

Institution: University of Stirling
Unit of Assessment: D30 History
Title of case study: Free-Access public history, policy formulation, and education: <i>The Records of the Parliaments of Scotland to 1707</i> and their analysis.
<p>1. Summary of the impact: <i>The Records of the Parliaments of Scotland</i> project, completed in 2008, and its subsequent research developments have achieved considerable impact through widening global public awareness of this historical resource. Its free-to-access searchable database is accepted as the definitive point of reference for pre-Union Scottish legislation. The project's materials and findings have had sustained impact on archival, heritage, legal and policy practitioners, providing significant input to a wide spectrum of present-day political, social, economic, environmental and cultural initiatives, from public debate and consultation through to formal enactment. The project has also contributed to the enhancement of the history curriculum in Secondary education.</p>
<p>2. Underpinning research: <i>The Records of the Parliaments of Scotland</i> [RPS] was conceived and directed by Prof. Keith Brown, formerly of Stirling and St Andrews (now Manchester), and launched at St Andrews in 1998 with Scottish Office funding. The completed, free-to-access critical edition database with commentary, activated (soft) on-line in Nov. 2007 with a full public launch in May 2008, was co-edited/authored by a team which included Dr Alastair Mann (Stirling PhD 1997). Mann was a full category A FTE staff member at Stirling for a year, Sept. 2003-Sept 2004, and permanent at Stirling from Sept. 2005, thus undertaking a considerable portion of the edition research and formatting at Stirling, followed by all his subsequent research, publications and public outreach. Dr Mann was responsible for 40% of the project editing and 35% authorship of the scholarly commentary: the database was returned as one of his RAE2008 outputs. Mann was also co-PI author on the project's middle and closing-stage funding applications [2002-7], and since the RPS launch has been the lead academic-in-post overseeing continuing editorial and public development (while no-one related to the project holds an academic post at St Andrews). Additional editing and interpretation of RPS has also been undertaken by Stirling colleagues Michael Penman [2000-] and Kirsty McAlister [2005-, currently on secondment with our Ochils Landscape public project].</p> <p>The long-term task of the RPS project [1998-2008] was to identify from extant archival manuscripts relevant decisions and minutes of the Scottish Estates pre-1707 otherwise omitted from the out-of-print twelve-volume folio edition of 1814-75; to then fully transcribe and provide a parallel translation (from Latin, French, Scots, Gaelic) of all these materials, with both original and translated texts fully MS-referenced; and to make these materials available universally through a free-to-access searchable database (a ground-breaking undertaking at that time, custom-built and to be regularly updated in response to public/professional feedback). The resulting edition, of 16.5 million words, identified an additional c.40% of previously un-noticed or discarded Parliamentary/Council/Convention of Estates material, and provided correction for a not inconsiderable level of Victorian editorial error. This corpus of material has subsequently formed the basis of research published in the form of monographs, edited volumes and journal articles as well as disseminated for public and practitioner consumption through public events, media interviews/features, web-sites and curriculum materials.</p> <p>Mann's work in analysing the complexity of parliamentary business, procedure and personnel, and the dynamic between Crown and Three Estates within the context of the 16th and 17th centuries has challenged the traditional perception of the Scottish Parliament as an unsophisticated, Crown-led institution, of little political, juridical, social or cultural value throughout the medieval and early modern periods and before the benefits of Parliamentary Union in 1707 (as has Penman's work on the 14th century assemblies of the estates). Such work has also illuminated crucial new aspects of the workings of such institutions as the controversial controlling committee, the Lords of the Articles, the nature and physical history of Scotland's Parliamentary record-keeping, and under-explored material for analysis in regard to a wealth of political, social, religious, economic, cultural, linguistic, genealogical and environmental themes, focussed on c.1200-1707, but with much that is still relevant to historical investigation from Union to the present day: e.g. pre-</p>

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1707 statutes still in law with implications for the current devolved Scottish Parliament's legislation and thus policy/law practitioners. As an allied sequel of similar import to historians and practitioners in heritage, policy, law and education, Mann has begun developing a similar edition of pre-Union Privy Council of Scotland proceedings c.1490-1707 (over 5 million words) in partnership with the National Records of Scotland, Edinburgh.

