Foreword

Thomas M. Devine

Over the last two decades or so the subject of Scottish emigration across the globe has blossomed as a core focus of research for modern historians. Broad studies have been published in addition to some on more specific themes such as return migration, the Scottish military, Scots and slavery, and the Scottish factor in empire, to name but a few of the topics which have resulted in important contributions. It could even be argued that there might now be something of a 'diasporic turn' in modern Scottish historical studies. If so, it is all to the good. For far too long students of Scottish history have concentrated exclusively on the homeland and failed to take account of the broader Scotland, the 'Scotland' originating from the vast migrations over the centuries which left imprints on Europe, England, Ireland, the Americas, the colonial Caribbean, Africa, Australasia, Asia and many other places across the globe.

Looking outwards can also provide manifest intellectual benefits for historians of small nations. As they pursue the study of the people who have gone away, so they may become more familiar with the potential pitfalls of introspection, parochialism and filiopietism, and the multiple connections of transnationalism and internationalism. But even then, rigorous contextualisation, allied with comparative analysis, must also surely be added to the mix. Until recent years numerous books on the Scots abroad since the nineteenth century have been replete with boosterism and ethnic conceit. Undeniably that genre may have leavened the pride in the identity of Scots living both at home and abroad. Nevertheless it marred the possibilities of a truly realistic and convincing perspective which was sensitive to historiographical balance and regard for both the lighter and darker aspects of the remarkable global migrations of the Scottish people.

A Global Force adds to the more sophisticated studies which have been plotting the worldwide significance of the Scottish diaspora. This scholarly and richly referenced volume adds a novel and intriguing dimension to existing contributions by focusing on countries in the Empire, dominions and commonwealth which have adopted Scottish regimental styles in their military formations. The authors

all demonstrate the vital allure of Highlandism. When overseas countries configured Scots titles and uniforms they looked to the famous Highland regiments as principal exemplars. Kilts and pipe bands were central to these visible and musical identities.

The contributors to the book also go further by addressing the reasons why the dominions were enamoured of 'the kilties' but also why some countries, notably Australia, soon renounced their love affair with Highlandism in favour of a military with its own strong national identity devoid of ethnic migrant traditions. This is a volume which contains much of interest, appeal and fascination on Scottish military history, the diaspora of the Scots and the migration of national identities across frontiers.

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