

THE BOOK
OF THE
OLD EDINBURGH
CLUB

The Journal for
Edinburgh History



David McCrone, 'In Defence of Parochialism: Municipal Politics in 20th-Century Edinburgh',
Book of the Old Edinburgh Club, New Series 13 (2017), pp. 79–90

~~~~~

This article is extracted from **The Book of the Old Edinburgh Club**, **The Journal for Edinburgh History** ISSN 2634-2618

Content © The Old Edinburgh Club and contributors. All rights reserved.

For information about The Book of the Old Edinburgh Club (BOEC), including contents of previous issues and indexes, see <https://oldedinburghclub.org.uk/boec>.

**This article is made available for your personal research and private study only.**

For any further uses of BOEC material, please contact the Editor, The Book of the Old Edinburgh Club, at [editor@oldedinburghclub.org.uk](mailto:editor@oldedinburghclub.org.uk). The Club has a Take-Down Policy covering potential rights infringements. Please see <http://oldedinburghclub.org.uk/oec-take-down-policy>.



*Digitised by the Centre for Research  
Collections, Edinburgh University  
Library from the copy in the Library  
Collection*



# IN DEFENCE OF PAROCHIALISM: MUNICIPAL POLITICS IN 20TH CENTURY EDINBURGH

DAVID MCCRONE

“Look you, sir. Your city is a very fine city, but it swarms with castes”. *The American was right: Our beautiful Modern Athens is in a swarm of castes, worse than ever was old Egypt or is modern Hindostan.*’

## CITY OF CASTES

Thus did John Heiton<sup>1</sup> begin his book *The Castes of Edinburgh*, first published in 1859. What was Heiton getting at, and why describe Edinburgh in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century as caste-ridden? We might be tempted to dismiss the account as historic journalistic copy, but he was on to something, something which resonated well into the 20<sup>th</sup> century. His point was that a simple division between Capital and Labour has never been Edinburgh’s way. Rather, there are longstanding nuances of status, class and power.

At root is political economy. In Liverpool or Manchester, commented Heiton, ‘twas cotton that did it’; in Sheffield, ‘twas steel that did it...’; in Dundee, ‘twas tow (rope i.e. flax/jute) that did it’; in Glasgow, ‘twas pig-iron that did it’; in Leith, ‘twas Dantzic wheat that did it.’<sup>2</sup> And Edinburgh? For lawyers, ‘twas quarrels that did it’, but the lawyerly caste did not rule the city directly. Rather, it was the Merchant class

...often worth a plum, and what is more, they are generally highly educated, and carry the manners of gentlemen. They can boast, moreover, of their corporate representative, the Chamber of Commerce – an institution of national celebrity and importance, whereby they contrive to draw within their cognisance, logic, and discretion, most of the great questions of the day... Edina forms mostly from out of them her Provosts, Bailies and Councillors, her Police Board and Paving Board.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, he concludes, ‘we suspect, indeed, that if the motto were to be of any form of that kind, it should be, “Twas the Merchant Burghers who did it”.’

To be sure, Merchants were a class differentiated from Shopkeepers, who in turn were divided into ‘Big Panes’ and ‘Little Panes’ according to size of ‘establishment’ (never anything as common as simply a ‘shop’). ‘Shopocracy has its castes, its emulation, its envy. There is something about a shop altogether peculiar. It is a sign; it is an advertisement’<sup>4</sup>. Labour, in mirror image, was also made up of castes, largely comprising small masters and tradesmen, rather than gathered up in major manufactories. Here was how Heiton described the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century Old Town:

You may call on a friend of note, and discover him  
With a shoemaker under, a staymaker over him.  
My dwelling begins with a periwig maker:  
I’m under a corn-cutter, over a baker  
Above a chiropodist, cookery too;  
O’er that is a laundress – o’er her is a Jew;  
A painter and tailor divide the eighth flat,  
and a dancing academy thrives over that.<sup>5</sup>

For the outsider, Edinburgh proved difficult to read socially and culturally, and in terms of its politics tolerably distinctive, which lasted long after other cities succumbed to the straightforward politics of class. Diversity is written into Edinburgh’s architecture, analysed in this issue by Steven Robb who focuses on the work of Ebenezer MacRae, the city architect for much of the inter-war period. Setting a context for MacRae’s endeavours, Edinburgh’s political economy was expressed and amplified by the hegemony of parish-pump politics, and political parochialism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century with which this article deals.

## POLITICAL PAROCHIALISM

The municipal politics in Edinburgh for much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century can be characterised as the defence of political parochialism. This article explains why this

is so, and why it was successful for so long, coming to an end only in the final quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Edinburgh's politics are not by any means unique, and there are examples of something similar in most other towns and cities in Britain<sup>6</sup>. Nevertheless, the hegemony of the parochial Right was far more successful than most in this most bourgeois city, and lasted until the 1970s when it was swept away by the challenge of Labour, but also by the rise of municipal Conservatives. Indeed, of these two forces, it is the latter which sounded the death-knell of the parochial Right.

We might expect that 'party politics' came late in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, but we can find 'Liberal' and 'Conservative' party labels employed by councillors in the final quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century; in 1875, for example, 24 out of 41 councillors were Liberals, 8 were Tories, and 9 had no party affiliation. By 1905, 14 out of 50 were Liberals, 3 were Tories, and most, 31, had no formal party affiliation. The remaining two councillors were Labour. Although the municipal politics of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were seemingly different from those of the 19<sup>th</sup>, their roots lay in post-1833 reform politics. Our first task, then, is to understand the 19<sup>th</sup> century roots of 20<sup>th</sup> century municipal politics in Edinburgh.

#### MUNICIPAL POLITICS IN 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY EDINBURGH

The story of modern politics in the city begins with the first reformed Council in 1833, the year of the Burgh Reform Act. W.H. Marwick observed in this journal that, while much has been published on legal and administrative aspects of local government, 'the history of its practice, especially of the political and other controversial issues that affected it, appears to have been little studied'<sup>7</sup>.

Marwick's account of municipal politics in Victorian Edinburgh was based on reports in *The Scotsman*, allowing, he warns, for the biases of the paper. From about 1820 until the mid-1840s, *The Scotsman* was a supporter of reform. However, from the third quarter of the century, under the editorship of Alexander Russel, it tended to support conservative Whiggism in opposition to 'the disorderly elements of radicalism as voiced by Duncan McLaren' and his radical Liberals. McLaren's 'advanced'

or 'independent' Liberals were criticised by *The Scotsman* as 'disorderly' and 'extremist', and there was a personal feud between the paper's editor, Russel, and McLaren, including a libel action. Marwick observes: 'in 1886, *The Scotsman* became Unionist, and inclined towards Conservatism, though professing support for non-intrusion of party politics in local government'<sup>8</sup> a refrain repeated down through the 20<sup>th</sup> century in support of the 'non-political' Right, and its defining enemy 'municipal socialism'.

