

Scottish Merchant Families in the Early Modern Period¹

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IN 1638 three Scottish brothers, David, Henry and James Lyall, left their home country to settle in the Swedish capital of Stockholm. Their commercial activity in Sweden marked the beginning of their family's highly successful engagement in the iron and copper trade which was to last for several generations. The Lyalls are just one of many examples of Scottish merchant families who achieved influential commercial positions in northern Europe whilst settling and conducting business abroad. For example, the Spaldings or the Mackleans played demonstratively in the same league as the Lyalls on the Scandinavian market. Given the success of these families, it is surprising that their activities have not received more substantial scholarly research. It is true that the early modern Scottish diaspora has rekindled the interest of historians in recent years and that significant publications have illuminated Scottish commercial, cultural and military linkages with the wider world. In particular, scholars such as David Hancock, Allan I. Macinnes and Steve Murdoch have demonstrated that Scottish merchants were highly successful, especially when locating their business abroad.² At the same time they have shown that traders who spent considerable parts of their lives in foreign countries did not lose contact with their home country. For example, they repatriated part of their wealth to Scotland, where it flowed back into the Scottish economy.³ The work of these historians has thus begun to challenge the image of Scotland created by older scholarly works which depicted seventeenth-century Scotland as a

1 I would like to thank Professor Steve Murdoch (of St Andrews) for providing documents and advice on the Lyall family. Furthermore, I would like to record my gratitude to Mats Eriksson for interesting discussions regarding the Lyalls and for the provision of further documents and secondary literature. I would also like to thank Sue Mowat for transcriptions of the Jolly Papers maintained in the National Archives of Scotland (NAS).

2 Hancock 2009; Hancock 2007, 5-38; Macinnes 2007; Murdoch 2006.

3 See, for example, Murdoch 2012, 34-54.

deprived and backward nation 'saved' by the Anglo-Scottish Union of 1707.⁴ At the same time the new studies on Scottish trade and commerce contribute significantly to the research of European trade in general. This is especially so as commodity flows, migrant currants and contact networks have received increased scholarly attention in recent years.⁵

Although Hancock, Macinnes, Murdoch and other scholars have delivered significant new insights, we still have gaps in our knowledge of early modern Scottish trade. These derive from the fact that previous publications have almost exclusively focused on trade by merchants in one particular geographical area or a politically defined territory or with one particular commodity such as fish or wine. For example, studies exist on Scottish commercial contacts with Stockholm and Kedainiai as well as within the Atlantic region.⁶ Some historians have also concentrated on individuals like the Scottish conservator at Veere, who was the nation's most prominent commercial factor.⁷ Other scholars, including Christopher Smout, have analysed the commercial networks of the Scottish factor at Rotterdam, Andrew Russell.⁸ What is interesting about this example is that Smout placed the emphasis of Russell's trading network in the Dutch Republic and Scotland. Another study which built on Smout has analysed Russell's commercial activities as being embedded in a network which largely operated in Scandinavia.⁹ These works thus captured only part of Russell's commercial activity without achieving a comprehensive assessment of his significance.

What is so far missing is a comprehensive study of Scottish merchant families over several generations which could compare with Leos Müller's analysis of the Swedish-Dutch Momma-Reenstierna family, Henry Rosevaere's examination of the Anglo-Dutch Marescoe-David company, John T. Lauridsen's analysis of the Marselis family or to Christina Dalhede's study of Scandinavian and German merchant families and their overseas contacts.¹⁰ The fact that we lack a comparable analysis of Scottish families is problematic for several reasons. We know very little about the comparative importance of different trade zones for Scottish merchants. We also know almost nothing about crisis management and business organisation over several generations. Furthermore, we have only just begun to understand the movement of

4 For examples of older research on Scotland's early modern economy, see Lythe 1960 or Smout 1963.

5 See, for example, the articles in Brand 2005 and Brand and Müller 2007.

6 Hancock 2007, 5-38; Murdoch 2009, 31-66; Zirculis 2005, 225-48.

7 See, for example, Enthoven 2007, 39-66.

8 Smout 1963.

9 Murdoch 2006, 143-8.

10 Dalhede 1987; Müller 1998; Rosevaere 1987.

inward and outward capital which is crucial when establishing the state of the Scottish economy during the early modern period. In addition, we have very little knowledge about the transfer of capital between different generations, or indeed between different regions.

This article analyses the commercial activities and transnational networks of two Scottish merchant families over several generations in order to address some of these gaps. It is to be understood as a preliminary study which anticipates a more comprehensive project on the commercial success and behaviour of Scottish merchant families in comparison to their German and English counterparts.¹¹ The families (Jolly and Lyall) selected for the purpose of this study represent two different types of mercantile familiar networks.¹² The Jollys operated mainly from the Scottish east-coast port of Prestonpans, strategically placing factors and family members in commercial hubs around the North Sea and conducting trade through them. In contrast, the Lyalls orchestrated their trade activities predominantly from Scandinavia and England though without losing their attachment to Scotland and participation in the Scottish trade.