3. References to the research

- i. *The Records of Parliaments of Scotland to 1707* database, eds. K.M. Brown, G.H. Macintosh, **A.J. Mann**, P. Ritchie and R. Tanner – <http://www.rps.ac.uk> (2008).
- ii. **M. Penman**, 'Parliament Lost – Parliament Regained? The Three Estates in the Reign of David II, 1329-71', in K.M. Brown and R. Tanner eds., *Parliament and Politics in Scotland, Volume I – 1286-1567* (Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 74-101. Available at: <https://dspace.stir.ac.uk/handle/1893/3436>
- iii. **R.D. Oram**, 'Community of the Realm: the Middle Ages', in M. Glendinning ed., *The Architecture of Scottish Government: from Kingship to Parliamentary Democracy* (Dundee University Press, 2004), 15-81. Available at: <https://dspace.stir.ac.uk/handle/1893/16580>
- iv. **A.J. Mann**, 'Introduction' [50%] and 'James VII, King of the Articles: Political Management and Political Failure', in Mann and K.M. Brown eds., *Parliament and Politics in Scotland, Volume II – 1567-1707* (Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 1-56, 184-207.
- v. **M. Penman** and **A.J. Mann**, articles in *The Scottish Parliaments, 1235-1707*, special issue of *History Scotland*, vol.8 no. 3 (May/June 2008), 20-6, 46-52.
- vi. **A.J. Mann** and G. MacIntosh, 'Ideas for Further Research' (2009), Edinburgh, and Scotland's People - <http://www.rps.ac.uk/static/furtherresearch.html>, follow link off 'Home' page.
- vii. **A.J. Mann**, 'House Rules: Parliamentary Procedure' and 'The Law of the Person: the Scottish Parliament and Social Control' and **K.J. McAlister** [50%] with R.J. Tanner, 'The First Estate: Parliament and the Church', in K.M. Brown and A.R. MacDonald eds., *The History of the Scottish Parliament, Volume III - Parliament in Context, 1235-1707* (Edinburgh University Press, 2010), 122-56, 186-215, 31-66.
- viii. **A.J. Mann**, 'Symbolism and Ritual in the Seventeenth-Century Scottish Parliament', in M. Coelho and M. Ribeiro eds., *Parliaments: The Law, The Practice and The Representations from the Middle Ages to the Present Day* (Assembleia de Republica, Portugal, 2010), 479-85.
- ix. **A.J. Mann**, 'The Scottish Parliaments: The role of ritual and ceremony in the pre-1707 Parliament and the New Parliament from 1999', in *Representative Assemblies, Territorial Autonomies, Political Cultures: Proceedings of the 59th Congress of the International Commission for the History of Representative and Parliamentary Institutions* (Alghero, 2011), 239-50.

Grants

- Mann co-PI on continuation funding applications for St Andrews project, including £293,593 from Scottish Executive (2004) and £18,000 from AHRB (2006), while a Stirling FTE.
- 2008-, Mann part of network Gendered Ceremony and Ritual in Parliament Programme, Leverhulme Trust [Bristol, Warwick, Sheffield].
- 2011-, *The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research*, €47,000 [£9,000 at Stirling] – 'Political representation: communities, ideas and institutions in Europe (c. 1200-c. 1650)', network between Stirling and the Huygens Institute of Netherlands History, The Hague, the University of Amsterdam, Leiden University, The Netherlands and the University of Antwerp and the *Katholieke Universiteit Leuven*, Belgium: three workshops, one in Stirling [Mann, Penman, McAlister, Ross, Oram] in August 2013. Stirling History/SAH contributed £3,500.

4. Details of the impact

Worldwide impact of *RPS* can be measured initially through web usage. To date, it has received over 2.07 million pageviews, representing 250,567 visits from 150,307 unique users, averaging 80 visits per day. 63% of these are UK based (40% of this from England); 13.4% USA, 5.8% Australia, 4% Canada, 1.47% New Zealand, 1.51% Germany, 1.17% France, 0.7% Ireland, Netherlands, Italy, Russia and Spain. Whilst a core of users are scholars/students of history, law, economics, literature and environment, direct queries to the editorial team 2008-13 [c.1,200 to date] confirm c.40-45% of users are otherwise private individuals and voluntary societies, particularly those

