

Glasgow, were strongly Presbyterian in outlook — the text of the treaty was burnt at the town crosses. In Lanarkshire handbills were circulated calling on Presbyterians to prepare arms and provisions for a march on the Parliament in Edinburgh. Rumours circulated of an armed insurrection.

IN January of 1707, the Parliament voted by 110 to 67 to ratify the Treaty of Union. Three centuries later it is impossible to state with absolute certainty which factors led a majority of the Parliament's members to vote in favour of the Union.

Bribery was not a determining factor. Burns' portrayal of the Union as something "wrought by a coward few, for hiring traitors' wages ... we're bought and sold for English gold — such a parcel of rogues in a nation" might make for good poetry. But it makes bad history.

The "English gold" referred to by Burns was the £20,000 sent to Scotland from the English Treasury in the autumn of 1706. The money was used to pay off debts to nobles on the Scottish civil list. But paying off those debts was also clearly intended to influence the outcome of the eventual vote on the Union.

In the event, the payments changed the voting intentions of, at most, only a handful of members of the Parliament. The bulk of the money, £12,325, for example, was paid to the Duke of Queensberry, the leader of the Court party. But he had always been a supporter of a union anyway. Other payments also went to long-standing supporters of a union. And, by the standards of the time, what today would count as bribery was then simply a commonplace practice.

If the Union could be explained in terms of bribery, why did it not occur on earlier occasions? Bribes were surely no less available, and Scottish nobles no less corrupt, in earlier years than in 1707. Nor does bribing a Scottish noble appear to have necessarily been a particularly expensive affair: five of the bribes paid out were less than the sum paid to the messenger who carried the treaty from Scotland to England.

In any case, "English gold" was not the only currency of bribery in early eighteenth-century Scotland. When the Duke of Hamilton, who had looked to the French court to support his claim to the Scottish crown, met with the French spy Hooke in 1705, he asked for — and, according to contemporaries, obtained and used — money from France in an attempt to bribe members of the Parliament.

THE risk of an English invasion was no more significant than bribery in determining the outcome of the Scottish Parliament's vote on the Treaty of Union. It is certainly the case that while the Scottish Parliament was discussing the draft Treaty of Union, England moved troops to the Border region and to the north of Ireland. How serious the intentions were behind these troop movements is a separate question.

War in Scotland would have undermined the all-important war on the continent. The Duke of Marlborough, the commander of the English forces, had consistently advocated a union rather than a war with Scotland — not least because of the potential impact of such a war on the 10,000 Scottish troops under his command. Nor was Marlborough's a lone voice in wanting to avoid the use of force. Queen Anne was of the same opinion.

If bribery and troop movements were not significant factors in deciding the outcome of the Scottish Parliament's vote on the Treaty of Union, the prospect of access to English colonies and the abolition of duties on Scottish exports to England certainly was a major influence, albeit not the sole influence.

High tariff barriers — erected not just by England, but by all European states — stifled the market for the little which Scotland had to offer by way of exports.

Union with England offered a chance to escape from this dilemma. "The only popular topic produced for rendering it (the Union) palatable was the great advantage that must accrue to Scotland from the communication of trade," as one writer put it.

The author of the pamphlet *Honey Lies in the Trade* likewise explained that the Union "may bring us into the way and knowledge of these places and things which they (the English) have laboured to conceal from us. And having once got a foot, we may possibly screw into the bowels of the hive."

The attraction of screwing into the bowels of the hive was also highlighted by supporters of the Union during debates in the Scottish Parliament: "This nation being poor and without force to protect it, its commerce cannot reap great advantages by it, till it partake of the trade and protection of some powerful neighbour nation, that can communicate both these. By this union we will have access to all the advantages in commerce the English enjoy."

Article IV of the Treaty of Union provided for freedom of trade. When the Scottish Parliament voted on the Article — in its debates on the Treaty of Union the Parliament discussed and voted on each Article separately — it passed by an overwhelming 156 votes to 19. The size of the majority underlined the extent to which "communication of trade" acted as an incentive to support the Treaty of Union.

No less important in securing assent to the Union were guarantees, or apparent guarantees, contained in other Articles that the class structure and institutions of Scottish society — with the obvious exception of the Scottish Parliament itself — would be preserved by the Union: the superiorities and privileges of the nobility, the rights and privileges of the royal burghs, and the existence of a separate Scottish legal system.

Given the domination of the Scottish Parliament by greater and lesser feudal nobles, the preservation of feudal superiorities was a matter of no small significance. The stated guarantees undermined attempts by the Union's opponents to persuade members of the Parliament that the Union would result in the demise of Scotland's feudal nobility.