The 1833 Act, gave the vote to £10 ratepayers (around 7500 in total), and by the 1867 Reform Act, there was household suffrage, extended to women in 1869. Until 1872, the ballot was open and not secret, the numbers announced each hour, with 'hopeless' candidates withdrawing as election day went on. Between 1837 and 1886, Liberals predominated in municipal as well as parliamentary politics. Tory MPs for Scotland could travel in a single train compartment to London, a jibe which students of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century put to re-use. The same was true in local politics. In 1841, for example, there were 4 Tories and 29 Liberals in Edinburgh, and only the split over Irish Home Rule and the rise of Labour towards the end of the century broke Liberal domination.

Here is an example of mid-19<sup>th</sup> century politics in Edinburgh to give the flavour<sup>9</sup>. At the municipal election of 1855, an elector in ward 1 (which encompassed the Lawnmarket, West Bow, Grassmarket and Infirmary Street) had the choice of ex-Bailie RS Grieve (high-class furnishings at 83 George St), Robert Anderson, George Johnston, and ex-councillor Lindsay, described by his supporters as 'having his time in his own hands, and a sufficiency of this world's goods to prevent him being influenced improperly'. Messrs Grieve (248 votes) and Anderson (205) were elected. In ward 2 (Advocate's Close, Bank St, the East End of Princes St, or St Andrew Square), one could choose between A. Mossman, jeweller, John Millar, china merchant and potter to the Queen, or ex-councillor Duncan McKinlay. Here, Messrs Mossman (300) and McKinlay (274) were elected. The political issues of the day included: the Forbes Mackenzie Act – 'for better regulation of public houses in Scotland', notably closing them on Sundays; thus, 'Vote for Johnston and a quiet Sabbath' (he came bottom of the poll in ward 1 with only 145 votes; unquiet Sabbaths were plainly preferred); the Municipal Extension

Act, decried by opponents as ‘bare-faced robbery’; and constructing a road through the Meadows where Middle Meadow Walk is today. Mr Grieve sat firmly on the fence – ‘I am prepared to agree to whatever public opinion seems likely to demand – a centre-drive, a side-drive, or no drive at all’, and found himself duly elected.

In 1856, the city boundary was extended to coincide with the parliamentary area. Municipal wards increased in number from 5 to 13, the size of town council from 33 to 41, and number of citizens from 70,000 to 160,000. The powers of Police Commissioners over policing, lighting and cleansing were transferred to the town council.

### THE FRANCHISE

In 1855, there were only 4230 electors, all male, who had premises worth £10 or more.

The 1867 Act extended the franchise to urban workers who stood for election as Trades Council candidates without success. ‘Lib-Lab’ candidates were more common until the turn of the century, with attempts to form working class representation by means of the Scottish Labour Party which merged with the Independent Labour Party (ILP) in 1893. The Edinburgh Trades Council did not affiliate, and supported instead the Scottish Trades Council Labour Party which did not survive beyond 1892. In 1889, Andrew Telfer, a ‘so-called working man’, according to *The Scotsman*<sup>10</sup> whose dislike of candidates could always be ascertained by the use of this *soi-disant*, won in St Cuthberts ward, and two years later, John Cubie was elected in the Canongate. The Trades Council recognised such candidates as ‘Labour representatives’. The plethora of labels on the Left encompassed James Connolly as an Independent Socialist in St Giles in 1894, ILP, and SDF (Social Democratic Federation) candidates. In 1899, there was a Workers’ Municipal Committee, supported by the Trades Council, one of whom got elected to the Council. As we shall see, *The Scotsman* took to branding such leftist groups as ‘Socialists’, before treating it as a synonym for Labour.

Apathy ruled after 1833, and few seats on the Council were contested: in 1849, only 2, and in 1889, none at all, according to Marwick. Writing in 1953, John Henderson<sup>11</sup> estimated that over a

ten-year period in the 1880s, there were on average three elections per year, but *eleven* in 1889 which he attributed to the granting of freedom of the city to Parnell (see below), as well as to a rise in the city rates. Apathy, however, was a useful device, and, as Marwick observes, ‘(t)he cry of “economy” was so frequently raised as to incur the jibe that Edinburgh residents, unlike the Apostle Paul, could not claim to be “citizens of no mean city”<sup>12</sup>. The intrusion of the ‘Irish vote’ notably in the Canongate in the 1870s was resented by *The Scotsman*, and in 1889 the award of the freedom of the city to the Irish Home Ruler, Charles Stewart Parnell, provoked violent opposition.

From 1882, women householders were entitled to vote in Edinburgh municipal elections (but not parliamentary ones), and numbered around 20% of the electorate. The electorate numbered fewer than 30,000 in 1880, and only around 60,000 in 1900, following the inclusion of women, and of Portobello. In short, between 1880-1900, there were small electorates and few contests (only 4 or 5 per year on roughly 50% turnouts).

### THE ISSUES

Religion was an issue, notably after the disruption of 1843. Until 1874, the Council held the patronage of city churches, and the growth of ‘Dissent’ sought to cut the number of Established-church clergy and their stipends which the Council had to support. An Annuity Tax dated from the 17<sup>th</sup> century to cover clergy stipends, and selective exemptions (for Advocates, curiously) simply heightened the grievances. Matters of religious dissent were never far away from politics in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, and Marwick calculated that in 1856 among Councillors, 17 were Free Church, 14 were dissenters, 7 belonged to the Established church, and there was one Episcopalian. Matters of education (control of the Tounis College was vested in the Council until 1858) also played a part, with appointments to university chairs a matter of politics rather than expertise (‘Christopher North’ (the Tory journalist John Wilson) was appointed to the chair of Moral Philosophy, although he professed ignorance of the subject).

Matters of municipalisation were not particularly contentious. Marwick observed that it was regarded ‘in Edinburgh as elsewhere, merely as an expedient

for the administration of recognised public utilities, and most of its champions would have been horrified to be regarded as Socialists<sup>13</sup>. The water supply to the city was contentious, not in its supply but its source. Outbreaks of cholera (1831-32) and typhus (1848-49) made the case for a pure water supply, and reservoirs in the Moorfoot hills (1879) and at Talla (1895) were established to serve the city with clean water (St Mary's Loch scheme having been rejected). A gas company was formed in 1817, but only in 1888 was gas municipalised; municipal electricity came 7 years later. The Tramways Act of 1870 legalised municipal ownership of horse-drawn trams, with municipal ownership largely achieved by 1893 with the introduction of cable traction. Not until after the First World War did the city run the trams directly rather than lease them to a private company.

