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LADIES AND WAITING:
MARIE DE GUISE AT STIRLING IN THE 1540S

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1 INTRODUCTION

This report is provides a detailed study of de Guise at Stirling up to 1550, when she went to France, and the political, social and local context. The primary argument will be that de Guise, like other royal and quasi-royal figures, used her household politically, indeed that it was an essential instrument in her growing authority within Scotland and so to her appointment as regent in 1554. Secondly, household is presented in the context of other aspects of Scots and European courts of the 16th century, particularly in relation to ‘formality and informality’.

Traditional studies of 16th century royal figures concentrate on political developments and military adventures and the books by Cameron, Merriman and Ritchie are within that tradition. Though they together cover the period of the adult reign of James V through to the death of de Guise, none is primarily concerned with de Guise prior to her appointment as Regent in 1554, even Ritchie seeing the earlier period as a springboard, as much as being of concern in its own right (Cameron 1998; Merriman 2000; Ritchie 2002). Thomas’s discussion of the court and household of James V ends with his death (Thomas 2005). In the thirty years since Marshall’s general biography of de Guise, understanding of European courts has been greatly expanded and her papers on food and fabrics are interesting but do not address the detail required (Marshall 1977). There has also been a tendency to see the Scots court as only tangentially related to politics, the key exceptions being work by Lynch, Goodare and Juhala. They are aware of Cuddy’s work touching on the informal character of James VI’s Scots court as a background to the changes on his move to England (Cuddy 1987; Hadley Williams 1996; Juhala 2000; Lynch 1990; Lynch 2000). But the routine of the court in Scotland, meals, access, attendance, arguably more important than exceptional events such as weddings, coronations and civic entries, remain largely unexamined for this period1.

This is problematic for any interpretation of life in the palace since, on the basis of current published information, we could say little except that de Guise lived in a manner appropriate to being the Dowager Queen. We now know that being a late medieval or early modern queen involved more than sitting about in a stately manner, being addressed as ‘Your Majesty’ and

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1 Scott (2007) on James I looks at some aspects of an earlier reign with its less full documentation,
issuing political decisions from time to time. But was de Guise’s manner what would have beffitted a Dowager Queen of France or of England or was it something distinctively Scots? What did she have for dinner? Did she have friends? In short, can we get nearer to the specifics of de Guise at Stirling?

What of that other Mary, who I will often refer to as The Little Queen, one of several contemporary usages? She was at Stirling along with her mother for most of the time from July 1543 until her departure for Dumbarton and later to France in 1548. Arguably, she is one of the best-known historical figures in the world and at the time she was one of the most important people in Europe. I do discuss the issue of which parts of the palace might have been assigned to her (formal) use and touch on her life here and there. But there is very little of substance to add to the countless biographies though it is surely fitting that this small child, too young to be a political actor or personally powerful, should not be centre stage. Wars were fought over her and thousands died, diplomats discussed her endlessly. But she herself was in the background.

The main body of the report is concerned with the adult and social world of de Guise’s court and household. It is also – and to a much greater extent that I had anticipated – concerned with de Guise herself, with her cultural role as well as her political role.

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2 THE ROLE OF MARIE DE GUISE AS QUEEN DOWAGER OF SCOTLAND

She is intelligent and of a cheerful disposition (Grimani to Cardinal Farnese dated Stirling, 15 Oct 1543)

2.1 THE HISTORICAL SOURCES FOR THE COURT AND HOUSEHOLD OF DE GUISE

The main published sources for de Guise’s life are the books by Marshall (1977), Merriman (2000) and Ritchie (2002). Guy’s biography of Mary, queen of Scots (2004) provides convenient coverage for the early years. The books, however, are mainly concerned with political issues.

To study the cultural issues and the practical aspects of daily life it is necessary to turn to look at the correspondence in a rather different way and also to turn to the archival sources. The archival sources, particularly, will be considered in more detail in Chapter Two, noting here just that household records were the essential means of regulating a series of complex, interlocking organisations (Vale 2001, 34-5). It would have been possible to produce an outline description of de Guise’s court and household using those sources alone. However, a more profound understanding could only be achieved by also looking at the context of the Scottish court over a longer time-span (I have gone back to 1425 and forward to 1603) and by looking at the secondary literature for other European courts, recognising that de Guise’s was a subset of that larger whole. Only by doing so can many of the hints in the archives be understood. For example, de Guise’s daily household accounts detail, first the costs for bread, then for wine, then for wax candles; so far, so boring. But when we learn that this was also the ordering in 15th century Burgundy where it was thought to directly reflect the sacramental role of bread, wine and wax, it becomes a fascinating insight into courtly culture and suggests that we might draw other analogies.

