but found we had a common feeling about corn-brandy, of which he carried a bottle.'[31] At Thorshavn, Bute found 'a very awful burn; all the drains ran into it, it was filled with offal, mostly of fish, with dead kittens &c. &c. there were in it living great fat ducks preying on abominations and radiantly happy, and here were quantities of women, standing in it and washing clothes. I think I would rather wear mine till they dropped off my back.'[32]

Even in Iceland, with its new experiences and hardships, Bute worried at religious questions. He enquired into the state of its (reformed) Church, and the beliefs current, noting that it 'neither has nor pretends to have the Apostolic Succession - any idea of its necessity is treated as quite ridiculous ... but the people universally hold several Catholic doctrines i.e. the Real Presence'.[33] With his mind still running on such problems, he returned to Oxford to continue 'considering and reconsidering his position'.

That autumn was plainly a significant one for Bute, but the details remain hazy. Somehow he got to know 'Mr Charles Scott Murray, a Catholic gentleman of Scottish descent and good estate.'[34] Scott Murray was a convert and had a sympathetic wife to whom Bute could talk of religion, a house near Marlow called Danesfield, a beautiful Pugin chapel and a chaplain. The Chaplain was the Rev'd Thomas Capel[35], later and better known as Monsignor Capel.

All the same, Bute was still seriously considering the Presbyterian Church, though he argued with some justice that the Reformation in Scotland had been carried through largely by 'a pack of greedy, time-serving and unpatriotic nobles'.[36] He spoke lengthily to Liddon in October,

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[30]NLS Acc9553 Bute's diary 21 Aug. 1867.

[31]*Ibid.*, 23 Aug. 1867.

[32]*Ibid.*, 9 Sept. 1867.

[33]*Ibid.*, 12 Aug. 1867. This is the classic Lutheran position, of which Bute must have been unaware since it struck him as curious.

[34]HB, p.61. Charles Robert Scott Murray 1818-1882, MP for Buckinghamshire. Gorman, *Converts* p.246.

[35]Monsignor Thomas John Capel 1835-1911, Catholic controversialist. See Fitzgerald-Lombard, p.3.

[36]*Ibid.*, p.40.

after he had met Capel. 'Lord Bute sat with me in the middle of the day for nearly 3 hours. He followed his old line of praising the Presbyterians and deprecating the Scottish Episcopal clergy. He repeated F. Capel's arguments wh. I answered seriatim.'[37]

For Liddon, Anglo-Catholic as he was, the Presbyterian option was a deeply-flawed one. For Bute, it was the only alternative to Roman Catholicism. Most of Bute's family would have been happy to see him take this path, but not Liddon. If there had been a single able and respected academic at Oxford willing to argue the case for Presbyterianism, he might have swayed Bute, but to the Anglicans, the Church of Scotland seemed alien and inadequate.

For a start, Presbyterianism was wholly Protestant. It had no bishops, but in every congregation were a number of elders, ordinary men in lay professions responsible for pastoral care and discipline, led by the teaching elder or presbyter who was the minister. The church year had no pattern, there was no colour in worship, no place for the Virgin, only the grim grandeur of austerity. Worship did not centre around the sacrament which recalled the Last Supper, but around the reading and preaching of the Bible. To somebody of Liddon's background, it was little less than repulsive. When newly graduated, he had visited St Giles, Edinburgh's former episcopal cathedral, which had become a Presbyterian church.

> St Giles is now cut up into three meeting-houses, belonging to the Scotch Establishment. Of these the Eastern one is the largest. All are furnished with very capacious galleries, the whole arrangements centring towards the pulpit - the Kebla [*sic*] of Presbyterian devotion ... Several Presbyterians went round with me; they seemed to think the whole affair a due blending of the beautiful and the useful. The men did not take off their hats, and seemed surprised at my doing so. I could not forget that in past ages the Shekinah of the Catholic Church had rested beneath that roof. I left the Church feeling a deep and unutterable aversion for a system whose outward manifestations are so hatefully repulsive. I thank God the Church of England *is* very different from the Kirk of Scotland.[38]

That Liddon had a great deal more sympathy with the Roman Church did not mean that he did not reject outright Capel's arguments. The year before Bute came to Oxford, Liddon had met Capel for the first time whilst they were both in Pau.

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[37]Liddon diary, 20 Oct. 1867.

[38]Johnston, *Liddon,* p.15.

> Father Capel is an active, tolerably well-informed, and very gentlemanly man, and does all he can for the 'English Mission'. He came here to luncheon yesterday. After luncheon I had an argument with him of two hours and a half; it was impossible to allow some of his statements to pass unchallenged. The argument ended as such arguments generally do, in leaving both of us much where we were at starting, and illustrating Madame Neckar's *mot* about arguments in general. But it has done this incidental good: That Father Capel has written to me this morning inviting me to discuss the doctrine of the Church *ab ovo usque*; and I have replied saying that I have read Passaglia's book on the subject, that I do not suppose that Father Capel can add to Passaglia's arguments and that I do not think them convincing; that, on the contrary, I rejoice to live and die in the Church of England.[39]

At some time in the autumn of 1867, Bute was in great distress. At Danesfield, 'consolation was given ... in the midst of sorrow.'[40] It was a significant event for Bute, and intensified his attachment, his commitment, to the Catholic Church. He made 'solemn promises ... at Danesfield to live and die in the Church of God.'[41] The precise date of this is not at all certain, though Capel may indicate it was around his birthday in September.[42] What the sorrow was is not clear. It could have been his continuing sense of guilt at not entering the Catholic Church. It might just have been the illness of his sole remaining Hastings aunt, Lady Selina, or the knowledge that his cousin Harry Hastings was dying.

Lady Selina died on 8 November that year and Bute went to her funeral.[43] His sympathy for his cousins (Mabel Henry liked to sign herself his loving sister)[44] was real and deep. He had written earlier to another female friend that with her mother's death she had 'lost ... what [she] loved most in the world.'[45] He was in his middle age before he assured those around him that

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[39]*Ibid.*, p.97.

[40]BU/21/33/24 Capel to Bute, 10 Sept. 1868. This letter has formerly been wrongly ascribed the date of 1865, due to the peculiarity of Capel's writing of the numeral 8.

[41]BU/21/62/17 Capel to Bute, 30 Mar. 1868.

[42]*Ibid.*

[43]HB, p.54.

[44]*cf* BU/21/62/51 Mabel Henry to Bute, 29 May 1868.

[45]BU/21/42/4 Elizabeth Knox to Bute, 6 Aug. 1866.

he could now think of his own mother without pain. Nor did their Low Church Anglicanism dismay him. He never had the least difficulty in sympathising with any views which were heartfelt. His own close friend Addle Hay Gordon was a High Church Scottish Episcopalian, which was of all religious positions the one against which Bute showed most fervour. Yet Addle was one of his most beloved friends.

In September 1867, Bute was twenty. He was over six feet tall, broad-shouldered, still slim hipped, with a handsome face made striking by its high-bridged nose and blue eyes. He was fit from his long walks and swimming, and his practice of the romantic sport of fencing. He bore the second highest rank outside royalty, and he was very wealthy. In short, Bute attracted attention and admiration.

> No doubt you will be surprised to get a letter from a stranger but I have endeavoured to get an introduction to you but without success. If I told you I loved you, you would laugh at me for being so absurd, but it is the truth, my darling ... what would I not give for one kiss of yr dear lips.[46]

The unknown one signed herself Ethel Wilton,[47] and Bute replied at once.[48] On paper, Ethel was very bold, but she began to sense some of the difficulties ahead: 'If we met I am sure I could never tell you what I feel for one I love so dearly.'[49] The beloved in the flesh tends to be disconcertingly unlike the beloved in the mind. Nevertheless, she set up a meeting : 'I will be on the bridge on Tuesday ... we must appear as friends in case I was seen by anyone so don't pass me by but speak at once. I shall be in mourning[50] & I will wear a bonnet. You cannot make a mistake.'[51]

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[46]BU/21/65/3 Ethel Wilton to Bute, undated, with envelope postmarked March 1868.

[47]Due to the fact that they did not attend University and are not listed either in many of the lists of landed gentry, and rarely attracted obituaries, women are often almost invisible in this period. Miss Wilton has proved impossible to identify more fully.

[48]BU/21/65/5 Ethel Wilton to Bute, undated.

[49]BU/21/65/10 Ethel Wilton to Bute, undated.

[50]Not merely black clothes, but cut more modestly than usual and trimmed with crepe. Crepe was a kind of silk gauze in which Courtaulds had cornered the market. It snagged on other fabrics and its dye ran in the rain, a spot of which falling on it left a white mark which had to be covered with ink. Jalland, *Death,* pp. 301-6.

[51]BU/21/65/8 Ethel Wilton to Bute, undated.

Ethel ran full tilt into Bute's disconcerting manner with strangers. 'I don't think you liked your walk yesterday and you must have thought me awfully stupid but you looked so grave I felt quite shut up.'[52] Alas, so unpropitious a meeting did not cure her. 'I suppose you thought I was too slow. I am twice as spoony about you now than I was before.'[53] Lacking much response from Bute, her mind swung at once to another terrible possibility: 'Pray do not think I am a "fast girl" as no doubt you do! because I am as well born as yourself & my position in the world is very good.' The relationship concluded with a plaintive letter from Ethel: 'Why are you so unkind not to answer me?'[54]

Bute had decided to end a relationship which, carried on in secret as it was, would have incurred the wrath of every respectable adult, and would indeed have labelled Miss Wilton as very fast. In addition, he was not good at answering letters, he was approaching a 'dreaded examination'[55] at Oxford, he was still much involved with his religious position and he was beginning to form another relationship.

The fact that his new love was the daughter of a determinedly Protestant family known for its 'proselytising tendencies'[56] was greatly complicating his consideration of his religious position. No letters to or from her survive, and therefore her identification cannot be absolutely certain, but Bute's courtship of his Protestant lady, carried on as it was in the eye of the small world of those days, could not but attract attention. It is highly likely from a comment of Lady Edith Fergusson that she was Lady Albertha Hamilton,[57] the Duke of Abercorn's sixth daughter, later Lady Blandford, 'the sixth of seven beautiful daughters of a well-known peer.'[58] Lady Abercorn was deeply religious, and the joke went that 'whereas other mothers of marriageable daughters invited desirable young men to their opera-boxes, Lady Abercorn would ask them to share her pew'.[59] This was a pew in the National Scottish Church at Crown Court, Covent

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[52]BU/21/65/9 Ethel Wilton to Bute, undated.

[53]BU/21/65/7 Ethel Wilton to Bute, undated.

[54]BU/21/65/14 Ethel Wilton to Bute, undated.

[55]BU/21/62/52 Lady Elizabeth Moore to Bute, 30 May 68.

[56]BU/21/62/118 Capel to Bute, undated.

[57]Lady Albertha Hamilton 1847-1932, BP.

[58]HB, p.58.

[59]George W. E. Russell, *Portraits of the Seventies* (T. Fisher Unwin, Ltd.: London, 1916) p. 260.

Garden, where the great Presbyterian preacher John Cumming[60] was Minister. He believed that the 'last vial' of the Apocalypse was shortly to be opened and poured out in 1867.[61] He was bitterly opposed to the Papacy, and papal aggression. Bute of course, was at once the best and the worst of suitors to share a pew with, being both a very religious member of the Church of Scotland, and attracted towards Roman Catholicism.

It has been thought that he was always quite steady in his intention to become a Catholic. He had been moving towards Catholicism since childhood, yet Capel, to whom he may have voiced his uncertainties, does not seem to have been very confident that Bute would make the final change. When his family and friends had constrained him to promise not to enter the Roman Church, they had seen that there was a gulf between an attachment to that Church and actually joining it. Capel was concerned to bridge that gulf by stressing Bute's unity with Catholicism:

> Let me beg you to prepare yourself as though you were to receive the Bread of Life on Easter day. Begin by the thought of renewing these solemn promises made at Danesfield to live & die in the Church of God. Then prepare for confession by repeating the different acts which are to be found in any manual of prayers ... Lastly, in humility & sorrow & love dwell on the mystery of the most Holy Eucharist ... In this way though materially out of the Body of the Church, you will be of her children united to her soul.[62]

It was an ingenious way of binding Bute to the Roman Church.

As if these were not pressures and difficulties enough, his Hastings relations were in great misery. Edith, who had been reconciled to her difficult husband, lost the baby she was carrying, it was thought from worry caused by her brother, who was still dying slowly, and whose ruin had impoverished all his dependants. She recovered from her miscarriage 'very nicely', as their mutual cousin Mabel Henry told Bute in May but 'She feels so about Harry. He promised to pay our money by the 15th & did not, so I only hope it may not be lost in the

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[60]John Cumming 1807-1881 was licensed by Aberdeen Presbytery, and called to Crown Court in 1832, See DNB.

[61]The degree to which this kind of millennialism stifled charitable action, an aspect of the faith of which Bute would certainly have disapproved, is discussed by D. N. Hempton in 'Evangelicalism and Eschatology', *Journal of Ecclesiaistical History,* 1980, pp.179-194.

[62]BU/21/62/17 Capel to Bute, 30 Mar. 1868.

general smash. Did you ever see anything more terribly true than the picture of his career in the "Tomahawk''?'[63]

The cartoon carried by the satirical paper is famous. It shows the carriage going 'home from the Derby'[64] with the Devil driving and 'Death in the rumble'. He is pouring champagne for a young man who flings 'honour' and 'dignity' overboard. A weeping woman, with a marked likeness to Lady Hastings, shares the landau 'long lost to the path of virtue, and fast drifting to the shores of Hell.'[65] Poor Lady Hastings, and poor Edith, with her family pilloried in the press. Bute suggested that Lady Edith might go to Loudon with her whole family over the summer to recover. It was, as Lady Elizabeth Moore remarked, 'a very wise and amiable plan.'[66]

Bute had been sent to Oxford with hopes of his gaining academic distinction. Distracted by love and religion, and still fearful that the pressure of too much work would plunge him back into illness, he dreaded he would simply fail his examination, and told his fears to Lady Elizabeth. As usual, she cheerfully braced him up, quite sure in her own mind that a lack of courage and resolution were his chief weaknesses: 'I dare say it will prove less terrible than you imagine & that you will get through quite well <u>if you only pluck up courage!</u> If you <u>do</u> fail I shall ascribe it entirely to the distraction of thought occasioned by a fair lady, who I trust will make ample amends in the future ... I cordially wish you success at college & in London.'[67]

She was not alone in her hopes. Lady Edith Fergusson suggested that Bute 'might send ... a little line ... if you have any good news of yourslf, which I hope you will have - perhaps I shall hear you have become a confirmed Cummingite.'[68] Most of the others who had been aware of his religious struggles were unconscious of the increasing dilemma that love was posing to him. Understandably, he revealed his feelings to very few, and as he approached his twenty-first birthday, all the players in the game were aware of making a last bid. Liddon wished: 'that we could be more at one than I fear is ... the case about some matters of the very first importance. I

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[63]BU/21/62/51 Mabel Henry to Bute, 29 May 1868.

[64]*The Tomahawk,* May 1868.

[65]*Ibid.*

[66]BU/21/62/52 Lady Elizabeth to Bute, 30 May 1868.

[67]*Ibid.*

[68]BU/21/62/86 Lady Edith to Bute, 25 June 1868.

wish I could have been less unskilful, or more useful to you, as to these questions, than I have been.'[69]

Mansel took a line often used to criticise Rome, speaking of 'an error which is very prevalent at this time ...a dread of personal responsibility. I believe that this feeling is that which gives the chief attraction ... to that search after an infallible authority in matters of religion and moral action.' He was happy that authority should guide the individual conscience, but not that it should supersede it. 'I believe that such an authority has nowhere been given to a man by God.'[70]

Bute may well have been more stirred by an appeal from an old friend of his mother's, Emily Freemantle. Her first letter to him is lost, but it seems he was annoyed by it, a possible sign he was also moved. She recalled being at his mother's bedside:

> on the early morning of the day we left Mount Stuart (which was indeed our parting) she said to me in the most earnest manner 'promise me one thing, that you and Freemantle will never lose sight of my child - Watch over him for my sake' ... my duty is, to Entreat you again to consider before you join a church [paper destroyed] fearful errors & from which our Heavenly Father calls His people to 'come out.'[71]

Mabel tried to tempt him. The kind Vicar of her home church 'is to have a confirmation ... it is a happy time to him always & I am sure it is to those so fortunate as to be his candidates. Dearest Bute, how earnestly I wish you were to be one of them!' She must have known it was a lost cause for she added 'I often think of my talk with you going to Churchdown, & pray much for you, & feel for you more deeply than I can tell.'[72]

Lady Edith Fergusson also wished she 'could think you ever really look at our side of the question.'[73] Yet to Capel, it still did not seem inevitable that Bute would take the final plunge: 'Do let me entreat you not to weary in your struggle - Surrounded by temptations and weakened

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[69]BU/21/62/68 Liddon to Bute, 13 June 1868.

[70]BU/21/71/1 Mansel to Bute, 19 June 1868.

[71]BU/21/62/30 Emily Freemantle to Bute, 22 April (1868?)

[72]BU/21/62/40 Mabel Henry to Bute, undated but almost certainly 1868.

[73]BU/21/62/88 Edith Fergusson to Bute, 25 June 1868.

by the falls of the past, it is not surprising you should feel almost an insurmountable difficulty in battling with self ... The deprivation of those ordinary means of grace which the church offers adds still more to your weakness.'[74]

It was not easy for Bute to voice publicly the difficulties of his position. His attachment to the Catholic Church had been both real and public. Moreover Capel had plans to proselytise in Oxford in May if Bute thought it would be useful just then. Bute considered that 'Mr Capel will find men here not unprepared to listen to him.'[75] Two undergraduates died of accidents within days of each other, plunging the university into a solemn mood. One of them was the twenty year old Robert Marriott of Christ Church, who died from falling out of a window. Hunter Blair quotes a letter of Bute's describing his death.

> I had seen him lying in the ground-floor room where he died - totally unconscious, and breathing with great difficulty. The Senior Censor came in when I was there, and read over him the prayers for the dying. This was the very clergyman who told me a few months ago that he did not believe in prayer ... I went into the room again after the men had gone to the billiard-room. It was the room of a friend of his: the walls covered with pictures of horses and actresses, and whips and spurs and pipes. The body lay on a mattress on the floor covered with a sheet. It was all dreadful, and I tried in vain in that room to say a *De Profundis* for him.[76]

The letter is almost a statement of the major themes of Bute's life: his concern with death, with prayer, with depth of belief, with right and fitting ceremonial. Only his love of art is missing, though this is reflected in his concern for the worldly litter of the room. The actual funeral was to be at the boy's home, but parts of the service were read before the hearse took him to the Canterbury Gate on his last journey. The extreme gloom of the occasion struck Bute as godless, for however much Christians grieve for themselves, they should rejoice in one re-born in a brighter world. This was 16 May, and Capel finally arrived on 23 or 24 May. Scott Murray thought he had delayed through nervousness: 'I think he is very timid about this visit & fearful about not doing the best for your friends. I am quite taken aback by your announcement that you leave Oxford for good in about a week. Are you going up for your degree?'[77]

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[74]BU/21/69/7 Capel to Bute, Holy Thursday 1868.

[75]HB, p.66.

[76]*Ibid.*

[77]BU/21/62/47 Scott Murray to Bute, 23 May 1868.

Hunter Blair put a good complexion on this visit.

> Bute's hope, no doubt, was that his earnestness, sympathy, and tact might have a soothing effect on the nerves of his friends, still quivering from the shock of the recent catastrophe ... Several undergraduates made Mr Capel's acquaintance ... One of them, he found, had been for some months resolved to make his submission to Rome; and by Mr Capel's advice he asked for an interview with the Dean and frankly informed him of his intention...[78]

In fact a miserable row ensued. The undergraduate in question was Charles Biscoe.[79] A friend told Bute: 'I never heard of anything so gratuitously brutal as the Dean's conduct towards him ... the Dean in his lecture gave it you hot, as having "sown the seeds of this mischief far and wide". Now this again any person who knows you will say is untrue ... although your opinions were well known among your friends, I am not aware you ever tried to proselytise.'[80]

Biscoe's resolution was to fail him. He did not become a Catholic and wretchedly told Bute: 'I know I have been miserably weak and cowardly and nobody can think worse of me than I do of myself.'[81] He became a clergyman in the Church of England.[82] All the incident had done was to underline once again the price to be paid for becoming a Catholic. What is more, it had to be paid in the currency which cost Bute most dearly: rows with authority figures, pressure, and opprobrium.

Bute's state of mind is well shown by his masked ball. In June he sent out invitations to a *bal masqué* in *La Morgue*.[83] It was a good-bye to Oxford, and a celebration and a summing up of his time there. As Hunter Blair explains, the *morgue* of the invitation was merely a room adjacent to Bute's suite of rooms occasionally used as a resting place for a dead undergraduate. It was, therefore, the room which had been used that very May. Bute neither needed to use this

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[78]HB, p. 67.

[79]Charles Thomas Biscoe 1847-1884. J. Foster, *Alumni Oxoniensis* (Parker & Co.: Oxford, 1888).

[80]BU/21/62/79 Colt Williams to Bute, 18 June 1868.

[81]BU/21/62/96 Biscoe to Bute, 5 Sept. 1868.

[82]AO.

[83] Hunter Blair quotes Turnor that the ball was so successful that Bute proposed repeating it but was forbidden. This is impossible, as 1868 was Bute's last year in Oxford.

room, nor to describe it as a morgue. That he chose to do both underlines his continuing preoccupation with death. From the idea of death, he moved to Catholicism.

The time-honoured symbol of Christ Church is a cardinal's hat, for it was originally Cardinal's College. The realistic hat appears on college stationery. Bute reproduced it upon his invitation card, which as an undergraduate of the college he was entitled to do. Under this symbol he drew a face in a parti-coloured carnival mask, half in cardinal's red and half in death white.[84] It was no longer a hat, but a Catholic cardinal in an extraordinary and enigmatic disguise. It echoed the costume Bute chose for the event. He was 'his Satanic Majesty' in red and black, complete with horns and tail.[85] Whether he was the devil for choosing Roman Catholicism, or for rejecting it, he left his friends to guess. Maybe he was damned if he did, and damned if he did not. Then he left Oxford without his degree. He found his escape where it always came most easily to him, in travel.

He spent his summer yachting and visiting Russia, taking Lord Rosebery with him. According to Henry Blyth, Harry Hastings was on board the *Lady Bird*. Newspaper reports speak of Harry being in Norway that summer, in a last ditch attempt to improve his health.[86] Bute travelled to St Petersburg and other parts of Russia. If he and Harry were on board the yacht at the same time, as seems highly likely, then Bute had once again the chance to observe at first hand the horrible symptoms of Bright's Disease.

The end of this summer is almost certainly the time referred to in Maxwell's book of memoirs, when Bute argued theology 'with the Presbyterian minister of Auchenleck in the morning and with the Roman Catholic priest in the afternoon.'[87] Maxwell's next statement has long been doubted. Bute told him 'in after years that he had very nearly decided in favour of the Presbyterian Church.'[88] Yet it is almost certainly correct.

The problem for Bute was in part not theological, but temperamental. It is well illustrated by his difficulty earlier that year in trying to present a stained glass window to Cumnock parish church. The Presbyterians took a strict view of the Second Commandment which forbade

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[84]BU/21/64/3 Invitation, 18 June 1868.

[85]HB, p.30.

[86]*The Sporting Gazette,* 14 Nov. 1868.

[87]Sir Herbert Maxwell, *Evening Memories* (Alexander Maclehose & Co.: London, 1932), p. 126.

[88]*Ibid.*

making an image of 'any thing that is in the heaven above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth'. Just as Scottish Reformers three hundred years earlier had smashed what they thought of as 'images' in churches, so the stricter Victorian Presbyterians were firmly against making any pictorial image of God, which included Christ, as the second person of the Trinity, or allowing any images of his saints into churches, lest they attract the worship due to God alone. The minister of Cumnock, James Murray, could not have been kinder about the problem. He spoke of 'the sorrow [the Kirk Session] felt in differing from your Lordship in any way'.[89] It would be fine if he offered 'windows filled with mathematical designs', but he did not want mathematical designs. *The Buteman's* 'London correspondent' put it rather nicely: 'whilst professing the most ardent love for all that is advanced in ritual and aesthetic in religion, the Marquis, who was brought up as a Presbyterian, always gave it to be understood he had not joined the English Church ... [but] Presbyterianism [is] scarcely .. a home for a high Ritualist.'[90]

Not the least of the problems when trying to assess the reliability of accounts such as Maxwell's, is their tone. To such persons, Bute's interest in religion and his tastes were too eccentric to be taken seriously. They adopted a mocking tone which encouraged them to say anything to raise a laugh, making it hard to weigh the evidence they present. Sir Herbert Maxwell, for instance, remembered how Sir James Fergusson tried to introduce Bute to 'sport'. Standing in a snowy wood, Bute 'had on his feet a pair of patent leather shoes, and under his arm a gun which he knew not how to handle.'[91] Bute was a very considerable walker and no townie. Bored though he was by shooting, it is overwhelmingly likely that he would have been shod appropriately for a winter day in the Scottish countryside.

That autumn he was to celebrate his majority, and, as the many who wrote to him realised, he would be more than ordinarily glad to reach it. It would not just put him in possession of his wealth, but make him master of his own life; and that in an absolute way that no young man still with a father or mother could experience. It would be his day of freedom, the day, also, when he would not be able to shelter behind his promises given to delay his choice of a Church. Nothing would then stop him becoming a Catholic except his relationship with the Duke's daughter, and his dread of the reaction of many of those whom he loved, including the staunchly Protestant Lady Elizabeth.

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[89]BU/21/62/ James Murray to Bute, 2 April 1868.

[90]*The Buteman*, 26 Sept. 1868.

[91]Maxwell, *Memories*, p.127.

One possible solution which occurred to him was to marry without telling his bride of his intention to become Catholic. Capel was horrified:

> ... should it then be God's Holy Will for the present object of your affections to become yours, remember you owe it to her, to your own soul & to God Almighty:-
> 1. To make known to her your determination to become Catholic before marriage. By so doing you put yourself in a state of grace, obtain God's blessing on her, & on your future.
> 2. To have a formal promise according to the mind of the church ... any children ... [are] to be educated Catholics.[92]

Capel, having laid down the minimum, was firmly against the marriage: 'I know of no misery on earth so great as that two beings united by every bond of affection should on the sole thing necessary be separated. The trials of married life, the care of educating a family, the spirit of mutual forbearance require the sacraments to uphold those who are married.'[93]

He was doubly concerned, for Bute was not only proposing to marry into a Protestant family, but an exceptionally ardent one.

> [God] is calling you to do a great work in the re-establishing of His Church in Scotland ... and as you will know a Protestant alliance without the most stringent guarantees would paralyse efforts however generous - Naturally this would be intensified in the case of a family already known for its Proselytising tendencies.[94]

He did not add that doubt must be raised as to whether Bute would once again be talked out of making his submission to Rome. His final plea suggests that he was only too aware of this but did not like to put it into words for fear of making the possibility more real: 'Let me again urge you to come at once to confession & decide once for all to make your abjuration the very day you are of age.'

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[92]BU/21/62/118 Capel to Bute, undated.

[93]*Ibid.*

[94]*Ibid.*

Before Bute reached his majority, there seems to have been a breach between him and Capel. It is entirely possible that Capel's letter had caused it, or equally that Bute, who hated pressure, was simply avoiding him. Capel was expecting him to arrive and spend time at Danesfield with the Scott Murrays, but Bute did not come, and did not keep in touch with him. Capel could only blackmail that 'humanly speaking the salvation of thousands born and unborn depends on you ... to prevent such great glory to God, the Evil Spirit will leave no effort untried.'[95] Yet again he begged Bute to make his submission on his birthday, or immediately afterwards. He did not, perhaps because of the continuing drama of his relationship with the lady, or perhaps because he did not wish a huge row in the middle of very public festivities.