So who were councillors in this period? In the appendix to his article, Marwick comments:

There seems some warrant for the view that citizens more prominent in other respects, in business or professions, took a larger part in public life than has been the case later; a probable explanation is that municipal duties then demanded less time than now, particularly at attendance at committees...

Bernard Shaw once said that the system of local government led to rule by shopkeepers. Certainly, many such, though usually bearing the more honorific designation of merchants, became councillors. Among Lord Provosts, besides those already mentioned, were Sir William Johnston, printer, Charles Lawson, seed merchant, William Law, coffee merchant, James Cowan, paper manufacturer, Sir James Falshaw, Chairman of North British Railway, Sir Thomas Boyd and Sir Thomas Clark, publishers, Sir Andrew Macdonald, clothier, Sir Mitchell Thomson, timber merchant, Sir George Harrison, woollen merchant, and Sir James Steel, builder. Four may be classified as professional – Sir James Forrest and Francis Brown Douglas, advocates; Sir John Melville w.s.; and Sir James Russell, physician, though latterly company director.<sup>14</sup>

## THE OPPOSITION

At end of 19<sup>th</sup> century, Labour was putting up around 12 candidates, with a couple being elected (a Labour candidate contested the parliamentary seat of Central Edinburgh in 1892). In 1900, the number of wards increased to 16, with 15 contested. However, this fell back to average of 6, until the Great War, with around 60% turnout. Henderson<sup>15</sup> comments: 'One interesting feature is the regularity with which a small group of Labour candidates contested, and with five members, formed a little group in the Council by 1914'.

## EARLY 20<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY MUNICIPAL POLITICS

The century started with *The Scotsman* nailing its political colours to the mast. Using the occasion of the extension of the city boundaries to take in Portobello, the editorial took exception to the fact that the Liberals had put forward candidates:

... they are put forward by a party political body. This is in strict keeping with the doings, or rather the misdoings, of the Radicals in the Town Council in the past. Though they burned their fingers over the Parnell freedom they do not seem to have taken the lesson to heart, and they are as ready as ever to make politics the test of fitness for the Council.<sup>16</sup>

Issues of Temperance exercised the editor, who probably wrote or instigated the comments, but his attack was wider:

In other directions attempts are being made to force what are already Imperial politics into the discussion of municipal matters. The electors ought to see that this course is not successful. The Municipal Council has its own business to do. It has not to interfere with the duties of the Imperial Parliament.<sup>17</sup>

What these municipal matters are is unclear, but certainly they should not to interfere with the workings of markets. Thus, on the pressing matter of housing in Edinburgh, *The Scotsman* offered its own version of 'let them eat cake':

... the man who tells us that the proper way to deal with the housing of the poor is for the city to build houses talks pernicious nonsense. The way in which overcrowding in the city can be disposed of best is to make facilities for travelling to the outskirts easy and cheap. There, land can be got upon which houses can be built at less price than they can be built in the town.<sup>18</sup>

Whether the newspaper would support subsidised fares is well and truly moot; it is much more exercised by the business of the city being 'conducted efficiently without the intrusion of party politics'. Issues such as Temperance, or women's suffrage ('"British women" are the tools of Radical wire-pullers', it asserted)<sup>19</sup>, or wider social reform, are deemed pretexts in the pursuit of power. It is sufficient to be 'non-political' in the pursuit of the city's business. *The Scotsman* opposed 'so-called Labour candidates'<sup>20</sup> (there is that 'so-called' again), and all the more so when 'Socialists' come to challenge this curious form of non-party

politics. It is sufficient that ‘... politics have not been talked about at the ward meetings, even though ‘pro-Boerism has attempted to raise its head.’<sup>21</sup>

The Edinburgh Workers Municipal Committee had the temerity to put forward a Labour candidate in St Leonard’s ward focusing on issues of housing and overcrowding, while *The Scotsman* was more exercised by ‘the evils of betting’ and other nefarious Sunday activities<sup>22</sup>, although it was quite taken with Sunday music in the parks. It reported at some length the annual dinner of the Merchant Company of Edinburgh<sup>23</sup>, and extolled the comments of Sir James Steel, lord provost, that ‘there is a good deal of similarity between the Town Council and the Merchant Company, not only because of their antiquity, but because of their connection with various public trusts.’ Moreover, said the Provost, he ‘was only sorry that there were so few of the large merchants of the city who came forward to give their services in the Town Council’<sup>24</sup>. Somewhat elliptically, the newspaper thought, ‘party politics are undesirable in municipal life; sex prejudices and preferences would assuredly be worse’<sup>25</sup>. It certainly did not approve of the provost’s widow Lady Steel (her husband having died in 1904) who was nominated, and defeated, for a Council seat. *The Scotsman* judged it to be ‘the wayward promptings of an ‘ill-regulated temperament’<sup>26</sup>. Municipal politics was a men’s game, and required men of substance at that.

Non-political politics were the order of the day, at least as *The Scotsman* could manoeuvre matters, reporting that the 1909 election resulted in ‘uneventful campaigns’ – ‘the election contests have been largely ‘gas and water’ affairs’<sup>27</sup>. It was happy for there to be ‘fewer contests than usual’, but resented Labour’s intrusion such as that of William Smith in Canongate who ‘appeared as an advocate of the Socialistic propaganda’. The city establishment, reflected in the newspaper’s views, walked a fine line between stirring up apathy, and getting out the (right-wing) vote in order to counter ‘Socialism’. Issues of municipal services such as electricity, the municipalisation of the tramways (vis-à-vis buses) were framed by the City Treasurer by the principle which can be taken as the leitmotif of early 20<sup>th</sup> century municipal politics, that ‘it behoved [councillors] to be extremely careful before they embarked on any expenditure which could be at all

avoided’<sup>28</sup>. Extending city boundaries into Leith was an issue, and amalgamating the western suburbs was justified on the economic grounds that ‘getting these Edinburgh people outside the city bounds who were enjoying its privileges’ to pay for them. Municipal parsimony ruled. ‘Socialist’ candidates pressed for elections in the inner-city wards, Calton, Canongate, Gorgie, Dalry and St Leonards, extending to contests in Broughton, Liberton and George Square.