The Jolly Family

From the late 1650s the inner circle of the Jolly family consisted of the skipper and merchant James and his four sons, John, George, Alexander and Robert. The fragmented Leith port books reveal that James undertook several journeys to London with his ship the *Black Dog* on behalf of various local merchants whilst trading on his own account.¹³ For example, on 4 March 1669 James imported one barrel of molasses and 25 pounds tobacco on board his own ship from London.¹⁴ This commercial behaviour was by no means unusual and James Jolly's activities did not differentiate from those of other Scottish merchants active in trade with England. However, by analysing the extant trade records and family papers we are able to come to some conclusions regarding Jolly's cooperation with other family members. During the 1660s Isabel Jolly, James's sister, engaged actively in trade. For instance, on 25 February 1667 she paid duties on comparatively large quantities of sugar, pepper, aniseed,

11 The research for this project was conducted during my time as Alan Pearsall Research Fellow (Maritime and Naval History) at the Institute of Historical Research (IHR, London).

12 Alternative spellings of the Lyall family name include Lejel and Leijel, used in particular in Scandinavian documents. For the purpose of this article the Scottish variant Lyall has been chosen.

13 National Archives of Scotland [hereafter NAS], Exchequer Records, E72/15/1-9, Leith, 1663-9.

14 NAS, Exchequer Records, E72/15/9, Leith, 4 March 1669.

currants, raisins and other commodities imported into Leith.¹⁵ Three months later James Jolly paid duties on a different consignment of goods on behalf of his daughter (presumably as she was not present in Leith upon the arrival of the ship) thus aiding her transaction.¹⁶ Assistance in business affairs of family members is a recurring theme in the Jolly documents and confirms the trust usually placed on familiar connections.¹⁷ The Jolly's inner network was clearly characterised by cooperation during this and subsequent decades. It also included more distant relatives who operated in foreign ports. For example, in November 1668 a merchant called Henry Jolly, a merchant of Bordeaux, sent a consignment of wine to his relatives in Leith.¹⁸ Unfortunately, we are lacking further information on the Jollys' activities in France during the 1660s, but the fact that a family member operated in a French port makes it probable that they regularly made use of this link.

The accumulation of wealth and property in James Jolly's hand demonstrates that he was a successful merchant. For example, in the 1650s and 1660s James was able to lend sums of money amounting to 9000 merks to John Hamilton of Easter Fallside and his sons.¹⁹ When the Hamiltons could not repay the credit, the securities given (including several acres of land, three tenements or 'great lodging', dwelling houses and salt pans in Edinburgh and Prestonpans) were transferred into his possession in 1673. However, James did not keep these, but gave the 'great lodging' to his son John, who had married a woman called Barbara Hunter, daughter of a skipper in Bo'ness, in the same year. His oldest son George received the rest of the properties.²⁰ We can speculate that James sought to gradually retire at this point and that he thus passed on part of his possessions. Whatever the reason for this transaction was, it demonstrates a genuine care for the financial security and well-being of the next generation. This is confirmed by a similar transaction made in 1679 when James's third son Alexander married a woman called Isobel Touch. Like John Jolly's wife, Isobel originated from a local family of skippers. Her brother Stephen undertook several journeys on behalf of the Jollys, thereby participating in and broadening the family networks. Furthermore, Alexander conducted business on behalf of his father-in-law.²¹ On occasion of their wedding, James Jolly transferred houses, tenements and arable land

15 NAS, Exchequer Records, E72/15/5, Leith, 25 February 1667.

16 NAS, Exchequer Records, E72/15/5, Leith, 23 May 1667.

17 For a discussion of the importance of trust in kith and kin networks, see Murdoch 2006, chapter 1.

18 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Bill of Lading, 11 November 1668.

19 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Bond, 1673.

20 Ibid.

21 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Account, 23 July 1680.

into the couple's possession.²² This was accompanied by a sum of 1000 merks which was to be complemented by an additional sum from Isobel's father. The money was to be lent on interest or to be used to buy property, demonstrating that the Jollys deliberately kept a varied portfolio and did not invest all of their capital into long-distance trade.²³

During the 1670s George, John, Alexander and Robert Jolly gradually took over the family business. Whereas George operated as a merchant from Prestonpans for most of his life, his brothers engaged themselves predominantly as skippers. Alexander became the master of a ship which was part owned by his father and his brother George called the *James and Margaret*. During the 1670s he frequently sailed to places like La Rochelle, Rotterdam and London, where he acted as factor on behalf of his brother George whilst also trading on his own account.²⁴ In addition, Alexander kept in close contact with his aunt, Isabel, whom he informed of some of his transactions, indicating that she remained involved in the family business.²⁵ At the end of the decade the Jolly's trade network received a new impulse when the fourth of the brothers, Robert, who had initially also become a skipper, settled as a merchant in the commercial hub of Hamburg.²⁶ During the seventeenth century the city had developed into an important entrepôt between the Baltic and North Sea/Atlantic trade zones aided by an intake of profitable migrants. Southern Netherlanders, Portuguese Jews and the company of English Merchant Adventurers settled in the city from the late sixteenth century and were awarded special group privileges by the municipal authorities.²⁷ Foreigners who were not part of either of these groups were still able to profit from the city's relative openness as they were allowed to purchase lesser citizen rights (*Schutzverwandschaft*) which enabled them to trade in and through the city. Robert Jolly benefitted from these arrangements which allowed him to conduct business in Hamburg for more than fifteen years on his own account and as a factor for his brothers George and Alexander, trading with Scottish commodities such as fish, salt and coal.²⁸ Furthermore, Robert's presence in Hamburg enabled the Jollys to break into the city's trade links with Shetland,

22 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, 12 August 1679.