2.2 COURT AND HOUSEHOLD

The household, as discussed in this report, was the group of people around the monarch (including de Guise) who provided and administered the day to day services. It was a substantial body of people, not least since even the simplest task incorporated a degree of ritual. The household, of its nature, generated records and household lists and accounts survive
for de Guise. The court, on the other hand, was more diffuse and variable and both contemporaries and historians have used words such as ‘protean’ in their failure to grasp it; the court did not generate records (Griffiths 1991, 46; Vale 2001, 15-6). The word court did not always mean the same thing and can mean different things at the same time. A 1603 definition was ‘a company of well-bred men in the service of a distinguished superior’ (Bertelli 1986, 8), though we can instantly see a problem with that since de Guise was a woman and her court included women. Others see the court as a place, the space around the ruler – though as the ruler moved, so did the place. Vane puts it rather neatly in saying that it was ‘the prince’s environment, both a place, normally of unfixed location and an assemblage of people’ though he then makes it clear it could also be an event or events, when the prince ‘holds court’ (Vale 2001, 30-1). Chatenet (2002, 21) similarly says that, far from being monolithic, the court is an aggregate of many courts and, again recognising that a court could be an event, says that Francis I had two sorts of palace, ones where he held court and others where he fled to live his private life (Chatenet 2002, 50). Whatever it was - and the 12th century Englishman Walter Map said ‘in the court I exist and of the court I speak, but what the court is, God knows, I know not’ - the court was potentially political since these people had influence through their proximity to the ruler (Map, quoted Vale 2001, 16).

The word ‘court’ is used in Scotland (Dunbar, 1999, p. 97) and when James V projected work at Rothesay it was so that he could visit ‘sum tyme of the year at his plesour witht his court and quen’. James V’s staff included grooms in the king’s kitchen and in the court kitchen (NAS E 34/5/2). Both these usage, incidentally, see the court as people around the monarch without perhaps including the monarch since the ‘court kitchen’ cooked for everyone except the king and his very immediate entourage. Some of de Guise’s own records refer to the queen and her ‘traine’ (NAS E34/15) a word which refers to her retinue or following and includes members of her household who were far below the level of the court.

We will return to these issues at a later stage. But it will be my contention that de Guise was using her household at Stirling and elsewhere during the years in question as a site where she could create a court. But whilst she did that, she also had to create something even more nebulous – a new model of queenship for Scotland, a model which would allow her to emerge as Queen Regent in 1554, surrounded by the court which she has also created.
2.3 DE GUISE, THE BRIDE AND WIFE

James I and James II of Scotland had chosen foreign, virgin brides of high noble status whilst James III and James IV of Scotland, like their counterparts in England until the second half of the 15th century, had chosen royal, foreign, virgin brides - astonishingly prestigious matches for the monarchs of a small country on the margins of the European mainstream. And prestige and a substantial tocher (dowry) were what these kings gained through their successfully winning such brides. James V repeated that latter pattern with his first bride, Madeleine daughter of Francis I of France. But following Madeleine’s early death James married Marie de Guise. She was also French and the defect that her immediate family were only ducal (and quite recently elevated at that) was countered by Francis’s own quasi-paternal role in promoting the marriage and the astonishingly generous financial arrangements he offered. Furthermore, de Guise had already shown her ability to bear sons, a prime desideratum in any queen.