In 1914, the last election before the Great War, *The Scotsman* was pleased to report ‘the rout of the Socialist candidates’<sup>29</sup>, and the newspaper regretted that ‘Socialists had forced contests’, considering that ‘Socialists’ were ‘one of the extreme bodies of the kind in the city’. What *The Scotsman* meant by ‘Socialist’ was unclear; at times they used it to describe ILP and leftist parties, although the newspaper so described Labour in later years. The newspaper was staunchly right-wing, hostile to public spending and anything which smacked of ‘Socialism’, seeking to equate low rates with ‘efficiency’.

#### INTER-WAR MUNICIPAL POLITICS

In the inter-war period, Labour councillors only numbered a handful, even after the amalgamation in the early 1920s of Leith, Colinton, Corstorphine and Cramond. Labour doubled its representation – from 3 to 6 – between 1919 and 1925, but in a council of 71 members. Labour’s breakthrough came in 1926, the year of the General Strike, when it more than doubled its number of councillors to 14, and took more than 50% of the vote in electoral contests. This breakthrough on the Left so alarmed *The Scotsman* and its right-wing allies that it gave a fair wind to the Edinburgh Good Government League (EGGL) which was formed in 1928 (on 24<sup>th</sup> February 1928, under the banner ‘Opposition to Socialism’), and the creation of the ‘Moderate’ party in 1929, described in *The Scotsman* as ‘an Edinburgh movement’<sup>30</sup>. Labour’s ‘failure’ to add significantly to its 1926 tally of councillors provided some consolation.

Despite adding one more seat in 1928, Labour ‘failed to repeat its success of two years ago [1926] when they gained no fewer than 8 seats’. EGGL ‘has arisen through increasing support for “Labour” [note the quotation marks] candidates, now 14 Socialist members’<sup>31</sup>. EGGL described itself as ‘non-

Socialist', indicating that it was defined merely by what it opposed. Thereafter, EGGL, the Moderates, and *The Scotsman* (all singing loudly from the same song-sheet) set about encouraging people to vote, to counter 'apathy' which would simply encourage the 'Socialists'. 'If electoral indifference continues', pronounced *The Scotsman* in 1930, 'Edinburgh's reputation for sound management may be impaired by the rise to power of the Socialists'<sup>32</sup>. By 1931, The Moderates took 63% of the municipal vote, to Labour's 35%.

In the mid-1930s, the Moderates were now called *Progressives*, at the behest of the Liberals, and lord provost Andrew Murray, who thought that it sounded more up-to-date, even though it was manifestly an alliance of Liberals and Tories. The newly-moulded Progressives had 52 councillors to Labour's 16. This did not reflect the fact that Labour took 42% of the vote in wards contested. While we may wonder why the Right made the fuss it did, given Labour's small number of councillors, it was 'The Socialists' share of the vote which startled them.

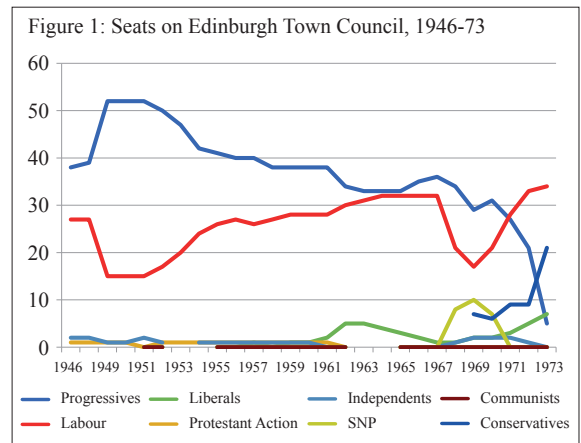
Nineteen thirty-five was also the year when Protestant Action took 3 council seats. *The Scotsman* deplored the 'emergence of sectarianism in local politics'<sup>33</sup>, but could not quite decide whether this was to the detriment of 'the Socialists' or its own favoured candidates on the Right. In 1936, Protestant Action won 6 seats, mainly at the expense of Progressives, which pointed to the latter explanation, and in post-war years, Progressives stood aside to allow PA to challenge Labour, notably in the Leith wards. By the final council elections (1938) before the Second World War, *The Scotsman* commented: 'If Edinburgh may be regarded as a Progressive stronghold, the Socialists consider their own position in Glasgow impregnable' (ibid.). Glasgow stood as a reminder to Edinburgh's electorate of the dangers of 'Municipal Socialism'. By the outbreak of war, Progressives had 45 councillors to Labour's 18 (even though Labour took 41% of the vote, once more alarming the Right), and Protestant Action's 6.

### POST-WAR POLITICS

In 1945, Labour had made 7 gains, mainly from Progressives 'who still hold an emphatic majority', said *The Scotsman*, and by 1946, Labour had 27

council seats, to Progressives' 38. The writing looked to be on the wall. Protestant Action receded, largely defeated by Labour, holding on to a single seat (South Leith) held by its founder John Cormack (1894-1978) until 1961<sup>34</sup>. *The Scotsman* took comfort, in 1949, in 'Labour's Severe Setback', 'setting it back 20 years'. In both Glasgow and Dundee, the Right had control at municipal level (in Glasgow, there were 47 'Moderates' to Labour's 37; and in Dundee, 19 and 16 respectively); results attributed to the nationalisation of gas and electricity, and the loss of local autonomy, as well as rising prices. In 1951, Labour in Edinburgh was reduced to 15 councillors (on a third of the vote), to the Progressives' 52. Other Scottish cities were also controlled by the Right: Glasgow, 59 to Labour's 53; Aberdeen 20 to 17; Dundee 22 to 14.

By mid-1950s, the tide had turned. By 1954, in Edinburgh, Labour had 24 councillors (on 44% of vote), with Progressives on 42 councillors (and 53% of vote). In Glasgow and Dundee, Labour were back in power on the councils. Successive council elections in Edinburgh showed a narrowing of the gap between Progressives and Labour in Edinburgh (see graph), with the Liberals re-emerging from the late 1950s (1 seat in 1959, 2 in 1961, and 5 seats in 1962). Commented *The Scotsman*: 'Liberals and Labour jubilant as Progressives wane'<sup>35</sup>.



By 1962, the Progressives had lost overall control of Edinburgh council for the first time in their history, with 33 councillors to Labour's 31, and Liberals on 5. In Glasgow, Aberdeen and Dundee, Labour were comfortably in power. By the mid-1960s Progressives and Labour in Edinburgh were virtually neck-and-

neck (respectively, 33 and 32 councillors), and there was an expectation that Labour would make the breakthrough to power sooner or later. Nevertheless, the Progressives managed to hold on to council control (in 1967, they went into the municipal election with 36 councillors to Labour's 32, the Liberals having fallen away), but right-wing representation was being challenged.