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conducting their own research into family and local history who are able to obtain (and, significantly, in turn correct and deepen) the project's records relevant to genealogy, biography, land ownership, place-names, topography and a wide variety of socio-economic themes. A further c.15-20% of users are practitioners within local/institutional services, professional bodies and private companies. This includes individual teachers and librarians seeking pupil/reader materials; law firms investigating precedent and individual cases; media outlets profiling historical events or individual themes (e.g. the anniversary of Union or Bannockburn, fishing rights, extreme weather, alcohol prices), including the BBC (and its *History* magazine), national newspapers and radio; or individual archives and heritage groups seeking to contextualise their own holdings/site (e.g. Dundee City Archives, Shetland Museum & Archives). Regular press releases by Mann and Gillian MacIntosh (*RPS* Project Manager to 2010, St Andrews) regarding topical *RPS* content and publicised *RPS* database updates (often prompted by corrections submitted by the public) maintain dissemination.

RPS was publicly launched (May 2008) before former First Ministers Henry Mcleish and Jack McConnell at the Scottish Parliament and cross-party commended by MSPs' to the nation. The database is in regular use by legal and policy practitioners. The Scottish Law Commission (SLC), which advises civil servants, Edinburgh MSPs, Westminster MPs and Brussels MEPs, has engaged the project team to assist in confirming repealed or still-active pre-1707 statutes for consultation in framing new legislation. In 2008, for example, it collaborated with SLC to advise the Executive and its agencies that a Scottish Parliament Act of 2002 had incorrectly assumed that the 1621 Bankruptcy Act remained in law: this helped frame a revised Bankruptcy and Diligence Act. In 2010 *RPS* also facilitated intervention (and discussion of jurisdictional competence) in support of Scottish National Heritage (querying Forestry Commission policy), by confirming the unnoticed Westminster repeal of the Scottish parliament's 1695 Soil Preservation Act as a crucial factor in efforts to develop Sand Dune conservation. Similarly, *RPS* was recently cited as contextual historic background and precedent in a US Supreme Court decision (*Florida v Jardines* 26 March 2013) in reference to justified probable cause and search in a drug trafficking arrest. Further queries about the detail, application and/or repeal of historic acts (or about more general historic events, places and people) have come from the British Institute of Electrical Engineers, the Scottish Legal Action Group and the BBC, most either informing the public or professional policy deliberations (with several clarifying issues raised by significant legislation of the new Scottish Parliament, e.g. The Abolition of Feudal Tenure etc. (Scotland) Act 2000).

RPS continues its wider cultural impact as an invaluable resource for private researchers, family history societies, archivists/librarians, community heritage projects and school teachers. The high level of inquiries from such communities encouraged MacIntosh and Mann to develop an on-line support gateway within *RPS* outlining 'Ideas for Further Research' (2009) aimed at family historians. Moreover, a legacy-partnership has been agreed with the National Records of Scotland, Edinburgh, to migrate and maintain the database within this national repository from June 2014, with editorial oversight from Mann and others, a transfer which will also see the family and place name evidence in *RPS* enhanced in conjunction with *Scotland's People*, providing direct linkages for genealogists. In addition, since 2000 Mann has developed online resources about the history of the Scottish Parliament for schools, including a free-access web site of documents, images and workshops, re-launched to the public in 2008 and which has now totalled 228,333 hits [below 5. iii.], in conjunction with Virtual Teaching Scotland, Learning and Teaching Scotland, and the Scottish Association of Teachers in History (SATH, c.400 members, within EUROCLIO, the permanent standing conference of European History teachers' associations). Mann, McAlister, Penman and James Smyth hosted three professional *RPS* development workshops for teachers in 2009-10 (reaching 150+ teachers), linked into their papers in a special issue of the *SATH Yearbook*, 24, 2010, pp. 4-25. In 2009 Mann, MacIntosh and Brown also initiated partnership with the Holyrood Parliament's Inward Education Manager to develop an on-line *Timeline of the Scottish Parliament* as a free educational resource (launched 2010, currently averaging 12 pageviews per day). This material has significant value for Scottish teachers and pupils preparing for the new Scottish/British historical content of the revised 'curriculum for excellence', with *RPS* particularly valuable in 'developing resources' [*SATH* forum, 23/3/12] for senior pupils preparing for Advanced Higher and dissertations. Since the opening of the Holyrood Parliament in 2004, Mann has also been lead historical consultant on procedural/ceremonial development for the Scottish Parliament and regularly assists the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe) with public

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queries: for example in 2011-12 over whether it was possible to petition the old parliament as it is with the new and how the opening 'riding' of the old parliament was choreographed. All these resources/activities are interlinked by the worldwide-web.

