

refugeed to Gothenburg after the Jacobite risings and Behre outlines the subsequent fluctuating and ultimately unfruitful negotiations between Sweden and the Jacobites.

The volume concludes with two very different chapters on 18th century contacts. John Simpson pursues some intellectual contacts between Scotland and Scandinavia. It is invidious to select from a selection, but Thomas Telford, who planned and helped to construct the Göta Canal, is one of the notable people mentioned. Simpson ends with a tantalising glimpse of intellectual traffic flowing in the opposite direction – from Scandinavia to Scotland – and one hopes that he will pursue the topic in future.

Lee Soltow's study of 'The Distribution of Private Wealth in Land in Scotland and Scandinavia in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries' is impressively detailed, particularly for the Scandinavian countries. It forms a fitting conclusion to a very stimulating volume which whets the appetite for more investigation of links between Scotland and its Scandinavian neighbours.

Doreen Waugh

R.P. Fereday: *The Orkney Balfours*. Tempus Reparatum Monographs (series editor: John W. Hedges), Tempus Reparatum Archaeological and Historical Associates Ltd., 4 Cyprus Terrace, Oxford OX2 8AT, 1990 303pp.

Ray Fereday dedicates his book to the memory of the late Evan McGillivray, former Orkney County Librarian, and in his introduction, William P.L. Thomson also draws attention to McGillivray's foresight in preserving 50,000 documents, then at Balfour Castle, from the flames. Although the appointment of an Orkney archivist came after his retirement, Mr McGillivray was also influential in this, and the Balfour Papers remain a jewel in the archive's crown. Just how lustrous a jewel, and thus how just the dedication, is shown by Dr. Fereday's book.

At the end of his previous major work *Orkney Feuds and the '45*, Ray Fereday left William Balfour of Trenaby and other Jacobitically-inclined Orkney lairds hiding in caves from Government troops. Now the Balfours move to centre stage, and we are shown the gradual repair of William's fortunes and the growth of the family's influence in the person of William's second son, Thomas Balfour of Elwick. The story is an extraordinarily rich one. Both played a significant role in the Orkney politics of the time. William helped to engineer the end of the earl of Morton's influence and served, with increasing disenchantment, Morton's successor as superior Sir Thomas Dundas of Kerse. There is fascinating detail of his protracted and difficult period as factor to the Dundas estates in Shetland. He and Thomas Balfour were in turn involved in events leading to the Dundases' political eclipse in the North. The confident and optimistic Thomas married well, built up large estates and entertained curious dreams of military glory which collapsed in humiliation when his Orkney and Shetland Fencibles were forcibly disbanded.

But there is much more to it than that; around these two major figures circled a host of others. There are Thomas's brothers – John, the Nabob who held the markers of the Rajah of Tanjore, and David, the Edinburgh lawyer; his sons – the rakish Edward, killed in action in the

Netherlands, the quieter William, who had been at Cape St Vincent and ends the book in Malta learning of the death of both his father and his brother. There are his sisters: Mary, who piously eloped with a future moderator to avoid the temptations of Vanity Fair; and Elizabeth, whose husband had burned down a town in America during the war of independence. Beyond this are glimpses of the earl of Morton and his scientific inclinations, the Dundases, Henry and Sir Lawrence, Sir John Sinclair of Ulbster, Thomas Balfour's in-laws the Ligonier family, and even Charles James Fox, briefly MP for the Northern Burghs, elected in Kirkwall.

Dr. Fereday handles the overpowering wealth of material with an immense sureness that seldom deserts him. Occasionally there is repetition – we are twice told where the parish of Bolton is – and there do seem times when a slightly more select approach to quotations might have been advisable. Moreover, it does seem odd in view of this last point to find a letter of William Balfour described as ‘a vigorous histrionic performance highly charged with emotive blackmail’, which yet remains unillustrated, as in this instance does Balfour’s ‘literary talent, natural melancholia and paternal concern [which] enabled him to strike Garrick-like notes of tragedy and despair well-calculated to wring the heart of a friend, even a lawyer’ (his own representative Samuel Mitchelson). However such points can only rarely be made; elsewhere the judicious use of the material causes the characters of the principals to shine clearly through.

As a volume, the book is an attractive one, well produced and with few literal errors. It has four good photographs of family portraits, including the Raeburns of Thomas and David Balfour, and a copious index. Although, rather oddly, the page headers do not include chapter titles, there are old-fashioned but agreeable synopses of chapters in the contents list (very useful for a reviewer!). All in all this is an indispensable addition to any library on Orkney and Shetland and a splendid contribution to the inspiring current work on the islands’ history.

Peter D. Anderson

A Note on the Swedish Book Review

If you want to keep up with Swedish fiction, poetry, and drama, indeed, with the world of Swedish books generally, where do you turn? One obvious answer is the journal Swedish Book Review. Founded in 1983 with the aim of ‘presenting Swedish literature to English-speaking readers in an informative and stimulating way’, the journal appears twice a year, the second issue accompanied by a supplement. During 1990, Swedish Book Review has presented novelists such as Agneta Pleijel, Sara Lidman, Kjell-Olof Bornemark, and Sigrid Combüchen; Combüchen’s Byron was due to be published in English in April this year. The 1990 supplement, generously illustrated and running to 92 pages, focuses on Swedish children’s literature, from classics such as Elsa Beskow’s picture books, Astrid Lindgren’s Pippi Longstocking, and Tove Jansson’s Finn Family Moomintroll to more recent favourites such as Gunilla Bergström’s Alfons Åberg – sorry, Alfie Atkins – and much else.

Swedish Book Review originates from the pioneering journal Swedish Books, published in Gothenburg from 1979 to 1982 by Jeremy Franks. Swedish Book Review is published on behalf of SELTA, the Swedish English Literary Translators’ Association, which was established in 1982. Since its foundation, the journal has been edited by Laurie Thompson, a lecturer in Swedish at St. David’s University College in Lampeter, Wales, as well as a translator. The