The chairman of the local Conservative Association pronounced that 'the entry of Conservative candidates in local government elections is a recognition of the inevitable'<sup>36</sup> and while in 1966 two candidates stood in wards where there was no Progressive standing, in 1967 a Tory won a seat which also ran a Progressive candidate. Plainly, the Conservatives were becoming alarmed at the failure of the parochial Right to hold on to municipal power; they also realised that building a local political base was essential to getting constituency Tory MPs elected.

Nevertheless, contrary to expectations, the Right did not lose council power. In 1968, the SNP won 7 seats, all at Labour's expense, with 34 Progressives, 21 Labour and 3 Tories, with Liberals holding a single seat. The Right was managing to hold on to power.

Post-1967, the demise of two-party council politics is shown on the graph. First-past-the-post elections did not properly reflect seismic shifts in vote shares. In the 1968 municipal elections, these were as follows: SNP 36%, Progressives 28%, Labour 20%, Conservatives 10%, and Liberals 7%; a startling victory by the Nationalists. This was largely repeated the following year when the SNP won 29% of the vote, but first-past-the-post awarded them only 10 council seats. The voting system produced considerable distortions in a multi-party system. For example, the Progressives had 29 seats (on 27% of the vote), Labour 17 (on 21%), and the Tories 7 seats (on 15%). However, the Tories warned what was to come: 'the Edinburgh City Conservative Committee... wishes it to be known that a Conservative candidate will contest such seats in the city as are most suited to the interests of the citizens of Edinburgh, regardless of confrontation with the Progressives'<sup>37</sup>.

The 'War on the Right' as *The Scotsman* put it in a headline on 6<sup>th</sup> June 1969, drew attention away from Labour's failure to win a majority on the council (in 1970, Labour had 21 seats to Progressives' 31), and while they won 28 to Progressives' 27 seats in 1971, a right-wing, but uneasy, alliance between

Tories and Progressives kept the Right in power. By 1972, in the final years of 'old politics' before council reorganisation, Labour managed 33 seats to the Progressives' 21, and Conservatives' 9. By this time, the SNP vote had collapsed, and the Liberals were on 5.

Labour may have won the plurality of seats (33 out of 71), but insufficient to give it a majority. That proved to be the running theme of post-war Edinburgh politics; so near, and yet so far, and this arguably helps to account for the enthusiasm with which local Labour councillors embraced proportional representation at the end of the century. First, however, the reorganisation of local government into two tiers lay ahead, following the Wheatley commission of 1969, introduced by the Local Government (Scotland) Act of 1973.

The battle on the Right had its own epitaphs: said the leader of the Progressives, Mrs Catherine Filsell – later to defect (unusually) to Labour, 'The Progressive Party believe that Edinburgh must be governed by local people who will always put Edinburgh first'. Replied the leader of the Tories, Brian Meek: 'I am afraid the Progressive Party is a bit of a dead duck'<sup>38</sup>. And so it proved in 1972, with 18 Conservatives, 10 Progressives, 34 Labour, 5 Liberals and 2 Independents. As our graph shows, political parochialism, at least in that form, had ended. By the final old-council elections of 1973, Labour held 34 seats, the Conservatives 21, there were 7 Liberals, and 5 others, including Progressives almost all of whom eventually joined the Tories. Half a century of 'non-party' politics to the Edinburgh Corporation, manifestly right-wing, had come to an end.

#### REORGANISED POLITICS, POST - 1973

And so to two-tier local government, commencing in 1974, across Scotland: regions and districts. In 1969, the Labour Government had set up the Wheatley Commission into local government, which proposed the two-tier system, to get around the problem that many people lived outwith the main towns and cities, yet used their services. It also made for more efficient use of planning and resources (such as Strathclyde Passenger Transport Authority). Regions had control over police, fire services, consumer protection,



education and transport. Districts had responsibility for local planning, housing, libraries and licensing. Here are regional election results, every four years, on the 6 occasions they were held. Labour held an advantage in Lothian regional council elections because they took in the ‘landward’ areas of East-, West- and Mid-Lothian,

as well as the city of Edinburgh. Labour’s strength in the landward areas offset its relative electoral weakness in Edinburgh. Nevertheless, its majority was never safe until 1986, and in 1982 there was even a Conservative-led administration, supported by the Liberals.

Table 1: Regional Elections in Lothian, 1974-1994

| Regional elections in Lothian | 1974         |         | 1978   |         | 1982         |        | 1986   |         | 1990   |         | 1994   |         |
|-------------------------------|--------------|---------|--------|---------|--------------|--------|--------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|
|                               | Seats        | votes   | Seats  | votes   | Seats        | votes  | Seats  | votes   | Seats  | votes   | Seats  | votes   |
| Labour                        | 24           | (39.9%) | 26     | (40.3%) | 22           | (28.9) | 30     | (46.3%) | 34     | (42.1%) | 36     | (40.7%) |
| Cons                          | 19           | (34.3)  | 18     | (33.2)  | 22           | (33.9) | 13     | (22.0)  | 12     | (25.6)  | 5      | (18.4)  |
| Lib                           | 1            | (9.0)   | 1      | (4.3)   | 3            | (26.9) | 3      | (16.1)  | 2      | (10.1)  | 4      | (15.9)  |
| SNP                           | 3            | (11.6)  | 3      | (20.3)  | 1            | (10.3) | 2      | (10.5)  | 1      | (18.4)  | 4      | (23.6)  |
| Indep.                        | 2            | (4.6)   | 1      | (1.5)   | 1            |        | 1      |         |        |         |        |         |
| <i>outcome</i>                | Lab minority |         | Labour |         | Tory/Lib-SDP |        | Labour |         | Labour |         | Labour |         |
| seats                         | 49           |         | 49     |         | 49           |        | 49     |         | 49     |         | 49     |         |

At the (Edinburgh) District level, electoral politics were much tighter, and there was greater continuity with pre-reorganisation days:

Table 2: District Elections, 1974-1992

| District elections | 1974         |         | 1977         |         | 1980        |         | 1984   |         | 1988   |         | 1992            |         |
|--------------------|--------------|---------|--------------|---------|-------------|---------|--------|---------|--------|---------|-----------------|---------|
|                    | Seats        | votes   | Seats        | votes   | Seats       | votes   | Seats  | votes   | Seats  | votes   | Seats           | votes   |
| Labour             | 29           | (36.2%) | 23           | (26.6%) | 25          | (36.8%) | 34     | (38.8%) | 33     | (36.8%) | 30              | (29.2%) |
| Cons               | 30           | (41.4)  | 34           | (44.8)  | 31          | (40.0)  | 22     | (33.0)  | 23     | (36.4)  | 23              | (40.2)  |
| Lib                | 3            | (13.5)  | 1            | (7.9)   | 2           | (11.4)  | 4      | (21.6)  | 4      | (11.9)  | 7               | (15.4)  |
| SNP                | 1            | (6.7)   | 5            | (19.3)  | 3           | (9.3)   | 2      | (4.6)   | 2      | (14.2)  | 2               | (14.4)  |
| Indep.             | 1            |         | 1            |         | 1           |         | 1      |         |        |         |                 |         |
| <i>outcome</i>     | Lab minority |         | Conservative |         | Tory/LibDem |         | Labour |         | Labour |         | Labour minority |         |
| seats              | 64           |         | 64           |         | 62          |         | 62     |         | 62     |         | 62              |         |

Across the piece, the Tories outpolled Labour in Edinburgh, with the exception of 1984, and in 1988 where the two main parties were neck- and-neck in terms of vote share, but Labour had more council seats.