23 In 1685 James Jolly transferred further properties in Prestonpans into the possession of Alexander and his wife (NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, 10 September 1685).

24 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Various Accounts, 1675-9.

25 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Alexander to Isabell Jolly, Rotterdam, 12/22 April 1675.

26 Robert Jolly settled in Hamburg from 1678 after undertaking two exploratory journeys to the city earlier in the decade (NAS, RH15/140, Robert to Alexander Jolly, Hamburg, November 1678).

27 Lindberg 2008, 641-62.

28 NAS, RH15/140, Various Accounts, 1680. For more information on the Jollys' activities in north-west Germany, see Zickermann 2013a.

which were then predominantly in the hands of local German merchants.²⁹ In addition, the family profited from trade with commodities which were traded through Hamburg from Scandinavia and England to the Iberian peninsula and France and vice versa. During the 1680s Alexander undertook several journeys from the city to France and Spain on behalf of his brothers and local merchants.³⁰ On at least one of his return journeys from the Mediterranean he called into Hamburg, before continuing to Norway (to sell some French wine) and from thence to Scotland freighted with timber.³¹ However, not all of Alexander's journeys proved to be profitable. On one of his voyages from Hamburg in 1683 the skipper suffered shipwreck at St Maria (close to Cadiz), losing the *James and Margaret* but rescuing her crew, his freight (consisting of typical Baltic commodities such as iron, whalebone and stockfish) and the ship's equipment.³² Being stuck in the port, Alexander banked on the help of the local English and Dutch merchant consuls, Robert Large and Mr Rus, to both of whom he referred to as being his 'friends', indicating a longstanding and trusted business relationship with these men.³³ After the loss of his ship Alexander continued his journeys between Scotland, Shetland, England, Scandinavia, north-west Germany and the Mediterranean on a new vessel called the *Alison* until he died in October 1687.³⁴ Despite the death of his brother and business acquaintance, which must have been a blow to the family network, Robert Jolly continued to engage himself as a merchant at Hamburg, commissioning various Scottish and local skippers to transport his commodities.³⁵ His stay in north-west Germany was interrupted by a short and unsuccessful interlude at the Scottish colony at Darien from whence Robert returned to Hamburg via Scotland. We know that Robert was active in the city at least until the early 1700s, but unfortunately we lose trace of him thereafter.³⁶

With Robert's disappearance from the city, the commercial activity of the Jolly family entered a new phase. Members of the following generation engaged themselves predominantly as skippers and there is no further evidence for the settlement of Jollys as merchants and factors in continental Europe. Following

29 For more information on Hamburg's trade with Shetland and the involvement of the Jolly family, see Hance D. Smith 1984 or Zickermann 2013b.

30 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Various Accounts, 1682-3.

31 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Account, 1682.

32 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Letters, Alexander Jolly to George Jolly and to his parents, 23 May 1683.

33 Ibid.

34 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Various Accounts, 1685-6; Letter, Robert Jolly to Isobel Touch, 3 November 1687.

35 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Various Accounts, 1687-91.

36 Zickermann 2013a, 125.

in the footsteps of his father Alexander, Stephen Jolly embarked on a career as a mariner on various ships from 1700.³⁷ After having worked as a customs official in 1714, he received a commission from six Scottish merchants and skippers the following year to build a ship on his and their behalf.³⁸

Two of the signatories of the contract were his cousins George and Alexander (George Jolly's sons) who were to own an eighth part of the vessel each.³⁹ However, instead of building a new vessel, Stephen eventually bought a ship from his cousin George.⁴⁰ He then sold parts of the vessel on to various Prestonpans merchants and family members. For example, one sixteenth of the *Concord* was purchased by another cousin, called John (another son of George) who also became a crew member.⁴¹ Stephen undertook several voyages from the Firth of Forth to the Swedish west coast, Norway and into the Baltic.⁴² These journeys were predominantly commissioned by Prestonpans merchants, including Richard and Charles Sherrif (who also owned part of the *Concord*).⁴³ For example, in 1719 Richard Sherrif instructed Stephen to sail to Christiansand (Norway) to purchase timber and iron if the commodity was to be obtained for a reasonable price.⁴⁴ Whilst at the port the Scottish skipper was to make enquiries regarding commodities currently in the possession of a Mr Michael Rus (possibly a relation to the Dutch consul at Cadiz mentioned above) and to sell these commodities in case Rus refused to – demonstrating a certain amount of trust placed on Stephen Jolly. Another Prestonpans merchant who commissioned Stephen Jolly was Thomas Mathie who, like the Sheriffs, sent commodities to Christiansand.⁴⁵ In addition to their dealings with Stephen both the Mathie and the Sheriff family requested Stephen's cousin George, master of the ships *George* and *Elizabeth* (from 1716), to undertake journeys on their behalf to places like Gothenburg, Christiansand and Danzig.⁴⁶

37 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Certificate, 13 November 1711.