The programme for the celebrations was on a massive scale, and poor Bute was to be centre stage at public events for more than a week. On his birthday, *The Scotsman* reported, 'By a judicious arrangement the festivities on the different estates are not to take place simultaneously on the anniversary of the Marquis' birth but ... successively.' They began on the eve of his birthday with a public ball in Bute attended by the Marquess. On the platform with him, amongst others, were Sir James Fergusson, George Frederick Boyle, Col. William Stuart, Lady Edith Hastings, Lady Elizabeth Moore and Rev. John Robertson. Bute had not changed his views on whom he owed debts of gratitude, although the presence of representatives of the Boyle family suggests a degree of *rapprochement*. The next day, the tenantry gathered at Mount Stuart, to present Bute with a formal address, to which he replied touchingly and tactfully: 'I feel towards the island all the proud affection which has for centuries bound my fathers to its soil, and I know how many there are among you whose attachment to it is not less hereditary than my own.'[96] Four days later, after a round of balls, receptions, addresses and dinners, the Marquess left for Cardiff, where a similar programme, complete with public ox-roasts and fireworks, swung into action.

Cardiff was the scene of Bute's greatest responsibilities, and he made a speech typical of him.

> When he came to regard the tremendous, he might almost say dreadful, power which he would necessarily possess for good or evil, and when he came to see, as his self knowledge had taught him, that he was as yet inexperienced, that he had many faults, and that he stood alone and unrestricted in any kind of action he might choose to adopt - when he knew all this, the great responsibility seemed

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[95]BU/21/33/24 Capel to Bute, 10 Sept. 1865.

[96]*The Scotsman,* 14 Sept. 1868.

> almost to crush him with its weight. But he knew that it would not do for him to think this, and he was determined not to be crushed. He intended to the utmost of his ability to do his duty by all who were in any way interested in him. All he asked was that they would assist him in his intention so as to enable him to carry his resolve into execution.[97]

After Cardiff came Dumfries. With the festivities over, Bute was truly free to make his submission to Rome. He chose instead to place a paragraph in *The Times*: 'I authorise you to state that it is not true that I have joined the Roman church.'[98] If he was intending to do so in the very near future, there seems no reason for his statement. According to letters quoted by Hunter Blair,[99] he was reading as a preparation for reception into the Roman Church. Yet with Bute's omnivorous taste for reading, how much did that mean? Perhaps more significantly he began to keep (somewhat unenthusiastically) the Catholic rules for fasting.[100] Not that Bute minded going without food, but to a chef of the period, meatless dishes meant fish dishes and Bute hated fish, however well cooked.

Hunter Blair quotes a section from a letter at the end of October. 'Today's post brings me a long letter from the Duchess of -. It is very disheartening. Unless the woman *lies*, she will do everything in her power to prevent the marriage. She is, I think, too upright a woman to deceive.'[101] This can only mean that Bute had actually discussed marriage with Lady Albertha, and that he himself was bound to it, since at that stage, only a lady might break off the relationship; it was socially and indeed legally, impossible for a gentleman to 'breach' his promise of marriage. Lady Albertha was twenty-one, like Bute, and so did not legally require her parent's consent.

On 10 November the Marquess of Hastings died of Bright's disease. Although his drinking and the stress to which he had subjected himself must have made matters worse, his early death had been inevitable. The 'curse of the Hastings', the 'almost hereditary' and incurable disease, seemed all too real, and Bute was half-Hastings. John Boyle is said to have heard the wheels of

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[97]*The Scotsman,* 17 Sept. 1868.

[98]*The Times,* 19 Sept. 1868.

[99]HB, pp.69-70, quoting Bute to Miss Skene, 5 Oct. 1868.

[100]HB, p 58.

[101]*Ibid.*

the ghostly Hastings death carriage at Cardiff Castle on the night of Harry's death, and that can only have emphasised Bute's Hastings inheritance.

The original story was that the head of the Hastings family heard the wheels of a carriage outside his house twice: each time, on looking outside, the carriage would not be there. It was a ghostly hearse, come to carry the family's head away. Originally, then, it was a warning of death. With Harry dead, his sister Lady Edith was in theory the head of the family. But did ghosts recognise women as heads of families? Did it cross Bute's mind that the death carriage took him for the head of the family?

At some point that autumn, Capel wrote to Bute. Since, for the first time, the priest suggested that Bute should become a Catholic at once, it was almost certainly written after the latter came of age.

> My dear Lord Bute
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> This morning I will offer the Holy Sacrifice in thanksgiving for the special graces you have received during the past four days & likewise to beg our dear Lord in mercy to accord you light and strength to accomplish what has been begun. Let me beg you to renew once more before the Blessed Sacrament your good intentions and promises
>
> 1. to make morning & night an act of faith declaring your intention to live and die in the Catholic Church;
> 2. to make daily a hearty act of sorrow for all the sins of your past life, and more especially for whatever may have been sinful in the imprudent promise.
> 3. to look upon yourself as a catechumen awaiting an opportune moment to make your submission to the church ...
>
> I leave here on Monday morning, and I shall be delighted to make any arrangement you may judge convenient. Hammersmith is quiet & easy of access, and in your present state of mind no very special preparation is needed.

> My address will be Charing Cross Hotel. Should I not find a note awaiting me there from you I shall go on to St Catherine's Villa, St Leonard's on Sea. May the Sacred Heart receive your good resolve.[102]

This, again, is not the letter of a priest who has always been quite certain his catechumen will make his profession. One would give a good deal for a date on it, and even more to know if the 'imprudent promise' which plainly figured so largely in Bute's life was the one which pledged him not to join the Catholic Church until of age, or some other promise given to his lady.

It is possible that in November Bute's beloved finally broke with him. She may not have formally promised herself to him. Equally, she may only have broken the relationship when she knew he was quite definitely going to become a Catholic. It is also possible that Bute went to his cousin's funeral. There is no mention of him in the press reports of it, but given the crowds of thousands who thronged to Kensal Green Cemetery[103] on 14 November, Bute could well have escaped attention. *The Morning Post* records that the Marchioness of Hastings was supported by various gentlemen[104] and it would be typical of Bute to chose such a role, rather than travelling in his own carriage behind the hearse. The combination of greater anonymity and greater usefulness would have attracted him.

Either the breaking of his relationship, or the trauma of Harry's death, would have been enough to make Bute reconsider his religious position. With the loss of the former, he would have far less to lose by becoming a Roman Catholic, and the death of Harry would suggest that he had more to gain. It would seem from Capel's letter that Bute had been understandably depressed, and that in this condition he had received 'special graces', some kind of help or consolation, over four days, and that this had once again awoken his resolve to become a Catholic.

At any rate, some important event occurred between Bute's birthday in September and early December. Bute did indeed go to Hammersmith where there was a convent of the Sisters of the

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[102]BU/21/62/119 Capel to Bute, undated.

[103]Kensal Green had been assured of its success after it was chosen as a final resting place by Augustus Frederick, Duke of Sussex, in 1843, and later by Princess Sophia. Litten, *Way of Death,* p.134. Such cemeteries were, and remain, not to everyone's taste. John Morely, *Death, Heaven and the Victorians* (University of Pittsburgh Press: 1971) p. 44, accuses them of 'snobbery, triviality and lack of taste'.

[104]*The Morning Post,* 16 Nov. 1868.

Good Shepherd and his conditional baptism, profession of faith and first Communion took place on 8 December 1868[105], the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.[106]

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[105]Hunter Blair, following a public letter of Capel, gives the place of Bute's reception as the convent of *Marie Reparatrice* at Harley House, home to the Sisters of Notre Dame. There is no mention of place in the Bute papers, and there was no convent of the Sisters of Notre Dame in Hammersmith. Capel repeatedly exhorted Bute to come to Hammersmith, where there was a convent of the Sisters of the Good Shepherd, and it was a convent of their order that Bute later founded in gratitude at Cardiff. One of two things occurred: either Bute went to Notre Dame and was received there by Capel, who had somehow learned of his whereabouts, or else Bute went to Hammersmith and Capel subsequently lied about the location. It is difficult to see how he could have made a mistake. In May 1868 he promised the Sisters at Hammersmith that Bute would found a convent of the Good Shepherd at Cardiff. [Anon., *A Daughter of the Venerable Mother Pelletier: Sister Mary of the Sacred Heart Ryder* (Convent of the Good Shepherd: London, 1902) p. 202]. This was about the time of Capel's visit to Oxford, and it is just possible that Bute had made such a promise. It is also possible, given Capel's lack of probity with money (to be discussed below) that he had made the promise, trusting to influence Bute afterwards. The promise was not fulfilled until nearly three years later.

[106]HB, p.70.

VI

Lothair?

'Extremely good-looking, highly bred, and most ingenuous ... '

Having taken the momentous step of joining the Catholic Church, Bute knew quite well the storm that would break. He left at once for the Mediterranean and spent the winter there on the *Lady Bird* with Edith, who must have been devastated by Harry's death. Capel very conveniently found that his health needed some time by the sea, and Bute's yacht was more appealing than St Leonard's. Sneyd, now his secretary, was in the party as well. Bute spent Christmas with the Scott Murrays at Nice. 'He was always ready to join in any fun, as long as he had not to meet strangers'.[1] At the end of his time there, he was just leaving when he remembered that he had forgotten to say good bye to the 'ugly governess. He insisted on jumping out of the carriage and rushing up to the schoolroom.'[2]

In the early spring he went to Rome, where he was confirmed by Pius IX in the Sistine Chapel. Hartwell de la Garde Grissell,[3] a former Oxford man, was chamberlain to Pius IX, and Bute struck up a friendship with him. About this time, Capel was complaining of Bute's 'idleness'[4] which suggests that during the religious and romantic emotional turmoil of the autumn he had become thoroughly exhausted. From Rome, he and his whole party went for a third time to the Holy Land. He wrote again to Miss Skene, to assure her that he was '*very* comfortable'[5] as a Catholic. He took a certain pride in telling her that he was 'like the *slowest* type of English Catholicism'.[6] It was not mere posturing. All his life he disliked what he considered

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[1]HB, p.73.

[2]*Ibid.*

[3]Grissell, 1839-1907, had matriculated at Brasenose in 1859, aged 19 and become a Roman Catholic the year before Bute. (Gorman *Converts* p.125). He lived in Italy most of his life, and collected a large body of relics, which he left to the Jesuit church of St Aloysius in Oxford.

[4] HB, p.75.

[5]*Ibid.*, p.77.

[6]*Ibid.*

unnecessary display, as much as he loved heartfelt devotion. He was, he told her, 'perfectly at peace in the Church', with his taste for controversy gone.

The newspapers broke the story of the 'perversion' of the Marquess of Bute in January 1869. *The Glasgow Herald* doubted 'whether a young man who has changed his religion with this facility is made of the stuff which has much personal influence over other men.'[7] But it was shrewd enough to realise that the Marquess was not placing his whole fortune at the service of Rome. 'A young nobleman in such a position and with such an income is not in the least likely to do more than give a liberal support to a few charitable institutions and subscribe handsomely to the buildings and clergy of his communion wherever he may reside.'[8] It took, however, a gloomy view of his future prospects.

> If ... as seems ... likely this conversion or perversion is the result of priestly influences acting upon a weak, ductile and naturally superstitious mind, we may expect the continual eclipse of all intellectual vigour; for these influences will never leave the Marquis but darken and darken around him as long as he lives. The Roman Church knows well how to treat such cases and how to use them for her own advantage.[9]

The storm, coupled with the eccentricity of Bute's character, caught Disraeli's attention, which was possibly further excited by the No Popery furore aroused by the meeting of the First Vatican Council in 1869-70. Disraeli had briefly met Bute in 1867 when in Edinburgh.[10] Disraeli had climbed the greasy poles of both Society and Government but he had begun as an outsider; and his attention was always caught by singular people (he had, after all, married one.) Probably he had earlier been intrigued by Bute's relationship with his Protestant lady. Disraeli had an axe to grind himself, for he had originally believed he had Archbishop Henry Edward Manning's support for his attempts to set up a Catholic University with lay control in Dublin. The attempt broke down. 'Manning transferred his allegiance from Disraeli to his hated rival, and Disraeli was out of office by the end of the year. It was understandable for Disraeli to feel that Manning had deceived him.'[11] Bute's earlier romance and his conversion

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[7]*The Glasgow Herald,* 5 Jan. 1869.

[8]*Ibid.*

[9]*Ibid.,* 7 Jan 1869.

[10]W. F. Monypenny and G. E. Buckle, *The Life of Benjamin Disraeli, Earl of Beaconsfield* (John Murray: London, 1910-1920), 6 vols, Vol IV (by Buckle) p. 558.

[11]Benjamin Disraeli, *Lothair,* ed. Vernon Bogdanor (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1975) intro. p. viii.

became the starting point of his latest novel, an intriguing *roman à clef* with the eponymous hero *Lothair.*[12] It is remarkable as being a contemporary account of Bute more than a few sentences long.

Corisande, like Lady Albertha, is the sixth daughter of a Duke (who is never given a further name). He has been identified with Albertha's father, the Duke of Abercorn.[13] Corisande is very young when, at the start of the novel, her brother introduces his Oxford friend into the family circle. Lothair, the only child of a close friend of the Duchess, has been reared by the forbidding figure of his maternal uncle, one of his two guardians, 'a keen, hard man, honourable and just, but with no softness of heart or manner. He guarded with precise knowledge and with unceasing vigilance Lothair's vast inheritance, which was in many counties and in more than one kingdom'[14] This is a fair description of Charles Stuart, though Disraeli makes the guardian deliberately unlike him in having him rear Lothair in the remote vastness of Scotland. Part of the sport with a *roman à clef* lies in separating the real clues to identity from the liberally-scattered red herrings. Disraeli's wife was the widow of 'the Glamorgan lawyer and industrialist Wyndham Lewis',[15] and he had therefore an excellent knowledge of, and contacts with, the Cardiff area, where Charles Stuart was Trustee. Lothair's other guardian is a Catholic convert, now a Cardinal, and unmistakably drawn from the emaciated figure of Manning (who was not yet a Cardinal himself). Lothair, unused to the warmth of family life, falls in love not so much with Corisande as with her family. His every word reveals his immaturity and *naïveté*, and with good sense, and considerable self control, the Duchess forbids him to speak to Corisande of his love. Self control because Lothair, like Bute, is heir to a huge fortune.

It has been usual to argue that Bute was not very like Lothair,[16] partly because Lothair is pictured wavering. Bute has been drawn as a man of fixed purpose, perhaps because in later life he sustained his great enthusiasms for art and architecture. Yet he wrote of himself: 'I am myself often vacillating.'[17] Ironically, it is in the areas where Lothair is most conventional

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[12]Disraeli was out of office and had 'some real leisure for the first time in many years.' He kept his work on *Lothair* entirely private, and his private secretary, Montague Corry, only knew of it when he 'read the advertisement in the journals'. Robert Blake, *Disraeli* (Eyre & Spottiswood: London, 1966) pp.148-9.

[13]George W. E. Russell, *Portraits of the Seventies* (T. Fisher Unwin, Ltd: London, 1916).

[14]The Right Hon. Benjamin Disraeli, *Lothair* (Longmans, Green and Co.: London, 1881 edition) p.4.

[15]JD, p.26.

[16]e.g. Thom Braun, *Disraeli the Novelist* (George Allen & Unwin: London, 1981) p. 132.

[17]BU/21/93/1 Bute to Gwendolen, later dated 4 Feb.1872.

that he is most unlike Bute, who as has been said, was bored by 'sport' and no connoisseur of horses.

Yet in the early chapters, Bute's unease in society is wonderfully captured, with Lothair risking all sorts of social solecisms from his reluctance to approach strangers. Even more telling is the scene in which Lothair, still under age, approaches his solicitor to ask for money he has promised to a friend to help him out of difficulties.

> 'Your Lordship has an objection to apply to the trustees?' enquired Mr. Giles.
> 'That is the point of the whole of my statement,' said Lothair, somewhat impatiently.
> 'And yet it is the right and regular thing,' said Mr Giles.
> 'It may be right and it may be regular, but it is out of the question.'
> 'Then we will say no more about it ... Don't you think I could see these people,' said Mr Giles, 'and talk to them, and gain a little time. We only want a little time.'
> 'No,' said Lothair, in a peremptory tone. 'I said I would do it, and it must be done, and at once.'[18]

There is something very like Bute in the combination of imperiousness and impracticality, and total lack of concern for the 'right and regular thing'. Even more like him is the ease with which Lothair is made grateful to Mr Giles, who lends him the money personally, and uses this as an excuse to manoeuvre him into dinner at his house, providing Mrs Giles with a huge social *coup.*[19] The gratitude Lothair easily feels is mentioned throughout the book, and Bute himself responded instantly to kindness and never forgot it. The novel is perhaps cleverest in portraying the difference between the private, loquacious Lothair, who is full of confidences and of wit, and the public figure who is 'monosyllabic and absent.'[20] Admittedly, Lothair on this occasion has a reason lacking to Bute, for he has just glimpsed the beautiful face of Theodora, the icon of Italian republicanism (a popular cause in England, especially among Liberals), and has begun to love her. Nevertheless, the difference between the venality of the

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[18]Disraeli, *Lothair*, p. 26.

[19]The description of her table silver which finally rises to a figure of Britannia herself and 'illustrated with many lights a glowing inscription which described the fervent feelings of a grateful client' (p.29) is not as Braun, *Disraeli* p.137 suggests, a reflection of Disraeli's love of grandiose table decorations. It is a satire of Apollonia's pretensions and lack of taste.

[20]Disraeli, *Lothair*, p.34.

social parasite, and Lothair's seriousness is beautifully drawn, as is his failure to realise that he is being toadied to.

For a time, however, Lothair does not have an opportunity to gain Theodora's friendship. Instead, he is absorbed by the Catholic aristocracy, especially Lord and Lady St Jerome, said to have been based on Lord Howard of Glossop and his first wife.[21] Disraeli raises the old terror that all Roman Catholics are, essentially, traitors for their loyalty to Rome, and introduces 'Monsignore Catesby ... a youthful member of an ancient English house' who has inherited the 'beauty of their form and countenance'.[22] He becomes Lothair's chief Catholic mentor. The suave Catesby, named for the Guy Fawkes conspirator, Robert Catesby, is a portrait of Capel. Disraeli creates an ingenious and largely fallacious picture of Lothair/Bute being manoeuvred towards Catholicism by those around him who introduce him to its positive aspects, including cultivated Catholics and the beauty and sincerity of its services, whilst avoiding all controversy. Perhaps it was simply beyond Disraeli to imagine a character with Bute's restless taste for theological argument, or possibly he preferred to show what his age imagined to be the chief snare of Catholicism: the genius of its priests and apologists to present only the 'points on which we agree'.[23]

Lothair's patrons show him Roman Catholicism as the one really appropriate and sophisticated religion, whilst Disraeli has a little fun depicting a Good Friday fasting picnic,[24] where they dine on lobster sandwiches.[25] Meanwhile, Lothair is falling in love with Clare Arundel,[26] who seems destined to become a nun. She can, it is suggested, only remain in the world, if she marries 'a spirit as exalted and as energetic as her own',[27] in other words, Lothair.

Lothair begins to enjoy London Society, though his closeness to the Arundels inevitably distances him from the Duke and Lady Corisande. He is trapped between unremitting pressure from the Roman clerics and the somewhat oppressive plans of Mr Giles for his

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[21]Benjamin Disraeli, *Lothair,* ed. Vernon Bogdanor, explanatory notes, p.377.

[22]Disraeli, *Lothair*, p.62.

[23]*Ibid.*, p.59.

[24]The Victorians specialised in picnics with 'a judicious mixture of the sexes' and abundant food with all the trimmings. Georgina Battiscombe, *English Picnics* (The Harvill Press: London, 1949) p.91.

[25]Disraeli, *Lothair*, p.63.

[26]Duke of Norfolk, whose heir is the Earl of Arundel, has his chief seat in that town.

[27]Disraeli, *Lothair*, p.66.

majority: 'a vista of balls and banquets, and illuminations and addresses, of ceaseless sports and speeches, and processions alike endless.'[28] Bolting on an excuse back to Oxford, Lothair rescues Theodora and her husband Colonel Campion from a carriage accident.

Lothair falls deeply in love with Theodora. One of the few real similarities between Bute and Disraeli was their genuine liking for female society, their ease in it, and their attraction to older women. It is impossible to guess if Disraeli gave Lothair this feature because he had heard of it or observed it in Bute, or because it was so natural to Disraeli himself. Perhaps, he gave it to Lothair because it was one point where he could fully sympathise with the original of his hero. In the midst of all the social manoeuvring for his favour, based solely on his wealth and position, Theodora introduces him to the idea of natural religion, and the possibility of action. Her reference to her pearls, dedicated to her political cause, introduces one of the scenes most clearly based on Bute, that of Lothair at the jewellers, buying pearls: 'what I want are pearls. That necklace which you have shown me is like the necklace of a doll. I want pearls, such as you see them in Italian pictures, Titians and Giorgiones, such as a Queen of Cyprus would wear. I want ropes of pearls.'[29]

These become a gift to Theodora - anonymous, since she is married, but she plainly understands from whom they come, and writes a note, encloses it in their case, seals it and entrusts it to Lothair's care. They speak of death, and especially death for a great cause. She anticipates her own, Lothair asking that if she dies before him, she will visit him once.

The celebrations of Lothair's majority are the excuse for a satire of 'Soapy Sam' Wilberforce, and 'Mr. Smylie', a High Church ritualist who beautifully articulates the Anglo-Catholic position: 'Rome may come to me ... the best thing it could do. This is the real Church without Romish error.'[30] The uneasy conjunction of Wilberforce and Smylie (not to mention the theological position) suggests that the latter could owe a good deal to Liddon, who had been appointed to and removed from a post at Cuddesdon, the pioneering theological college, by Wilberforce. Disraeli makes Lothair a non-smoker, which successfully establishes him as a slightly anti-social oddity, but which was far from the truth, as Bute smoked heavily. Since Theodora has opened Lothair's eyes to the wider sphere of action, he is no longer an easy prey to the Catholic party, who seek to persuade him that the only life is in religion, and the only true religion in the Roman Catholic Church.

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[28]*Ibid.*, p.93.

[29]*Ibid.*, p.173.

[30]*Ibid.*, p.231.

Theodora's cause is the reunification of Italy, and the improbabilities of an Italian campaign to which Lothair lends his personal support, appearing beside Theodora on the battle-fields, and her death, and his subsequent illness seem to have nothing to do with Bute. Lothair is nursed back to health by Clare Arundel, but a plot to manoeuvre him into the Catholic Church by a spurious miracle fails when Theodora keeps her promise to appear to him just once after her death, and he in turn keeps his promise, made on her deathbed, not to enter the Catholic Church. A visit to Palestine and a conversation with a Syrian called Paraclete reaffirm to Lothair the need for a biblically-based religion. He returns home, and after more vicissitudes finds himself alone with Corisande. They open the box containing Theodora's pearls, and find she has written inside 'The offering of Theodora to Lothair's bride.'[31] He gives them to Corisande, and is given a rose in return.

Whilst it is perfectly true that Disraeli is not at his best in drawing characters, Lothair is in fact a most revealing caricature of Bute. If Disraeli singularly failed to get inside Bute, to understand the springs of thought and action, he nevertheless presented a very fair portrait of the way he appeared to others. He puts into the Cardinal's mouth an affectionate summing up of Bute/Lothair: 'Extremely good-looking, highly bred, and most ingenuous; a considerable intelligence and not untrained; but the most absolutely unaffected person I have ever encountered.'[32] There are many telling pictures of Bute fawned on in society, of his sudden moments of shyness, and above all of his commissioning his jeweller to create lovely things. The endless susceptibility to women is Bute's, and the romanticism, though one feels that his lively sense of the ridiculous might have prevented him jumping into a hansom, exclaiming, ' 'tis the gondola of London.'[33] Above all, Disraeli caught Bute's tendency to vacillate. *Lothair* was published in 1870, the year in which the Italian army finally occupied Rome.[34] The first edition was exhausted in two days, and eight editions were produced that year.[35]

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[31]*Ibid.*, p.485.

[32]*Ibid.*, p.42.

[33]*Ibid.*, p.112.

[34]Critical reaction to *Lothair* was mixed. *Blackwoods Magazine,* vol.107, pp.773-96, June 1870, carried a review of such staggering anti-semitism that even sections of the Victorian press protested. *The Quarterly Review* vol.129, pp.63-87, July 1870, was sardonic, remarking 'When Theodora was dead, and Clare Arundel had taken the veil, what was left for Lothair but to return to his old love, Lady Corisande.' Henry James, writing in *Atlantic Monthly*, vol.26, pp.249-51, August 1870, was kind. Disraeli might 'not have strictly reproduced a perfect society of "swells," but he has very fairly reflected one.' Further contemporary reaction can be found in R. W. Stewart, ed., *Disraeli's Novels Reviewed* (The Scarecrow Press, Inc: Metuchen, N. J., 1975) pp.246ff.

[35] *Lothair* ,ed Bogdanor, intro., p.ix.

Bute was still abroad when the book was published, although he had returned to Britain for a short time in the autumn of 1869, probably because he wanted to see Cardiff Castle, on which work had started in the spring. It was a project which had been suggested long before. The original building on the site had been a square Roman fort. The Normans built a castle in one part of the ground, and in the late mediaeval period the Earl of Warwick followed fashion by erecting a dwelling-house a little apart from the original castle. However, what had been a fair sized building in the middle ages no longer gave adequate accommodation. Cardiff Castle had long been an inconveniently cramped house for a nobleman, or, indeed, any well-to-do man. It was simply too small for entertaining. The second Marquess had found it so himself, and the first had rarely used it at all.[36]

In 1865, Bute had met one of the most original architects of the Victorian period, William Burges.[37] Both men were passionately interested in history. Bute had fallen in love with the Gothic style before his ninth birthday, the style in which Burges invariably built. It is not clear if they first met because Burges had already been asked to prepare a report on restoring Cardiff Castle, or if he was asked to make the report following a chance encounter. There is no reference to Burges in the few papers of this period which survive in the Bute archive. It is impossible to guess at what point shared enthusiasms deepened into the friendship which is apparent as soon as references to Burges appear, when it frequently sounds as if Bute is echoing Burges' words. Thus Burges refers to the building as having been 'restored over and over again'[38] and Bute to its being 'by no means satisfactory ... the victim of every barbarism since the Renaissance'[39] which sounds like an unbowdlerised version of the same words. Burges was known for his hot temper.

His report was presented in February 1866. It dealt primarily with the castle as an antiquarian relic, and took as axiomatic that nothing must be done to damage the ancient remains of the mediaeval castle, which Burges pointed out had been built over a Roman original.[40] It suggested three possible courses of action, the strictly conservative, designed merely to protect existing remains, the antiquarian, designed to explore them a little, and the 'modern'. This latter would ensure the preservation of genuinely old walling, 'all that the antiquarian can

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[36]JD, *passim.*

[37]William Burges 1821-81. A full account of his life and work is given by J. Mordaunt Crook, *William Burges and the High Victorian Dream* (John Murray: London, 1981).

[38]WB/2 Report on Cardiff Castle, 26 Feb. 1866.

[39]BU/21/93/5 Bute to Gwen, 28 Feb. 1872.

[40]WB/2, Report on Cardiff Castle, 26 Feb. 1866.

possibly care about ... the supposed work of Robert Earl of Gloucester',[41] whilst allowing for new building which would recreate what might originally have been there. Burges argued passionately for the latter course, which would allow him the creative space for a superb example of the Victorian Gothic. He had to convince, not the young Bute, who was so easily enthusiastic, but his staid trustees, especially the conventional Stuart. To win them over, the argument was on traditional lines, with an appeal to the rank of his patron.

> In considering these three courses there is no doubt at all, that in any age other than the present the last mentioned one is that which would most certainly have been adopted in as much as it is the most suited to the circumstances of the case; for we must never lose sight of the fact that Cardiff Castle is not an antiquarian ruin but the seat of the Marquess of Bute.

If Burges needed the approval of the trustees, he also needed to reassure the young Marquess that he would not be considered a vandal.