Under Conservative government legislation of 1994, the 9 regions and 53 districts were abolished,

and replaced with 32 single tier unitary authorities. Subsequent elections in Edinburgh produced the following results. If reorganising local government yet again was designed to gerrymander advantage for the Conservatives in Scotland<sup>39</sup>, it patently did not work in Edinburgh, the most bourgeois city in Scotland.

Table 3: Council Elections, 1995-2017

| City of Edinburgh Council | 1995        | 1999        | 2003        | 2007*       | 2012*       | 2017*       |
|---------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
|                           | Seats votes | Seats votes | Seats votes | Seats votes | Seats votes | Seats votes |
| Labour                    | 34 (40.7%)  | 31 (32.5%)  | 30 (27.4%)  | 15 (22.9%)  | 20 (28.1%)  | 12 (18.4%)  |
| Cons                      | 14 (23.3)   | 13 (22.5)   | 13 (24.7)   | 11 (22.1)   | 11 (19.7)   | 18 (27.7)   |
| Lib                       | 10 (18.1)   | 13 (24.4)   | 15 (26.9)   | 17 (22.0)   | 3 (9.3)     | 6 (13.6)    |
| SNP                       | 0 (17.3)    | 1 (20.5)    | 0 (15.6)    | 12 (20.3)   | 18 (26.9)   | 19 (27.1)   |
| Green                     |             |             |             | 3 (8.3)     | 6 (11.4)    | 8 (12.4)    |
| <i>outcome</i>            | Labour      | Labour      | Labour      | NOC LD/SNP  | NOC Lab/SNP | NOC Lab/SNP |
| seats                     | 58          | 58          | 58          | 58          | 58          | 63          |

\*under single transferrable vote system (STV)

By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Labour in 1999 had a firm grip on local power, but its majority of seats (53%) was achieved on only one-third of the popular vote. The main losers were the SNP whose fifth share of the vote produced a single seat, reflecting the fact that its vote share was spread uniformly across the city. Coming a good second in first-past-the-post does not win seats. Not until 2007, the first election following the introduction of PR (the Single Transferable Vote (STV)) for local government, part of the deal struck by the Liberal-Democrats in alliance with Labour following the 2003 Scottish parliament elections. Almost uniquely in Scotland, four parties in Edinburgh in 2007 got around one-fifth of the vote each, roughly reflected in numbers of councillors. This may seem startlingly new, but we have already seen that something similar was presaged in the late 1960s with the rise of the SNP, and to a lesser extent the Liberals who were crawling out of the post-Progressive wreckage.

By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Edinburgh’s municipal politics had been transformed<sup>40</sup>. Dominated for most of the century by ‘non-party’ politics in the shape of the Progressive Association which had kept out all-comers, from Labour, Protestant Action, even Tories, it succumbed to the latter in the final quarter. The question is why.

### TRANSFORMING EDINBURGH

Lying behind Edinburgh’s politics is the issue of its economy, or rather, economies. Edinburgh was not a heavily ‘industrial’ city, although it was far more devoted to manufacture than is commonly conceived. Rebecca Madgin and Richard Rodger make the point that

Professional employment accounted for one worker in six in Victorian Edinburgh – more than twice the national average – and provided a steady demand for furniture and fine art, prints and pianos, and generally underpinned the consumption-based industries in the city. In turn, this supported highly skilled, craft-based firms and sustained a substantial labour aristocracy. Edinburgh in the late nineteenth century was described as ‘the greatest retail shop-keeping centre out of London’ and so ‘small-scale crafts, catering for a “luxury” market, constituted an important component of this employment<sup>41</sup>.

Here is the basis of Heiton’s ‘city of castes’. Not only was there no unified industrial bourgeoisie, but the city’s elites did not, by and large, come into common contact with industrialised labour, who nevertheless comprised half of the male workforce in the century up to 1951.

In his study of the labour aristocracy in Victorian Edinburgh, Robbie Gray commented:

The most prominent middle-class groups were not directly involved in relations of production with the manual working-class, but were engaged in the professions, wholesale and retail distribution, commerce and finance. The industrial structure was itself heterogeneous, with a considerable amount of smaller-scale labour-intensive industry and a consequent diffusion of ownership<sup>42</sup>.

So on both sides of the Capital-Labour divide there was diversity, a feature of the local bourgeois consumer market, and reflected in the considerable numbers employed in domestic service<sup>43</sup>. Even in a situation where most men were in industrial employment, Edinburgh's heavy industry (engineering, brewing, rubber) was composed largely of single firms, and thus differs from those in large cities such as Glasgow and Birmingham<sup>44</sup>.

We cannot, of course, simply read off 'politics' from the employment structure, but it did mean that Labour, led by 'superior artisans' 'implanted accommodative responses to capitalism, and transmitted them to the wider labour movement at the turn of the century'<sup>45</sup>.

### PEOPLE OF PROPERTY

Furthermore, at a time when municipal rates raised locally were a much higher proportion of city revenues than they are nowadays, those on whom the burden fell, notably people of property, were far more likely to engage in local politics simply to 'keep the rates down'. In the absence of local taxes on income, trade or sales, the burden of taxation fell on those who held property, not persons of great wealth but owners of tenemented houses, small businesses, or parcels of land. In this context 'localism', 'economy' and 'non-partisan politics' ('there are no politics in sewerage', as the saying went) were the dominant motifs. Plainly, local politics was a defensive protection against rising rates, especially in the context of booms and busts in the property business<sup>46</sup>.