She was a cultured, educated, intelligent woman, familiar with the French court (Marshall 1977). Scotland certainly had its own courtly traditions (which we will consider later) and queens, so often sent off to foreign lands in this way, would expect to have to make some adjustments (Starkey, 2004, 40-44). But there would be enough of the common courtly culture of north-western Europe for it not to be totally alien. Her presence at James’s court was ideally suited to complement his own, to complete the court’s image as mature and kingly. There is no reason to doubt that de Guise fulfilled the well-recognised roles for such queens, not just as a gracious ornaments to the court but as intercessor with the king, as peace-bringer and mediator, as model of piety, as entertainer of prestigious guests (Laynesmith 2004). In May 1541 the king’s mother Margaret Tudor reported that the king and queen of Scotland were in great distress due to the deaths of the young prince and his even younger brother within a few days of each other (CSP Scot I, 40). By late April 1542, however, it must have been clear that de Guise was again pregnant with what was to be her fifth child who was born at Linlithgow in early December 1542. Eight days later, James himself died and the week-old infant became monarch, Mary Queen of Scots.
2.4 Queen Dowager and Little Queen

The political and military circumstances were turbulent in the extreme. The late king had been campaigning on the Border in the war against England just weeks before his death. As the news of her accession spread the Little Queen became the focus of international struggle over her eventual marriage since, whoever married her should gain control of Scotland. Henry VIII wanted her for his son (later Edward VI) and Francis I of France was determined to block him. Meanwhile the Little Queen’s nearest kinsman, the earl of Arran (who would dearly have loved the Little Queen to marry his own son) was appointed Governor in her name; and since Arran was next in line to the throne, he was not altogether without an interest in her death, an interest he shared with his chief immediate rival, the French-reared Stewart earl of Lennox.

In the circumstances, the surprise is that de Guise was not elbowed aside, perhaps even separated from her daughter. That this did not happen was a major coup for de Guise and of lasting importance for her daughter. We will consider two important symbolic moments of the next few months. First, the seals (particularly the Great Seal) used to authenticate royal documents in the Little Queen’s name, were quickly redesigned, certainly by 7 January 1543 (RMS III, entry 2854). On one side, replacing the usual image of the mounted king wielding his sword (the monarch as military leader) appeared the royal arms of Scotland – an adjustment to the fact that this monarch was a child and female. On the other side, however, she appears full-faced, throned in majesty, a mature adult figure. This represents the other key royal role, the administration of justice, so essential to peace in a potentially-turbulent country. Of course, there is a very practical aspect to this; the seal is back in action quickly as an indication that the work of government goes on in spite of the trauma of the times. But the seal also points us to the contrast between her ‘real’ or individual body on the one hand and the enduring ‘body’ of the dynasty on the other. The other symbolic moment came the following July when, after months of tension and negotiation and a brief if not very serious stand-off between forces supportive of de Guise and forces loyal to the governor Arran, it was agreed that de Guise and the little queen would leave Linlithgow for Stirling. Guy describes the long and splendid

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3 Starkey 1997, 44-5 highlights the similar representation of English monarchs; we will examine the issue in more detail in the next chapter.
cavalcade (Guy 2004, 26). De Guise had wanted the move for months and may even have directed the arrangements or at least some of the details. Participation in such royal processions, carefully stage-managed as they were, involved a direct endorsement of the proceedings and of the rights of the organisers ((Laynesmith 2004, 82-97). So, in this case, every participant in the train was endorsing the Little Queen’s rights, acclaiming her as the undisputed queen of Scotland and also endorsing her removal to Stirling. Inextricably tied to that, they were endorsing her mother’s rights, too, her right to move her and to direct the pattern of her upbringing and the endorsement mattered not least since two key participants were Arran and Lennox. It is difficult to believe that de Guise did not enjoy the irony of the two rivals’ participation, knowing that neither was above suspicions of wishing to usurp her daughter – or worse. Symbolism and practically were inextricably linked in all royal lives and even the most ordinary event in the two queen’s lives, however mundane, however seemingly human or natural in its motivation, had its metaphorical, mystical or even sacerdotal meaning in the eyes of participants and observers.

De Guise shared Stirling with her daughter, the Little Queen, from their arrival in July 1543 till the Little Queen’s departure for France; indeed, so far as we can tell the Little Queen was the more constant resident. Her very small, personal infant household was probably augmented later by tutors and by more table- and personal servants but, even on the eve of her departure; these would have been a tiny proportion of the total personnel at Stirling. But, de Guise’s domestic arrangements must have been designed to polish the child’s prestige, ensure that nothing could sully her reputation or her standing, a household grand enough to approach the ideal of a queenly court. Nonetheless, arrangements for her security (a prime reason for her mother bringing her to Stirling) must have been very obvious and included a significant personal security detail though fortification of the castle and a strong military presence continued even after the Little Queen’s removal.