38 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Commission, 2 March 1715.

39 Stephen Jolly was to own a quarter of the ship. The other signatories were William Young, Alexander Dunbar, Andrew Young and William Stewart.

40 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Vendition, 13 October 1715. George Jolly had bought the ship at Gothenburg in June in the same year.

41 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Vendition, 4 October 1715. Stephen Jolly sold a further eighth part to a merchant in Prestonpans called Charles Sherrif on 25 October 1715 (NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Vendition, 24 October 1715).

42 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Crew List and Various Accounts, 1717-18.

43 Stephen Jolly sold an eighth part of the ship to Charles Sherrif on 25 October 1715 (NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Vendition, 24 October 1715).

44 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Letter, Richard Sherrif to Stephen Jolly, 1719.

45 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Account, 1720.

46 NAS, CE56/5/1, Custom Book Prestonpans, 1708-18; GD 90/2/193, Bill of Lading, 19 September 1718; Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Letter, William Mathie to George Jolly, 19 June 1717; Account, 18 September 1718.

The Jolly network of the 1710s and 1720s thus had a different quality compared to that of the late seventeenth century. Although George and Stephen occasionally shipped commodities on their own account (and on behalf of each other) they were active predominantly as mariners.⁴⁷ Their network did not include family members who engaged themselves as merchants. This role, which had previously been afforded to George and Robert Jolly, was now given to other local merchant families of Prestonpans. At this point we can only speculate as to why this was the case. It is probable that the family had lost part of their capital in the Darien venture of the 1690s. However, Robert Jolly was apparently able to continue his commercial activities in Hamburg upon his return from the ill-fated expedition, indicating that he had still some capital at his disposal. Another explanation might be that the Jolly cousins perceived a career as skippers to be more lucrative and more risk-free than that of a trader. Given that most family members of previous generations had engaged themselves as mariners (and moreover married into families of skippers) their choice is not too surprising. The extant trade records and Jolly papers reveal that family members engaged in the trade of traditional Scottish export commodities throughout the second half of the seventeenth and during the early eighteenth century. However, whereas Alexander, George and Robert successfully exploited their base at Hamburg and opened up new trade links with Shetland, the Iberian peninsula, and France, Stephen and George predominantly sailed to Scandinavia and to the Baltic. The emphasis of the Jollys' commercial activities thus changed over time and it can be argued that Stephen and George were less ambitious and of less entrepreneurial spirit than their fathers. Nevertheless, the cousins were not unsuccessful in their careers. When Stephen Jolly died during a journey to Norway in May 1728 he left his possessions to his sister-in-law, Isabel Thomson.⁴⁸ These included 15/16 parts of his ship, household furnishings worth twenty pounds sterling, a silver watch worth five pounds sterling and a considerable sum of over 2043 Scottish pounds.⁴⁹ Ownership of these possessions was contested in part by Thomas Mathie and by David Reid (another skipper of Prestonpans) and his wife Sybilla Bartleman (relict of the late George Jolly). Nevertheless, the sums left to Isabel demonstrate that Stephen had been able to accumulate at least some wealth over the years. We can also assume that the skipper had transferred part of his capital and possessions to his children during his lifetime as his grandfather James had done two generations previously.

47 For example, in 1717 George Jolly shipped commodities on behalf of Stephen from Scotland to the Baltic (NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Account, 11 March 1717).

48 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Inventory, 15 May 1728.

49 NAS, Wills, CC8/8/92/603, 27 January 1730.

The Lyall Family

As skippers and merchants the Jollys engaged themselves in the Scandinavian iron and copper trade, exporting the commodities to Scotland and (in Robert Jolly's case) to France. However, their engagement in this lucrative commercial exchange remained small in comparison to the mercantile activities of the Scottish Lyall and Spalding families in Sweden. The three Lyall brothers, David, Henry and James, left Arbroath in 1638 for Stockholm to join the substantial Scottish community which had established itself in the city since the late 1560s.⁵⁰ In order to be allowed to conduct trade through the city they acquired citizen rights, integrating formally into their multi-ethnic host society.⁵¹ The siblings were either accompanied or later joined by a fourth brother, Adam, who became a citizen at a later date.⁵² From the fragmented church registers we can gauge that Adam, David, Henry and James associated themselves predominantly with three different Stockholm church communities. James's five children of his first marriage (Gertrud, Margaretha, Jacob, Eva, Catharina) were baptised in the German church between 1645 and 1651.⁵³ The link with this community was established by James's wife Margaretha Eden, the daughter of a councillor (*Rådman*) in Uppsala, whose family had migrated to Sweden from north-west Germany.⁵⁴ Apart from this connection with the German church, James, David and Adam preferred the St Nikolai church to cater for their spiritual needs. It was here that James's daughter Eva (a child from his second marriage) and David's five children were baptised between 1660 and 1667.⁵⁵ Furthermore, James purchased a grave at St Nikolai where he buried his first wife in 1653 and a child in 1654. In addition, one of David's children was also laid to rest here in 1656.⁵⁶ Like their brother, David and Adam

50 Murdoch 2009, 34-6.

51 A large number of German, Dutch and Scottish migrants settled in Stockholm from the sixteenth century onwards, bolstering the indigenous population. The influx of Germans alone was so big that the city authorities ensured that they could not make up more than half of the city's population (ibid, 34).