> On the contrary were the remains of high interest in the history of architecture or precious on account of their art, I should most unhesitatingly advise the strictly conservative treatment but this is by no means the case. Every part of the castle has been restored over and over again. The moat and ancient precincts have to a great degree disappeared and all that the antiquarian can possibly care about, viz. the great wall (the supposed work of Robert, Earl of Gloucester) will remain unmutilated.[42]

Bute's interest was caught, but before work could start, he had his bitter row with Stuart. Since Bute had accused his guardian and trustee of overspending, and cast doubt on his financial probity, it is hardly surprising that this plan for the Castle was suspended. The one exception seems to have been a private sitting room for Bute. Burges 'converted a dull Georgian bedroom into a splendid Gothic fantasy, a private retreat for his patron ... Burges banished the sash windows, lowered the ceiling, and commissioned from Charles Rossiter a deep painted frieze depicting the life of St Blaan.'[43] More usually St Blane, he is the most important of the Celtic saints of the island of Bute, and the considerable remains of the monastery he founded, among the most important in Scotland, were owned by the young Lord

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[41]*Ibid.*

[42]*Ibid.*

[43]Matthew Williams, 'Gorgeously Arrayed in Blue and Gold', *Country Life,* 5 Mar. 1998, pp.56-9.

Bute. One of the first acts of his majority was to give the go-ahead for the ambitious new tower to be built and decorated by Burges. Work started in the spring of 1869.

The plans for Cardiff Castle had always included a clock tower at the south west corner, containing two smoking rooms: a winter room low in the tower, and a summer smoking room at its top. The theme of the lower room was the passage of time, appropriately for a clock tower. The passing seasons were evoked by the signs of the zodiac, and figures of the sun and moon. The dominating feature was the fireplace. Burges, who was 'so short, quite tiny', ugly and plump,[44] put a burning intensity into this fireplace. Youthful, tall, elegant lovers radiated on it. A girl warmed herself by a painted fire, her cheeks reddened by it, or by the words and the presence of a beautiful boy who leaned over her, his hand slipping down her shoulder. Another couple went skating, which gave the excuse for the supporting arm and the protection of this boy, the timidity of his girl. Couples pursued each other as much as their putative target while their bows and arrows echoed Cupid's own. Regal, he stood to receive the homage Virgil demanded for him in the inscription, for he 'conquers everything and we all yield to love.' His support was Capricorn, the goat, which is appropriate for a room centred on the zodiac and for a god centred on lust.

From the beginning, the summer smoking room was to have two tiers, with an open gallery above the main room, and both with rows of windows. The design always was mediaeval, but, by the time Burges came to exhibit his ideas for the interior at the Royal Academy the following summer, it had also become oriental, in fact a recreation of the 'grand smoke' at Chios, on Bute's tour of Greece in 1866, just before plans for the new rooms were suspended. The seating is based on divans, the draught is blowing from the open windows, the company of youths and grown men are smoking chilbooks. Recreating Bute's experience, the older man is 'doing' a cigarette, anachronistic for the period suggested by the costumes and decoration.

The theme of the design for the walls of the summer smoking room was Christian iconography. The top gallery had a mural of the Fall and Expulsion from Eden, whilst, appropriately for a room which echoed the East, the murals in the lower room told the story of St George, the saint the Crusaders are said to have brought back from there. The plans changed. When the room was built, the walls were decorated on the lower tier with illustrations of the stories of the signs of the Zodiac, and on the upper tier with the four elements. It is impossible to be certain why the change was made. Most plausible is the

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[44]BU/89/2/2 Gwen to Angela, undated.

suggestion[45] that Bute had not been aware of the attention the new tower would attract. When he became conscious that it would be very much in the public eye, he wanted to remove from it everything that might draw attention to his still-notorious conversion. Of course, however religious, a young man might well feel that the walls of a smoking room, dedicated to easy male socialising and 'loose talk', are not the best place for Christian iconography.

The signs of the Zodiac came from Burges' imagination and not Bute's.[46] Burges was interested in Rosicrucianism, in which astrology is important. The upper tier plays a good deal with the idea of minerals, another interest of Rosicrucianism, since one of its roots was in the mining and mineral-working tradition of the Tübingen area of Germany.[47] It seems that Burges was fascinated by the fact that his patron was in real life the owner of mineral wealth. Introducing the elements sparked another idea. The pillars supporting the gallery had originally been decorated with wyverns, and then with angels, each pillar essentially the same. In the new transformation, they became each of the eight winds, beautifully, individually and exotically personalised.

Yet it is love which dominates this room as it does the winter smoking room. Was it Burges or Bute who chose the theme? The mural of the zodiac exploits every romantic nuance; the end wall of the summer smoking room is covered with the erotic story of Psyche, and the fireplace itself is alight with courtly love transformed by sensuality. Again, Cupid dominates the fireplace. Burges had originally intended to depict him standing quite formally, but changed him into a much more approachable seated figure, absorbed in a pair of love birds on his wrists. Below him is his summer motto *aestate viresco* or 'in summer I flourish'. Under him couples court and hunt through a summer landscape.

Bute's 'bachelor bedroom' was between these two rooms, to give him a private suite of three rooms in the tower. This room too had been intended to have a religious theme, with a mural crucifix. That was changed, and instead the walls and ceiling were covered with images and mythology of mineral wealth and alchemy, very much Burges' themes. The furniture was of course also designed by Burges. He was not only an architect; he designed whole rooms, with painted walls, fabulous textiles, and furniture. The furniture was massive, Gothic in every sense of that over-used word, and decorated with inlays, fabrics and painting. At Cardiff,

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[45]Matthew Williams, Keeper of the Collections at Cardiff Castle, *pers. com.*

[46] Mordaunt Crook, *Burges,* p.264 suggests that 'those astrological complexities were surely of [Bute's] own devising' but it was another ten years before Bute became interested in astrology.

[47]Christopher McIntosh, *The Rosy Cross Unveiled* (The Aquarian Press: Wellingborough, 1980) p.45.

none of the pieces is painted; instead they 'rely for their decoration on high quality carving and marquetry. In choosing carved and inlaid rather than painted furniture, Burges made use of the excellent workmen available locally in Cardiff's Tyndale Street.'[48] Wit runs through his pieces, rebuses abound, and, although he has certain well-loved themes, each is carefully chosen as appropriate to its setting.

Years earlier, Burges had drawn the Sleeping Beauty to illustrate Tennyson's poem *The Day Dream*, where the poet quite explicitly viewed the fairy story as a parable of sexual awakening. A version of this was painted for Burges by Holiday upon the head of his own bed, where a luxurious demi-nude with auburn hair is about to be awakened by her prince. Burges had imagined a beautiful bed for her. He recreated this bed, complete with its cushions, for the young Bute.[49]

Meanwhile, Bute's life was occupied in a somewhat more down-to-earth fashion. He had gone to Rome for the Vatican Council of 1869. He was, according to Hunter Blair, in the 'inopportunist' party of those reluctant to see the Pope declared infallible, but once the decree was promulgated, accepted it as a good Catholic. All in Rome was not serious. He became friendly with Sir John and Lady Sebright. He called her 'a very vivacious lady, who would have her joke even in the Catacombs'.[50] His friend and secretary George Sneyd was with him most of this time. They finally returned in August 1870, and most of that autumn and winter was spent at Cardiff or on Bute.

On this return, Bute finally did what Capel had been promising he would do since his conversion.[51] He put in motion the creation of a new house for the order at whose Hammersmith convent he had stayed to be received into the Catholic church. The 'Nuns of the Good Shepherd'[52] were to have a house and grounds outside Cardiff, at Pen-y-lan, where a barn with an 'ecclesiastical appearance' was to be converted into a chapel. The idea was a

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[48]Matthew Williams, 'William Burges' Furniture for Cardiff Castle', *Decorative Arts Society Journal*, No. 16: 1991, pp.14-19.

[49]M. Williams, *pers. com.*

[50]HB, p.90.

[51]Capel had links with the order, which had Houses at both Hammersmith and St Leonard's on Sea, where his home was. The order had been established in England in the middle years of the nineteenth century. It was principally concerned with reclaiming fallen women. John N. Murphy, *Terra Incognita* (Longmans, Green and Co: London, 1873) p.195.

[52]Anon., prob. Fr. Cronin, 'The Story of the Foundation of the Convent of the Good Shepherd, Pen-y-lan, Cardiff' *Catholic Parish Magazine of St Peter's Cardiff*, November 1922, p.ii.

refuge for fallen women, 'always so desirable in a seaport town',[53] with a laundry for the women to support themselves by their work,[54] together with provision for children and a school for them.

Two nuns came to Cardiff to look at the site, and the Marquess went out to Pen-y-lan to meet them, 'running towards [them] and leaving no time to take off [their] black aprons. He expressed great pleasure at seeing "the pretty white habit". He was afraid [they] would have come looking like quakeresses.' The bulk of the work was to be done by the Marquess's builder and clerk of works, Mr Barnett, and he left the decisions on this to him and the builders, confident, he said, that they would not put him to any 'unnecessary expense'. The chapel he wanted 'fitted up in a very simple but somewhat handsome manner by my architect, Mr Burges'.[55] The picture of the impulsive young man running towards the nuns, and his concern with avoiding 'unnecessary expense' is somehow very typical of the real Bute, and very unlike his public image.

Jane Austen's famous opening lines suggest that society should have been well aware that Bute was very definitely in want of a wife. In his case the problem was that he needed to choose one who was already a Catholic, since his past experience had taught him of the heart-breaking difficulties attached to loving a girl who was a Protestant. In 1871 he was attracted to Lady Holland's adopted daughter, Marie Fox. She was about twenty-one years old, petite with 'black hair and sparkling eyes'.[56] The only remaining account of the courtship is from the Fox family.[57] No letter between him and Marie survives.

Situated as she was, at the centre of society, Marie was not short of admirers, but Lord Bute was an outstanding prospect, offering not only his impeccable birth and title, but his fortune. That Lady Holland was particularly concerned with engineering a good catch is confirmed by the account of her earlier relationship with Lord Rosebery, of which his version is that Marie refused him on the grounds of religion before he had even contemplated marriage, and Lady

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[53]*Ibid.*

[54]Protestants, as well as Catholics, had institutions for fallen women. Laundries were the usual way of providing the women with work and allowing them to support themselves. It was harder to get admission to the Protestant institutions. 'No girls were ever intentionally admitted who were diseased, otherwise disabled or pregnant.' Olive Checkland, *Philanthropy in Victorian Scotland* (John Donald: Edinburgh, 1980) p.238.

[55]Anon., 'Pen-y-lan', *Parish Magazine of St Peter's Cardiff.*

[56]Ed. Julia Cartwright, *The Journals of Lady Knightley of Fawsley* (John Murray: London, 1915) p.233.

[57]Giles Stephen Holland Fox-Strangways, Earl of Ilchester, *Chronicles of Holland House* (John Murray: London, 1937) p.434.

Holland wrote, several years later, expressing mingled regret and happiness that he had not in the end married her.[58]

Marie seemed in every way perfect for Bute, the more so as she and her mother were Catholic, and she had been very much brought up as part of society. Exactly what happened next is uncertain. In that summer and the next Lady Holland felt quite sure that Marie had been wronged, and she gave her considerable energies to ensuring that her version of the facts was circulated. Time, and missing letters, have somewhat blurred the lines of her account, but a letter from a friend suggests how carefully controlled it was: 'I have not hesitated to state the case exactly as it appears by your last letter to such people as I think you would like to know it ... I think if you could hear all that is said you would not be dissatisfied ... you would I think find much less is said for His side than you would expect.'[59]

This version of events is reflected in the account in the later *Chronicles of Holland House*: that Marie's adoptive father being dead, Bute went to speak to her mother. He was, it seems, a little disturbed about the fact she was adopted. 'Bute asked to see the papers which referred to Marie's birth. Lady Holland prevaricated. She replied that he should have made the request long before.'[60] Bute wanted to marry Marie, but only if her birth was respectable. If she was a bastard, he was not prepared to make her his Marchioness, however proper her upbringing and adoption, and despite the fact that she was accepted by society, and had been presented at Court. When 'Bute went even further, and demanded to be put in touch with the girl's father, any question of an engagement was speedily at an end.'[61]

To support this story there are two letters from Bute in the Holland House papers. In the first Bute explains he has pressing business in the Lords and at Cardiff.

> Under these circumstances I hardly think myself justified in availing myself of your offer till my return, which you need not doubt will be as soon as possible ... I venture at once to say that the unavoidable awkwardness of the meeting can be obviated by your entrusting the papers at the proper time to one of your

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[58]James, *Rosebery,* p.45.

[59]BL add. ms 52159 f245 Charles Douglas to Lady Holland, 14 Mar. 1872.

[60]Ilchester, *Holland House,* p.434.

[61]*Ibid.*

> confidential friends or advisers, with whom this purely legal affair can be transacted in the ordinary legal manner.[62]

Here, Lady Holland has 'offered' to show Bute papers. She had thought that it would take 'interference at the right moment'[63] to persuade Bute to make an offer to Marie. That would, of course, be the time when he might feel his courtship had not quite amounted to commitment on his side, but that there was a possibility that Marie had read it as such. Once a gentleman had deliberately engaged a girl's love, once it was plain to those around him that a proposal was imminent, he could not draw back. So this would indicate that Lady Holland was attempting to manoeuvre Bute into an engagement before he himself had made a decision.

Bute's letter plainly caused Lady Holland offence, and the next letter, two days later, begins with an apology, in which he carefully implies that he did not believe the story that Marie was the illegitimate daughter of Lord Holland.

> I did not mean to imply that there could be anything to cause a feeling of awkwardness on your part. I meant that to myself it was painful, as it is, to make in relation to Miss Fox such enquiries as for the sake of possible children, in the event of marriage, I feel it my duty to make. The investigation of such a document as a certificate of marriage (which forms, I presume, one of the papers) appears to me to come within the description of a legal matter, and one of those which, especially in circumstances analogous [*sic*) to the present, are usually and best transacted in the most formal manner ... I much regret that you should feel that I have been tardy in seeking the explanation which you are so good as to afford me. It is not 'long ago' since those circumstances arose which alone, in my judgment, justified me in claiming participation in a family secret to which you attached so much importance.[64]

It appears that Lady Holland took Bute's advice and placed what papers she had in the keeping of Mary Beauchamp, the young wife of the Sixth Earl.[65] Lady Holland had been extremely hopeful that Bute would ask Marie to marry him, but Lady Beauchamp had the unenviable task of telling her of the 'tone of disappointment wh. filled Lord Bute's letter at

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[62]BL add. ms 52159 ff224-5 Bute to Lady Holland, 20 June 1871.

[63]BL add. ms 52159 f242 Charles Douglas to Lady Holland, 14 Mar. 1872.

[64]BL add. ms 52159 ff226-7 Bute to Lady Holland, 22 June 1871.

[65]Mary Catherine Beauchamp, 1844-1876, had married in 1868. BP vol. II.

being hindered from seeking the full information wh. he desired to obtain. Dear Lady Holland I am sorry - but hope things will still come right.'[66]

By the end of July Bute was telling Miss Skene: 'There is no engagement between Miss - and myself, and nothing is less likely than that there ever should be ... here I am thrown out on the world again, feeling very lonely and desolate. My future, indeed, looks pretty blank just now'.[67]

If this was all that was known of Marie, and of the story, there would be no reason to doubt the official Holland House version, even although Mgr. Capel had reported that the breach was 'six of one & half a dozen of the other.'[68] In fact, later events and comment must cast doubt on the tidy Holland House story. The following summer, 1872, Marie was married to Prince Louis Liechtenstein, who had seen all the papers relating to her. Some of the most crucial papers, including the birth certificate, seem to have related to another girl.[69] Pressure was brought to bear on Lady Holland to reveal more, and she either could or would not do so.

The official tale is that Marie then 'lost her head and accused Lady Holland of unkindness in her youth, which was certainly very far from the truth'.[70] Marie in fact went a lot further than this. What distressed Lady Holland most was that Marie 'accused her of "encouraging men in being immoral to [her]" '[71] whilst under her roof. In its first stages this unhappy quarrel appears to have preoccupied Lady Holland almost to the exclusion of everything else, and letters to and from her are almost exclusively concerned with it. Friends tried to heal the breach, suggesting that it was mis-reporting or the thoughtlessness of youth. Unfortunately Lady Holland had seen the accusations in Marie's own hand, so could not believe there had been a mistake.

Gradually, friends and employees came forward to admit that for years Marie had been making similar accusations. Lady Holland's niece reported that even whilst she had seen Marie 'overwhelmed with kindness and affection'[72] the girl had been telling tales of her

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[66]BL add. ms 52159 ff.228-9 Mary Beauchamp to Lady Holland, 10 July 1871.

[67]HB, p.105, quoting Bute to Miss Skene, 29 July 1871.

[68]BL add. ms 52159 f.244 Charles Douglas to Lady Holland, 14 Mar. 1872.

[69]*Holland House,* p.436.

[70]*Ibid.*, p.437.

[71]BL add. ms 52160 f.107 Lady Holland to the Rev'd. C. Comberbach, [6 Mar.?] 1873.

[72]BL add. ms 52160 ff.224-226 Carrie Clark to Miss Probyn, 8 Dec. 1874.

sufferings. Worse, the niece had borne 'the blame of many stories put on [her] most ungenerously by Marie.'[73] More or less the same account was given by another girl who had been in a 'dependent position'[74] in the Holland household during Marie's girlhood and who spoke of 'her horrible falseness with regard to you, smiling in your face & saying the most outrageous things behind your back.'[75] From Lady Holland's point of view, probably most damning was the evidence from her husband's former agent, who said that Marie's nurse claimed that Marie had been peeping at some improper things relating to a footman through a hole in the wall 'which was all nonsense, as there was only an indent in the wall and no hole'.[76] Whether or not Marie had been sexually abused by a servant, as Lady Holland came to suspect,[77] Marie's imagination plainly was vivid and creative, and she had made herself the heroine of dramas, especially sexual dramas, from at least her early teens.

Not only did Bute have a most punctilious regard for the truth; he also had a strong dislike of dramatic scenes. He was in addition hypersensitive to any suggestion of being deceived. One of the allegations now made against Marie was that she changed her love 'so easily' from one man to another and 'wrote love letters at the same time' to different men.[78] If Bute had suspected that she was behaving this way towards him, he would indubitably have considered himself 'thrown out on the world again, feeling very lonely and desolate'. The most probable candidate for the alternative suitor is the Austrian Prince whom she had met in 1870. He returned to England in 1871, the year of Bute's courtship. After Marie's tragically early death, the Prince was in the Mediterranean at the same time as Bute, and sought a meeting with him. Bute's tone suggests that he felt he was the injured party: 'It gently amused me to find myself a friend of Marie Fox's husband.'[79]

Beyond that, there is also a suggestion that Marie may herself have rejected Bute when he showed that he was not happy with the lack of information about her birth, since it appears that a friend of hers asked if Lady Holland had 'dismissed that man as he deserved'.[80] Given that Marie most certainly said one thing to Lady Holland's face and another behind her back,

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[73]*Ibid.*

[74]BL add. ms. 52161 f.45 Terese von Bülow to Lady Holland, 19 Sept. 1875.

[75]BL add. ms 52161 f.56 Therese von Bülow to Lady Holland, 23 Sept. 1875.

[76]BL add. ms 52161 ff.119-122 J Browne to Lady Holland, 16 May 1876.

[77]*Ibid.*

[78]BL ad mss 52161 f.56 Therese von Bülow, 23 Sept. 1875.

[79]BU/21/175/120 Bute to Gwen, 11 June 1882.

[80]BL ad mss 52159 f.243 Charles Douglas to Lady Holland, 14 Mar. 1872.

there must be more than a possibility that this was Marie's line, and that she had done the dismissing herself, perhaps outraged that Bute seemed to need evidence for the stories about her birth which she had told him. That Bute did not in fact care all that passionately about her birth is suggested by a letter to his wife written when Marie was dying of tuberculosis. 'I met a man, who knows Marie Fox well - & who told me she is dying ... He told me more or less about her rows in Vienna & her ... constant mania about being some kind of royalty - legitimate or otherwise ... I suppose the whole thing is going to sink into a grave - hers - It was an odd mystery while it lasted.'[81] Lady Holland forgave Marie, but refused to meet her again, and Marie on her death-bed, with true histrionic ability, acknowledged her fault and expressed her sorrow and repentance.[82]

Bute dealt with his loneliness and depression by working. The winter before, 1870, he began translating the Roman *Breviary* into English 'as good, plain, manly and idiomatic' as he could contrive. The Church of England had one prayer book, the *Book of Common Prayer*. It contained the orders for both daily prayer, and for Holy Communion and the other services and sacraments of that Church. The Catholic Church had several, including the *Missal*, which carried the order for Masses, and the *Breviary*, which contained the orders for the other services of the day. Both Anglican and Roman priests were expected to say their offices each day. Pious lay people also chose to say them. As Bute explained in his translation, the Church of England had taken the common habit of saying the three morning services (Matins, Lauds and Prime) and the two evening (Compline and Vespers) together, and 'it is from this aggregation that it had evolved its (somewhat changed) orders for Morning and Evening prayer.' All the psalms, many passages of the Bible, and passages from the lives of various saints were in the *Breviary*. There was therefore a great deal to translate, and Bute later admitted that he had under-estimated the scale of the task when he began it. It was to result in a two-volume work running to more than three thousand pages.

He had a collaborator in a learned Jesuit, the Rev'd. James McSwiney[83], who was one of the few people with whom Bute saw eye to eye. McSwiney was learned and always good company though shabby and dirty. He was invaluable to Bute not only as a practical help, but as someone with whom to discuss the difficulties of the project. All the Biblical readings in the *Breviary* were from the Vulgate, an early Latin translation of the Greek and Hebrew texts, made so that people could have the Bible in the vulgar tongue; St Jerome had been the

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[81]BU/21/148/6 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[82]BL ad ms 52161 ff.246-7 C. Comberbach to Lady Holland, 27 Dec. 1878.

[83]Fr. James McSwiney, SJ, 1827-1905 (ordained 1857). Fitzgerald-Lombard, p.217.

principal translator. But scholarship had moved on, the age and worth of the different Greek and Hebrew texts which lay behind Vulgate had been re-evaluated, and older versions had been rediscovered. The problems of which 'reading' to follow where texts offered different choices had been much discussed and a consensus arrived at. Bute's old Harrow master, Westcott, was one of those most actively involved in such work. This presented Bute with a dilemma. He did not want to follow what the scholar in him knew to be an incorrect version of the original, yet he was bound to translate the Latin before him. He tried as far as possible to compromise. Afterwards, it was generally agreed that the passages from the lives of the saints were especially successful, perhaps because most of them had not been translated before, and therefore Bute was able to be more original and idiomatic in his use of English.

Thus Bute provided himself with a long-term academic work to occupy the 'blankness' of his life. Not that it did remain blank for very long. At some point in the winter of 1871/2 he fell in love again, this time with a young lady from a family both impeccable and Catholic. The Hon. Gwendolen Mary Ann Fitzalan-Howard was the granddaughter of the 13th Duke of Norfolk, and the eldest daughter of Lord Howard of Glossop, the same Lord Howard who had provided Disraeli with the model for 'Lord St. Jerome'. She was small, with fine eyes and an exquisite bone-structure to her face, still only seventeen and a little plump, with a high colour and brown hair with golden lights. By February they were engaged to be married.

Capel was ecstatic. He wrote at once to felicitate Gwendolen, assuring her that 'None of your parents have prayed and wished more than myself for this happy issue. I am sure it is God's holy will.'[84] As Bute's confessor, he knew him better than others, he said, and he added that 'his frank, earnest, generous nature needed but the affectionate heart of a spouse for its fullest expansion.'[85] Gwen was pleased with his letter, she told Bute,[86] who explained that Capel had an allowance from him 'from which he administers beggars, and occasionally comes to act as chaplain for short periods and it is to him I generally confess, particularly in the case of long or delicate confessions. He is very clever and exceedingly useful to me, particularly in ecclesiastical affairs.'[87]

Bute returned to Cardiff, suddenly liking it better than ever. At first he worried a little over the disparity in their tastes, since she was not at all interested in art 'which is one of the

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[84]BU/21/95/1 Capel to Gwen, 23 Feb. 1872.

[85]*Ibid.*

[86]BU/21/93/4 Bute to Gwen, 26 Feb. 1872.

[87]*Ibid.*

greatest pleasures I have'.[88] Yet he was sure 'your common sense will be a great help to me ... for you know that I am myself often vacillating.'[89]

He enjoyed himself making preparations for his bride: 'I shall have a bedroom fitted up with red silk for you - as that will suit your complexion.'[90] He chose a room close to his own private sitting room, with its gentle religious theme. He hoped that he had not suggested that work on Cardiff was further advanced than it really was: 'Pray don't imagine, my dear, that the house is all done up as if we were living in the reign of Henry III. There is only my sitting room, the Oratory and the New Tower. The rest is by no means satisfactory and has been the victim of every barbarism since the Renaissance'.[91] .

He also looked out the family jewels for the first time: 'there is both a "tiara" and a "diadem" - one of which had probably better be altered, as you are not, I suppose, tall enough to bear much of that kind of thing ... my mother apparently gave up the wearing of them for ever immediately after my Father's death.'[92]

Both parties suffered a little from the inevitable misgivings of a couple about to be bound together for life. Would they make the other happy? Would they be happy themselves? Bute reassured himself: 'My dear Gwen, it is my daily prayer to the Almighty to bless us, and give us a happy home, and I don't thing there is any woman with whom I am so likely to have it as with you. I have been very happy with my bachelor life hitherto, and I know it will be your wish to make me still happier.'[93]

Later, he reassured his fiancée; 'My dear, whenever I do anything now I think how we shall be together in everything hereafter, and I only pray I may be able to make you happy with me! ... I hope and pray that nothing may be wanting in me to make us so, and I don't see how anything can be wanting in you.'[94] Of course Gwen and her parents had to be invited to Cardiff Castle, and Bute, lacking a mother to act as hostess, persuaded Edith and her daughter Flora to come. This put rather a strain on the limited accommodation at the castle but Bute

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[88]BU/21/93/1 Bute to Gwen, 4 Feb. 1872.

[89]*Ibid.*

[90]*Ibid.*

[91]BU/21/93/5 Bute to Gwen, 28 Feb. 1872.

[92]BU/21/93/3 Bute to Gwen, 24 Feb. 1872.

[93]BU/21/93/1 Bute to Gwen, 4 Feb. 1872.

[94]BU/21/93/8 Bute to Gwen, 7 Mar. 1872.

discovered that 'Edith and Flora want to sleep in the same room (for fear of ghosts)'.[95] Entertainment included visiting the new convent building at Pen-y-lan.[96]

Like many a prospective bridegroom, Bute found himself enmeshed in warring factions of family and friends. 'Edith and I have been looking up a list of my relations. They are a very queer lot, and she don't want some of them asked that I do, and vice-versa.'[97]

> I find Edith has quarrelled with many of her relations and says she won't come to the marriage if they are asked ... She can't see that if I forgive the Chas. Stuarts she may as well forgive Corry Marsham. Lady Elizabeth has not written to me - I cannot conceive what fault I may have committed. I am freely, justly and willingly devoted to her, but I do think she is rather hard on me. I hope your blandishments may have some effect on her. Query. Do all women who grow old maids get rather odd?[98]

Nor was he free from problems over hideous and unwanted wedding presents, problems his own tactlessness made worse.

> John Boyle's wedding present [a clock] had been brought up to my sitting-room without telling me what it was, and I thought it was something that the servants had bought. So Burges and Sneyd and I began to make jokes about the art ... and John Boyle there all the time.[99]

The next day, in some trepidation, Bute set about righting wrongs: 'Mercifully, I didn't say anything very bad, and so I promised to keep it in this room or put it in yours, and it's all right again ... the dial is a good size and the works are all right'.[100] The tenantry and townspeople at Rothesay had got up a subscription for a bracelet, pendant and earrings of pale coral, pearls and diamonds. The Ayrshire tenantry also gave diamonds, though the presents from Cardiff were to be presented once the happy couple were there. It would seem that Gwen had not realised that it would be tactful to use one of these at the wedding. Bute, always very

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[95]BU/21/93/7 Bute to Gwen, 7 Mar. 1872.