Ritchie rejects suggestions that de Guise was a mere French stooge, arguing that she had a clear-sighted view of her daughter’s rights and potential and that maintaining and supporting her daughter, not supporting France, was the key objective of her regency (Ritchie 2002). It may seem obvious that this would be so – any mother would support her own child. But members of royal families were not mere private people and quite small children were sometimes married to strangers in distant countries. Francis I sent his sickly, teenage daughter to Scotland
to marry James V, where she died within weeks – Francis does not seem to have been blamed for it. Nurture of their children’s rights and welfare was, however, one of the approved queenly roles. Margaret Tudor’s mother and grandmother had successfully urged Henry VII not to send the 9-year old child to Scotland in case ‘the king of Scots would not wait, but injure her and endanger her health’ so the marriage was delayed till she was slightly older (Laynesmith 2004, 211). Such a protective role was a culmination of the queenly role of motherhood itself – again, not a mere matter of biology or ‘nature’ but of duty to her husband’s dynasty. The queen’s fertility, particularly if she produced sons, was indicative of God’s blessing on the realm (Laynesmith 2004) and fertility was of little use if the children then died – as de Guise knew, all too well, after losing one French son and her two Scots sons so early in their lives.

2.5 The role of queen dowager in Scotland

Queens dowager in Scotland over the previous century or so had played varying roles with varying success and much depended on the particular circumstances as well as their political skills. James IV’s will, executed before he set out for the war which would result in his death at Flodden, appointed Margaret Tudor as tutor of her son and regent of the realm in the event of his death, so long as she remained unmarried. Buchanan thought this the first time a woman had been appointed in this way and it was found tolerable, particularly to those who favoured peace with England, as few nobles of any capacity were available (Aikman 1827, II, 263). Following her (surprisingly rapid) re-marriage to the Earl of Douglas, however, she was forced to renounce both regency and king and John, Duke of Albany, was invited to return from France to hold the post of regent; as the king’s nearest male relative he was next in line to the throne. But, apart from a period when she fled to England, Margaret Tudor continued to have access to her son; her consent was required if his residence was to be changed (Hay 1954, 77-8). At a later stage, Margaret Tudor came to recognise that her interests lay in being (as she said herself) ‘a good Scotswoman’ (Jansen 2002, 136) but she seems slowly to have sunk into near-irrelevance and when Sadler, the English ambassador met her in Edinburgh in 1540, she grumbled that her brother, Henry VIII, took no interest in her, a point neatly confirmed by Sadler who says most of their conversation was ‘of light importance’ and not worth reporting (Sadler, I, 17-45).
Joan Beaufort, widow of James I, took a key role in revenging herself on her husband’s murderers and had custody of her own son, the young king. But she was soon marginalised by Douglas, was imprisoned for a time and (even after Douglas’s death) did not regain control of her son (Brown 1994, 194-9). Mary of Gueldres, on the other hand, though not formally regent, successfully managed her son’s affairs after his father’s death (MacDougall 1982, 51-62). These examples do, at least, demonstrate that dowagers in Scotland were not automatically barred from power – nor were they invariably excluded in other countries.

In 15th century England, regal power was never given to any individual during a royal minority and (for example) Protector Gloucester was controlled by a council, though Margaret of Anjou (wife of Henry VI) acted skilfully and gained considerable authority during her husband’s mental breakdown, perhaps modelling her actions on French precedents, though she did not become regent (Laynesmith 2004, 160-173). In the 16th century, Catherine Parr, last wife of Henry VIII, was the only queen to survive her husband but power then passed to the Protector Somerset and she did not long survive. However, Henry VIII had appointed both his first and his last wives as regents during foreign visits indicating that, though he desperately wanted a son to succeed him, he had no insuperable objection to female authority. In France, where queens could not hold the crown themselves, queens dowager had equally varied expectations, Catherine de Medici becoming regent for her son Charles IX. Everywhere, much depended on the exact circumstances and on the aptitudes of the women involved; it was not merely a case of seizing opportunities that offered but of creating opportunities and then of shaping the instruments of power, particularly the institution of queenship itself (Laynesmith 2004).