52 According to a short biography in the *Svenskt Biografiskt Lexikon* [SBL], Adam did not acquire citizenship rights until 1670. However, there are several documents which explicitly refer to him as a citizen of Stockholm before this time. See, for example, sea passes for Stockholm ships in Svenska Riksarkivet (hereafter SRA), Kommerskollegium Huvudarkivet, Konzept till sjöpass, BIIb, vol. 1.

53 Stadsarkiv Stockholm (hereafter StSS), Förteckning Över Register Till Kyrkoböcker, Tyska Församlingen, Dopbok, 1639-1700.

54 SBL vol. 12, 49.

55 StSS, Förteckning Över Register Till Kyrkoböcker, Tyska Församlingen, Dopbok, 1639-1700.

56 StSS Stockholm, Förteckning Över Register Till Kyrkoböcker, Nikolai Församlingen, Döda, 1627-80.

also purchased graves in this church in 1670 and 1679 respectively.⁵⁷ However, despite this and the fact that their ancestors continued to be associated with St Nikolai, both brothers were buried in the Maria church in Södermalm.⁵⁸ The reason for this remains unfortunately elusive but the fact that the brothers integrated with apparent ease into Stockholm's Lutheran church communities demonstrates once again the religious flexibility of Scottish and other foreign migrants.⁵⁹ Interestingly, not all four brothers worshipped at the same church. In contrast to his brothers, Henry Lyall attended the St Klara church and it was here that he buried his wife Judit Rokes in 1705 and one of his sons in 1697. He was himself laid to rest there in 1710.⁶⁰ A possible explanation for this is that Judit Roke was a member of the St Klara community and that Henry chose to worship in her church following the example of James's association with the German community through his spouse. The affiliation to a certain church community was undoubtedly of social importance. However, unfortunately Stockholm's extant church records do not reveal network linkages created, for example, through the religious sponsorship of children. There are only occasional glimpses of established social connections. For example, in 1656 Gyllenbring, a secretary at the royal court of appeal (*Kungliga Hovrätten*) buried a child in Jacob Lyall's grave.⁶¹ Furthermore, Adam laid a new-born child to rest in the grave of a man called Adam Eados at St Maria church, whereas Henry buried a young child in the grave of Baltzar Rokus (almost certainly a relative of his wife) at St Nikolai.⁶²

During the first half of the seventeenth century Sweden's commerce became more and more integrated into European trade patterns. This development was not least aided by foreign (predominantly Dutch) entrepreneurs and investors who penetrated the Swedish economy and encouraged the production and export of copper and iron.⁶³ The increased demand for these commodities in the Dutch Republic and the involvement of Dutch entrepreneurs resulted in a general shift of destinations for Swedish exports from the southern Baltic to North Sea ports like Amsterdam.⁶⁴ Men

57 Ibid.

58 StSS, Förteckning Över Register Till Kyrkoböcker, Maria Församlingen, Döda, 1656-80 and 1680-1700. David died in October 1670, shortly after he had purchased the grave at St Nikolai church. Adam was buried on 12 May 1686.

59 For a discussion of confessional networks and conversion of Scottish migrants, see Murdoch 2006, 84-124.

60 StSS, Förteckning Över Register Till Kyrkoböcker, Klara Församlingen, Döda, 1680-1710.

61 StSS, Förteckning Över Register Till Kyrkoböcker, Klara Församlingen, Döda, 1656-80.

62 StSS, Förteckning Över Register Till Kyrkoböcker, Maria Församlingen, Döda, 1656-80; Nikolai Församlingen, Döda, 1627-80.

63 De Jong 2005, 36-58; Müller 2005, 59, 62-6.

64 Ibid., 59, 62-6.

like Louis de Geer and Elias and Pieter Trip are just a few examples of foreign merchants who became highly successful in Dutch-Swedish trade.⁶⁵ From 1650 England (and in particular London) began to compete with the Dutch Republic as an important market for Swedish commodities. However, Dutch families, such as the Mommas, profited from exporting iron to English ports and Amsterdam continued as an important centre for exports from and imports to Sweden.⁶⁶