There was also more to it than that. Particularly in the inter-war period, Edinburgh Corporation used low-interest loans and subsidies to encourage private builders. As Miles Glendinning put it: 'Its officials came to believe that it should not, through large-scale council building, raise the price of building materials and labour and thus damage the private enterprise market'<sup>47</sup>. Having successfully 'farmed' state subsidies set up by John Wheatley's Housing Act of 1924, Edinburgh Corporation helped building firms erect low-cost houses for rent. They did this by releasing land on favourable feuing terms, and even provided builders with cheap loans up to 75% of the value of the houses. One-quarter of all new private-sector housing in the city after 1933 were

built for renting under post-subsidy schemes<sup>48</sup>. Thus it was that Edinburgh adopted a 'conservative' house-building strategy for which city architect Ebenezer MacRae was ideally suited, described in this volume by Steven Robb.

The doyen of this system was James Miller who, between 1927 and 1934, built almost 2000 subsidised houses, over twice as many as the next ten largest firms put together. By 1932, Miller had built 64% of all subsidised houses in Edinburgh, and, as if to make the point about the connection between property and politics, became Lord Provost of the city from 1951-1954, and Lord Mayor of London in 1964. By 1939, Miller's company had squirreled away in a land bank of 489 acres on 72 different sites in Edinburgh. Miller Homes<sup>49</sup> was but the tip of a large iceberg of private builders who were indebted to the policies and practices of the Progressives, not merely to defend their interests but to promote actively new building opportunities.

If Edinburgh had a reputation for defending its patch against large-scale state and outside private developments such as 'system-building', it was at the behest of local business and political interests. Whereas two-thirds of houses built between the wars had been privately built, from 1946 to 1963 two-thirds were council houses. By 1962, Edinburgh Corporation lent more than £6m for house-building, and, in Glendinning's words, 'the Corporation doggedly revived its policy of subsidising the private sector'<sup>50</sup>.

Politicians worked across parties. The Labour councillor Pat Rogan was made convener of the housing committee by a Progressive council in the early 1960s, and Glendinning observes that 'because the Progressive's parsimony had left the financial resources to support the sudden boost to the housing drive, and the large, low-density schemes of prefabs had bequeathed him a tempting land bank to raid'<sup>51</sup>. Rogan in 'Tory' Edinburgh was in a much better position than his counterpart in 'Socialist' Glasgow. When the Progressive councillor George (born Adolf) Theurer<sup>52</sup> took over the housing convenership in 1965, he worked closely with Rogan<sup>53</sup>, culminating in the last major public housing scheme in Edinburgh, Wester Hailes between 1967 and 1975.

In our study of landlordism in Edinburgh<sup>54</sup>, we explored the intimate connections between property and political power in Edinburgh between 1875 and

1975. In the first phase, between 1875 and 1918, party politics were replaced by ostensibly non-party labels. The Master of The Merchant Company of Edinburgh's statement in 1873 that he was 'thankful that the Town Council had nothing to do with politics' became the motif for the next century. As many as 80% of councillors in 1875 were landlords, and even by the 1930s the figure was around half. Property interests were disproportionately represented on committees dealing with building works, public housing and city extensions. There was deep resistance to the 'nationalisation' of politics especially over public housing which was seen as a direct threat to private interests (recall *The Scotsman's* suggestion that working men take to the outer fringes of the city in search of affordable housing). The twilight creed of the Progressive Association (never a Party) made in their manifesto in 1973 that 'Progressives stand for local government by local people, whose duty is to the ratepayers of Edinburgh alone and not to any national political party. We see the good government of the city as an end in itself' could have been issued at any time during the previous century. By the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, it had become its swansong.

Why? Political parochialism died as the state grew in power, and as local government responsibilities were extended to carry them out. New responsibilities carried with them new fiscal techniques for implementing them, and a new cadre of professionals to manage them. The days of 'non-political' councillors were largely over. As the hold of the Progressive Association with its parochial and petit bourgeois character weakened, so shopkeepers and small business candidates were pushed aside by more professional Tories. The numbers of councillors in higher administrative jobs increased, not only among Conservatives but Labour also, in the quest for 'higher calibre' candidates. Thus, whereas in 1965 only 18% of Progressives were in professional occupations, ten years later, their successor Tories were mainly professionals or in large businesses<sup>55</sup>. A good many of the new breed of councillors, on Right and Left, were university graduates, and local politics proved to be a training ground for national politics. In our landlords study, we commented:

As "political animals", these newcomers were very different from the small shopkeepers, the builders, the trade unionists, and even the older professional men and women who had dominated the council chambers in earlier years. The local political game 'was technical, complex and involved the ability to deal with highly qualified local officials, and to manage the distribution of very large resources'<sup>56</sup>.

## CONCLUSION

So what does the rise and fall of 'political parochialism' in Edinburgh signify? First of all, it was not unique to the city in that similar forms of Right-wing 'non-party' politics were to be found north and south of the border. In Scotland, the demise of Moderates/Progressives came in the mid-1950s, but they survived in Edinburgh for another couple of decades. Insofar as the main aim of the Right was keeping Labour out of power, and co-equally keeping council rates to a minimum, it was more successful in Edinburgh, reflecting the local class structure as well as the character of the Labour movement. Arguably, the injection of middle-class university students into local politics made a difference: for Labour, Robin Cook and George Foulkes, and later, Alistair Darling, and for the Tories, Malcolm Rifkind; all became national (British) politicians. The differences between 'city' and 'landward' Labour, between Edinburgh and the Lothian hinterlands, were reflected most noticeably in Lothian Regional politics in post-1974. Most of the 'new wave' of Labour councillors represented wards in the city, while the 'old guard' were recruited chiefly from the landward areas in which mining communities were still important<sup>57</sup>.

The 'politics of austerity', cutting public expenditure, entered British politics in the late 1970s ('The party's over', said Prime Minister James Callaghan), was revived under Conservative governments post-2010, all the while leading to the atrophy of local government throughout the UK. If most of local government expenditure was coming from central government<sup>58</sup> then the old adage that 'he who pays the piper calls the tune' applies. The parochial Right could be forgiven for thinking that someone had stolen, and was playing, their very own tunes.

BOOK OF THE OLD EDINBURGH CLUB

NOTES AND REFERENCES

- 1 John Heiton *The Castes of Edinburgh*, (Edinburgh, 1859).
- 2 Heiton, *The Castes of Edinburgh*, 1859 p.282.
- 3 Heiton, *The Castes of Edinburgh*, 1859 pp.282-3.