De Guise was too astute to fall into the traps which beset Margaret Tudor. She had, furthermore, a long-term objective in supporting the rights and privilege of her daughter, which she was to pursue through the rest of her life (Ritchie, 2002). She was never marginal to Scots politics, even in the earliest weeks of her widowhood, and it will be a key argument of this Report that she used her household at Stirling from 1543 onward as the means of creating a new model of Scots dowager queenship and so creating a springboard from which she would achieve formal recognition as regent in 1554. That certainly depended on French support for herself and for Scotland but gaining that support was largely her achievement.
And gaining it was no easy matter. As queen consort, de Guise was ‘of one body’ with the king, an extension of his own personality, at least in theory. Disrespect towards her was disrespect to him. When Elizabeth Woodville became queen of England many people resented the rise of her family and their influence on the king but they took care to avoid blaming her directly (Laynesmith 2004, 201). As a widow, though de Guise retained the mystical aura of queenship, she was more vulnerable to criticism.

2.6 QUEEN AND HOUSEKEEPER

Like any noblewoman de Guise had a range of sources of income and there were a great many drains on her purse. All this had to be managed. Her staff, as will be seen, included administrators and financial experts, people who were responsible for bringing in her income from rents, overseeing the day to day detail of the household expenditure and so on; there must have been some sort of overall budgetary control. From this point of view, her living at Stirling was convenient as it was the centre of the Lordship of Stirling from which she drew some rental income; she does not seem to have made a point of visiting the other estates which provided her income and the actual business of rent collection was done by intermediaries though there are letters from her encouraging those collectors to send the money in when it was in short supply. And she herself signed off the domestic accounts prepared by the professional staff. Again and again, the accounts record expenditure incurred ‘by order of the queen’ or some such phrase. It would be nonsense if she did that and did not actively supervise the bigger items of income and also the overall budget as did many other noblewomen at this period – there was, after all, no point in their having incomes independent of their husbands and extended families if they did not do so (Laynesmith 2004, 232-3; Marshall 1977; Ward 1992) and Margaret Tudor’s domestic financial problems had flowed, at least in part, from her lack of organisation and poor management abilities.

De Guise’s correspondence also shows that she was directly concerned with employing at least some members of her household and that she kept in touch with others, even after they had left her employment. This was potentially of major political importance, particularly where Scots were concerned since all (and particularly those closest to her, the leading female attendants) could provide links with the wider society. Employment in any royal household was a favour and would elicit gratitude from a whole family whilst such links provided a means of
spreading the monarch’s wishes to the localities, links that were vital to the most absolute monarch and all the more so to one trying to increase her authority, like de Guise (Elias 1983, 42; Brown 2004). So, whilst many tasks were delegated, de Guise did not just sit and watch events ordained by others unfold; she was an active agent in her own domestic life as well as in the political life of Scotland—again, it will be part of the argument of this Report that the two were interlinked, that ordering her daily life was a part of ordering wider affairs.

2.7 CREATING QUEENSHIP

Most studies of queens are biographies, relating the key events and processes of the life. By the 19th century, women writers in particular recognised that, whether the subject was a queen consort or a queen regnant, being a queen was different from being a king. Between them, Mary queen of Scots and her contemporary Elizabeth of England, have generated a huge literature. For Mary, in particular, there has been a tendency to interpret her biography in terms of her own character, in the extremes either as near-saint whose problems were caused by her enemies or as a ‘whore’ and murderer whose problems were of her own making. But more recent general studies suggest that some of her problems were intrinsic to queenship in the circumstances of time and place. Similarly, if less dramatically, for de Guise.

In the medieval period, there was a common courtly culture in north-western Europe which shared values and modes of behaviour ‘across territorial, linguistic and ethnic boundaries’ (Vale 2001, 2). Queens had a role within that common culture and many of the attributes of that role were carried forward into the renaissance period. Queens remained, as they had been, bringers of national and international peace, harbingers of prosperity, exemplars of piety, demonstrators of loyalty to the dynasty and the community, manifestations of the monarch’s love for the nation (Laynesmith 2004). Starkey (2004) and Laynesmith show how these roles were enacted in hugely elaborate tableaux at the royal entries and ceremonies at or around the time of the marriage or coronation of a new queen. The ‘peace bringer’ is perhaps the most obvious of roles given the use of royal marriages to cement newly-formed alliances— and can rarely have been clearer than in the marriage of James IV and Margaret Tudor, the outcome of no less grandiose an agreement than the Treaty of Perpetual Peace between England and Scotland and for which the ceremonies were redolent with images of peace, of prosperity, of the fecundity of the earth and of the royal line itself (Fradenburg 1991). The contemporary poet
Dunbar describes Margaret Tudor’s entry into Aberdeen, greeted first by the salutation of the Blessed Virgin, then with further symbols of religious generosity and peace and of the Stewart dynasty springing like green branches from the Bruces; she was greeted by four and twenty virtuous, singing maidens, all surrounded by mirth and joy and by fountains running with wine – though it is clear that whilst the City rejoiced, Dunbar thought the queen should be grateful too (MacKenzie 1932, 137-9)