Similar to some of the Dutch families, the Lyall brothers managed to engage themselves in the trade with Swedish metals. Leos Müller has demonstrated that James Lyall exported no less than 55,290 ship-pounds of the commodity whereas David exported 12,706 ship-pounds during the period between 1651 and 1660.⁶⁷ As has been pointed out elsewhere, this made the Lyall brothers the third largest iron exporters from Sweden behind the Momma-Reenstierna family and the Swedish merchant Adam Bex.⁶⁸ James cooperated closely with his brother Adam during this period, exporting iron predominantly to London but also to other destinations in northern Europe such as Amsterdam. However, James and Adam fell out in the early 1660s, disputing each other's bills in a court case which dragged on until the 1670s and passed through various legal authorities.⁶⁹ In 1662 Stockholm's lower court administered a preliminary verdict in relation to over sixty contested bills demonstrating how closely intermingled the brothers' business affairs had become. Particular areas of dispute included expenses for voyages Adam had debited to James, the repayment of loans and differences in the conversion of English to Swedish money and weights and vice versa.⁷⁰ Both brothers sought to prove their points by referring to their books and ledgers and by providing attestations from business acquaintances. The latter included members of Stockholm's financial elite, such as a member of the Momma family and the Scottish iron merchant James Semple, demonstrating a business relationship between the Lyalls and these traders.⁷¹ The court made a decision on each disputed sum of money but its verdict was contested by James Lyall and only later confirmed by the royal court of appeal (*Kungliga Hovrätten*).⁷² The quarrel is evidence that family networks were not always stable and could fall

65 Ibid., 69-70.

66 Ibid., 71-2.

67 Müller 1998, 86-7.

68 Ibid.; Murdoch 2009, 44-5.

69 SRA, Ericbergsarkiv, Nils Gyldenstolpes Papper, vol. 1.

70 SRA, Ericbergsarkiv, Nils Gyldenstolpes Papper, vol. 1, Judicial Decision, 23 August 1669.

71 SRA, Ericbergsarkiv, Nils Gyldenstolpes Papper, vol. 1; For information on James Semple see Murdoch 2009, 44.

72 SRA, Ericbergsarkiv, Nils Gyldenstolpes Papper, vol. 1, Adam Lyall to Gyldenstolpe, 1684, but without date or place given.

apart. In the case of James and Adam Lyall it is interesting to note that the first contested bill was issued in 1651, more than ten years before the court case. It is probable that the brothers at first sought to iron out their differences between themselves or through familiar mediation. However, when this did not work, their fall out was quite spectacular and occupied the Swedish courts for a considerable length of time. This was especially so as James's widow Barbera (née Dress) took up the dispute once again in the early 1680s, petitioning the Swedish king albeit without success.⁷³

The dispute between the brothers impacted on the family network as a whole. From the 1660s Adam cooperated very closely with his brother Henry, compensating for his separation from James. They shared the risk and cost of journeys and transactions and jointly represented their interests when necessary. For example, in 1677 they petitioned the Swedish chancellor, Magnus de la Gardie, in regard to a contested bill they had written to some of his employees.⁷⁴ It is probable that the relationship between Adam and Henry intensified after the death of David in 1676 and James in 1678. In addition to his cooperation with Henry, Adam also traded on his own account, exporting iron from Stockholm and Landsrona to Flanders and to Amsterdam during the 1660s.⁷⁵ He was so successful in his commercial transactions that he became the most important importer of goods into Sweden in 1670.⁷⁶ David and James also continued to engage themselves in the iron trade. According to Leos Müller, James exported 33,465 ship-pounds of the commodity during the 1660s, a smaller but still substantial quantity compared to the previous decade.⁷⁷ It was either him or one of his brothers who sent consignments of iron to Leith in Scotland, where they were assisted by a fifth brother and local merchant called Arthur Lyall.⁷⁸

During the 1680s the Lyall network benefited from new developments at the Danish-controlled Sound. From the sixteenth century a branch of the Lyall family had settled at Elsinore, where some family members achieved influential positions.⁷⁹ For example, Sander Lyall (d. 1560) became a successful merchant and engaged himself as custom-house officer and provost. His son Frederick also became a custom official in 1583 and a provost in 1591.⁸⁰ The family maintained a presence at Elsinore into the seventeenth century, trading

73 Ibid.

74 SRA, de la Gardiesamlingen, E1475, Adam and Henry Lyall to de la Gardie, Stockholm, 11 June 1677.

75 SRA, Kommerskollegium Huvudarkivet, Koncept till Sjöpass, BIIb, Vol. 1, 1666-7.

76 Ibid., 87.

77 Müller 1998, 86-7.

78 NAS, Exchequer Records, E72/15/1, Leith, 10 August 1663.

79 Christensen 1970, 136.

80 Ibid.

with Scotland and other destinations in the North Sea and Baltic region.⁸¹ They also explored new trade routes and engaged themselves in the Danish East India trade.⁸² The familiar network was occasionally replenished with fresh blood from Scotland. For example, in the 1680s Patrick Lyall arrived from his home country after having previously engaged himself as a skipper and merchant in Edinburgh and London.⁸³ At Elsinore he became the British merchant consul. This office had been established in 1671 to assist and protect the commercial exchange of Scottish and English merchants at the Sound and was first taken up by the Lyalls' fellow countryman John Paul.⁸⁴ Patrick was the nephew of the Lyall brothers in Stockholm and Edinburgh and thus created a bridge between the family branches in Scandinavia and Scotland. He was in contact with Adam and Henry Lyall and Patrick's presence and position at the Sound was without doubt of advantage to them.⁸⁵