[96]Anon., 'Pen-y-lan', *Parish Magazine of St Peter's Cardiff.*

[97]BU/21/93/10 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[98]BU/21/93/11 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[99]BU/21/93/10 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[100]BU/21/93/11 Bute to Gwen, undated.

conscious of the feelings of others, especially those without his wealth and social position, had to use a little persuasion to get her to wear one set of these (the Rothesay set was chosen) to 'go away' in.[101]

The question of where to hold the wedding was raised. A great many people would want to come to this ceremony, and the idea of a wedding in St Paul's Cathedral was mentioned, but the Catholic religious authorities at once objected to the idea of a Catholic couple making a Protestant marriage; feelings that Bute fully shared. Then it seemed for a time that the marriage would be at Glossop, near Manchester. But it was a long journey from there to Cardiff, where Bute was determined to honeymoon. Bute, who plainly found himself shrinking from the idea of a busy and sociable wedding breakfast, proposed hopefully 'I should think ... we had better breakfast together privately.'[102] The idea was that they would then be able to make an early start to the journey. The difficulties of travel to Glossop for guests were great, too. In the end it was decided that the bride should be married from her London home, and that the ceremony would be at the Brompton Oratory.

Bute took great pleasure in designing the presents for the bridesmaids, lockets with the coat of arms that would be his and Gwendolen's once they were married.[103] Round the coat of arms was to be a girdle 'alternately rubies and diamonds, being your colours - red and white'.[104] With a gold background, enamelled colours, and real pearls in the coronet, Bute thought they would be 'very well'. He had given the commission to an Edinburgh jeweller, hoping it would 'get his name up.'[105]

Bute made arrangements for his going away, anticipating gleefully the pleasure of having his bride alone with him. He was amused when it seemed the railway company carried that anticipation a little too far. The 'Great Western Railway is very civil - will be delighted to put on what is called a family (!) carriage for you and me'.[106] There was also the horse-drawn carriage, for 'going away'. 'I have been giving orders, or rather, taking them from the stud groom about carriages', remarked Bute ruefully. Gwendolen was happy to agree to 'our

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[101]BU/21/93/18 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[102]BU/21/93/7 Bute to Gwen, 7 Mar. 1872.

[103]That is to say, not the Bute arms alone, but the Bute arms impaled with the Fitzalan-Howard coat of arms.

[104]BU/21/93/5 Bute to Gwen, 28 Feb. 1872.

[105]*Ibid.*

[106]BU/21/93/12 Bute to Gwen, 26 Mar. 1872.

brown pair of horses', which would have looked virtually black, rather than borrowed and bridal greys, which would have been almost white.[107]

In the no-man's-land of engagement, social functions bothered Bute. He refused an invitation to a dinner-party at the Rothschild's 'for a variety of reasons', the most important being a fear that it was set up to make fun of him and his *fiancée*.

> I neither can nor will consent to play at shepherd and shepherdess with you for the amusement of a whole boiling of people, who would come on purpose to joke over us. If I talked to you, you know we should make a joke for the whole lot, and if I didn't there be no end to the ill-natured remarks they'd make. I do think it would have been in better taste if they had not so transparently invited us to act a scene for their entertainment.[108]

Bute was very sensitive to people's reactions to him, and he greatly feared being a figure of fun: not without cause. His interests were not conventional ones, and society then was more rigid than it is now. Hunter Blair's memoir of Bute preserves something of this mocking tone. In some respects Hunter Blair admires him, and he is certainly sympathetic to Bute's conversion, having himself become a Catholic, but even he consistently laughs at him for his earnestness and his gaucheries in society.

Inevitably, the prospective bride was weighed in the balance by Society and found wanting. She was 'quite without such knowledge of the world as might fairly be expected at her age, & in no way likely to be <u>such a help</u> as <u>he</u> wants'.[109] Her natural mother was dead, which argued Gwen might well die in childbirth, and 'you know her brother is very wanting'.[110] It is true that her brother Frank, who was twelve at this time, was very lacking intellectually. In addition, the 'Foxites' suggested that Bute was inherently fickle in love, and that Gwen would soon discover the shallowness of his feelings for her.[111]

Bute dreaded most aspects of the ceremonial surrounding his wedding, and tried to impress this on Gwen: 'I fancy our entry into Cardiff will be very trying - more so than you

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[107]BU/21/93/12 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[108]BU/21/93/14 Bute to Gwen, undated 1872.

[109]BL add. ms. 52159 f.242 C. Douglas to Lady Holland, 14 Mar. 1872.

[110]*Ibid.*

[111]*Ibid.*

imagine.'[112] Gwen was shy, but not only did she have a robust good sense about such things; she was a little more ambivalent about the status which her new role brought her.

> Papa ... said to me this afternoon that you said something about you hoped the nervousness at Cardiff would not take the shape of crying. Don't imagine that that is the least likely. It's most improbable. No! I hope I shall behave like a sensible person and look pleased (which it would be impossible not to be under the circumstances) and make my bows properly which will be quite new to me.[113]

Great popular excitement was aroused by the prospect of the marriage. The couple were to be greeted by the mayor and corporation on their arrival in Cardiff by train the evening following the wedding. After speeches, they were to be escorted through the town in an open carriage, cheered on by crowds for whom the local railway companies were putting on cheap excursion trains. The town was to be decorated with triumphal arches, transparencies painted with such subjects as Hymen, the god of Marriage, portraits of the happy couple and still more coats of arms. The *Illustrated London News* carried reproductions of the photographs taken of the bride and groom. The groom stared into the middle distance with the stern expression he always assumed under the intrusive gaze of the lens, and the bride looked becomingly demure.

Bute made spiritual preparations for the marriage. He went on a retreat to Belmont, an abbey just outside the city of Hereford, easily reached by train from Cardiff. 'The spiritual advice of the Prior,[114] and the whole thing has done me a great deal of good'.[115] The Prior memorably encapsulated Christian ambition: 'if one keeps one's mind fixed on things which are noble, grand and true - that is God - as own grows older, the experience is wider, the aspirations stronger and higher ... There with a life conducted before the Eternal, one begins to live the same life which will be continued for ever hereafter.'[116] Bute also very much needed the quiet and calm of such retreats, as his mercurial temperament was still liable to soar to fever pitch, which is just what it reached by the eve of the wedding.

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[112]BU/21/93/13 Bute to Gwen. 1 April 1872.

[113] BU/21/94/1 Gwen to Bute, undated.

[114]The Prior at this time was Jerome Vaughan OSB 1841-1896, one of eight sons and five daughters of John and Eliza Vaughan of Courtfield, Monmouthshire, of whom six of the sons and four of the daughters entered the religious life. The eldest, Herbert, became Archbishop of Westminster in 1892 and a cardinal in the following year. Roger was Archbishop of Sydney. Bernard became a Jesuit, and a highly regarded preacher. Mark Bence-Jones, *The Catholic Families* (Constable: London, 1992) pp.149, 243, 256.

[115]BU/21/93/13 Bute to Gwen. 1 April 1872.

[116]BU/21/93/14 Bute to Gwen undated.

Bute was not helped by Rosebery, who was to have been his best man, but reneged the day before the wedding. He turned at once to his friend and cousin Charlie, as a substitute: 'Never mind, Mauchline, who is my cousin, will do quite as well.'[117] But of course Bute did mind, for who would not be hurt by such an action? As usual, his direct writing gives a vivid picture of his mood, feverishly turning over unopened presents, pausing to unwrap one, and then putting it impatiently down: 'There are a lot of things here - I haven't the patience to open them - Here's a smelling bottle from the Ryders.'[118] Gwen hastened to reassure Bute and to comfort him as best she was able: 'My own darling don't mind. I'm certain its not unfriendliness on Ld. Rosebery's part, he's probably much taken up with his own affairs, & is thoughtless about ours. It's annoying for you I know of course, but I entreat you not to think about it.'[119]

Outside the Brompton Oratory temporary stands were erected in the road, so that the assembled crowds might get a good view. The wedding itself, on 16 April, was not only under the eyes of family and friends, but the curious eyes of the Protestant press. Bute had seen no objection to reporters getting into the Oratory.[120] All except the avowedly Catholic press commented on unfamiliar aspects of the service. *The Glasgow Herald* was quietly surprised at how similar the ceremony was to a Protestant one.

Bute left the Vestry twenty minutes before eleven o'clock. He was accompanied by Charlie who cut a dash in 'full Highland costume'.[121] Bute crossed to one of the two *priedieux* at the front of the church. He rested his head in his ungloved hands, and remained there, praying, while the church filled behind him, and the groomsmen and the eight bridesmaids arrived. They included Angela, Winifrid and Constance Fitzalan-Howard, Gwen's sisters. Angela was just a year younger than Gwen, and the sisters were very close. Lady Flora Hastings, Charlie's sister, Phillipa Fitzalan Howard, Gwen's cousin and friend, sister of the Duke of Norfolk, were also bridesmaids.[122] They were dressed in white taffeta and muslin, with touches of pink, and carried pink May blossom and rosebuds.

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[117]BU/21/93/19 Bute to Gwen, 14 Mar. 1872.

[118]*Ibid.*

[119]BU/21/94/1 Gwen to Bute, undated.

[120]BU/21/93/16 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[121]*The Morning Post,* 17 April 1872.

[122]Phillipa Fitzalan Howard 1852-1946, BP.

Under the eyes of the astonished popular press, Bute remained praying, and therefore in a place safe from the crowds, until at eleven o'clock his bride, on her father's arm, arrived at the *Priedieu* next to his. She was 'simply'[123] dressed

> in the richest white satin, covered with magnificent *point à l'Aiguille* lace, and trimmed with wreaths of finest orange blossom. The corsage, cut square, was ornamented on one side with sprays of diamonds and on the other by a wreath and bouquet of orange blossom. On her head a large tulle veil enveloping the figure over a wreath of the same choice flowers.[124]

From behind the veil, 'curious old diamond flowers', part of the Crichton-Stuart family jewels, blazed out from the dress over which they were fixed. The marriage was celebrated by Archbishop Manning, and Mgr. Capel preached the sermon. It was a smooth and unremarkable recital of the then traditional view of marriage, with the bride coming from her home 'in innocence of soul and warmth of affection'[125] to the equally sheltering love of the bridegroom. He wished them every happiness, but reminded them that 'sorrow must in some way or other be your fortune. God Almighty wills it that you must bear your cross, and in that hour remember that you are to be a great support to each other, no one else coming in save God.'[126]

Among those to sign the register was Benjamin Disraeli. One wonders (for there is no record of it) what his Lothair made of him. Afterwards, the two men being on the best of terms, it was widely rumoured that Bute had never even read the book.[127]

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[123]*The Morning Post,* 17 April 1872.

[124]*Ibid.*

[125]*The Glasgow Herald*, 17 April 1872.

[126]*Ibid.*

[127]BU/96/20/25 Lord Colum to Gwen, 17 Sept. 1920. Bute's youngest son asked his mother if it was true that 'Father never read *Lothair*?' Alas, the answer is not preserved.

VII

Marriage

'all that one could have hoped for or desired'

The honeymoon was deliciously happy. Three days after her wedding, Gwen wrote to her sister Angela with ungrammatical enthusiasm, 'Happiness don't half explain what I am, if Dr Johnson was alive he'd have to invent a new word with a stronger meaning.'[1] There was a rapturous delight in having a husband 'who's [*sic*] one thought is your happiness and comfort'[2] and also in giving back to him 'the love and devotion wh. he gives to you.'[3] The only thing to dent her happiness slightly was the fear that she had lost an especially precious letter from the many Bute had written her, and she urged her sister to search everywhere for it, especially in the pocket of her evening gown, for she 'would be sorry for losing that letter.'[4]

The petty disruptions of social life were an annoyance when they began to make themselves felt, but no more than that. Gwen especially disliked having to spend much of her mornings returning 'calls' which had been made on the couple, and she was downright nervous over her first dinner party, mainly over 'how these queer people are to go in, they do fight so over their precedence and as much/if any don't exist it is very difficult to manage.'[5] Gwen was, however, a much more trenchant personality that Bute, and she cared much less about the opinions of others, which made her life easier. She did not agonise as he did over the endless begging letters which were also part of her new life.

> B's doing the Beggars with his librarian down stairs, they are the most extraordinary sort of people I ever heard of. I get about ten also every morning & more come in during the day with the many posts. The sums they ask for are quite

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[1]BU/89/1 Gwen to Angela, 19 April 1872.

[2]BU/89/3/4 Gwen to Angela, 23 Aug. 1874.

[3]*Ibid.*

[4]BU/89/1/19 Gwen to Angela, undated.

[5]BU/89/1/2 Gwen to Angela, undated.

> fabulous, from all parts of the world. I tell B he gives them too much and they tell others and come again themselves.[6]

Bute was only slowly learning how self-reliant she was. At a picnic for Catholic children in the parkland behind the Castle, one of the many public festivities to celebrate their marriage, they decided to separate and he suggested that she should find Fr. Clark to protect her. As she told her sister 'I naturally said I was capable perhaps of taking care of myself, which I succeeded in doing!'[7] Generally, however, marriage brought her much-increased freedom, from her own bank account and cheque book,[8] to the right to read and send letters without supervision; Bute thought that a husband insisting on reading his wife's letters was 'intolerable'.[9]

Their happiness together did not depend on incidentals, like Bute's wealth, or Gwen's musical gifts. Much closer to the heart of their marriage was the time they spent laughing together. Gwen discovered that her accounts of social life, for instance 'a Catholic party - Mr Manning figures as one of my principal examples' could send Bute off into 'fits of laughter.'[10] She was dryly amused by Bute's slangy talk, regularly quoting his many uses of it : 'Bute insists on my wearing my lovely Elise's gown ... Bute does it for the fun of the thing I'm sure. He says "Why you'll 'fetch' the old women so." That word I used is not my usual way of expressing myself, but Bute always says it and I've heard it so much these last two days.'[11]

All the same, Bute greatly appreciated the contribution of Gwen's musicality to worship. She was too loyal to do much more than hint that Bute's musical tastes were not the most sophisticated.

> I play the oddest things for Offertory's [*sic*] that you can imagine 'Maryland, my Maryland' that style of thing. I'm quite ashamed but B delights in it so that makes me do it of course. He says he likes lively things during the Offertory. I 'cage my songbirds' every day at 5. B is pleased to describe my choir so, it's not my originality, so don't think so. I have 2 maids & 1 groom, all have good voices and

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[6]BU/89/1/3 Gwen to Angela, 25 April 1872.

[7]BU/89/1/4 Gwen to Angela, undated.

[8]BU/21/95/3 Coutts Bank to Gwen, 11 May 1875.

[9]BU/21/185/39 Bute to Gwen, 24 Oct. 1883.

[10]BU/89/1/6 Gwen to Angela, 12 June 1872.

[11]BU/89/1/8 Gwen to Angela, 17 July 1872.

> ears happily for me. I shout at them at the top of my voice & play the harmonium at the same time, it's not altogether what one would call 'easy' but still I manage pretty well.[12]

At Cardiff the Butes worshipped in a small chapel created by Burges at the start of his work there. One must imagine the petite eighteen year old playing rousing tunes on the harmonium, and shouting at the top of her voice as she led the singing of hymns, which Bute told a friend was all the music they could manage: 'My Lady plays the harmonium in our little chapel: we venture on nothing more than hymns, and get along pretty well.'[13]

Gwen took very seriously her provision of music for the services. When her ladies maid was leaving she ruefully told her sister that it would not be easy to get a replacement. 'I am very particular, I'm afraid - she mustn't be too old or too young. She must be good looking - she must have good taste, be a good dressmaker - & if possible have a good voice, and be a Catholic. Her voice is for the choir, as you may imagine.'[14]

In June Bute was summoned to vote as a Conservative peer, and both grudged the moments apart. Bute was a Tory, though he was not much interested in politics. He voted when summoned, as part of his duty, that being for him, as for other Victorians, 'the operative word'.[15] Ruefully, she told her sister that her tall husband was 'a horrid little person to leave me here alone for four whole days which I told him more than once.'[16] It was only in his absence that she realised just how much she had given up in leaving her busy home life with a beloved father, a stepmother, five sisters and a brother. She poured out: 'it's only the thought of Saturday coming and bringing him back to me that keeps me alive at all.' She was guiltily aware that she was flouting the conventions in speaking even thus openly of her love to an unmarried sister: 'you can't understand all this & I ought to keep it to myself but when my little duck is away, it seems so odd not to have a soul like oneself to speak to & for four whole days, after being accustomed to so many sisters & always Papa and Mama.'[17] Bute replied to

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[12]BU/89/1/7 Gwen to Angela, 25 June 1872.

[13]HB, p.110.

[14]BU/89/1/12 Gwen to Angela, 21 Oct. 1872.

[15]Girouard, `Values', p.51.

[16]BU/89/1/6 Gwen to Angela, 6 June 1872.

[17]*Ibid.*

her that 'you realise so very much all that one could have hoped for or desired, that it grieves me, will I nill I, that you should be put to the least pain.'[18]

One Sunday evening in August, only four months after the wedding, Gwen felt unwell enough to send for her doctor. Next morning she was too unwell to get up, and that week her symptoms were described as 'serious'. She had one of the most dreaded of Victorian illnesses; scarlet fever.[19] On Friday, Queen Victoria sent a telegram from Balmoral, demanding news of Lady Bute.[20] By the weekend, Gwen was getting better, though her convalescence was long. Later that month, probably when both were in a carriage together, there was an accident in which Bute broke his arm.[21] To help her convalescence they travelled to the island of Bute.

Bute enjoyed surprising his wife. She told her sister ecstatically: 'The one wish of my life I now have. Bute told me last night I am to have a pony carriage got for me (without telling me anything about it) as I liked driving. I am going to begin with one horse or pony.'[22] Her other great pleasure was rowing. Despite their wealth, it was difficult for her to get help to take her rowing boat in or out of the sea, and of course, Bute with a broken arm could not assist a great deal. When 'Bute's men friends' came to stay, they were press-ganged into assisting her, compensating for her loneliness during the time they spent with him.[23] Gwen was uncomplaining in her letters, but probably both the rowing and the pony carriage were designed to help her back to full health, for she was still weakened by the scarlet fever. Before her marriage she had written that she hardly ever had a bad headache;[24] now they were a regular occurrence.[25]

Her sisters and friends came to stay with her, too, but increasingly she missed her big family circle, and such amusements as the acting they had enjoyed. She arranged to have her own copies of Shakespeare sent to her.: 'I can't act - still I can pretend or now & then imagine

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[18]BU21/94/1 Bute to Gwen, 14 June 1872.

[19]Not only was there a high death rate from the illness; it also gave rise to serious after-effects, one of which was already known to be Bright's Disease. David Hamilton, *pers. com.*

[20]BU/21/94/2 Telegram from Queen Victoria to Bute, 2 Aug. 1872.

[21]BU/21/171/20 Condor to Bute, 7 April 1881.

[22]BU/89/1/11 Gwen to Angela, 3 Oct. 1872.

[23]BU/89/1/12 Gwen to Angela, 6 Oct. 1872.

[24]BU/21/94/1 Gwen to Bute, undated.

[25]BU/21/101/3 Bute to Gwen, 27 Jan. 1873.

myself to be acting Caesar or Ldy. MacBeth & those are my two favourite parts.'[26] She mixed with the limited circle of Bute's acquaintance on the island, especially the Stuarts of Ascog, where the father was Bute's factor, 'Bute's cousins about ten or twelve times removed ... still they are his cousins'.[27] She fell in love with the Georgian house and the beautiful and peaceful surroundings, and they became 'my beautiful Mount Stuart'.[28]

Preparing for Christmas, still not much celebrated in Scotland, mainly meant preparing for the various services in Bute's chapel. Burges had created a chapel for Bute in the servants' wing of Mount Stuart House. Modelled on a portion of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem,[29] and with a sculptured relief of the agony in the garden,[30] it emphasised how important Bute's early experiences of this place had been. It was a tiny room, provided with a miniature confessional and a vestry. The decoration was not yet complete. In December the firm of Harland and Fisher began 'designing and painting Friezes in the Chapel at Mount Stuart, with processions of figures and tympanum with Our Lord, the Blessed Virgin, and Apostles &c. from Lord Bute's design.'[31] It is of course possible that this simply means, 'from the design provided by Lord Bute', but it may well be that the natural meaning is the right one, and Bute, whose draughtsmanship was excellent, had drawn the original for the procession of male and female saints that still enfolds the little chapel. Work continued for some time. In 1875 Bute arranged for Charlie Campbell, partner in the firm of Campbell, Smith and Co., a painter trained by Burges, to paint the mural behind the altar:

> As to Charlie Campbell what I wanted painted was a little mound, with four streams running out of it, and stags drinking thus. He had better sketch roe deer for the purpose but begin the rock first and I'll talk about the deer when I arrive.[32]

Typically, Bute chose the familiar little deer of the Isle of Bute, rather than the more spectacular red deer with its huge antlers, to illustrate Psalm 42, which he must have sung in its metrical form as a boy: 'As pants the heart for cooling streams ... so longs my soul, oh God for thee'.

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[26]BU/89/1/16 Gwen to Angela, 3 Dec. 1872.

[27]BU/89/1/9 Gwen to Angela, 22 Sept. 1872.

[28]BU/89/3/2 Gwen to Angela, 1 Feb. 1874.

[29]*The Buteman,* 28 Dec. 1875.

[30]Mordaunt Crook, *Burges,* p.285.

[31]BU/85/1 Invoice from Harland & Fisher, Aug. 1873.

[32]BU/21/117/9 Bute to Gwen, Mar. 1875.

After Christmas, it was plain that Gwen's health was still not back to its youthful vigour, and she decided to consult her family doctor during a stay at her old home, in Glossop. She had another reason for consulting her doctor. Despite the Butes' close and loving relationship, there was still no sign of a child. Bute told her that 'as to Dr Nobel, you know, my own darling, that if you never had a child in your life, I hope it would never make any difference in my affection for you. Of course, all the same, if you have - or are even now pregnant - it wd. give me great pleasure.'[33]

Bute was away in Cardiff while Gwen was seeing the doctor: 'I do hope and trust you are taking care of yourself, and will mind and tell Dr. Noble <u>everything</u>. The points may be chiefly divided into 1st. Back. 2nd Legs. 3rd. Squeams. 4th. Faintness. 5th. Headache. 6th. Weariness and 7th. & 8th which latter need not be put on paper.'[34] When they had been married a little longer, both the Butes wrote openly about Gwen's irregular monthly cycle, and the heavy bleeding that accompanied it.[35]

But they were both still young, it was simple enough to explain the absence of a baby by Gwen's convalescence, and there were many other things to fill their time, not least building, which still meant one architect - William Burges. Calling him 'soul-inspiring Burges' or 'the soul-inspiring one', was a joke between them; a joke with a foundation in reality. Not only did he create his greatest triumphs of architecture for them; his company charmed them. Bute reported time spent with him as an especial treat, almost objectively, as though he was noting a fine performance in the theatre, or a good vintage of wine. The state of his temper was usually worth recording, especially the comparatively rare occasions when it was good.[36]

Cardiff Castle was beginning to take shape, with the clock tower completed 'except for the tiles in the top room.'[37] Seeing ideas realised which before had only existed on paper, such as the moat around the keep, was 'quite astonishing. It causes the mound to look more like a large natural hill than anything else.'[38] Bute was full of enthusiasm for his latest project, the creation of a proper great hall: 'The effect of the lowered floor between my room and the hall

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[33]BU/21/101/3 Bute to Gwen, 27 Jan. 1873.

[34]BU/21/101/4 Bute to Gwen, 29 Jan 1873.

[35]*cf.* BU/89/7 Gwen to Angela, 7 Jan. 1878.

[36]*cf.* BU/21/107/2 Bute to Gwen, 12 July 1874.

[37]BU/21/101/2 Bute to Gwen, 25 Jan. 1873.

[38]*Ibid.*

is hardly perceptible below, but so very good above that I think of having the dining-room immediately treated likewise. This will give some idea of the effect of a restored Great Hall above, and only necessitate a partial change in the pictures below.'[39]

Gwen was working embroideries for the project: 'I saw the coloured drawing for your work - it really is quite charming.'[40] Burges was not only axiomatically inspirational, clever and endlessly creative; he was also something of an autocrat and decidedly impractical. Bute, growing more confident, prepared to tussle with his architect: 'There are great difficulties about the still-room, etc. and I think hardly anything can be done till a few new rooms are added, wh. in my opinion they may easily be, towards the water tank - when Burges comes I shall fight him at once on this point.'[41] The new plans were extensive.

> I have now made up my mind to add a still room, housekeeper's room, and two bedrooms over the kitchen, my own room over the sitting room, and to lower the dining room ceiling. The rooms above can be used till the new ones are ready and then the present dining room can at once become a library and the Great Hall blossom towards realisation. Perhaps the latter may be fulfilled by the maids being stuck into a new story over Herbert's room.[42]

Bute travelled on to his friend Addle's wedding He could be relied upon to send Gwen a full description of the dresses of other women when she was absent from grand social occasions. Young and very much in love, Bute also took great pleasure in advising his wife on her dress and especially her jewels: 'I have been thinking that if the diamond stomacher is too gorgeous, you can put my ruby-and-diamond cross of the H. Sepulchre on yr. breast with three diamond stars in yr. ears and two on your head - with the Cardiff bracelet like a tiara, between your hair and yr. chignon.'[43] He loved to create suitable backdrops for her, as she told her sister: 'I am going to have my sitting room redecorated. Bute says it must be done with yellow to suit my complexion - not that I should have thought is was worth while suiting, however.'[44]

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[39]*Ibid.*

[40]*Ibid.*

[41]BU/21/101/3 Bute to Gwen, 27 Jan. 1873.

[42]*Ibid.*

[43]BU/21/101/5 Bute to Gwen, 14 Mar. 1872.

[44]BU/89/1/16 Gwen to Angela, 3 Dec. 1872.

Neither of them had any taste for the state they might have indulged in, and the pretensions of others also made them laugh. Gwen expected her family to laugh at it too, for she told Angela that they had gone to a wedding where Lady Stafford had 'her husband and her footman' who carried all their belongings, including their prayer book, but the Staffords 'didn't get served first, as they thought they should. ... In short their what Bute called "swagger" was odious.'[45] In contrast, the Butes carried their own waterproofs, umbrella and prayer book.

Bute had loved ancient buildings since childhood. He was naturally inclined to learn about the things he loved, and to his own learning, he had added more from Burges. His family had always felt a link with one of Scotland's most ancient and beautiful buildings, because legend had it that a family ancestress was buried there. Paisley Abbey was one of the oldest of Scottish religious buildings still in use, and a tomb there had long been described as that of Marjory Bruce, who, through her marriage to Walter Fitzalan, commonly known as the Steward or Stewart, had founded the royal Stuart dynasty and also that of the Stuarts of Bute.

Paisley had prospered through the development of the textile industry, and now there were plans to improve the cramped and insalubrious streets by widening them and building sewers. These plans also included demolishing part of the Abbey. This portion, to some Victorian eyes, sat at an infelicitous angle to the main building, and was an indubitable inconvenience to the proposed new street plan. The town's historian, Mr David Semple, F.S.A., assured everybody that it was a modern addition to the Abbey, put there by the Earls of Dundonald 'in the beginning of the eighteenth century'.[46] In the 1870s, it was used by the Abercorn family. Semple passionately advocated the demolition of this part of the Abbey, wishing it to stand out unencumbered by its curtilage, dominating the surrounding area.

Bute came somehow to hear of the proposals, and was horrified. He believed that the area in question included the ancient cloister of the Abbey. He employed the Scottish architectural firm of Bryce, Anderson and Bryce to prepare a report on the 'Abbey Close'. The job fell to Robert Rowand Anderson,[47] who concluded that the work was of different periods, but that the oldest part was actually older than any other part of the Abbey. The firm suggested an alternative route for the new street, which would avoid demolition. Changing the plans was undoubtedly going to be expensive, not least because houses had already been purchased for

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[45]BU/89/2/3 Gwen to Angela, Sept. 1873.

[46]David Semple F.S.A., *Second Supplement to St Mirin* (J & J Cook: Paisley, 1874) p.24.

[47]Sam McKinstry, *Rowand Anderson: the Premier Architect of Scotland* (Edinburgh University Press, 1991).

demolition. In the summer of 1873, Bute offered £1000 towards the increased costs if the Abbey Close might be saved[48] and, to his credit, the Provost of Paisley offered a further £500. Semple continued to assert that the building was modern.