The 15th century Bower relates a tale of James I’s wife, ladies and clerics joining to persuade the king to remit a needlessly savage punishment (Scott 2007, 70) whilst he was reconciled with Douglas in another dispute ‘at the urging of the queen, bishops, prelates, earls and barons’ (Scott 2007, 109-110); these stories (true or not) underline recognition of this queenly role in Scotland. Piety was another important quality of the queens consort and queens dowager of later fifteenth and early 16th century England (Laynesmith 2004, 252-261) though piety did not prevent some of them being effective political operators. Rather, their pious acts and observances would enhance their own standing as well as that of their husband and his dynasty. Queenly piety was often manifested in acts of charity, in devotion to female saints (particularly the Virgin Mary or their name-saint), in pilgrimages and in intercession with the king on behalf of the people, particularly in matters of war or of internal dispute.

Laynesmith describes the ways in which foreign royal brides were greeted in England, typically met close to their point of arrival and taken quickly to a focal centre where elaborate ritual would publicise their new role. It was a recipe followed for de Guise’s arrival in Scotland, when she was taken by the king the few miles to St Andrews where the rituals must have been held in readiness, awaiting her arrival. There, above the Abbey Gate a great cloud was made to appear in the heavens and to burst open in two halves, revealing ‘ane fair lady most lyke ane angell’ with the keys of Scotland in her hands, a token that ‘all the heartis of Scottland was opnit to the ressawing of hir grace’. There were prayers and orations and instructions that she should serve her God, ‘obey hir husband and keep hir body clene according to Godis will and commandement’. There was a service in the Cathedral and the following day she visited all the churches and colleges in the town (Lindsay 1899, 379). Pitscottie’s general unreliability does not matter in this context, as he is describing a widespread European ideal and is certain that de Guise would conform to it.
During her husband’s life she went on several pilgrimages within Scotland, king and queen together going to the Isle of May in August 1539, a shrine traditionally associated with prayers for the gift of children (Marshall 1977, 78). Bringing many of these themes together, in August 1542 as war with England loomed, de Guise went on pilgrimage to Loretto to pray for her own safe delivery of her expected child but also for the safety of her husband and of the kingdom (Marshall 1977, 97). Here she was performing a role all could understand, a role consonant with her duty to God and to the Stewart dynasty as well as to the community of Scotland. The power of such a public demonstration was the greater given the deaths of the two princes; the birth of a royal heir would, surely, signal the blessing of God with all that could then be expected of further peace and prosperity for Scotland. Only one report of a pilgrimage has been found after the king’s death, when de Guise went (again on foot to Loretto) to pray for victory ‘for peace among her lords against the realm of England’ in late (Marshall 1997, 41).

Finally, as wife, de Guise appears to have ‘taken to her chamber’ at Linlithgow, probably some time during October 1543, during a gap in the household record from September (which she finished at Falkland) and 1st November when she was at Linlithgow (NAS E33/2); this formal retreat from the world into an enclosed society of women and formally cut off from the outside, is well described for England (Starkey, 2004) and was also known in Scotland as Margaret Tudor used it as a cover for her escape from Scotland even after her remarriage (Janssen 2002, 135).

But as a widow, her role as possible bearer of further heirs was finished and the heir she had produced was not the hoped-for male. The marriage had held promise of fecundity, peace and prosperity, but Scotland was in worse case than before, ravaged by recent war and threatened with worse. The birth of a female heir may even have increased the risks. And yet, over the next few years, de Guise was to win and consolidate a position for herself (and secure a stunning marriage for her daughter) and she was to do that across two of the most turbulent decades in Scotland’s history and in spite of being ‘a foreigner’.