Mann has been invited to deliver papers and RPS-user demonstrations to a number of international networks of scholars, archivists, legal professionals and policy-makers planning national-scale editorial and resource projects. He has advised Spanish academics/archivists directly on developing similar online free-access record projects (in anticipation of historic anniversaries for 1516 and 1813) and, with MacIntosh and Brown, demonstrated RPS at International Commission for the History of Representative and Parliamentary Institutions (<http://www.ichrpi.com/>) conferences in Barcelona, Edinburgh, Lisbon, Sardinia, Sicily and Dublin down to 2013: that in Sicily, for example, was attended by the Speaker of the Sicilian Regional Assembly and deputies and senators from *Parlamento Italiano*, Rome, seeking comparative briefings so as to better understand procedural and cultural lessons from parliaments past and present. In July 2013, at the annual conference of the Society for the History of Authorship, Reading and Publishing (SHARP-<http://www.sharpweb.org/>) in Pennsylvania, Mann (also a book(trade) historian and SHARP member) demonstrated RPS live for the first time in North America to 20 institutional, independent, and private libraries; 9 scholarly societies, and 12 publishers from Europe, South America and Asia (alongside 66 USA universities and 57 non-US universities), as well as a range of independent and private book collectors as part of a 'digital projects showcase'. As a result, in the summer of 2013 the highest number of monthly RPS website hits was seen since the launch in 2008 (down to end September 2013 there were 12,209 visits from 8,131 unique users). RPS is now central to a new SHARP digital network initiative where advice is made available to those seeking to create new digital and online free-to-access multi-user projects.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- i. *Scottish Parliament Minutes, May 2008: RPS completion commended to nation by MSPs* - [Motion S3M-01932: Bill Kidd, Glasgow, Scottish National Party, Date Lodged: 16/05/2008](#)
- ii. *Scottish Law Commission: testimonial re project's identification of statutes still in force* e.g. Bankruptcy & Diligence Act, 2007, revised with effect from 8 March 2011, Commencement No 8 and Transitional Order 2011 SSI 2011/179, article 3; linked to *RPS Tables of Statues* and [Acts of the pre-1707 parliament still in force today](#).
- iii. 'The Scottish Parliament: History Workshops at Stirling University' (2008), <http://scotparlhistory.stir.ac.uk/>, on-line support materials for teachers/school pupils.
- iv. *Scottish Parliament Information Centre: spice@scottish.parliament.uk*, hosting *The Holyrood Timeline: a pdf/video educational tool on 'The Scottish Parliament – Past and Present'*, co-authored by RPS team <http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/visitandlearn/9982.aspx>
- v. *Learning & Teaching Scotland: teacher support materials including RPS* - <http://www.ltscotland.org.uk/scotlandshistory/unioncrownsparliaments/unionofparliaments/index.asp>
- vi. *National Records of Scotland: testimonial and confirmation of future RPS status* <http://www.nas.gov.uk/about/080516.asp>
- vii. International Commission for the History of Representative and Parliamentary Institutions: symposia attended by RPS and non-HEI practitioners/policy makers - <http://www.parlamento.pt/Documents/programaIChRPI.pdf>
- viii. US Supreme Court decision (*Florida v Jardines* 26 March 2013, http://www.supremecourt.gov/opinions/12pdf/11-564_5426.pdf): RPS cited at p. 9.
- ix. Sweet & Maxwell, Legal firm guidance on searching for Scottish Legislation with RPS usability detailed under section 7.5: <http://www.sweetandmaxwell.co.uk/wgreen/online-update.htm#chap7>
- x. *Scottish Parliamentary Review*, Mann invited to pen inaugural essay (and serve on the Editorial Board) of the first issue published in May 2013. This is intended, like its Westminster equivalent, as a journal specifically for members of parliament, civil servants, policy makers, NGOs and lawyers, not academics: <http://www.scottishparliamentaryreview.org/>