Nobody denied that recent alterations had been carried out to the cloister, but Semple's assurances were accepted. The Duke of Abercorn was to be compensated to the sum of £500 for the parts belonging to him. Work started in January 1874. By February, the local paper was reporting, smugly, that 'in a few days more the effect of the improvement there will be fully seen and cannot fail to be appreciated.'[49] However there was growing consternation, and objections, with which the improvers dealt in time-honoured fashion. Lord Blantyre, one of the feuers, had objected to the removal of the wall of the burial ground. He awoke to find it had been taken down illegally in the night between Sunday and Monday.[50] Semple himself asked the 'arching' in the rest of the Abbey if the arching revealed as the cloister was demolished was genuine, and heard it cry out 'a resounding "No!"'[51] The voices so clearly heard by him were dumb before everyone else. A furious correspondent to the paper delivered what was, in fact, to be the judgement of history:

> A single glance will convince anyone that the row of arched buildings forming the side of the cloister court which is now in course of demolition are ... part of the Abbey Church properly ... and which the Duke of Abercorn could no more sell or make merchandise of, than he could sell the transept of the choir... or the Abbey itself.[52]

One can only wonder what Bute made of the involvement of the man who might have been his father-in-law. His concern to save the Abbey Court was most certainly not born out of a desire to cross Abercorn; it was a part of his dislike of the wreck of old and beautiful things, and his general unwillingness to subject them to the tidying up urge of Victorian society. Later, he was saddened by a Yorkshire church 'being ruined, as most of them have already been, by what is playfully called "restoration". There is a rather good Georgian ceiling in plaster work with a curious bas-relief of an angel wh. is, it appears, to be destroyed.'[53]

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[48]*The Edinburgh Courant,* 13 June 1873.

[49]*Paisley & Renfrewshire Gazette,* 14 Feb. 1874.

[50]*Ibid.,* 11 April 1874.

[51]Semple, *St. Mirin,* p.37.

[52]*Paisley & Renfrewshire Gazette,* 14 Feb. 1874. Letter from John Crawford.

[53]BU/21/185/17 Bute to Gwen, 11 July 1883.

Nor was it religious buildings alone, or even especially, that he desired to protect. He had learnt from his experience at Paisley that a secular building, or a building partly in secular use such as the Abbey Court, was especially vulnerable.

> While I applaud the zeal of persons who investigate churches, I myself tend to take at least equal interest in domestic and secular buildings which are also much more likely (as at Paisley) to be destroyed, and might suggest as curious the castles in little Cumbrae and in the south of Arran (don't know the name of this last which is said to have once belonged to my family) and the defensible farmhouse at Wester Kames[54] & the remains of a similar one at a farm somewhere on the West side of the Island[55] - and specially the table in Brodick Castle at wh. Robt. Bruce is said to have eaten.[56]

His passionate desire that buildings were not destroyed in the name of conservation was, however, only one side of Bute's love of decorative architecture. As well as re-building Cardiff Castle, he was also working on the Georgian Mount Stuart. With work well underway on the chapel, he moved on to the dining room, for which vines were drawn from nature, and 'oak for festoons on frieze etc.'[57] These vine leaves and heads of grapes were then carved by Nicholls[58] and painted by Campbell, Smith & Co. In all there were fifty eight panels for the ceiling 'including 100 swallows, painted raised vine leaves & about 100 bunches of grapes to imitate nature.'[59] Work then started in the drawing room, which was lavishly decorated with 'birds, squirrels and butterflies'[60] which were always to be Bute's favourite decorative themes. In addition, Nicholls created the originals for a 'horse and stag ... finishing same for casting in bronze for fire dogs.'[61] They were beautiful, nervous creatures, with all the flightiness of the live animals, and still grace the family's firesides.

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[54]In 1895, Bute himself was to commission the architect Robert Weir Schultz (1860-1951) to survey Wester Kames with a view to restoration. Gavin Stamp, *Robert Weir Schultz Architect and his work for the Marquesses of Bute* (Mount Stuart, 1981), p.43.

[55]'Kilmory Castle', at the farm of Meikle Kilmory.

[56]BU/21/175/18 Bute to Gwen, 28 Mar. 1882.

[57]BU/85/2 Bateman Invoice, 1874.

[58]BU/85/2 Nicholls Invoice, 1874.

[59]BU/85/2 Campbell Invoice, 1876.

[60]*Ibid.*

[61]BU/85/13 Nicholls Invoice, 1874.

Bute was far from being the only aristocratic builder of the period:

> The Duke of Sutherland virtually rebuilt Cliveden House, Dunrobin Castle, and Trentham Hall, giving Sir Charles Barry a handsome run of commissions ... More restrained were those who limited themselves to the complete remodelling simply of their principal seat: the Marquess of Westminster at Eaton Hall, or the Duke of Nothumberland at Alnwick Castle. Enormously expensive projects like these, carrying price tickets of maybe £400,000 upwards, indulged personal tastes for conspicuous display and grandeur, demonstrated the modernity of the builder as the patron of architects, artists, and craftsmen, and served to leapfrog the new halls and castles over the slightly older generations of large halls or castles in more or less friendly rivalry and competition for primacy within the peer group.[62]

Nothing about Bute suggests he had much taste for personal grandeur; it was the pleasure of working on the designing and building of his projects that impelled him. He once famously remarked that he had 'comparativly little interest in a thing after it is finished.'[63] He was deeply and personally involved in all his projects. Burges was more of a collaborator than an employee, others awaited his visits, ideas and judgements with a mixture of pleasure and trepidation.[64] Bute was also extremely price-conscious.[65]

A childhood taste he was indulging was a delight in animals, and he made a small collection of favourite exotic species. There were beavers, first at Cardiff: 'There are two more beavers here, wretched little things - I suppose young ones out of a nest. They are still in their box, but tomorrow I hope to get them temporarily into a better place. One dare not put them with the old ones, who have been in a horrible temper ever since the new ones were put in sight of them.'[66] Possibly because of the difficulty of mixing them, there were also beavers at Mount Stuart.[67]

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[62]Thompson, *Respectable Society,* p.155.

[63]HB, p.241.

[64]Mount Stuart mss. Frame letter book, p.273.

[65]*Ibid.,* p.51.

[66]BU/21/107/2 Bute to Gwen, 12 July 1874.

[67]J. S. Black, 'A short account of how the Marquis of Bute's Beavers have succeeded in the Isle of Bute', *Journal of Forestry and Estates Management,* vol. 3 (1880) pp.695-698. J. A. Gibson, 'The Bute Beavers', *Transactions of the Buteshire Natural History Society,* vol. 21 (1980) pp.27-33.

The 'kangaroos' (they were actually large wallabies) went to Mount Stuart from the beginning. Gwen had hit on the perfect present to give to Bute, in return for those he was so easily able to shower on her. They arrived whilst she was away: 'to begin with, Ma'am, I must wait till Tuesday to thank you anything like sufficiently for your excellent present. The beasts have not arrived yet, but I hope they will come in an hour or two. Churchman has gone up to Glasgow to meet them.'[68] Gwen herself was not without reservations about them, as she confided in Angela: 'they are to run wild in our woods ... I shall have to give up going out. The kangaroos may be 8 feet high, they are tame creatures or at least may get so & they are very fond of jumping on top of people'.[69]

It was not just wallabies and beavers that filled his grounds. There were rabbits, too. Not only did he forbid the hideous cruelty of gin traps, which were still the common way of controlling pests at this period, but within his gardens and policies, rabbits were protected. Amazed guests saw them washing their faces on the lawn before the drawing-room windows. 'There are really quite a large number of plants that rabbits don't injure' Lord Bute would say when a visitor deprecated their appearance in his beautiful gardens.[70]

Bute was delighted at the progress of Cardiff Castle, but Gwen, arriving there in the autumn of 1873, was not: 'Here we are again at this ruin. I don't know when it will get the least into shape, not for 2 or 3 years I'm afraid - but it will be worth seeing when its [*sic*] inhabitable. We had lunch today for the 1st time in the lower room of the Tower. Dear Burges was present & quite content with his work.' Gwen drew him for her sister, a squat figure 'with his absurd glasses ... he is so short, quite tiny.'[71] Her judgement on him has become part of his biography: 'ugly Burges who designs beautiful things.'[72]

The Butes spent the whole of the winter and spring in Majorca. Socially, Bute had gained by his marriage. His range of social contacts was no less. His 'men friends' came to visit as often as they had before, and in addition, he had the company of his beloved wife. Burges was happy to spend time abroad with him, and he was in touch with those at home through his letters.

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[68]BU/21/107/3 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[69]BU/89/2/1 Gwen to Angela, 13 Feb 1873.

[70]*The Churchwoman,* A personal reminiscence by one who knew him, 9 Nov. 1900.

[71]BU/89/2/3 Gwen to Angela, Sept. 1873.

[72]*Ibid.*

Gwen, however, was in a somewhat different position. She was enormously happy with Bute, but she felt the lack of easy daily social contact with a wider circle, especially when living abroad. However much she enjoyed trips out behind 'our pair of mules',[73] she missed having people to talk to. Her valiant attempts to learn Spanish from a book were not very successful. Suggestions to Bute that she ought to have a tutor fell on deaf ears. 'He says what I suppose is true "why can't you teach yourself?" - I say I don't know where to begin & then he says calmly, read the grammar through and through - he does that with his Hebrew, but I fear there is a slight difference between my husband & myself in the brain line.'[74]

So when her maid began to reminisce about a visit to Glossop, Gwen became upset. 'The other day when I was dressing Bradford said "Oh my Lady, do you remember this time last year this very day we were going to Glossop. Oh that we were doing the same now, etc." I let her talk a little of it, then I cd. not bear to think of that happy day, & I said don't talk of it to me, stop. The servants hate this place you know.'[75] The 'servants hating the place' was only another way of saying that Gwen herself was feeling isolated. But she admitted to her sister that 'I am looking at things in rather what Bute calls the tragedy light. The fact is he always looks at things in the comic light & I get sometimes tired of it. However he's wiser after all.'[76]

Perhaps he was, for when Angela herself came to marry, and Gwen wrote her a letter of sisterly advice, she seemed to find delight in returning 'love and devotion', and thought it impossible that her sister would be quite as happy as herself. However, Gwen was alive to the real difficulties and strange demands that might face a young Victorian bride, and lest her sister enter on marriage unprepared, she told her a story to illustrate possible problems ahead.

Whilst living on the Isle of Bute, and visiting her tenantry, she had seen a baby just a few weeks old in a cottage. It was delicate, and the parents told her 'in a careless way' that because of this they had not taken it to church to be baptised. As a good Catholic, Gwen was naturally horrified, since she believed they were putting the baby's eternal welfare at risk. She made the couple promise to have it baptised, and they agreed, but although she visited them twice after this, bringing pressure to bear each time, they still did not act. As she was

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[73]BU/89/3/2 Gwen to Angela, 1 Feb. 1874.

[74]*Ibid.*

[75]*Ibid.*

[76]*Ibid.*

rather anxious about it I said all about it to Bute, and now my little difficulties arose because he told me to go the next day to the Minister or his wife and tell them about the child and not come away without in some way getting it baptised either take the child to him or he to it or else if they being Presbyterians could not do it without preparation I was to go in the meantime and baptise it myself, had all this been to a priest about a child who was to be a 'cat' it wd. have been easy enough - but to a great fat minister, about one of his own kirk it was difficult as you may imagine.[77]

Poor Gwen was trapped between two different churches, for the Presbyterians did not place the same emphasis on baptism, and would not have considered it valid if administered by a woman. She must have been thought very, very strange for this incident, and she certainly knew this. Bute, typically, did not heed the usual social conventions which would have left the baby unbaptised and Gwen unembarassed, because he had other priorities. It was this kind of incident that exemplified to her the downside of marriage. It does not tell one much about Angela's prospective marriage, but does tell one a good deal about Bute. The story, however, ended without further difficulties. 'I went and made it all quite clear & satisfactory and it seemed to come so easily when I did it all because Bute wished it done and had told me to do it.'[78]

The conventions of the day did not allow Gwen to write to her unmarried sister about the thing that was probably behind her seeing life in 'the tragedy light', which was that, although Gwen was well and the couple had now been married two years, there was no sign of a baby. As if childlessness was not enough, 'iniquitous calumnies'[79] began to spread that this was due to an estrangement between Bute and Gwen. Presumably Bute's reputation for eccentricity, and the fact the young couple did not much appear in London society, made them an easy target for such gossip. Their failure to have a family may in part have been behind Bute's request for another relic of St. Margaret of Scotland. He turned to Archbishop Manning for help. Bute could trace his descent from this great queen, who had had 8 children, as could all the members of the Stuart royal family, and he had a great devotion to her. Manning was a bit disappointed that all he managed to get for Bute was 'a little piece of bone'.[80] An ancestress, a mother and a

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[77]BU/89/4/1 Gwen to Angela, 23 Feb. 1875.

[78]*Ibid.*

[79]HB, p.115.

[80]BU21/108/5/ Manning to Bute, 19 Dec. 1873.

saint; who could be a more suitable intercessor to help the young couple on their way to a family?

In 1874, two events reminded Bute that he might well die young, and childless. At the end of January Edith Hastings died of the Bright's Disease which had plagued her for years, and Bute was much saddened. He had known her since the age of nine, and her children were nearly enough his age for them to be his friends. In June, whilst he and Gwen were cruising on their yacht, they came close to a serious accident. During the night a steamer suddenly altered course, ignoring the rule that steam should give way to sail, and the yacht ran across her bows 'so close that the steamer carried away a portion of the rigging of the Lady Bird.'[81] As his friend Addle wrote to him: 'It must have been a very narrow shave.'[82] He wrote to his father-in-law Lord Howard to make arrangements for what would happen in the event of his early death. Lord Howard, despite his own childless second marriage, remained resolutely optimistic: 'I trust and hope, most sincerely, that the contingency alluded to, will never occur. Yourself and Gwendolen, will, I fervently hope, live long and that Providence will bless you with a family. ... I much regret that Mr Boyle has done some ill judged, or perhaps, hasty thing. I do hope you will not stand to lose £35,000.'[83]

Bute, as things turned out, stood to lose a great deal more than that. The Cardiff estate was still run by trustees, as it had been in Bute's minority. One of these was John Boyle, the other, less active, William Stuart. Davies records of this period that 'Boyle remained dock manager and chief trustee, his salary rising to £2000 a year after 1868, and under him the agents of the various departments continued to operate. A marked feature of the 1870s was the increasing prominence of the mineral agent, W. T. Lewis, who in that decade became an industrialist and a public figure in his own right.'[84]

Although consideration had been given to winding up the trust and allowing Bute to run things himself, the legal position was not clear, and Bute did not have his father's interest in business. The Glamorgan estates, too, had grown so much that, as Davies points out, it would have been hard for any one person to control them.[85] John Boyle pressed on with a policy of expanding

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[81]*The Buteman,* 23 May 1874.

[82]BU/21/108/6 Hay Gordon to Bute, 10 June 1874.

[83]BU/21/108/7 Lord Howard to Bute, 4 Sept. 1874.

[84]JD, p.73.

[85]*Ibid.*

the docks, and he overspent very considerably. Plainly Bute had begun to perceive that all was not well in the autumn of 1874, but the full storm broke by degrees in the early spring of 1875.

The increasing amount of coal being exported from South Wales created a demand for larger docks at Cardiff. Work started on the Roath Basin while the Marquess was still a minor.

> With the commencement of the Roath Basin in 1868, annual expenditure soared to around £150,000 and on its completion in 1874 the Bute investment in dock construction had reached £2,285,000. In that year, when £133,000 was spent on new works and a further £29,000 on loan interest, the Glamorgan estate produced a net income of £114,000. Further loans were therefore obtained, the rise in interest paid suggesting borrowings in the region of £475,000 between 1868 and 1874. In 1874, when net dock receipts stood at £62,618, the return on investment was 2.7 per cent, while rates of up to 4.5 per cent were being paid on money raised to finance dock construction.[86]

The problem was that Boyle had borrowed heavily to find the capital to build the new dock. The expectation must have been that income from the dock would create an overall profit. It did not. The new docks came nowhere near breaking even. Hardly surprisingly, the banks became alarmed.

Bute went down to Cardiff, leaving Gwen at Mount Stuart with Flora. She had been staying with them a great deal since their return to Britain, and she was not in good health. Gwen, who loved acting and reading aloud, spent much of her time reading aloud to Flora, who was often confined to bed.[87]

Bute's regular letters to Gwen are the only record of the crisis. 'Affairs are, I must say, looking as black as night - and, if we can still cash up to the butcher and bakers, we can't to other tradesmen employed by McConnochie.'[88] McConnochie was the dock engineer.[89] However Bute was still optimistic: 'John Boyle has been with us nearly all day. He is in good spirits enough now, quite jesting. I can't help hoping we may raise the wind by selling some of

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[86]*Ibid.*, p.273.

[87]BU/89/5/74 Gwen to Angela, 23 Aug. 1874.

[88]BU/21/117/1 Bute to Gwen.

[89]JD, p.143.

McConnochie's plant which cost £70,000.'[90] This optimism was not to last. In early March, it became clear to Bute that he was in the middle of what he hated above all things: a crisis.

> My own darling wife -
> John Boyle and McConnochie have just gone, and the result of their interview with me makes me feel just as if somebody had knocked me on the head - I hardly know what to say or do - I believe my property is so far beyond the value of the mortgages on it that even their being foreclosed is hardly likely to end in Bankruptcy - but that is the word, and the fact perhaps, that is to be faced. ... We have at least however, among other mercies, so undeserved by me, to thank God for our affection one to the other, which will always remain, remain [*sic*] to us amid any hardships. It is also well for us that the tastes we have - at least as regards pursuits - will be able to be moderately indulged, being inexpensive.[91]

The situation gradually worsened. Boyle went to London to try and borrow further money. The financial position was so tight the workmen labouring at the dock would have to be paid off if the money was not forthcoming. The Butes themselves would need to retrench. The question was, of course, how far Bute money was distinct from Trust money. Since the docks were not run by Lord Bute, was he liable for the losses incurred? Or was it all the responsibility of the trustees? In any case, Bute's personal finances were bound to be affected. Bute himself blamed Boyle whole-heartedly: '... the horrible crisis seems to require my presence to keep some watch on matters, such as John Boyle.'[92]

Bute summed the situation up in his own clear and dramatic words. He had his mother's disastrous gift for outspokenness.

> Telegram from John Boyle, indicating what a letter more fully tells this morning - viz. - that he cannot borrow any more money, and they demand some security for what they have lent already - I had a conversation with Shirley[93] last night who says in effect
> 1/ No security exists to be given.
> 2/ My Scotch property, and the Castle cannot be seized for the debts of the Trust.

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[90]BU/21/117/2 Bute to Gwen, 2 Feb. 1875.

[91]BU/21/117/4 Bute to Gwen, 1875.

[92]BU/21/117/5 Bute to Gwen, 3 Mar. 1875.

[93]L. V. Shirley was solicitor to the Bute Estate in Cardiff, JD, p.71.

3/ John Boyle and William Stuart are the persons open to the legal proceedings of the Creditors and as

4/ Everything that can be pawned is pawned already

5/ The creditors will have nothing to seize and can only, if so disposed,

6/ Put John Boyle in prison!!!

I have telegraphed to Pitman to come here if he can on Saturday night.[94]

That Bute had to attempt to reassure Gwen in his next letter is not surprising.

I think from your letter received yesterday that you are more alarmed than the state of things absolutely required. The worst I think that is likely to happen is a suspension of Payment on the part of the Trustees. Proceedings of bankruptcy against them are very improbable. There will be a most infernal row, scandal and uproar, but we, ourselves are not likely to be affected otherwise than by being reduced at least for a time, to such moderate income as we can get from Scotland and from my freehold property here. I suppose we shall have to retrench very unpleasantly and the works on the house here will have to stop. That the Trustees will in the long run be able to pay their debts I think there can be no doubt - but the policy in general which Mr. Boyle has for years so disastrously pursued will smash, and become for ever (almost without doubt) impossible.

I am going this afternoon to Belmont, to pass Sunday in peace.

...The worst of being here will be being in the midst of rows, the creditors demanding in vain to be paid and having to be told that I am not obliged and do not choose to pay debts incurred by the Trustees - but in Shirley's and WT Lewis' judgement even this is better than to seem as if one fled in terror from them.[95]

This was in fact the blackest point. Bute was terribly dismayed at the prospect of rows. He was not all that dismayed by the prospect of being much poorer. Though he very much regretted having to cut back work on the Castle, he was sanguine about the 'retrenchment' in his private life.

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[94]BU/21/117/6 Bute to Gwen, 5 Mar. 1875.

[95]BU/21/117/8 Bute to Gwen, 6 Mar. 1875.

In mid March 1875, things were beginning to look a little better. The Trustees succeeded in borrowing £100,000 from 'the Equitable' on the grounds that the mortgaged property was worth a good deal more that the sums already lent on it. The income from the Glamorgan Estate might not exceed the expenditure, but the capital value of the whole area in Bute hands far exceeded the debt John Boyle had incurred on Bute's behalf.

> Out of this [borrowed money] I propose to pay the Bank £50,000, to give them some deeds, and show them how really rich the Trust property is. By this means we hope they may be induced to abstain from issuing a writ and seizing John Boyle's property - a tremendous economy, and keeping every shilling one can in hand will, I hope, enable us week by week to pay the necessary wages out of what comes in week by week - and the remaining £50,000 will then be in hand to pay something on account to the different tradespeople till better times come.[96]

Typically, he did not allow the very real misery of being apart from Gwen for so long, and the daily see-saw of crisis and relief, to distract him from making proper arrangements for Passiontide at Mount Stuart: 'Please see that the Chapel is veiled by next Saturday evening. You had better use a dead greyish purple - say, the unglazed side of purple calico.'[97]

It has been considered a mystery that Bute did not carry forward the work on Cardiff faster. Mordaunt Crook remarks on the proposed and nearly-completed stables,[98] that Bute did not care for horses. Bute's once-made, off-the-cuff remark that he took his chief pleasure in building and that he was not interested in a project when it was once finished has been quoted and re-quoted to try and explain why he denied himself precisely that pleasure of seeing work in good and vigorous progress, and plans coming into fulfilment. In fact what caused some projects to be abandoned, and others to be scaled down, was this crisis: 'Burges is here, and we hope to reduce all expenses to about £25pw.'[99]

There was another project shared between Bute and Burges, that was perhaps even dearer to Bute's heart. In 1872 Burges had prepared one of his meticulous reports on Castell Coch, a wholly ruinous castle five miles outside Cardiff. The plan was to re-create some of its original features, such as the portcullis, whilst making a simple retreat with bedrooms for the family, a

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[96]BU/21/117/11 Bute to Gwen, 11 Mar. 1875.

[97]BU/21/117/9 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[98]Mordaunt Crook, *Burges,* p.268.

[99]BU/21/117/11 Bute to Gwen, 11 Mar. 1875.

dining room, sitting room, and minimal kitchen and servants quarters. Bute had been abroad, Burges busy with Cardiff. For whatever reason, work had not started in the spring of 1875. Before the full force of the storm broke, Bute took his former guardian, Sir James Fergusson, to see the site, and was utterly astonished at his lack of interest. 'I walked with Sir James to Castell Coch on Saturday. I don't think he either knew or cared a bit about it, being on the contrary entirely absorbed by the fear of getting a chill from being in the open air.'[100]

As well as rebuilding the castle, Bute was planting a vineyard on the sunny south facing slopes below it. This must have been an irresistible project. Firstly, it recalled countless continental castles and houses, with their own vineyards below them. Then Bute would have known of the accounts of vineyards in Britain in the Roman and early mediaeval periods, and have yearned to disprove the scoffers who said that they never could have existed. There were also echoes of the Old Testament, where a vineyard is the usual image for the people of God, and, perhaps even more poignantly, the Gospel of St. John, where Christ speaks of himself as the true vine, and his disciples as the branches. Bute always associated himself strongly with the Evangelist whose name he bore.

The project of re-building Castell Coch was a pleasure he could not bring himself to abandon, and he intended to lease it from the trustees, and continue work on it from his own pocket. That it was Bute's own, particular, pet project perhaps explains its perfection. That he carried on building it in his circumstances tells one a lot about Bute. He had to warn Gwen:

> I think that our income will be reduced for 5 or 6 years to about £15,000 a year. This will of course make it necessary to reduce our expenditure to something under £10,000.[101] Compared to other people of our own rank we shall be very poor. I think that the time for making our retrenchments will be when we leave Mt. Stuart after Easter. ... I think also that we shall have to consider, no longer as a joke, the idea of living abroad, at any rate for some very considerable time ... rather than to live in a corner at some place of our own with 3 or 4 maidservants and nothing of a stable to speak of, and a continual wretched struggle to keep up appearances.[102]

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[100]BU/21/117/3 Bute to Gwen, 1 Mar. 1875.

[101] Very approximately, this sum marked the boundary between gentry and aristocracy. Thompson, *Landed Society*, p.26.

[102]BU/21/117/12 Bute to Gwen, 13 Mar. 1875.

Despite his anger at the way he felt others had got him into this trouble, he had come to a 'sort of agreement between myself and the Trustees'. It is difficult to be absolutely sure of the income from the Scottish estates at this time, but during the custody battle more than ten years before it was estimated at £17,000. The English, as opposed to the Welsh lands, which included some mines in Co. Durham, must also have brought in some revenue. Bute was not drawing at all from the Welsh estates, and it looks as though he was paying out of his pocket to keep the Trust afloat. Of course, in comparison to the great majority, he was still a very rich man, and John Boyle was drawing a salary of only £2000. As he admitted, it was only by the standards of 'people of [his] own rank' (the wealthy nobility) that he had suddenly become poor, and as he reassured Gwen 'this need not, I hope, last many years.'[103]

Perhaps guilt is too strong a word for the way Bute felt about his wealth. The word he had chosen to describe his responsibilities when he came of age was 'burden'. He was all too aware of being privileged, and privilege in the face of want is an uncomfortable position. At their wedding, Mgr. Capel had spoken to the couple of the cross that God would lay on them; a cross for which they must look to each other for support in bearing. Now, faced with a change in his circumstances, Bute spoke of his hopes to Gwen; words belonging to the deepest and most private places of their relationship, and only overheard because, being over three hundred miles apart, they were confided to a letter.

One is always dissatisfied with the particular cross that God chooses to lay on one, and I am sure both of us have prayed very much to have another one than the one we have hitherto had - One cannot speculate on the hidden counsel of the Divine Will, but I cannot help indulging the first glimmers of a hope that if this new cross is to be laid a little grievously on us, the lightening of the present one may perhaps be contemplated by Our Father who is in Heaven. Come or come not what may, or may never be, I am always, my dearest Gwen, your affectionate husband.'[104]

Bute returned to Mount Stuart for Holy Week and Easter, which was in March that year. In April the couple went to Angela's wedding. She married Marmaduke Constable-Maxwell, later to be Lord Herries of Terregles, on 14 April, 1875. He was one of a large and impeccable Catholic family, and a great sportsman.[105]

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[103]*Ibid.*

[104]*Ibid.*

[105]Marmaduke Lord Herries 1837-1908. Bence-Jones, *Families*, pp.215-8.

The Butes did not go abroad. By the time they returned to the Isle of Bute on 5 June, Gwen was looking fragile.[106] She was plainly not fit to travel. The cross had been lightened. Gwen was expecting a baby. Because of her pregnancy, they spent that summer in Britain after all. Living quietly in the Scottish countryside at Mount Stuart was comparatively inexpensive, and it was a peaceful and healthy place for an expectant mother.

Lady Edith's death had made a serious gap in Bute's extended family. Edith had never been a Catholic, nor had Charlie, but despite Bute's conversion the old friendship had remained quite steady. Edith's daughter Flora had been attracted to Catholicism for some years, and at the time of his marriage, Bute had thought it 'certain'[107] she would convert. In the summer of 1875 she was received into the Catholic Church. Her father had been considered in the family to be a very difficult man since the early days of Edith's marriage.[108] No longer having a wife, he embarked on making his daughter's life miserable. She was twenty two, her brother, now Lord Loudon, a year younger. 'The treatment to which she has been subjected at home has naturally been extremely trying and painful to her, but she has endured it with admirable patience, being reinforced and supported by the remarkable kindness of her brother ... Norfolk has been kindness itself to her, and so, too, have others.'[109]

The irony of the situation was that Mr Abney Hastings came from a Catholic family, and was to convert to Catholicism himself a few years later. Perhaps it was his own attraction to this path that made him especially hard on Flora. Alternatively, he may have been jealous of her warm regard for Gwen, who had treated her like a sister.