The commercial success of the Lyall brothers between the 1660s and 1680s was not built on trade alone. As Murdoch has pointed out, Adam, James and David also became major players in the metal industry, following the example of other Scottish migrants who successfully engaged themselves in the production of iron and/or silver.⁸⁶ Through his second wife Barbera Maria Dress, whose father Andry produced iron in Sweden since the 1620s, James came into the possession of mines and ironworks in Rockhammar, Ör and Hammarby in the Nora district.⁸⁷ Furthermore, he owned the Vällnor ironworks in Knuty.⁸⁸ Together with his brother-in-law Adam Radou, he also leased mines and ironworks belonging to the Swedish Crown in the Nora and Linde districts. In addition, he obtained the lease for additional ironworks and properties in Norr and Söderbärke with his brother David.⁸⁹ The latter was a business partner of Claes Depken, an iron producer who was related to David

81 Riis 1988, 232-3.

82 For example, William Lyall took over the office of governor of Tranquebar in the 1640s (Bredsdorff 2009; Murdoch 2006, 210).

83 NAS, Register of Deeds, RD8, 107, Bond, 17 March 1663; Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, Charles II, 5,24,78, Correspondence, Capt. John Strachan and Patrick Lyell to the Navy Commissioners, 2-30 August 1666.

84 Murdoch 2006, 156-8.

85 *Ibid.*, 159.

86 *Ibid.*, 189-92.

87 Värmlandsarkiv, SE/VA/916/F1e/84, Fastbrev på Hammarby gård och hammar (...) för Jacob Leijel, 1662; SBL, 'Andry Dress (Dreiss) (c.1585-1651)', vol. 11, p. 443; 'Jacob Leijell (1612-1678)', vol. 22, p. 448.

88 Hällander 1990, 80.

89 Murdoch 2006, 190; SBL, 'Jacob Leijell (1612-1678)', vol. 22, p. 448.

through his wife.⁹⁰ Depken was, furthermore, an assessor in the *Bergskollegium* (the 'Board of Mines'), a central institution which regulated Sweden's metal industry. He initiated the construction of new ironworks and furnaces in Älfkarleö, Härnäs and Hytton in the late 1650s, half of which he sold to David in 1662.⁹¹ David took an active part in the administration of these industrial complexes and he and his family moved to Älvkarleö, situated about 110 miles north of Stockholm.⁹²

The following generations of Lyalls continued to engage themselves in the iron industry whilst also taking over related governmental positions. After David's death his oldest son (also called David) took over the Älvkarleby iron works.⁹³ He also became an assessor of the *Bergskollegium* in 1688 and also held an office as *Bergsmästare* ('Master of the Mines') in Uppland and Västernorrland from 1691.⁹⁴ His son (also David) followed in his and his grandfather's footsteps and took on the directorship of the Älvkarleby complex until his death in 1727. Several other Lyall family members held shares in the ironworks at this time.⁹⁵ Henry's son, Adam, also became a *Bergsmästare* in Öster and Västerbergslagen in 1700 and assessor of the *Bergskollegium* in 1713.⁹⁶ Furthermore, James's son Adam engaged himself as owner of the Hellefors silverworks after finishing his studies at Uppsala University.⁹⁷ All three cousins were ennobled in the 1710s for their contributions to the Swedish metal industry.⁹⁸ It is noticeable that the emphasis of the Lyall commercial network in Sweden shifted from the iron trade to the production of metals. Whereas the first generation of Lyalls had engaged themselves both in the commercial exchange with the commodity and in the industry, David Davidson, Adam (son of Henry) and Adam (son of James) focused on a career in the production of iron and on a career in government positions. This behaviour was not untypical. There are several examples of other foreign merchants, such as Willem Momma and Willem Bruyn, who moved from trade to industry and estate ownership.⁹⁹ It is evident that they perceived an engagement in the iron industry to be

90 SBL, 'David Leijell (1621-1676)', vol. 22, p. 448. David's wife was the sister of Klas Depken's wife.

91 Ibid.; Hållander 1990, 116; Liljeroth 1931, unpaginated.

92 Ibid.

93 Ibid.

94 Anders von Stiernman 1755, unpaginated; Murdoch 2006, 191.

95 Liljeroth 1931. The Lyall family members who owned shares included Borgmästare Johan, Petter, Lieutenants Lars and Johan, Elisabeth and Caisa Helena Lyall.

96 Ibid.

97 Stiernman 1755; Murdoch 2006, 191.

98 Ibid.

99 Müller 1998, 160.

more lucrative and that they avoided the risks of overseas trade. However, the Lyalls' engagement in the commercial exchange did not end here. Two of Henry's sons, Henry and Balthasar, migrated to the British Isles in the 1710s and rose to become directors of the Honourable East India Company.¹⁰⁰