Fear of higher taxation had been one of the driving forces behind the popular unrest triggered by publication of the draft Treaty of Union in October of 1706: taxes in Scotland were lower, and less efficiently collected, than was the case in England. But subsequent amendments to Articles concerning taxation in the draft treaty protected, for longer or shorter periods, basic commodities from English levels of taxation.

Of arguably greater importance than the amendments made to



the draft treaty in response to concerns about higher levels of taxation were the steps taken to defuse the far more militant and widespread opposition to the Union on religious grounds.

Church of Scotland (which was Presbyterian while the Episcopalian Church of England was Anglican) ministers played a central role in the wave of unrest which had followed publication of the draft treaty. The proposed Union guaranteed the Scottish legal system but made no mention of the position of the Church of Scotland. The Kirk feared that the Union would lead to the re-introduction of bishops into church government, and to the imposition of ministers on local congregations.

In negotiating the draft treaty the Scottish commissioners, as one of them later wrote, had wanted to "make the Presbyterian government and its security the basis of any Union between the two nations." But the final draft omitted any guarantee of the Presbyterian settlement at the insistence of the English commissioners: they feared a Tory backlash in the English Parliament in the event of such a guarantee.

The response of the Scottish Parliament, in November of 1706, was to rush through the Act for Securing the Protestant Religion and Presbyterian Church Government in November. The Act confirmed "the said true Protestant religion, and the worship, discipline and government of this Church (i.e. the Church of Scotland) to continue without any alteration to the people of this land in all succeeding generations."

WHATEVER the precise calculations in the minds of those members of the Scottish Parliament who voted to ratify the Treaty of Union, it is credible to assume that the combination of free trade, guarantees of feudal privileges, recognition of Presbyterian church government, concessions on tax issues, and the allocation of the "Equivalent" sufficed to bring about a majority.

In addition, there was the question of what, if any, was the alternative to acceptance of the Union.

Economically, the likely alternative was further economic stagnation.

Politically, given that the Treaty of Union incorporated confirmation of the Hanoverian succession, the likely alternative was a French-backed attempt by Jacobites to restore the Stuarts to the Scottish throne, bringing civil war in Scotland. Inevitably, England would also be drawn into such a conflict.

A restored Stuart monarchy would take revenge on those sections of the Scottish nobility who had supported the ousting of James II/VII, and also attack Presbyterian church government in Scotland. Alternatively, a victory for England would result in a union anyway — but only after war in Scotland, and on far less favourable terms.

(Pro-Union pamphleteers made great play of the risk — and it was a real risk — of a Stuart restoration if Union with England were rejected: "Men are known by their friends. All the Jacobites are in league with you (opponents of the Union), the Papists are on your right hand, the Prelatists on your left, and the French at your back. ... On what account do these people join with you?")

Although a majority of the Scottish Parliament concluded that their class interests were best served by ratification of the Treaty of Union, some sections of the Scottish ruling classes, as well as other social forces in Scotland, drew a very different conclusion. But they did so on the basis of contradictory considerations.

Jacobites opposed the Union for the obvious reason that it implied a Hanoverian monarch in Scotland.

And of course free trade cut both ways. It was for England as well as Scotland. Scotland was therefore at risk of being overrun by cheaper English commodities and raw materials.

Anti-Union pamphleteers pointed to the threat which free trade might pose to Scottish manufacturing: "Scotland may then bid farewell to the woollen, stuff, stocken, and many other manufactures, especially now in so hopeful a way of thriving among them. ... All hope of erecting new manufactories must be lost."

The Glasgow merchant elite was hostile to the Union for a different reason: free trade would lead to the stationing of customs officers in Glasgow, putting at risk the profits accumulated from illegally smuggling tobacco from the American colonies.

Individually, none of these strands of opposition carried enough social weight to frustrate the Union. Nor could they act together in an attempt to secure their common goal: their motivations for opposition to the Union, and their alternatives to the Union, were not only inconsistent but also often mutually exclusive.

THE Treaty of Union formally came into effect on 1st May 1707. According to Adam Smith, writing in later years, "the immediate effect (of the Union) was to hurt the inter-

est of every single order of men in the country."

This was not entirely accurate. Even in the short term, some nobles and merchants profited handsomely from the Union.

Grain and oatmeal exports doubled in the decade and a half following the Union. Commercially oriented cattle-rearing increased, in order to take advantage of easier access to an expanding English market. And, by 1730, Glasgow merchants, having overcome the problem of having to pay duty on their imports, had trebled the volume of their tobacco imports from the Americas.