- 4 Heiton, *The Castes of Edinburgh*, 1859 p.295.
- 5 Heiton, *The Castes of Edinburgh*, 1859 p.324.
- 6 See, for example, E.P. Hennock, *Fit and Proper Persons: Ideal and Reality in Nineteenth Century Urban Local Government*, (London, 1973); and A. Offer, (1981) *Property and Politics, 1870-1914: landownership, law, ideology and urban development in England*, (Cambridge, 1981).
- 7 W.H. Marwick, 'Municipal Politics in Victorian Edinburgh', *The Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, 33 (1969), p. 31.
- 8 Marwick, 'Municipal Politics in Victorian Edinburgh', 1969 p.31.
- 9 E.F. Catford, 'Only 4230 were Eligible to Vote in City's 1855 Elections', *Edinburgh Evening News*, 12<sup>th</sup> April, 1955.
- 10 *The Scotsman* and *Edinburgh Evening News* have been accessed via 'ProQuest Historical Newspapers', held by Edinburgh Public Library between 1817 and 1950, and thereafter on microfilm. This observation was made on 25<sup>th</sup> September 1889.
- 11 J. Henderson, J. 'Seventy-Year Survey of Edinburgh Voting', in *Edinburgh Evening News*, 20<sup>th</sup> April 1953.
- 12 Marwick 'Municipal Politics in Victorian Edinburgh', p. 34.
- 13 Marwick 'Municipal Politics in Victorian Edinburgh', p. 36.
- 14 Marwick 'Municipal Politics in Victorian Edinburgh', p. 37.
- 15 J. Henderson 'Seventy-Year Survey of Edinburgh Voting', in *Edinburgh Evening News*, 20<sup>th</sup> April 1953.
- 16 *The Scotsman*, November 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1900.
- 17 *The Scotsman*, October 27<sup>th</sup>, 1900.
- 18 *The Scotsman*, October 27<sup>th</sup>, 1900.
- 19 *The Scotsman*, November 7<sup>th</sup>, 1900.
- 20 *The Scotsman*, November 10<sup>th</sup>, 1900.
- 21 *The Scotsman*, November 6<sup>th</sup>, 1901.
- 22 *The Scotsman*, November 1<sup>st</sup>, 1902.
- 23 For histories of The Merchant Company of Edinburgh, see Alexander Heron's *The Rise and Progress of the Company of Merchants of the City of Edinburgh, 1681-1902*, Edinburgh, 1903; covering the period from 1681 to 1902, and, subsequently, Rosalind Marshall's *The Edinburgh Merchant Company, 1901-2014*, Edinburgh, 2014.
- 24 *The Scotsman*, November 6<sup>th</sup>, 1902.
- 25 *The Scotsman*, November 6<sup>th</sup>, 1907.
- 26 *The Scotsman*, October 17<sup>th</sup>, 1907.
- 27 *The Scotsman*, November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1909.
- 28 *The Scotsman*, October 29<sup>th</sup>, 1912.
- 29 *The Scotsman*, November 4<sup>th</sup> 1914.
- 30 *The Scotsman*, November 6<sup>th</sup> 1929.
- 31 *The Scotsman*, November 7<sup>th</sup> 1928.
- 32 *The Scotsman*, November 1<sup>st</sup> 1930.
- 33 *The Scotsman*, October 29<sup>th</sup> 1938.
- 34 Cormack won (and lost) the North Leith ward early in his career, and transferred to South Leith which he held for a number of years.
- 35 *The Scotsman* May 2<sup>nd</sup> 1962.
- 36 *The Scotsman* April 6<sup>th</sup> 1967.
- 37 *The Scotsman* June 5<sup>th</sup> 1969.
- 38 *The Scotsman* May 3<sup>rd</sup> 1972.
- 39 D. McCrone, L Paterson and A. Brown 'Reforming Local Government in Scotland', in *Local Government Studies*, 19, 1993, pp. 9-15.
- 40 The prime focus of this article is on 20<sup>th</sup> century municipal politics in Edinburgh, but the results for 21<sup>st</sup> century elections have been added to give a more complete picture.
- 41 R. Madgin and R. Rodger 'Inspiring Capital? Deconstructing myths and reconstructing urban environments, Edinburgh, 1860-2010', in *Urban History*, 40, 2013, p. 510.
- 42 R.Q. Gray, *The Labour Aristocracy in Victorian Edinburgh*, Oxford, 1976, p. 21.
- 43 Gray puts the proportion of people employed in domestic service in 1881 at 20.5% .
- 44 Gray *The Labour Aristocracy in Victorian Edinburgh*, 1976, p. 24.
- 45 Gray *The Labour Aristocracy in Victorian Edinburgh*, 1976, p. 190.
- 46 R. Rodger *The Transformation of Edinburgh: Land, Property and Trust in the Nineteenth Century*, Cambridge, 2001.
- 47 M. Glendinning, 'Housing and Suburbanisation in the early and mid-Twentieth Century', in B. Edwards and P. Jenkins (eds.) *Edinburgh: The Making of a Capital City*, Edinburgh, 2005, p. 150.
- 48 Glendinning, 'Housing and Suburbanisation in the early and mid-Twentieth Century', 2005, p.151.
- 49 Millar Homes was sold for £655m in 2017 to the private equity group Bridgepoint, whose holding also included Pret-a-Manger, the sandwich chain.
- 50 Glendinning, 'Housing and Suburbanisation in the early and mid-Twentieth Century', 2005, p. 158.
- 51 Glendinning, 'Housing and Suburbanisation in the early and mid-Twentieth Century', 2005, p. 160.
- 52 Theurer, wig-maker to trade, died in 1997. See his obituary in <http://www.heraldsotland.com/news/12323425>. George\_A\_Theurer/ .
- 53 Rogan's influence in Edinburgh can be gauged by his obituary in *The Scotsman* in 2011. It is a far cry from what *The Scotsman* might have said one hundred years previously.
- 54 McCrone and Elliott, *Property and Power in a City: the sociological significance of landlordism*, London, 1989.
- 55 McCrone and Elliott, *Property and Power in a City: the sociological significance of landlordism*, 1989, p. 94.
- 56 McCrone and Elliott, *Property and Power in a City: the sociological significance of landlordism*, 1989, p. 97.
- 57 B. Elliott and D. McCrone 'Austerity and the Politics of Resistance', in I. Szelenyi (ed) *Cities in Recession: critical responses to the urban policies of the New Right*, London, 1984
- 58 By 2014-15, Scottish local councils had direct control of only 14% of their income streams (see <https://reformscotland.com/2016/01/local-government-finance-fact-sheet/>).