Bute made the occasional necessary visits to Cardiff. As well as business, he was heavily involved in ecclesiastical matters. There were problems over which religious orders should be active in the Cardiff area, about which Bute was frequently consulted. He had a particular dislike of the Italian Rosminians, thinking 'they want to make this whole great town and mission with its thousands of Catholics a sort of "garden enclosed" for their own order.'[110]

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[106]*The Buteman,* 12 June 1874.

[107]BU/21/93/7 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[108]cf BU/21/10/7 Lady Selina Henry, undated.

[109]HB, p.122. quoting a letter of Bute 'to an intimate friend', 10 Jan. 1876.

[110]BU/21/93/1 Bute to Gwen, 4 Feb. 1872.

He was promoting monasticism in Scotland. He wanted to see Benedictines established there, and had 'engaged ...to support certain subjects at St Michael's Hereford [the abbey at Belmont] to be employed in Scotland in due course after their promotion to the priesthood, and eventually to found a monastery'.[111] He also launched a bitter attack on Charles Eyre,[112] Archbishop of the new Scottish hierarchy, restored in 1878, over his lightening of the rules of the Lenten Fast. Eyre explained kindly that 'The fact that nearly all of our people are of the poorer and working classes ... who cannot do their work on an abstinence diet'[113] had led him to take this step. In addition he had taken account of the especially unkind climate of Scotland, where Lent is usually in the harshest part of the winter. Bute was quite unappeased. He did not grasp just how hard life was for poor Catholics. It was his usual habit to entrust the monies he gave to help the poor to third parties, usually to priests or nuns working with them.[114] Later, one was to remonstrate with him, presumably concerning his requests as to whom he should help: 'I try to help only the really deserving tho' I am afraid that if God were to serve some of us so, we should be very badly off.'[115]

Much later when he was invited to take part in 'some tribute of respect to his Grace Archbishop Eyre',[116] Bute found himself unable to contribute. Despite his respect for him as the representative of the Pope, despite his unremitting attention to his 'difficult position', and despite his 'personal goodness and kindness ... his personal piety and self denial ..... the unprovoked attack made within the last few years upon the observance of Lent in Scotland must (as I think) have inflicted ... upon all the Catholics and probably all others in Scotland, injuries whose full extent is known to God alone.'[117] Scotland had been deprived of 'a vast means of grace'. This was another unposted letter. Bute annotated it himself 'not sent, as I saw the people.'

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[111]BU/21/108/4 Birchall to Bute, undated.

[112]Charles Petrie Eyre 1817-1902; Ushaw College Durham 1826, deacon 1838, priest 1842, first Archbishop of Glasgow in the restored Catholic hierarchy 1878-1902. See DNB.

[113]BU21/119/1 Eyre to Bute, 5 Jan. year uncertain.

[114]Much philanthropy in Victorian Scotland involved Protestant religious instruction, so the Catholic poor, especially the children, were effectively excluded. Checkland, *Philanthropy*, p.248. The monetary and emotional support the Catholic poor received from Bute is still remembered in industrial areas of Ayrshire to this day.

[115]BU/21/183/4 Richardson to Bute, 22 June 1882.

[116]BU/21/149/2 Bute to Henry Lachlan, 22 Jan. 1878.

[117]*Ibid.*

By the end of August, it was generally known that Lady Bute was expecting her first child. It was a convention of the Victorian period, continuing into the next century, that matters such as conception and childbirth should not be spoken of before the unmarried. Bute was more than somewhat amused by the reaction of the nuns at Pen-y-lan: 'All the nuns began at once with one voice to say how glad they were at the condition you were in &c. &c. &c. I really think they were not as shy of the subject, and apparently knew as much about it as the old bags themselves.'[118] The nuns, of course, ran a refuge for 'fallen women.' The monks at Belmont were a little more reserved, though they, too, knew that Gwen was expecting a baby: 'Fr. Jerome's compliments: & that they are leaving St Benedict no peace in yr. regard.'[119] It was clear that the financial crisis was over: 'They have got together some £85,000 wh. is to be applied mainly to the payment of debts.'[120]

Bute was working on the history of William Wallace that summer. The mediaeval was his favourite period of history, Scottish independence was one of his passions,[121] and the two met in the noble and doomed figure of Wallace. There is some evidence that his interest started with Blind Harry[122], for there are sheets of a modern English version in Bute's papers,[123] and these predate his essay on Wallace. As he himself explained, Blind Harry wrote his Scots verses on the life of Wallace 'about 150 years after Wallace's death. In point of time, therefore, this great work stands to the events it professes to narrate in about the same relation that a popular historical book of the [Victorian] day does to the persecution of the covenanters.'[124] However, Blind Harry had allegedly based his tales on a work in Latin prose by the Rev. John Blair, 'a personal friend of the hero.'[125] As Bute pointed out, it was likely that somebody else had translated this Latin into Scots first, adding to the possibility of error. Bute turned the somewhat allusive original back into a plain English prose version, adding his own notes on obscure passages.

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[118]BU21/117/14 Bute to Gwen, 30 Aug. 1875.

[119]BU/21/117/17 Bute to Gwen, 2 Sept. 1875.

[120]BU/21/117/16 Bute to Gwen, 1 Sept. 1875.

[121]He combined it with his Toryism by noting that the issue was above politics.

[122] The poet of the Scots Wars of Independence. See DNB.

[123]BU/21/132 Papers on Blind Harry.

[124]John, Third Marquess of Bute, *The Early Days of Sir William Wallace (A Lecture delivered at Paisley, Nov. 16 1875)*, New Edition (Alexander Gardener: Paisley, 1912) p.7.

[125]*Ibid.*

He moved on from there to a rather more general re-creation of the childhood of Wallace for a lecture he was to give in Paisley that autumn. It reveals his approach to history:

> when we turn our eyes across the gap of 600 years to set before us, in some wise, the first years of the great national hero, we are encountered by a double difficulty. Concerning the matter itself, we know nothing, and concerning its surroundings, we know more than we shall want this evening ... dates are, after all, only the skeleton of History. Her form and colour, and the voices with which she speaks to us, are other than these; and if we look upon the scene into which the hero must have been born, and the things which must have surrounded his childhood, the matter becomes superabundant. We might go into the history of Scotland for a detailed account of the political events, amid the noises of which his understanding slowly opened. We might go to archaeology, which would afford us a picture of the sort of house in which he was born and lived, or of the education he received, or of the social conditions which surrounded him. An essay, or a series of essays might be written on the games of his childhood.[126]

From this admirable blend of documentary history and archaeology, Bute re-created a vivid picture of the early years of a moderately well-born boy living near Paisley in the thirteenth century. He re-created a vivid image of a simple tower house surrounded by a huddle of lesser buildings,

> probably arranged within a wall or palisade, and forming a moderately compact mass - like the farm buildings of the present day ... The sombre shingles or thatch of the roofs and the blank whiteness of the walls relieved by lines and spots of glaring colour where the woodwork was covered, and the walls themselves striped with vermilion red or apple-green; a gay religious image at or over the gate, coats-of-arms here and there, and the flag of the Wallaces flying over all.[127]

Bute imagined that the house was probably stone, which today seems less likely. In fact, very little is known of the housing of the gentry of this period, and the picture Bute created is probably truer of buildings one or two hundred years later. But he was using the very best research of his own day, and using it creatively. When he came to consider the garden, he turned to evidence from illuminated manuscripts and from early poems to create the image a

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[126]*Ibid.*, p.5.

[127]*Ibid.*, pp.37-8.

tiny gem of flower-scattered grass without formal flower beds; an image which holds true today.

As for religion, Bute was well aware that he, an adherent of the old faith, had the advantage, and he enjoyed gently teasing his listeners. He spoke to a Scottish Presbyterian audience of the Scot Wallace's devotion to the Psalms, and this at a time when the singing of metrical Psalms was still the principal form of praise in a Presbyterian service. He told them that the Wallace family would have had 'one or more of the MS Psalm books which may now be seen in museums and which are sometimes stupidly and ignorantly called Missals, though they are much more like to the Psalm-book of the Church of Scotland than to the Missal or Mass-book.'[128] He reminded them that the dying William Wallace had had a Psalter held up before his eyes.

He spoke of worship for the majority of the population, who could not read and 'the forms of prayerful meditation on the gospel history called the Rosary ... introduced by S. Dominick about fifty or sixty years before'.[129] It is perfectly correct to speak of the Rosary as an aid to meditating on the Bible, and it is perfectly certain that this aspect of the Rosary had never crossed the minds of his Presbyterian audience before.

Bute became serious again as he described the demolition of those parts of Paisley Abbey which were certainly old enough to have been seen by Wallace, recalling his great battle to save them. He ended his lecture with a reflection on his own line, and that of the Wallaces. He had started his lecture by explaining that the name Wallace is derived from 'Welsh'; the Wallaces were a Welsh family in their origins. Now he ended it with a reflection on this.

> The Stuarts ... belonged essentially to the conquering Norman race ... not so the Wallaces, whose three Scotch generations could not so utterly have obliterated all sympathy with the Cambrian cradle of their family, but that the savage injustice and cruelty of the Plantagenet conquest of Wales ... must have struck them with peculiar horror and indignation ... The Wallaces had found shelter from English bondage in Scotland ... when they found [they were liable to come under English masters there as well] they determined to resist for themselves to the uttermost of their power.[130]

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[128]*Ibid.*, p.39.

[129]*Ibid.*, p.43.

[130]*Ibid.*, pp.56-7.

The English were tyrants, and the Stuarts were, in origin, English. This lecture is perhaps the most perfect of all Bute's scholarly works. It played entirely to his strengths and his passions; literature, social history, noble inspirations. Above all, it was centred where he was strongest, not in hard fact but intuition and allusion.

Bute might have been happier if he had had more time to spend in historical research and writing, for ecclesiastical matters often drove him to fury. Plans to re-establish monasticism in Scotland were not going smoothly. The Rt. Rev. Abbot Richard Burchall,[131] the powerful, long serving President-General of the Anglo-Benedictine congregation, and the only English mitred Abbot, was in charge of the project, and Bute did not find him at all sympathetic. Burchall failed to attend pre-arranged meetings, and refused to listen to Bute's advice.

> As there is no feeling or opinion of mine touching this matter wh. has not now been disregarded I naturally feel a reluctance to meddle with it any more than I can help in future. ... I am weary of saying that if the monastery is started at Lanark or any parallel place two results will as I believe certainly ensue.
>
> 1) a collision with the secular clergy, the full misery of which cannot be gauged and
>
> 2) The failure of the school and probably of the monastery.
>
> I must also beg to remind you of the protest I have already made that no part of the sum I propose giving to the monastery is to be handed over, directly or indirectly to Mr Mentatum ... to take and apply merely to the improvement of a wealthy land-owner's property and at the evident impoverishment of the institution, the alms of a benefactor intended for the purposes of religion.[132]

The Abbot's reply was more than a little condescending, and he missed the point entirely: 'I presume that you consider the vicinity of the ancient churchyard of Loudon an eligible site, and that your Lordship has a preference for it ... as I have not a Bradshaw to hand, I shall feel obliged if your Lordship will kindly inform me what is the best way of getting to the spot in question from Carlisle.'[133]

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[131]Richard Placid Burchall OSB, 1812-1885.

[132]BU/21/119/9 Copy letter Bute to Burchall, 7 Nov. 1875.

[133]BU/21/119/10 Burchall to Bute, 24 Nov. 1875.

Bute was incensed: 'I must take this opportunity formally to protest & disclaim any kind of responsibility for such a decision or any consequence wh. may or may not ensue. To know the pages of Bradshaw by heart is not an acquirement of mine, & I cannot understand why you should imagine me able to prognosticate the contents of his issue for the month of November.'[134] After that, no doubt Fr. Burchall realised that he had lost his patron's confidence and respect. In some ways, it was an untypical outburst. Bute's natural ability with words and his inherited forthrightness could make him extremely cutting, but it was an ability he normally restrained. Many letters, originally written with all too telling invective, were later corrected and much toned down before being sent. He was not of a quarrelsome disposition, and he frequently restrained and mollified his much more pugnacious wife. Perhaps the natural anxiety of a prospective father was irritating Bute's temper, for Gwen was now in the last month of her pregnancy.

Later, Bute was to remember his wife in a 'cheery condition, swollen to a preposterous size, with a large child jumping about inside, and a gentle flutter of monthlies [midwives], pill boxes [doctors], nurses, tradespeople and sympathising friends.'[135] They prepared carefully for the occasion. Bute asked for an especial cross from the convent at Taunton, which Gwen's mother had held in childbirth, and there were blessed candles to burn. Gwen was not afraid.[136] Dr Noble, from her family home at Glossop, came as her *accoucheur.*[137] Did the couple predetermine that Bute should stay at his wife's side for his child's birth, or was the decision made spontaneously because she naturally clung to him for support during her labour? Either way, the fact that Bute was there[138] shows the depth of their relationship, and of course, how little Bute was interested in conventional male roles.[139]

In the early hours of Christmas Eve, Gwen was safely delivered of a daughter, Margaret, who was christened that evening in the little Burges chapel, packed to the full with local friends, notables and farmers. Bute had especially asked for the family gamekeeper, Wilson, to be present. This was the same 'Jack Wilson ... [who] knocked a writ-server down the stairs of a

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[134]BU/21/119/11 Bute to Burchall, 27 Nov. 1875.

[135]BU/21/160/5 Bute to Gwen, 12 Sept. 1879.

[136]BU/89/5/4 Gwen to Angela, 21 Dec. 1876.

[137]*The Buteman,* 28 Dec. 1875.

[138]BU/21/175/137 Bute to Gwen, 20 June 1882.

[139]By contrast the Second Marquess had only been allowed to see his wife and baby for a few moments by the second day. SNL Ms.3445 f.325 Bute to Principal Lee, 15 Sept. 1847. Alfred, Lord Tennyson fared slightly better, plainly being allowed to spend quite some time with his wife after the birth of their eldest living child. Thwaite, *Poet's Wife,* p.249.

Rothesay hotel'[140] and had accompanied Bute on his flight with Lady Elizabeth. Bute not only invited Wilson, but made sure the local paper recorded the fact that Wilson's 'presence greatly gratified his Lordship.' In the hierarchy-ridden world of a Scottish island, and the even more hierarchy-ridden world of Bute servants, the note in *The Buteman,* which neatly and wittily inverted their social importance, must have meant as much as the invitation. To the best of his abilities, Bute paid his debts. Except in the Church, hierarchies had little importance to him, not even the one which saw him at its pinnacle.

Mgr. Capel sent Bute a little note of congratulation on 'the happy events of today. God has indeed blessed you. The enclosed will I trust find a place in your prayer book as a memento of a great day in your life.'[141] One might think the formality of the note a little strange from the chaplain who had baptised the new baby. But the relationship between Bute and Capel was already strained to the uttermost. Bute had found out that Capel was cheating him. At the beginning of 1878, when he feared that Capel might be made a Bishop, and knowing how much his close association with Bute had helped Capel's career, Bute wrote in French to Cardinal Franchi, Prefect of the Congregation of the Sacred Propaganda in Rome.[142]

> ... Mgr. Capel was the Priest to whom I addressed my first confessions and the ceremony of my abjuration. I knew him already, having met him at the house of mutual friends. It was to me that he owed the petition granted by the Holy Father in consequence of which he was named *Cameriere intra urbem.*
>
> I engaged him as Almoner to accompany me on a journey to the Orient and - after our return - I made him my regular Almoner. He had 7,500fr. (£300) [Bute's figures] for very little trouble, since I only rarely made him work as Chaplain. He had a further 7,500 per annum to distribute among some of the poor who sent me begging letters.
>
> After some years, never finding a single pauper who has received alms at his hands, I began to have some suspicions. Specially (for example) I had asked him particularly to give £50 (1,250fr) to the Pères Servites of London. Nobody ever saw the money. Circumstances increased my doubts. I started asking him for an account of what he had disbursed. He never replied except with promises, and

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[140]HB, p.7. footnote.

[141]BU/21/119/21 Capel to Bute, 24 Dec. 1875.

[142]The full text of this letter is given in the Appendix, p.239.

after a year of such requests, always fruitless, I found myself obliged to tell him that I was dissatisfied with his conduct as almoner - and to terminate definitively the previous arrangements.

Your Eminence, no one but my wife, my secretary and one of my agents knows up to now what I dare to write to you. I find myself driven by duty to His Eminence, to my country and to the Holy Apostolic See, to write what I have just written. It is to be taken as a personal confidence.

I shall not add a word, except to say that I have heard things said by Mgr. Capel that in my personal opinion, cannot be reconciled with either Catholicism or Theism itself. It is true that it was only through his ignorance of questions often enough discussed by ancient and modern thinkers that he brought these latest idiocies to light - but the effect would be no less scandalous for that in a sceptical country like mine.

He has not made such a success of his school at Kensington that the English would not probably be glad enough to be rid of him - but let them not do so by giving him to us...

Bute's long letter shows a marked change of tone between the two halves. The first, dealing with the fraud, is restrained, painful, careful. These are matters which Bute has revealed only to his wife, Sneyd and one of his *hommes des affaires.* This fraud not only brought Catholicism into disrepute, and showed Bute as a credulous dupe; it also taught Bute that he could not expect to be valued for himself. Once more he could say 'I can trust nobody'. Capel had hurt him where Bute was always vulnerable, by making it perfectly clear by his actions that all he wanted was Bute's money. No wonder Bute had found difficulty in writing this part of his confidence.

By contrast, the last section, where he attacks Capel for his views, is flamboyant. He wields his knife with panache. It is 'only' Capel's ignorance of matters 'often enough' discussed which leads him to speak as though he is not only not a Catholic but not even a theist. The pain is less personal, and Bute is therefore more free to attack with some pleasure.

Yet the whole business must have been most distressing, including the discovery of Capel's very limited intellect. It was not Capel alone who had steered Bute into the Catholic Church; Bute's attraction to it was long-standing. Nevertheless Capel had been a key figure in that

process. Liddon had found that Bute used Capel's arguments. Now Bute had found Capel to be utterly wanting in human decency and intellectual competence, let alone Christian virtue, or Catholic teaching. The letter is marked in Bute's own hand 'not sent'. Yet Bute carefully preserved it; perhaps it had fulfilled its real purpose. It had given him the chance to formulate and express feelings which were too painful to reveal to a comparative stranger. Probably he found other ways of communicating them to the Catholic hierarchy, as a later letter, from the then Archbishop, seems to advise him to remain silent on the subject.[143]

Capel was in trouble on many fronts. He had been Manning's choice as Rector for the Catholic 'University College' at Kensington, which was opened in 1875. The scheme was a failure. Manning was to some degree to blame for the weakness of the pro-university's academic side,[144] but Capel, who had not kept any accounts, was responsible for the large sums of money which simply vanished. It was 1877 by the time Manning became seriously worried. In addition, the college was suspected of reckless irregularity and immorality.[145] Capel was suspended from the office of priest in the Diocese of Westminster. In 1879, it was determined that he should go to California. When Bute heard of it, he wrote a note wishing him well: 'in case we should not meet before you leave, I write to say I hope God may give you the happiness of promoting his glory. I am about having some masses said for you.'[146] Had Capel stayed quietly in California, the whole affair might have died there, but he tried hard to clear his name in Rome. [147]

Gwen had been right when she commented to her sister about their only brother: 'fancy poor, dear Frank going to school at Capel's, I don't tell Papa so, but I don't like it.'[148] Nevertheless, Bute's money had not been spent in an attempt to make the pro-university viable. He had severed all links with Capel before then. Money entrusted to Capel had a habit of vanishing. Moreover, he had completely betrayed the trust put in him by a man to whom he not only owed most of his position in Society, but whom he, as his confessor, knew to be particularly open and trusting. The ceiling of the tiny chapel that Burges had constructed in Cardiff Castle out

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[143]BU/21/162/13 Caird to Bute, 14 Nov. 1879.

[144]Robert Gray, *Cardinal Manning: a Biography* (Weidenfeld and Nicolson: London, 1985) p.257.

[145]Vincent Alan McClelland, *Cardinal Manning: His Public Life and Influence 1865-1892* (Oxford University Press: London, 1962) p.119.

[146]BU/21/162/6 Bute to Capel, 25 June 1879.

[147]Edmund Sheridan Purcell, *Life of Cardinal Manning, Archbishop of Westminster*, 2 vols (Macmillan & Co: London, 1895) vol. 2, p.584. Purcell wrongly thinks that he was suspended from the priesthood.

[148]BU/89/6/4/ Gwen to Angela, undated.

of the dressing room where Bute's father had died is decorated with angels holding the instruments of the passion. They all look sorrowfully at the humanly-devised instruments of torture, except for the angel holding a picture of Judas' kiss. He follows the convention of veiling his face; treachery is too grievous a sight for the angels.

VIII

Purgatory

'I do not dare to say ... "Send me here my purgatory." '

There had been little or no contact between Bute and the royal family, despite his wealth and status. It is tempting to speculate that the visit of Prince Leopold[1] to Mount Stuart and the Island of Bute in 1876, was intended to bring about a rapprochement. Bute might have felt it disloyal to his mother to entertain the Queen, but her children were a different matter. The attack on Flora had been a personal one, not one by the monarchy. Bute was now a father, with his daughter to consider, and, perhaps, other children as yet unborn.

A tremendous amount of preparation went into the visit, and a whole suite of rooms in the north east corner of Mount Stuart House were fitted up very lavishly. Space was somewhat at a premium in the house, with Bute giving up his personal sitting room for a nursery, and all pretence being abandoned that Gwen had a separate bedroom; that room now became her dressing room, and the couple had a 'family bedroom'.[2]

In the same flurry of work for the Prince's visit was included a making over of the stairway area. This involved 'designing & painting and gilding on the dome'.[3] Details of the decoration are lacking, but it was based on a starry sky. Bute had been enormously impressed with the glittering stars in the ceiling of the summer smoking room at Cardiff, but Burges had set them out formally, evenly spaced. It seems that the new decoration was to be a realistic depiction of the night sky, for the invoice included moneys for 'making model and getting it properly set to scale at Greenwich Observatory' as well as 'providing and fixing stars at 1/6 each made of cut glass & fixed with metal settings.' Nicholls' figures of morning, noon, evening and night from Cardiff were re-created, and the staircase was decorated with flowers

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[1]Prince Leopold 1853-1884, BP.

[2]BU/85/20 Pitman to Sneyd, 4 Dec. 1877.

[3]BU/85/10 Campbell Invoice, Oct. 1876.

representing the seasons. None of this was cheap, perhaps indicating that Bute had now largely recovered from his financial crisis, or more likely that he simply could not resist spending on his houses.

Bute took a villa near Nice for the winter of 1876 and the early spring which followed. Gwen, who did at least have her baby for company, got rather bored whilst Bute went into Nice each weekday for 'Hebrew and fencing' lessons.[4] She waited eagerly for word of her sister's first baby, which was born in January and named after her Aunt Gwendolen. In the spring, leaving Gwen in her villa, Bute went with Sneyd by a P & O steamer for his first visit to mainland Greece. 'We had a beautiful view of Capri in the evening as we left - but it was as cold as if it was night. Tiberius must have been crossed sometimes in his pleasures. He had 12 villas in it.'[5]

Bute fell immediately and lastingly in love with Greece, and especially Athens, an Athens without pollution to stain the clear air.

> We landed and drove here in an open cab (about 3 or 4 miles) through a beautiful green plain well watered & cultivated with many trees, the road (very good) planted like an avenue... The acropolis was very soon seen. It is more overlooked by other hills than I expected. It is here a small new town (Xcept some very quaint small old churches) prettily laid out in avenues of pepper trees ...
>
> We have been all day looking at antiquities - the temple of Zeus Olympian and the theatre of Dionysus in the morning, And the Pryx and the Acropolis in the afternoon - set in the midst of a lovely landscape, canonised, beautified, transfigured, vivified by the most xquisite poetry and history, they quite exceed anything at Rome. It is something like the difference between opera and the conversations in a dialogue book. The pure Greek art is totally by itself, and I shall have to go again more than once before I can fix what it is first and then try to conceive (wh. I suppose cannot be done) what it must have been. It is a dream of intellectual sensuality.[6]

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[4]BU/89/5/2 Gwen to Angela, 25 Nov. 1876.

[5]BU/21/139/3 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[6]Ibid.

He had begun to revise his harsh judgement of the Orthodox Church: 'On the whole, the state of the schismatic church is a favourable contrast to much one sees at Nice.'[7] He was deeply struck by Eleusis:

> I had not known that the place was so situated as to apply to the imagination every stimulus wh. it is possible to think of. It is indeed quite impossible to describe the Bay of Eleusis itself. Physically, it is rather like St Ringan's Bay[8] in Bute, Inchmarnock doing for Salmis.[9]

The Butes returned home by way of a sightseeing trip through Italy. Gwen was enchanted with Assisi, and especially the body of St Clare: 'she must have been good looking I should think. I never saw a corpse so sharp featured as she is still.'[10] Bute was in his element on journeys, sightseeing, changing his plans with a glorious sense of freedom, and reading French novels so silly that his wife could not be bothered with them. She on the other hand, was becoming increasingly impatient. It was not just that they had sent Margaret on ahead to Lago Maggiore, to wait for them in comfort and safety, and that Gwen was missing her dreadfully. Gwen wanted the usual occupations of life in Britain; family, friends, pets, riding, amateur theatricals. Angela was going to a meeting of the extended family at Arundel, and Gwen longed to be there too. 'I envy you arriving so soon at Arundel. Bute can't imagine why I want to hurry home as he calls it, he looks forward to going back to England after being abroad as boys returning to school.'[11]

Gwen was envious of her sister's pastimes, and chafing at the restrictions that Bute's tastes placed on her.

> Imagine my never once having been on horseback for five years, soon I shall be getting too old for all these youthful amusements: I don't myself see the fun of passing all one's youth abroad, though this is only for you, once I am back, tho' fond as I may be of doing what Bute likes still he can't have all the fun and I shall

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[7]BU/21/139/4 Bute to Gwen, 24 Feb. 1877.

[8]That is, St Ninian's Bay.

[9]BU/21/139/5 Bute to Gwen, 3 Mar. 1877.

[10]BU/89/6/7 Gwen to Angela, undated.

[11]BU/89/6/11 Gwen to Angela, undated.

be careful how soon I come abroad again because after a stretch of seven months a good interval may be allowed.[12]

She soon set about satisfying her desire to ride again. That summer they intended to spend time at Cardiff, and prepared accordingly: 'We have just bought for our Victoria at Cardiff a lovely pair of horses and Harris assures me that I cd. ride one of them beautifully so I shall insist upon being allowed to do so.'[13] Since a carriage horse and a lady's hack look quite different, there is something slightly comic in the image of the beautiful, well born, and wealthy Lady Bute riding out on her driving horse, the more so as the financial crisis seems to have been largely over.

She kept up her own driving, too, having her ponies and carriage sent to Cardiff, 'as if I am to be victimised by being made to do a most prodigious amount of calling, I don't see why I shd. not do it in the way wh. pleases me most & I like driving.'[14] 'Calling' was the bane of Gwen's life, but necessary, as the failure to do it caused offence to the local notables, who could not realise its omission sprang not from Gwen's belief that they were below her, but from her dislike of the activity.

Bute had exempted Castell Coch from his economies, and a year earlier had been delighted with its progress. 'I went yesterday morning to Castell Coch with Burges. I believe it will get on fast, and that the two halls, cellar, ground floor room, kitchen & great lesser & least bedrooms with the wall-gallery will be done by the autumn.'[15] Coch had many advantages for Bute. It was a small enough project for him to see rapid progress on it. It made a convenient focal point for one of his daily long walks, and it was in the country, away from the city, and its associated 'rows'.

In November 1877, Bute's cousin Flora married Gwen's cousin Henry, Duke of Norfolk, who had been so kind to her in the year following her conversion. Their wedding present to her was a pair of jewelled ivory hair brushes designed by Burges.[16] Of course, the Butes went to the wedding, Gwen reporting to Angela that the bride was to go away 'in a sapphire colour velvet ... she insists on having the sleeves of her chemises all lace'[17] which seemed an unpardonable

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[12]BU/89/6/11 Gwen to Angela, 24 April 1877.

[13]BU/89/6/20 Gwen to Angela, 6 Aug. 1877.

[14]BU/89/3/3 Gwen to Angela, 5 June 1874.