But while some "orders of men in the country" quickly profited from the Union, other, lesser, orders paid the price for those profits, as well as suffering under the imposition of higher taxes.

The doubling of grain exports to the new markets opened by the Union resulted in severe food shortages in the Lowlands: grain crops were being exported instead of being supplied to local markets. A wave of food riots broke out in 1720. The level of unrest in the Lowlands was greater than in the whole of Scotland during any of the post-Union Jacobite uprisings.

In Galloway the spread of cattle-rearing had similar consequences: tenants were dispossessed in order to make way for enclosures. In 1724/25 the region was swept by the most serious rural unrest — the Levellers' Revolt — anywhere in Scotland in the entire century. Hundreds of armed men tore down the walls of cattle enclosures, mutilated cattle, and fought pitched battles with troops. The revolt lasted for some six months.

The imposition of new taxes and of higher levels of taxation — despite, or even in breach of, amendments to the Treaty of Union during debates in the Scottish Parliament — also provoked widespread unrest in the immediate post-Union years.

From the point of view of the English ruling classes, the Treaty of Union was only partially successful. France failed to secure its aim of territorial expansion in the War of the Spanish Succession. And after Queen Anne's death in 1714 the crown was transferred to the House of Hanover. But the Union failed to eliminate the threat of Jacobitism.

On the contrary, there were attempted Jacobite uprisings of varying degrees of seriousness in 1708, 1715, 1719 and 1745. And it was the Treaty of Union itself which had helped make possible those uprisings.

The social basis of Jacobitism in Scotland was a section of the feudal nobility based predominantly, but not exclusively, in the Highlands. The source of their power lay not in their wealth but in the feudal superiorities and privileges which had been preserved by the Treaty of Union.

They constituted a survival of feudalism in a state increasingly based on capitalist relations of production. Because their exercise of feudal powers, together with the support which they continued to receive from France, allowed them to remain a significant social force.

Eradication of the continuing Jacobite threat was therefore inseparable from abolition of the Scottish feudal superiorities which the Treaty of Union itself had allowed to be carried over into the new British state.

But it was only in 1747 that these superiorities were abolished: following the defeat of the Jacobite forces at Culloden Moor in 1745 Parliament passed the Act for Taking Away and Abolishing the Heritable Jurisdictions in That Part of Great Britain Called Scotland ... and for Rendering the Union of the Two Kingdoms More Complete.

From the point of view of the Scottish ruling classes, the results of the Union were more complex.

On the one hand, at least in the short term, the Treaty of Union preserved their feudal powers. On the other hand the existence of those powers was incompatible with the expansion of capitalist methods of production triggered, albeit only from the middle of the eighteenth century onwards, by the Scottish economy's integration into that of the newly created British state.

The wealthiest faction of the feudal nobility was able to benefit from the emergence of a Scottish capitalist economy. The remainder looked — unsuccessfully — to Jacobitism and France to preserve their feudal privileges. Culloden and the legislation of 1747 sealed their fate. In that sense, pre-Union warnings in the Scottish Parliament that Union would lead to the nobility being "divested of their followers and vassalages" had been proved correct.

Paradoxically, the main beneficiary of the Union in Scotland was a social force which had played little role in bringing it about: the Scottish bourgeoisie.

Unlike in England, there had been no victorious bourgeois revolution in Scotland in the seventeenth century. In the opening years of the following century the embryonic Scottish bourgeoisie was economically and politically weak, and sceptical about a union with England.

Its economic weakness was reflected in the overall weakness of the Scottish economy. Its political weakness was reflected in the domination of Scotland and its Parliament by a feudal nobility. And its scepticism about a union flowed out of fears that Scottish manufacturing would not survive a post-union flood of cheaper and better-quality English imports.

In the event, however, from the 1750s onwards the Union resulted in a rapid capitalist transformation of the Scottish economy: a process which, in England, had required nearly two centuries was concentrated into a period of decades in Scotland. Inevitably, the class which emerged as the dominant class from that capitalist transformation was the Scottish bourgeoisie.

The Scottish bourgeoisie did not rise to the level of a ruling class in an independent Scotland. Just as the Scottish economy had been gradually integrated into a single British economy in the aftermath of 1707, so too the Scottish bourgeoisie had become part of a single British ruling class. In later years the same forces which had created a single British ruling class would also lead to the emergence of a British-wide workers' movement. "THE most radical elements in the modern British labour movement are most often natives of Ireland or Scotland. Scotland entered on the capitalist path later than England: a sharper turn in the life of the masses of the people gave rise to a sharper political reaction," wrote Trotsky in 1925.

Scotland "entered on the capitalist path" not only later than England, but also much more rapidly.