Conclusion

The above comparison of two kin-based networks has demonstrated some of the commercial activities of the Jolly and Lyall families in northern Europe. The Jollys operated their business mainly from Scotland, placing family members in strategic locations abroad. Henry and Robert Jolly undoubtedly aided the expansion of the family's commercial links by opening up trade with and through Hamburg and France. Despite his long-term presence in the north-west German port, Robert Jolly did not formally integrate into his host society through the acquisition of full citizen rights. As outlined above, Hamburg's laws allowed foreigners to be commercially active and it is probable that Robert Jolly chose to stay in this port precisely for this reason. Whilst he must have linked himself socially to the city's traders, there is no evidence that he established any permanent roots, for example through a marriage to a local woman. His abode in Hamburg thus had a temporary character and Jolly's decision to leave the city for Darien seems to have been a comparatively easy one. Throughout his residency in north-west Germany, Robert cooperated closely with his relatives George and Alexander, the latter of whom provided a mobile link within the family network. Part of the brothers' success lay in the variety of their commercial activities. They participated in a wide range of trade routes and in the commercial exchange with a large number of commodities, including traditional Scottish export commodities like coal, fish and salt. When a particular commercial exchange became unprofitable they explored different avenues, proving a great deal of flexibility. For example, in the early 1680s Robert complained about a decay of maritime trade except in France.¹⁰¹ This was not only through the loss of ships (due to the on-going Franco-Dutch War) but also through a wave of bankruptcies of merchant houses in the Spanish Netherlands, France and

100 The National Archives, C11/2762/45, Henry and Balthasar Lyall v Simmons, 1716; Will of Balthasar Lyall, PROB 11/703/103, 1740. For additional information on Henry and Balthasar Lyall see *Gentleman's Magazine* or *Monthly Intelligencer*, vol.1 (1731), 2; Parliamentary Archives, Naturalization (Jacobson, &c.) Act HL/PO/JO/10/6/5/1524, 1 March 1700; East Sussex Record Office, Mortgage (by Lease & Release, 2 copies of release) for £4,000 DLW/572-4 11, 12 Apr 1752. I thank Peter Leyer for passing these references onto me.

101 NAS, Jolly Papers, RH15/140, Robert to Alexander Jolly, Hamburg, 22 April 1681.

London to whom the Jolly family was commercially connected.¹⁰² It was shortly thereafter that the Jollys established their trade links with Shetland, adding a new commercial connection to their portfolio to compensate for the difficulties experienced elsewhere. When trade itself did not seem to be a lucrative alternative, Alexander's and George's children fell back to the family's traditional professions as skippers and mariners. Their engagement as mariners gave them an income and a highly respected position within society without having to bear the full risk of commercial transactions. Interestingly, the vacuum left by the withdrawal of the Jollys from their role as traders was filled seamlessly by other Prestonpans merchant families, such as the Sherrifs and Mathies.

The Lyalls operated undoubtedly on a larger scale than the Jollys and it can be argued that they were as successful as other major European merchant families, such as the Momma-Reenstiernas. As significant players in the Swedish iron trade and industry, they maintained a large trading network with other destinations in the Baltic and North Sea region, including Scotland. Their commercial exchange was aided by family members in their home country and at the Danish Sound. Unlike the Jollys, the Lyalls became firmly integrated into their host societies, acquiring citizenship rights and influential positions as councillors and consuls. They also intermarried with other important merchant families who were crucial in aiding the Lyalls' success in the metal industry. It is likely that without the aid of the Dress or the Raddou families they would have remained confined to trade. A quality the Lyalls shared with the Jollys was their flexibility in their commercial behaviour. They frequently changed locations within Sweden and other places and even branched out into the trade with East Asia. They thus proved to be extremely mobile and flexible, following the most lucrative markets around the globe. They also covered a spectrum of professions, engaging themselves not only as merchants but also as owners of ironworks, skippers and members of Swedish institutions, such as the *Bergskollegium*, and British monopoly companies, such as the East India Company.

The significance of the Lyalls in the Swedish iron trade and industry is comparable to that of other influential foreign merchant families like the de Geers. They adopted similar strategies as other migrants, moving from involvement in the commercial exchange to the production of raw materials they imported, taking ownership over various mines in Sweden and contributing significantly to the Swedish economy. The Jolly family, on the other hand, did not have any comparable opportunities and their overall contribution to the Scottish economy has yet to be evaluated.

102 Ibid.

Importantly, the Jollys and Lyalls are just examples of their respective types of early-modern Scottish merchant families. Previous research on mercantile networks indicates that the commercial behaviour of the Jollys was in principle comparable to that of other Scottish families, such as the Spaldings, Sherrifs and Mathies. However, we cannot come to a conclusion on this until further research has been conducted on the trade activities of these families. Given their comparative significance, it is astonishing that Scottish merchant families have not received more scholarly attention in the past. This is especially so as the commercial activities of familiar networks abroad remained connected to and impacted on the Scottish economy. Further research on familiar networks in Scotland and abroad will undoubtedly shed new light on the commercial behaviour of Scottish traders over several generations, allowing us to write a new history of Scotland's economy and to provide a fresh alternative to the more pessimistic conclusions sometimes reached by historians. In order to fully understand the commercial success and failure of Scottish merchants over several generations it is crucial for research to move away from orthodox trade records such as port books and custom records and to concentrate on merchants letters, ledgers and other family papers maintained in Scottish and foreign archives. A focus on these alternative documents will unearth new information and permit a deeper and more comprehensive insight into early modern Scottish trade.

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