[15]BU/21/128/2 Bute to Gwen, 9 May 1876.

[16]John Martin Robinson, *The Dukes of Norfolk* (Oxford University Press: Oxford, 1982) p.220.

[17]BU/89/6/23 Gwen to Angela, undated.

extravagance to Gwen. However, she was pleased to announce that the wedding had been successful and 'Flora looked quite pretty'.[18] Flora's health continued to be poor, and not long after the wedding, it was clear that she was showing signs of the dreaded Bright's Disease.[19]

The Butes had intended to spend the winter at Mount Stuart. On 3 December, with the Butes still in London, Mount Stuart House caught fire, 'caused it is said by the over-heating of a copper flue, 12 by 8 inches, leading from a furnace on the ground floor.'[20] Due to lack of space in the house, Lady Bute had had the former servants' bedrooms in the two wings redecorated as guest bedrooms, and moved the servants to the loft. This necessitated insulating the underside of the roof, which had been done by lining it with thick felt. It was this which caught fire. The fire was discovered at '10 o'clock in the forenoon'.[21] There was plenty of water, but 'fire extinguishing apparatus was found to be practically useless'. The servants began moving pictures, furniture and books out of the building and were later joined by the 40 men of *H. M. S. Jackal* and by men from Rothesay, including all those in the employment of the burgh. All that day the fire was fought, and at times it seemed possible the fire-fighters would win the battle. Towards evening it got a renewed grip, and it became clear that the only possible areas to be saved were the two wings. The lawns were dug up and 'turfs were placed against the doorways of the long narrow corridors which led from the main building ... The flames reached at least 50 feet high, and all around was illuminated as clear as if it were daylight. As the flames came shooting out of the windows, the firemen turned the hose upon them, and the water hissed upon the frames.'

Inevitably, there was much damage, some of it done by 'roughs'[22] who came out from Rothesay attracted by the food and wine distributed by the maids to the workers. Yet the great bulk of the more valuable items were saved. The fire was stopped before it reached the outer wings of the house, and the Burges chapel was unharmed. However, the central portion of the house was a shell.

There was nothing for it but to spend Christmas at Dumfries House, which Bute loved, but Gwen disliked: 'Here it will be very dull, I find it a very depressing place, but we are hardly

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[18]BU/89/6/24 Gwen to Angela, undated.

[19]Robinson, *Norfolk,* p.221.

[20]*The Buteman,* 8 Dec. 1877.

[21]*Ibid.*

[22]BU/85/20 Pitman to Sneyd, 4 Dec. 1877.

settled and the house tho much prettier than when you saw it last is still not as I could wish.'[23] She envied her sister a Christmas with her two children, Angela having had a second daughter, called after her mother, at the start of December. There was still no sign of another child for the Butes.

Moving his main Scottish home from Mount Stuart to Dumfries House focused Bute's attention on the Catholic Church in Ayrshire. He believed in keeping the religious authorities up to the mark: 'Spent a lot of time with the Abp. to whom I gave a good talking to about those two priests .... as to McGinnes [he said] he was such a scandal he had to be got rid of somewhere & so he sent him to Cumnock, out of the way!'[24] Since Cumnock was Bute's home church at Dumfries House, it is hard to know whether to pity McGinnes or Bute more.

The academic work he had in hand was Ayrshire-based as well. It was an attempt to untangle an episode known as 'the burning of the Barns of Ayr'. This grew out of his interest in 'Blind Harry' who is one of the sources for the incident. Bute first laid out very concisely the undisputed background to the event: 'In the winter of 1296-7, the English Government appeared to be firmly and, on the whole, peaceably established in Scotland. Early in May 1297 ... a riot took place at Lanark. The same day William Wallace's wife was hung there ... and that night insurrection broke out in the burning of the English quarters at Lanark.'[25] 'Immediately after the burning of Lanark, William Wallace and his friends successfully attacked the English Justice sitting at Scone, where he had been acting with great severity.'[26] Later, at Irvine, the two armies, Scots and English, met, and the Scots cavalry being much weaker than the English, the aristocratic leaders of the Scots decided on surrender, amongst them Robert Bruce. 'William Wallace appears to have entirely dissented from the conduct of the great people at this "capitulation of Irvine", as it is called.'[27]

Bute was whole-hearted in his respect for the comparatively humbly born Wallace, while his contempt for his own ancestor, Bruce, is plainly and beautifully expressed.

> It would seem that the battle [of Falkirk] was preceded by a violent quarrel between William Wallace and the leader of what must, perhaps, be called the aristocratic party, in consequence of which Wallace retired from the army, to

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[23]BU/89/6/28 Gwen to Angela, 22 Dec. 1877.

[24]BU/21/101/6 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[25]John Patrick Crichton Stuart, *The Burning of the Barns of Ayr* (Alex. Gardener: Paisley, 1878) p.3.

[26]*Ibid.*, p.5.

[27]*Ibid.*, p.16.

> which he only returned when the sight of the misfortunes of his country became more than he could bear. As the shattered remains of the national army retreated over the common, Wallace had an altercation across the stream with Robert Bruce, who was fighting on the English side. Robert never again bore arms against his country.[28]

He later remarked of Robert that he 'was finally elected Guardian of the Kingdom, in which capacity he wrote a most insolent letter to the King of England ... and did not change sides again for quite a little while.'[29] Bute did a very neat job of piecing together the movements of the English Army from the details recorded on the Horse Roll.[30] The English reached Ayr,

> and what did they find ...? They found it empty and burnt, for, when Robert Bruce, the younger, who had held that castle, had heard of the coming of the King, he fled before his face and burnt the castle ... This, the writer submits, was the real burning of the barns of Ayr.[31]

It was done to leave the English Army without lodging, and to help to starve them out, and it was successful. However, this event can have had nothing to do with the executions of Scots gentry in the barns at Ayr that Blind Harry records. Bute surmised compellingly that this event took place much later, in 1306 or 1307 when the ageing King Edward had lost his accustomed patience, and that the death of a man called Brice Blair, who was known to have been hanged at Ayr, had been linked with other deaths, which did not in fact all occur there.

Blind Harry found Wallace had made an attack on an English Judge at an Aire which he took to be the town of that name (instead of a Justice-Aire), especially as he knew that Wallace was famous, amongst other things, for having burnt the English quarters in the town. Then came the question, What had the English judges to do with Ayr under Edward, to draw down the wrath of the popular party? The answer was evident. The executions in the barns, in which Brice Blair had perished, had left only too bloody a tradition. So he supposed all three things - the executions, the attack on the judge, and the burning, must be parts of the same affair.[32]

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[28]*Ibid.*, p.11.

[29]*Ibid.*, p.32.

[30]E.g. *ibid.*, p.22.

[31]*Ibid.*, p.23.

[32]*Ibid.* p.63.

The Barns of Ayr displays the objectivity of which Bute was so proud in his historical work. He was not remotely tempted to whitewash his ancestor Bruce, rather the contrary (today the judgement on him would take a better account of the political realities of his situation) and he was also completely fair to Edward I. The study sprang from his interest in the folk history of his Ayrshire homeland, the tradition that Wallace stood on a certain eponymous hill and remarked that the barns *burn weil*. Bute was ready to take evidence from every source, the more picturesque the better, but not to throw all caution to the winds: he also offered a more conventional etymology for the placename. He picked an episode concerned with Scottish independence, always close to his heart, and revolving around issues of death, justice, and cruelty. The wars of independence were not attracting proper scholastic attention at this time, and Bute was, once again, very much a trail-blazer in his interests.

Early in 1875 Bute accepted a knighthood of the Order of the Thistle from Queen Victoria. He knew well how his Aunt Selina's children would view this, and he wrote at once to Mabel to explain. She was mollified:

> The contents of your letter received this morning are a source of mingled surprise and joy to me and seem an answer to prayer, that some one might sympathise in my earnest desire that full justice and respect may yet be showed to the memory of our dear Aunt. I tell you frankly that I have been very angry with you, for I fully believed you had ... condoned her Majesty's conduct to our family by accepting the Thistle from her ... you voluntarily assure me that you have never sought the Queen, except at her royal command & I am most thankful for it ... your letter has raised my warmest sympathy & the old sisterly feeling.[33]

Mabel had stored all the old material relating to the pitiful trouble between Queen Victoria and Lady Flora Hastings, and she sent copies to Bute. She also sent an account of the origin of the Curse of the Hastings,[34] which went back to the time of the death of 'the last Hastings Earl of Pembroke' when there was a bitter dispute between the heirs through the line male and the line female. It was not the title but the right to bear arms that was in dispute. The rightful claimant was set aside for the descendant of Grey de Ruthyn, and the former cursed any of his own heirs who married into the family.

> George Augustus 2nd Marquess of Hastings married Barbara in her own right Baroness Grey de Ruthyn. Mark the result. His eldest sister, Lady Flora

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[33]BU/35/1 Mabel Henry to Bute, 10 Jan. 1878.

[34]BU/35/5/2ff Papers and copy letters relating to Lady Flora Hastings.

Hastings, died in Buckingham Palace the innocent victim of a vile conspiracy headed by the Queen herself... Lady Flora's mother, Lady Loudon, died 6 months after of a broken heart in consequence. Lord Hastings himself died 4 years later at 36 (not without suspicion he was poisoned) & he too was a crushed man. Paulyn his eldest son succeeded him but died at 19, single. In his younger brother Harry's death at 26, the Marquess of Hastings' title became extinct. His sister succeeded him as Edith, Countess of Loudon, but died suddenly & her only just forty quite blind...

> Some Welsh gentleman hunted out all this about the Curse, in an old History & wrote it down for Lady Selina Henry.[35]

However untrue it was that Victoria had caused Lady Flora's death, the death roll from Bright's Disease was an impressive one.

In March 1878, Bute travelled to Rome whilst Gwen went on a visit to Glossop. He met Pope Leo XIII, and described him in detail.

> He has an intensely aristocratic air, but after the manner of Spanish noble families who have bred in-and-in until they get quite dwarfed ... He is very erect & looks bright, with glittering eyes & much xpression. He trembles without ceasing & gave me the impression of a weak man, in bad health, worked almost to death. ... He is hardly a perceptible shade fatter than Manning. His face is perfectly white, Xcept the blue-black round the eyes and - well, a red nose - as if from chronic indigestion. ... I left him with the mingled feeling of reverence and affection with wh. one wishes the Vicar of our Ld. to fill one.[36]

Bute's life remained a quiet family one. Some of it was spent on Bute, in a rented house Balmory, at Ascog. After careful consideration, it was decided that Mount Stuart could not be restored,[37] and that Robert Rowand Anderson should build a new Mount Stuart, incorporating the surviving wings of the old house.

The question has always been raised of why Bute did not turn again to Burges, and the answer most usually given is that the latter was already very busy, as was true. It is also true that when

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[35]BU/35/5/4 The Curse of the Hastings.

[36]BU/21/148/3 Bute to Gwen, later dated March 1878.

[37]cf BU/85/1/20 Taylor to Bateman, 10 Sept 1878.

Burges was shown the drawing-room at Mount Stuart, which Bute had decorated himself in accordance with his own taste, he 'looked up, shrugged his shoulders, muttered "I call that damnable," and walked on.'[38] Perhaps for his most beloved home, Bute wanted a craftsman who would be a little more amenable to his own ideas, a little more sensitive to his feelings. Moreover, Bute intended to re-create the decoration of the original mirrored ceiling in his new home.

Cardiff, however, continued under Burges' care, and Bute's new bedroom was nearing completion. It had the wholly personal theme of Bute's name-saint, John, and the principal themes of the room are taken from the Book of Revelation. The windows embodied the 'seven churches', amongst the least comforting of all possible scriptural themes. Although the words of Christ were addressed to the 'angels' of churches at a time of persecution, praise is heavily mixed with blame, until the last church, Laodicia, is blamed for its being 'neither hot nor cold'. Beautiful and peaceful as the room is, it must have served as a perpetual reminder to Bute that lukewarmness is amongst the greatest of sins. Capel had once accused Bute of idleness. Looking at his life from the outside, it does not seem he was much inclined to lukewarmness. The view from inside may have been different. When furniture was installed, the only bed was a modest single with a metal frame.[39] It is highly likely, however, that Bute used this room as a sitting-room and dressing room, and followed his usual practice at Mount Stuart, sleeping in his wife's bedroom.

Climbing the stair from his bedroom brought Bute to a roof garden. The architecture, essentially Roman inspired, conjures up memories of the Mediterranean, but the walls are covered with scenes from the life of Elijah, and the memory, more immediately, is of the roof garden of the bishop's palace in the Levant, which had been such an oasis of peace in a troubled time. Perhaps, too, with its smiling Madonna, it reminded him of his intensely personal experience in the same palace.

Work was also underway on a small dining room, which was based around the theme of Abraham and Isaac. The fireplace was carved with the three angels who visited Sara and Abraham, who 'entertained them unawares'. She is laughing to one side of the fireplace, at the improbable news that she will bear a son. Beautifully realised by Nicholls, painted by Campbell, she is an older woman, not a crone. In this same room hung the portrait of Lady Sophia, who also against the odds, bore just one beloved son. Given the themes and rebus at

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[38]HB, p.218.

[39]Matthew Williams, *Lord Bute's Bedroom* (Cardiff Castle Room Notes, unpublished).

Cardiff, the allusion is surely to her, and to her late-born son.[40] The windows continue the story of Isaac, who became the founder of a numerous family. This room only made slow progress in the late seventies; did Bute try to avoid thinking that in his own family the descendants might be few indeed?

Lady Margaret was a delight to the Butes, but they wanted more children, and especially a male heir. The Second Marquess had left the estates entailed to a male heir, so Lady Margaret would not be able to inherit the bulk of the Bute wealth, and although she might inherit the Scottish Earldom, and become Countess of Bute in her own right, she could not inherit the Marquessate, which was a British title. The longing for more children was for both a larger family and a son.

Gwen became pregnant again, but their hopes were soon shattered. In February 1879, she miscarried, and a melancholy 'little deposit'[41] was made in the garden at Chiswick. There was concern about Gwen's health, but what had been shaken most was the confidence of both parents. They were beginning to be concerned, too, about Lady Margaret. Although there was nothing obviously wrong with her leg or hip, she walked with a slight limp, which only became obvious as the naturally unsteady gait of childhood wore off.

Bute himself, who had earlier written that he did not have a strong constitution, was feeling less than well, and was much troubled by his skin. There were large red patches on his scalp, chest and back, diagnosed as eczema. In September he went to Harrogate, where he had been before with Gwen. This time, Gwen stayed behind in London, because she was once again expecting a baby. Paradoxically, the times that Bute and Gwen spent apart give the clearest picture of their life together. Bute wrote daily, or almost daily, and most of the letters were preserved.

He was given a new diagnosis by his doctor there: 'it was not exyma (which is an affection of the blood) but sorysis [*sic*] (I think he called it) - wh. is a slight derangement of the skin-nerves'.[42] Almost certainly the Harrogate doctor was correct. The site and nature of Bute's 'spots' as he called them, suggests psoriasis, which is an over-growth of skin. The condition has a strong genetic link, and is common among Scots. This supposition is supported by the fact that the condition responded well to the treatment prescribed in Harrogate, the application of tar. To this day, tar-based shampoos are used to treat psoriasis of the scalp.

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[40]Matthew Williams, *pers. com.*

[41]BU/21/162/2 Howard of Glossop to Bute, Feb. 1879.

After Gwen's miscarriage in the early spring of that year, Bute was full of concern for her: 'I suppose I needn't impress upon yourself the necessity of caution as to yourself. But at the same time, open air - when possible, is a great thing - the creature must now be about as big as a grape.'[43]

Bute had Margaret with him, because it was thought that her health, too, would benefit. She was now four. Hew, his manservant was also there, and Margaret's nurse, Campbell. They stayed in a suite of rooms in an old hotel. Hew was a great favourite with Margaret. Her father welcomed this, often leaving the room, rather than remaining when to do so might have made Hew feel awkward because his employer, and not himself, should have been the chief focus of Margaret's hero-worship. Hew, whom he trusted greatly, could be relied upon not merely to pack and care for Bute's clothes, but to remind him who would be expecting presents, and other such practicalities, which those of Bute's turn of mind are only too liable to forget.

Bute valued his servants, with whom he had a very easy-going relationship. He was always conscious of their vulnerability. It was, perhaps, the more remarkable in Hew's case, for on occasion there would be an outbreak of 'Hew's unfortunate failing'.[44] Hew would get drunk, sometimes simply tipsy enough that Bute did not care to be served by him, and sometimes too drunk to be capable of work. Bute also endured for a long time a cook whom his exasperated wife reckoned 'no better than a kitchen maid who had lived in a 2nd. rate inn'. Gwen finally sacked her for 'gross impertinence', adding that she would have sacked her earlier for 'vile cooking' except for Bute's 'kindness of heart.' Even then, Bute would not send the damning reference his wife composed, preferring to create a kinder one of his own, though ringing in his ears were Gwen's instructions not to say the woman was a good cook and 'make me out an idiot.'[45]

Physically and in character, his daughter was very like him. Margaret had a happy but somewhat wilful disposition: '[Margaret] is very affectionate with me, but I am not sure, from the things she says ("I will not" and so on) that she isn't rather spoiled.'[46] With Gwen missing

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[42]BU/21/160/1 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[43]*Ibid.*

[44]BU/21/185/28 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[45]BU/21/176/18 Gwen to Bute, 4 Nov. 1882.

[46]BU/21/160/2 Bute to Gwen, undated.

Margaret, Bute reassured her by telling her of Margaret's games and her health. His birthday fell near the beginning of the visit.

> Trolled off to chapel through the Scotch mist, and to Communion. Back again, and met Mgrt. running down the passage to meet me, with a nose-gay, and a little speech. Then she came into my room, and opened all the letters. I assure you that she is a perfect duck - when she is good ... I never see her without roses, and I see her very constantly.[47]

He continued to reassure his wife at intervals throughout his visit.

> Margaret and I get on excellently. Her colour is really generally very good. Her legs are hard and her arms, I hope, somewhat better. Her spirits leave nothing to be desired. [48]
>
> Margt. spends a good part of every afternoon now in playing at being a kitchen maid in concert with Campbell. She arranges rowan berries, hips, and hauchs (haughs? haws?) [sic] in toy dishes and serves them up. When this is done, she makes believe either that it is another day, so that a new dinner is required, or else that suppertime is arrived. This generally lasts until the bath comes, when there is a frightful excitement swimming tin fish and walnut-shells (wh. are named severally after the principal steamers of the Clyde) in it. I find that she still cannot pronounce L or R though in some words such as 'Rothesay' she gets pretty near it. I heard that the little Mowbray girl, who is the same age, is a good deal bigger, but cannot speak so well.[49]

Bute dined with Lord Mowbray.[50] He was 'certainly fond of eating, and a little inclined to coarse language and risqué double entendres. However, as he rather led me into it, the least said, the better.'[51]

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[47]BU/21/160/5 Bute to Gwen, 12 Sept. 1879.

[48]BU/21/160/7 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[49]BU/21/160/11 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[50]Alfred Joseph Stourton, Baron Stourton, 1829-1893, had just succeeded in getting the barony of Mowbray, to which he was co-heir, called out of abeyance in his favour. Bence-Jones, *Catholic Families,* p.266.

[51]BU/21/160/7 Bute to Gwen, undated. Catholics were encouraged to make lavatorial jokes, 'due to the belief that lavatorial or "dirty" jokes were a preventative against *risqué* or "improper" jokes, which

Bute also tried to raise his wife's spirits by telling her of his daily activities. He was working on learning Arabic, and he had a visit from Burges:

> whether it was the consequences of the champagne (the only night I've had anything but St Julien) or what, I don't know, but the soul-inspiring one was a martyr to the colly-wobbles this morning . He told me, about 10 a.m. that he had already visited his aunt 6 times. Pill box had to be sent for, who complimented him on his boyish appearance, considering his age, and gave him medicine and chicken broth etc. He was supposed to be fit to start (and did so) for London abt. 4 p.m. His own remedy seemed be eating very strong peppermint lozenges, so that the room smelled of them even more than it does of tobacco, wh. is saying a good deal.[52]

He also heard from Anderson, who sent plans for the new Mount Stuart.

> Anderson's plans are exceedingly nice. The house seems to bid fair to be a splendid palace. There were only a few things, partly in regard to the picturesque and partly the luxurious, wh. I suggested alterations to him. And these I shall see better in the model which is in Edinburgh on my way back from Glasgow. I think I will have the model brought to Chiswick for you to see, only it is very large and heavy.[53]

Bute's own treatment continued, with applications of tar to the 'spots' and daily baths in the spa water. The 'spots' began to fade: 'The ones on the head are become only faint rose-coloured spots, and the two big ones on the body are rapidly working in the same direction.'[54] Bute was anxious to stay in Harrogate until his treatment was completed, and the spots cured, although he was realistic enough to know that he would probably have a recurrence later. But his anxieties about Gwen pulled him in two directions, for she was in a 'low, moping, solitary, jumpy beastly state'[55], and he longed to comfort her.

> Your letter rather distresses me in one respect, I mean, as regards your nerves. ... You have never been the least like this before, and it seems too early to be

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were taboo on moral grounds.' Bence-Jones, *Catholic Families,* p. 227. Bute was not at all shy about sex and very shy about other bodily functions, and regularly transgressed this rule.

[52]BU/21/160/4 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[53]BU/21/160/22 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[54]BU/21/160/7 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[55]BU/21/160/5 Bute to Gwen, 12 Sept. 1879.

> determined by the sex of the child, which can hardly yet, xcept in the will of God, be fixed.[56]

Her confidence had been badly shaken by her miscarriage. Bute, at a distance, tried hard to find her occupations, suggesting friends who might come and see her, including Burges, and activities for her. She was studying Classics with her unmarried cousin Phillipa, who, being two years older than Gwen, was now twenty-seven.

> If Phillipa is going in for Greek - the best dictionary is Liddell and Scott ... I believe most boys think it easier than Latin, though I can't say I do. As you are at Latin, I think you might try Horace's Odes or Ovid's Fasti. You cd. get a translation - Bohn's - to help you if you wanted it. There is an edition of Lucretius (the finest by far and away, of all the Latin poets) by Munro with a most elegant and accurate translation in English prose, at the bottom of each page. The only draw-back in these (except Horace's Odes) is that certain natural things (e.g. the relation of husband and wife in certain circumstances) are spoken quite plainly, and, in Ovid, rather sensual. I should think however you wd. smell this rat soon enough, at least before Phillipa had caught the unhallowed fire.[57]

Bute seemed just a little entertained at the prospect. Yet however he tried to cheer his wife with news and with positive images of her later in her pregnancy, and plans for her amusement, he shared in her worries. When a letter came late, he had been afraid

> that, yesterday being the monthlies' own day, they might have taken it into their heads to come on, and perhaps the whole thing gone shipwreck and you too ill and wretched to write. On the contrary, I am delighted to hear you are so well.[58]

He began to question his doctor in Harrogate about the times most likely for a miscarriage, and spoke to Margaret's nurse, as well. He was dismayed to learn that his elder brother had been 'born dead from an accident in the seventh month, when one thinks everything safe.'[59] He found he could not even pray about Gwen's pregnancy.

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[56]*Ibid.*

[57]BU/21/160/6 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[58]BU/21/160/10 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[59]BU/21/160/20 Bute to Gwen, undated.

> I confess that I prayed so much about the last thing, and with so little effect, (but rather the contrary) that I feel rather shy of exposing this one to the same circumstances. Perhaps it's very wrong, but I do not dare to say in every sense, 'Send me here my purgatory.'[60]

He struggled to hide his own fears and depression, revealing just enough to make it clear to her that he was sensitive to her position. Her fears, his worry about her, and the comparative solitariness of his life at Harrogate sometimes oppressed him. Occasionally the mask slipped: 'In the afternoon I felt so low, I went and asked O'Donnell to take me for a walk, wh. he did. He really is a very nice old man.'[61] Bute continued to reassure Gwen: 'Do try to realise that it is all physical and that there is not only nothing to be sorry about, but everything to be happy about.'[62]

There was 'everything to be happy about' only for a short time. Later that winter, Gwen lost her baby. Two miscarriages and countless disappointments did indeed give the Butes a purgatory on earth. Even leaving aside his own longing for a son, Bute was too close to Gwen not to be devastated himself by her grief. His worry over her health added to the burden as did the need to be strong and cheerful for her sake.

To lose a baby is distressing for any couple. Many Christians comfort themselves with the thought that their baby is safe with God. But for Victorian Catholics, the baby could not be with God unless it was baptised. The unbaptised child would not go to hell, but remain in a state of twilight being, limbo, neither experiencing bliss nor pain. If the child was born alive, even if it could not live, then it could at once be baptised (and any one could perform this baptism) and then it was assured of heaven. Bute was most insistent that any child born, unless it was quite certainly dead long before it was born, should be at once baptised.[63]

That same autumn of 1879, Flora, Duchess of Norfolk, bore a son. It quickly became clear that he was blind and epileptic and his mind never developed beyond that of a child. He was deeply loved by his parents who continued to hope for a cure. The Butes greatly pitied them, and the tragedy did nothing to lift their own hopes.

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[60]BU/21/160/7 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[61]*Ibid.*

[62]BU/21/160/22 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[63]BU/21/175/39 Bute to Gwen, 20 April 1882.

In the autumn, the Breviary translation was at last published, with much interest being taken in the press. Most of the reviews were positive. They admired the clarity of Bute's English, and the size of the undertaking. Most of the reviewers were High Church clergymen pleased to have an English version of the Breviary. The publishers, Blackwoods, had hoped for a degree of controversy, which they thought would help it sell. Bute was not very happy about this.

> Blackwood thought the largeness of the sale would much depend upon the amount of controversy which (he therefore hoped) it would cause as well among Cats. as others. This is not a very cheery lookout.[64]

When the reviews began to roll in, there was only a minimum of fuss. 'Mr T. G. Law, Librarian to the Signet Library, Edinburgh and previously of the London Oratory'[65] took the purist Roman view.

> In the Roman Breviary, we expect to find the vulgate and nothing else. That ancient version has a marked character of its own which is historically most interesting. It is sometimes right where the originals, as we now have them, are wrong, and it is always instructive even in its faults ... but Lord Bute in his otherwise most praiseworthy zeal for the Hebrew Verity, sins against every canon of criticism by frequently correcting the Vulgate reading, or by straining his version, through slight alterations, substitutions or omissions, into closer agreement with the English Protestant Bible, in cases where the Latin construction is plain.[66]

'Bishop Wordsworth (Edinburgh Courant)'[67] took a staunchly Protestant line of criticism. He felt that Bute had watered down the Catholicism of the Breviary, and was therefore in danger of persuading his readers that it was less objectionable than it really was.

> Tui precatus munere
> Nostrum reatum dilue
> (Feasts of one martyr - lauds)

being translated as

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[64]BU/21/160/19 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[65]BU/21/169/8 Book of press cuttings concerning the Breviary.

[66]*Ibid.*

[67]*Ibid.*, Marginal notes. Charles Wordsworth 1806-1892, Bishop of St Andrews, Dunkeld and Dunblane 1853-92, nephew of the Poet Laureate.

By the virtue of thy prayer
Let no evil hover nigh

> Thus the power of mediation and atonement attributed to the martyr so undisguisedly in the original, is almost obliterated in the translation for the benefit of the English reader.[68]

Others reflected that his translation of the psalms was much influenced by the *Book of Common Prayer*, as indeed it was. Personal letters also came in, some requesting copies of the Breviary. Perhaps the kindest, and the most full of insight, came from Cardinal Newman. The Catholic convert and learned churchman was himself an author and translator of substance.[69] 'I know what a laborious work it must have been, and, as well as anyone, how little a translator can, after all his endeavours, satisfy himself. But others will not be so unfair to the work as you are likely to be from what you say.'[70]

Probably the most pertinent criticism was that the Breviary would have little use. By and large, the Catholic clergy were well enough educated to understand the Latin they were required to read, and so were the Anglo-Catholics who were interested in it. But it was popular amongst orders of female religious especially in the colonies, who could not read Latin fluently, and letters from them requesting copies still survive. Perhaps it was successful as being part of the movement that was to push the Catholic Church into finally authorising worship in the vernacular. Bute himself certainly favoured this. The Mass, of course, could only be heard in Latin, but Hunter Blair records that all other services in his homes were said in English.[71]

Here perhaps is a clue as to why Bute undertook this work. He wanted to make the wealth of worship he enjoyed accessible to everybody, and he knew how little able to understand or enjoy the Latin original others were. Catholicism, despite its ancient families and well-born converts, was largely a working class religion, indeed a religion of the poorest labouring classes. His own servants could not follow the Breviary. It was not a dislike of the Latin, whose sonorous and economical phrases he loved, but a desire to make worship accessible to all, even to his own loss, that impelled him.

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[68] *Ibid.*

[69] A full account of his life can be found in Sheridan Gilley, *Newman and his Age* (Darton, Longman and Todd: London, 1990).

[70] BU/21/162/18 Newman to Bute, 3 Dec. 1879.

[71] HB, p.116.

Bute travelled abroad without Gwen, partly because 'the monthlies' tended to be irregular, and every time their arrival was late, the couple hoped that she was once again pregnant, and began to take precautions accordingly. There was a definite strategy. If there was even the smallest chance that Gwen was pregnant, she must stay where she was, resting and not travelling at all, until the pregnancy was so well advanced that travel presented no risk. Bute wrote to her from Oberammergau: 'It is very tiresome that you should have had to give up the play for this time, without anything coming of it. I hope the pains you speak of passed off soon, and that there was no serious cause for them.'[72]

His interest in travel and languages meant that he was approached from many countries for the money and other kinds of support which he regularly provided. He was sponsoring two young men through their education. Both seem to have been of Eastern origin, speaking Arabic as a first language. They had, it seems, converted to Catholicism. Bute soon came to believe that Amîr Nassîf's conversion was a sham, 'a politic stroke aimed at the pockets of Catholics in general, and at mine in particular.'[73] Bute was as usual hypersensitive to being exploited for his wealth. Yousif Hamîs was another matter. Since he appeared perfectly sincere, Bute exerted himself for him.

Hamîs wanted to study medicine at Edinburgh University. One problem was the entry qualifications. He did not have nearly enough Latin to pass the qualifying exam. Bute plainly thought it unnecessary a doctor should have excellent Latin, and besieged the University with enquiries, getting conflicting answers. In the end, clarification came from the Principal of the University, Sir Alexander Grant. If Mr Hamîs wanted 'merely to study medicine' he could do so without taking any entry examinations. If he wanted to graduate but not become a British Empire doctor concessions would be made. If he wished to be a registered doctor no concessions were possible. It would seem that Hamîs chose the middle option, as he substituted Arabic for Latin in his entrance examinations.

It was now five years since the great financial crisis of 1875, which was the time Bute had originally thought it would take for his South Wales estates to work their financial position around to solvency. Davies records:

> Boyle retired as dock manager, the pill being sweetened for him by an annuity of £3000. He was succeeded by Lewis, who became manager of the estate as a whole ... In 1881 Boyle and Stuart resigned as trustees and the trust was

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[72]BU/21/163/2 Bute to Gwen, probably 1880.

[73]BU/21/169/5 Bute to Sneyd, 18 Dec. 1881.

> reconstituted with three members H. Dudley Ryder, a Bute kinsman and a director of Coutts Bank, E. B. Talbot, a relation of Lady Bute's mother, and Frederick Pitman.[74]

Pitman had been Bute's man of business and lawyer since his minority, and he trusted him fully. There was once again considerable pressure from the town for Bute to expand the docks, which were proving inadequate to the demands upon them. Bute now endeavoured to separate the docks from the rest of his property. It was not so much that he wanted a solution which would recognise the vast sums of money his family had ploughed into the docks. Rather, he did not want to risk pouring more money into the docks without any guarantee that the returns would even cover the necessary borrowing. A meeting was held *in camera* between Wyndham Lewis and Shirley (representing the Trust) and representatives of the Chamber of Commerce and the town council. Lewis reported to Bute that he had told the meeting that

> while you did not at present feel inclined to continue expending further capital to enrich the Trust Estate, you were at the same time desirous of fostering the growth of the trade of Cardiff and with that object you would ... entertain some practical scheme for transferring the act of 1874 upon fair terms, to substantial parties prepared to provide the necessary capital, ... or [to] consider the alternative of providing the capital yourself, upon having a guarantee to you in some satisfactory form, of fair interest upon such expenditure.[75]

The initial reaction of the town's leaders was to form a Harbour Trust to provide the necessary capital. However, the plans came to nothing, and W. T. Lewis presided over another expansion of the Cardiff docks.[76]

As always Bute's real enthusiasms were far away from the world of business. He had just begun to explore a new one - astrology. The signs and symbols had long decorated his rooms at Cardiff, but he first came across a contemporary written account of it in the area where most contemporary readers discover it, in the popular press. Francis Condor wrote regularly for the *St James' Gazette* 'where you will not be surprised to hear that his chief astrological labours are dedicated to trying to forecast the successes or otherwise of the eminent statesman whom

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[74]JD, p.73.

[75]BU/21/167/2/2 Memorandum of a meeting between Wyndham Lewis and Shirley for the Trust and J Riches and A Hood for the Chamber of Commerce of Cardiff and Rees Jones (Mayor), Alderman Alexander, Alderman Jones & the Town Clerk for the Corporation of Cardiff, 29 Dec. 1880.

[76]JD, p.256.

he blasphemously describes as "the Cataline of Downing Street".'[77] He was Bute's first, and most regular correspondent on the subject. Bute did not have a very mathematical mind, and he struggled with 'the papers of figures & diagrams of triangles &c'.[78]

Bute was caught between his enquiring mind, which was always seeking a much better understanding of the rules of cause and effect in the world around him, and his natural scepticism, which made him hard to convince.

> As to astrology, which I have read enough to scare me from any dogmatism one way or the other, I am bound to say that any experiments I have made show me that all events already past for which I have set up schemes have an indication reflecting them in the scheme. But this may be merely because the rules are so vague that almost everything may mean anything. And on the other hand, I have not met with any instance in which the forecast was realised by the event - at any rate very few. But again, I can hardly be surprised at this, when I consider not only my own incapacity as to both mathematics and astrology, but the incapacity of the ... people who draw up Ephemerides &c and the abject manner in which geocentricism and everything else that Ptolemy believed in are clung to for these purposes.[79]

Nevertheless, the fascination with it was real enough, and Bute turned to astrology for indications when advice from more usual quarters was uncertain. By the spring of 1881 he was seeking advice from any area he could get it.

In October 1880 the Butes' hopes were raised again. Bute went away for a country house weekend, whilst his wife pleaded ill-health, an all too transparent euphemism in Victorian times. Bute tried hard not to add to Gwen's burdens by undue solicitude for her: 'I know if there were anything serious you would have telegraphed. If the things have come on, I should not think it would be a miscarriage, only the things at their tricks.'[80] Above all else, he wanted to reassure her that she was not doomed to perpetual miscarriages. Even if she had another early miscarriage, it was better for them both to believe that the 'monthlies' were just late yet again and heavy; it seemed almost as though 'the monthlies' were determined to trick and tease them, raising hopes only to dash them again.

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[77]BU/21/169/5 Bute to Sneyd, 18 Dec. 1881.

[78]*Ibid.*

[79]*Ibid.*

But 'the things' did not appear, and by the spring of 1881, it was clear that Gwen was expecting a baby, due in the early summer, and that the most dangerous time was over. Bute longed to take Gwen to Bute or Dumfries, so that the baby could be born in Scotland, but was afraid of her losing the baby through travelling. The family doctor thought in March that travel would be safe. Bute was still unsure. He turned for help to Francis Condor, who was less certain. Some astrological aspects raised a question. In particular, 'an unusual coincidence' in their birth charts indicated that Lord and Lady Bute should not travel together. 'If I remember aright, you met a carriage accident on your wedding journey'.

He added that after a series of miscarriages, his own wife had only borne her children safely to term by resting in one place for the whole of her pregnancies. It was best not to take the smallest risk: 'If it should be a son, you will be too proud and happy to welcome him to have room in your mind for a brief regret.'[81]

Whether astrology or personal experience prevailed, the Butes decided to stay in London at Chiswick House, whose extensive grounds had not yet been sold for development. There was space for Bute to take the walks so necessary for his health, and easy access to the best medical advice for Gwen.

In addition, there was a wide circle of friendly relatives, despite a growing tension between Bute, Gwen and her step-mother. In 1880, Gwen's third sister, Alice, had married Bute's cousin Charley, who was now Earl of Loudon. Charley had always been a friend of Bute's. He was everything Harry Hastings had not been, reliable and full of good sense and kindliness, but with that touch of wit, charm and liveliness so necessary to Bute in his friends. Angela, Gwen and Alice were close, and the brothers-in-law good friends. Although they were related on both sides, and Flora had spent much of her girlhood with them, the Butes were not close to the Norfolks. Bute felt that the Norfolks had 'quietly dropped them'.[82] Nevertheless, they were on cordial terms with and heartily sorry for the Norfolks, whose only child, a son, continued to be a hopeless invalid.

It was as well for the Butes that they had this support, and the hope of a child, for this spring they lost a friend who could be relied on to charm and to cheer them. In March Burges had visited Cardiff, and become chilled. He returned to his London home ill. He died on 20 April

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[80]BU/21/162/5 Bute to Gwen, later dated 22 Oct. 1880.

[81]BU/21/171/20 Condor to Bute, 7 April 1881.

[82]BU/21/194/26 Bute to Gwen, 7 Aug. 1884.

1881.[83] He had taught Bute an enormous amount about style, art and architecture. Now, ably assisted by Burges' team, Bute carried his work forward. In June, he went to Cardiff with the painter Westlake.[84]

> Westlake picked me up. He does everything he can to make himself amusing. His prevailing traits are ultramontanism and horsiness, the former according to zeal rather than knowledge. I think we shall get on very well as to artistic things. Castell Coch is very comfortable and we get on very well - at the same time, it still wants a lot doing to it. There has been a good deal done down here, and some of the rooms, e.g. the library, look beautiful. The heating appears to answer, as Westlake finds nothing whatever the matter with his pictures. He pointed out to me your portrait put into Limbo as Esther.[85]

Spring lengthened into summer, and Bute longed for the clean air of the Scottish countryside,[86] or the bright colours and real heat of the Mediterranean,[87] but kept it resolutely to himself,[88] and busied himself with his academic work and with caring for Gwen. She would walk a little in the grounds and sit in the shade of the trees, embroidering blue and red parrots on a bed covering destined for the baby she was carrying. On the morning of the twentieth, Gwen had 'the show', but the doctor, Lawrence, was non-committal. A year later, it was all perfectly clear in Bute's memory.

> You remember how you breakfasted with me - and how you were feeling ill all afternoon ... and Lord and Lady Howard coming & the difficulty I had with you, my dear, to be allowed to have them stop for dinner... Then there was the question if you should come to dinner, decided in the negative ... about 7 o'clock, when you were sitting very uncomfortable in yr. room - and I believe you really got very little dinner at all. Then there was the letting know of Ld. and Ldy. H. after Lawrence, who had already arrived, had decided Duncan shd. be sent for. Then we all 4 dined together, in a solemn manner, and Ld H made small talk to Lawrence abt. anything that wasn't interesting & Ldy. H. cdnt. restrain herself

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[83]Crook, *Burges,* p.328.

[84]Nathaniel H. J. Westlake, 1833-1921. Margaret Westlake, 'N. H. J. Westlake F.S.A.', *British Society of Master Glass Painters Journal* 1929, pp.58-65

[85]BU/21/168/2 Bute to Gwen, 1 June 1881.

[86]BU/21/168/1 Bute to Gwen, undated.

[87]BU21/175/84 Bute to Gwen, 20 May 1882.

[88]*Ibid.*

> from talking insides to me sotto voce. ... then you sent for Lawrence & me & everything was very much the same as usual in such cases, until Lawrence was called out to introduce Duncan, & I had to scream for him & John was born. I remember so well going into the dressing-room & finding Porter & saying 'She has a son.' Do you remember John crying, & trying to curl up under you & Duncan slowly detached him & Lawrence looked and said it was a son? He was carried in to Porter, who held him in a blanket. I remember the shock of adding to my prayers the words `and my dear son' I have a vivid recollection also of George beginning to play the bag-pipes outside. I went and told Ld. H. ....He insisted on coming into the chapel at once to give thanks & I said 7 (I think) Gloria Patris - wh. he and Ldy H. answered (I pity that poor woman for her barrenness, very much).
>
> Do you remember the xposition & blossoming of the withered rose from the Holy Land, put in hot water before the picture of the B. virgin, ... You had frightful after pains. Then the Howards went away & took Duncan.[89]

It is typical of Bute that in the midst of his own great joy, his thoughts turned compassionately to a woman he cordially disliked. It is also typical that his first act was to give thanks to God, and honour to the Virgin, with a simple and symbolic ceremony. After all the dry and withered days of barrenness and loss, his and Gwen's hopes and love could expand with the birth of this child.

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[89]BU/21/175/137 Bute to Gwen, 20 June 1882.

Conclusion

'this day, the most fortunate of my life'[1]

When Bute died, nearly every newspaper in the land carried at least a couple of column inches of obituary. Most were merely formal, mentioning his wealth, his scholarship, his children, his widow. Many credited him with the wrong number of children and misspelt his wife's name.

Others turned to those who had known him, and there were some charming personal reminiscences, which ring absolutely true of the man.

> We spoke of a lady whose circumstances had become sadly reduced. 'I could not presume to offer her any help,' he said 'but I did give myself the pleasure of having some pleasant colouring put into her house. I visited at her father's years ago, and everything always looked very cheerful. I thought she might miss it.' He had, in fact, entirely renovated her house from top to bottom.[2]

The rabbits preserved in his gardens, his forbidding of gin traps were remembered with amazement. His collaborator on *The Scottish Review,* William Metcalf spoke of the 'ease' with which he wore his learning and titles.[3] Most of the publications failed to get the real measure of the man, as they must. He was too private, and at once too light-hearted and too serious for them. Some were spiteful, grumbling that his money was spent in the wrong way, others, simply uncomprehending, like the *Weekly Register* which commented admiringly that 'he read Divine Office to his family daily when most people were pouring over light literature, or, in strict circles, over a Catholic paper.'[4] This was of course true, but merely because Bute shifted his light reading to other times of day and other places. He always enjoyed popular

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[1]BU/21/175/36 Bute to Gwen on his 10th wedding anniversary, 16 April 1882.

[2]*The Churchwoman,* 9 Nov. 1900.

[3]*The Glasgow Herald,* 10 Oct. 1900.

[4]*The Weekly Register,* 12 Oct. 1900.

novels; they were, however, just part of his life. In the same way the rabbits, the squirrels, the endless benefactions, the scholarship, the building, the love of art, were all just a part of his life. The real problem for the newspapers was that it was quite impossible to cram a life as rich as Bute's into a few column inches. It is hard enough to cram it into a hundred thousand words.

I set out with several questions which I hope have been answered, at least implicitly, in the course of the narrative. While describing his outward achievements, I have attempted to illuminate the inward struggles out of which they grew. Bute was a many sided figure, and the face he presented to the world was often very different from that known to his intimates. He was an engaging mixture of the serious and the light-hearted, and yet he could appear awkward and obstinate to those who did not know him well. His earliest writings show his sense of humour, and it remained a prominent vein of his life, as did his love of colour and the decorative arts. He was a highly creative man. In William Burges, he was wise enough to find as a teacher one of the foremost creative artists of his generation. He was also courageous enough to move on from there to develop a more personal and fluid style, displayed in Castell Coch and Mount Stuart House.

Bute also suffered one serious and protracted bout of depression, and several less serious and shorter recurrences. He bore them with courage, and creatively found a way of linking them with his religious life through the theme of the agony in the garden. This was of course a deeply personal experience, but it left clear traces in the fact that the chapel at Mount Stuart was modelled on the Holy Sepulchre, with a relief carving of the agony in the garden, recalling the time he was struggling out of his depression on his first visit to the Holy Land.

Bute was a man who much enjoyed leisure, the chance to walk, and to spend time in convivial talk and laughter with his friends. His deep and enduring shyness severely limited his friends in number, but his relationship with them was correspondingly profound. Despite a temptation to idleness, he nevertheless had constant occupation. This included dealing with the endless appeals for his charity, overseeing his various estates, his buildings, and, of course, his scholarly work; all of them in different ways were a response to his faith. He had a good brain, and a considerable gift for languages, especially written languages; his scholarly work always involved his imagination and his rich inner life as well as his learning. He always loved Scottish history, and one of his specialist fields was the early mediaeval period in which relatively little work had been done. His approach to his subjects employed all the

resources available to him, and the results were fresh and engaging. His objectivity, which he called 'dispassion', was impeccable, and he was, with good reason, proud of it.[5]

Bute's charities were deeply personal, and although he funded generously, he exercised his prerogative of choosing projects very particularly. However much it was a common attitude of his time, there is something unappealing in his concern with the worthiness of the recipients, although in his defence it must be said that this only reared its head when he was dealing with abstract problems. Once he knew the people concerned, all thoughts of worth fled. He left an annuity of £100 *p.a.* to the Rev'd T Capel.[6]

Perhaps his greater achievements were personal rather than formal ones. His friendships were deep. Those whom he loved, he loved to the end, with tenacity and with gratitude; they were not only aristocrats, but those like Jack Wilson, the gamekeeper guest of honour at his daughter's christening. One of Bute's more endearing qualities is the way he treated his servants as people. It was only when his valet Hew had been leglessly drunk for three days that Bute considered having 'words' with him. He refused to sack a cook whose meals he could not eat. If he made no attempt to live up to the Victorian ideal of the hard-riding, sporting, manly Christian gentleman, Bute's gentle approach to those who were his inferiors was unfailing. It was typical of the man that he was a champion of education and employment for women, that he had an extensive circle of women friends, and encouraged them to write for publication.

He was a partner of a happy marriage, he was deeply loved by his children. In his extended family circle he was turned to again and again to act the role of peace maker. He had moved far from his early days, learning from the strife of his adolescence. Perhaps he had learnt a little too much, for the fear of 'terrible rows' haunted him often disproportionately. This was perhaps the worst of the legacies of his troubled youth. His most singular achievement was one that his early years give no hint of, and most certainly one his mother did not really achieve. He learned to forgive.

Hunter Blair is surely incorrect in deploring his upbringing. A conventional one would most probably have suppressed the enormous creativity that makes Bute so engaging as a writer, a patron and a person. Yet Hunter Blair's is a valuable contribution to our understanding of Bute. Despite the fact that many stories were lifted from the obituaries, despite his snobbery

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[5]HB, p.141.

[6]*The Weekly Register,* 26 Oct. 1900.

and his purple prose, despite his misspellings of names and other inaccuracies, he had been a personal friend of Bute's. When it comes to the Catholic Church, he draws a veil over the problems between Bute and Capel, choosing instead to play down Capel's role in Bute's life, which also necessitates his making Bute's final submission to Rome seem a *fait accompli* from the age of nineteen. It is possible to sympathise with Hunter Blair's dilemma, but not to agree with his verdict.

He does provide an excellent corrective to an account of Bute's life, for he bears witness to how Bute appeared to his less intimate contemporaries. It would be far too easy for one familiar with his letters to present Bute as a lively and witty man, full of jokes and passion, and to forget that this was the Bute only known to his family and his closest friends. Hunter Blair reminds us that even with fairly close friends, his shyness could make him distant. His occasionally leaden respect reminds us, too, that the title and the wealth weighed heavily, not so much on Bute, as on those on who met him.

His letters and diaries make it easy to forget both title and wealth. It is unlikely that many people possessing either are much preoccupied with them, and most certainly Bute, generally speaking, was not. The exception was, perhaps, the obligations which both pressed on him. Had he not been the Most Noble, the Marquess of Bute, had he not been so rich, he might, paradoxically, have built more and written more, for the time and the money he spent fulfilling what he saw as his obligations would have been channelled into other activities. With just enough money for his own building, and for a little charity, he would probably have directed his energies and wealth into those things, and into his writing. Most strikingly, when he was for a short time hard pressed, he still continued to spend on building.

Hunter Blair himself quotes many diaries and letters of Bute's, some of which still exist in the Mount Stuart archive. When checked against the original, he is found to be fairly, but not impeccably, accurate. He has a distressing tendency to tidy up and normalise Bute's prose in the same way as he yearned to tidy up and normalise Bute's life.

Here for instance is what Bute actually wrote in 1866 to describe his ascent of Etna.

> [After midnight we] emerged upon the summit between the peaks, and at the same time the full moon, silver, intense, rose from behind the lower with a vivid light and shed a flood of radiance over the tremendous scene of desolation. As far as the eye could reach there was nothing visible but cinder and sky, the last

> starless, the former a plain of black dust in which we sank some 18 inches at every step.[7]

Here is Hunter Blair's version, which has been italicised to point up the differences.

> [After midnight we] emerged upon the summit between the peaks; and at the same time the full moon, silver, intense, rose from behind the lower *summit* and shed a flood of *light* over the tremendous scene of desolation. As far as the eye could reach there was nothing visible but cinder*s* and sky. *At every step we sank eighteen inches into the black dust.*[8]

There is no mention at all of the contrast between cinder and sky, 'the last starless, the former a plain of black dust'. Hunter Blair omitted the most striking part of the whole description.

Then, too, there is the question of the missing letters. Many of those quoted by Hunter Blair have now vanished, especially exasperating in view of the fact that he cites them in part only. It must be hoped that they will turn up in his papers, now being catalogued. It is understood that when this process is complete, they will be made available for study.

Mordaunt Crook wishes to emphasise the 'ordinariness' of Bute, the fact that he was not a 'melodramatic figure'.[9] He was not, he had by far too great a sense of humour ever to be. He was however quite extraordinary. Every person is of course a product of their age, and few, if any, have truly unique features. What made Bute extraordinary was his combination of features, and beyond that, the gentleness, the courtesy which he extended to all, from rabbits to friends, the way he tried to help others without placing them under an obligation to him.

There were, of course, men interested in art and architecture; Ruskin, Burges and many others. Ruskin, however, was notoriously unsuccessful in his marriage, and although he loved women, he sought to fit them into roles which suited himself and society. Bute was at ease in female company, and expected women to be able to pursue the same interests and occupations as himself. Those aspects of female life, childbirth and 'the monthlies', which many of his male contemporaries were unable to discuss, did not dismay him. Bute, unlike, Burges, had

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[7]BU/31/1 Bute's diary, 6 July 1866.

[8]HB, p.36.

[9]Mordaunt Crook, *Burgess*, p.257.

no interest in 'sport', and almost none in horses. It is impossible to imagine him enjoying the spectacle of terriers killing entrapped rats, as Burges did.[10]

This study leaves Bute at the age of 33, having bravely faced the challenges so far presented to him, and succeeded better than most. Yet there were challenges ahead. He had still to face the financial and practical difficulties posed to the *Scottish Review*. He was still involved in the uncompleted Mount Stuart House. He was yet to become seriously involved in psychical research and in the struggle both to maintain the independence of St Andrews University, and to introduce female teaching staff there. And he had still to face the harshest challenge life provides, that of facing death in his own person in the shape of the Bright's Disease which he had seen lay waste his family.

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[10]HB, p.218.

Abbreviations

AC J. A. Venn, Litt.D., F.S.A., *Alumni Cantabrigienses,* Part II Vol. VI (C.U.P.: Kraus reprint, 1978).

AO J. Foster, *Alumni Oxoniensis* (Parker & Co.: Oxford, 1888).

BL British Library.

BP Peter Townend, ed., *Burke's Peerage, Baronetage and Knightage,* 103rd edition (London, 1965).

BU Papers in the Bute archive, Mount Stuart House, Isle of Bute.

CP George Edward Cokayne, *The Complete Peerage of England, Scotland, Ireland, Great Britain and the United Kingdom, extant, extinct or dormant*, Vols. I – XIII, The Hon. Vicary Gibbs, H. A. Doubleday, edd., (St Catherine Press: London, 1912-1926).

DNB *Dictionary of National Biography.*

HB The Right Rev. Sir David Hunter Blair Bt., O.S.B., *John Patrick Third Marquess of Bute K..T. (1847-1900) A Memoir* (John Murray: London, 1921).

JD John Davies, *Cardiff and the Marquesses of Bute* (University of Wales Press: Cardiff, 1981).

NAS National Archive of Scotland, Edinburgh.

NLS National Library of Scotland, Edinburgh.

SP Sir James Balfour Paul, ed., *The Scots Peerage* (David Douglas: Edinburgh, 1908).

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BU/35 - Papers of the Hastings family and descendants.

BU/57 - Bute's Diary 1861.

BU/63 - Additional papers of Third Marquess of Bute.

BU/85 – Invoices relating to Mountstuart House.

BU/89 - Papers of Gwendolen Mary, Third Marchioness of Bute.

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Appendix

Letter from Bute to Cardinal Franchi, Prefect of the Congregation of the Sacred Propaganda in Rome, 1 Jan. 1878.

[Note: Accents are shown only where present in the manuscript. Bute's habitual cedilla in words such as *ce* has been omitted.]

Lettre personelle à Son Eminence

Dumfries House,

Old Cumnock.

N.B.

Jour de l'an. 1878.

Votre Eminence

Aura la bonté de prendre ce que je vais Lui confier comme une chose tout-à-fait secrete, et de croire que c'est avec une repugnance extreme que je Lui addresse la parole sur un tel sujet. Les journaux repetent avec persistance le rumeur que Mgr. Capel a eté recommendé au Saint Siege pour une Mitre Écossaise. Au commencement, je ne trouvais cela possible. Aujourdhui, les circonstances mentionnées ont plus l'air de la probabilité.

Mgr Capel etait le Pretre auquel je me suis addressé pour faire mes premieres confessions, et la ceremonie de mon abjuration – je la connaissais dejà, l'ayant rencontré chez des amis communs. C'etait à moi qu'il doit la priere exaucée par le Saint Pere en suite de laquelle il a eté nommé Cameriere intra Urbem.

Je l'engagais comme Aumônier pour m'accompagner en voyage en Orient – et – apres notre retour, je le faisias mon aumonier ordinaire. Il avait 7,500 fr. (£300) de gages pour tres peu de chose, par ce que c'etait rarement que je le faisais fonctionner comme Chapelain. Il avait

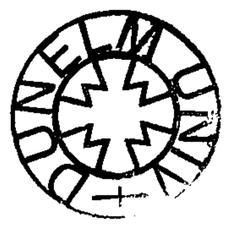
encore 7,500 fr. Par an, pour distribution entre quelques-uns des pauvres qui m'addressaient des lettres de mendiant.

Apres quelques annees, en ne trouvant jamais un seul pauvre qui avait reçu d'aumône par ses mains, je commençais à entretenir quelques doutes. Specialement, (par example) je lui avais commandé particulierement de donner £50 (1250 fr.) aux Peres Servites de Londres. Personne ne les voyait jamais. Des circonstances augmentaient mes doutes. Je commençais à lui demander un comte de ce qu'il avait disbursé. Il n'a jamais repondu que par des promisses, et, apres une année de telles sommations, toujours sans fruit, je me trouvais dans la necessité de lui dire que je n'etais pas content de sa maniere d'agir comme aumônier – et de terminer absolument les arrangements qui avaient jusque là existés.

Votre Eminence – Il n'y a que ma femme, mon secretaire, et un de mes hommes d'affaires qui savent, jusqu'à present, ce que j'ose Lui écrire. Je me trouve poussé par le devoir envers Son Eminence, envers ma Patrie, et envers le Saint Siege Apostolique, d'ecrire ce que je viens d'ecrire. Elle le recevra comme une confidence personelle.

Je n'ajouterai pas un mot, que pour dire que j'ai entendu des choses dites par Mgr. Capel qui, selon ce que je crois, moi, ne peuvent pas se concilier, ni avec le Catholicism ni avec le Théism meme. C'est vrai que ce n'etait que par son ignorance des questions assez souvent agitées par des penseurs anciens et modernes qu'il mettait à jour ces dernieres sottises – mais l'effet ne serait pas moins scandaleux dans un pays sceptyque comme le mien.

Il n'a pas eu un succes à son Ecole à Kensington tel que les Anglais ne seraient pas probablement assez contents de s'en debarasser – mais qu'ils ne le fassent pas en le donnant à nous!

Je demande la permission de baiser la main à Son Eminence.

Bute