De Guise must have realised very quickly that her audience, the crowd she had to please, were the Scots, at least the Scots political class. If even Margaret Tudor could realise that her future lay in being ‘a good Scotswoman’ then de Guise would certainly do so. She would also realise that she could not win them all. Ritchie has shown that her long term objective was to maintain
and support her daughter’s rights. And she must have known that no amount of French support would avail if she lost the Scots. She had to make and keep a party and to unite disparate factions in a common cause – the latter, as we have seen, a classic queenly role. She would, surely, have seen no contradiction in being ‘a good Scotswoman’ whilst retaining something of her own French tastes and interests, particularly as many of the more senior Scots were familiar with and admired French practice. When, so early as 16 June 1544, Sir George Douglas wrote to de Guise offering his support and commending her for uniting the nation, he was promising more than he would deliver and he was flattering her since unity was still a distant prospect. But he was recognising that this was her aim and an appropriate way to flatter a queen (Cameron 1927, 89-92).

Studies of renaissance courts have often emphasised what was new and fashionable in architecture, dress, music and so on. However, there were also continuities. ‘Much that was medieval persisted in the courts of the Renaissance’ says Bertelli (1986, 93). Vale, also, emphasises that change and continuity co-existed – and the continuities sometimes persisted into the seventeenth or even 18th century (Vale 2001, 17; Griffiths 1991). As Chatenet (2002, 133) explains, contemporaries who saw the court only briefly could assume that it was unchanging, particularly as there was a chauvinistic assumption that it should not change. But fashion and the taste and the personality of individual monarchs could lead to changes in tone and procedure. Queens had an even greater impact on their own courts, not least since they came from such a diversity of backgrounds. We know little about the tone of de Guise’s court before the king’s death. Certainly, her changed role after his death demanded that she set a new tone if she were to be an effective political player. The few near-contemporary comments we have about that tone are not, however, reliable. Buchanan, for example, complains that from her arrival in Stirling:

The court presented one scene of gayety and pleasure by a constant succession of games and festivals; the day was employed in tournaments, and the night spent in masquerades (Aikman 1827, II, 335).

Buchanan here makes a two-edged accusation, not only of frivolity but also that the entertainments were a deceitful façade to neutralise Lennox and to encourage him to hope that she might marry him, accusations best treated with scepticism, particularly as there is no other
evidence of games, festivals or tournaments at the time. Buchanan, who wrote masques for Mary queen of Scots in the early 1560s before turning so viciously against her, knew that there was a traditional tone to the court and that it could vary, indeed did vary and that this was a moment when change might be expected since new circumstances certainly imposed new requirements. De Guise could not go on as she had done before and achieve her objectives.

Historians (and Ritchie is the main authority) rightly concentrate on directly political strategies, on formal treaties, on bribes (more generously known as pensions), on her skill in neutralising her opponents and so on. In this section I will concentrate on some of the more symbolic aspects, starting with the fact that de Guise had experienced coronation, a mystical process which had not made her queen (that had come with her marriage) but which was sacramental. Coronation imbued her with numinous qualities which did not lead inevitably to political authority but could be used to create and maintain authority. Few who entered her presence would forget the fact of her coronation – and so admission gained a certain value, it became a tradable political asset. We will see in a later chapter that de Guise made herself astonishingly accessible to people of a wide social range – Scots and others, clerics and laics, men and women. We know too little about the accessibility of previous Scots queens to make a valid comparison; but certainly Scots nobles (an extensive class of families) expected to have access to their king, so perhaps in that way, de Guise was being kingly, rather than queenly, in Scots eyes.

There can be no doubt that she continued her ordinary religious observances as a widow, alms, prayer, attendance at mass, perhaps further pilgrimages and so on though it has to be admitted that the specific records are slight. She paid for candles suitable for the altars and for the images in the ‘chapels of the two queens’ (ie her own chapel and her daughter’s chapel) both before and after the move to Stirling. The bishop of Whithorn, dean of the chapel royal, was the most frequent of many clerical guests at her table in 1549 (for which we have records) as doubtless he had been in previous years. The ‘priests and friars’ were provided with their

\[4\] Both Laynesmith (2004) and Starkey (2004) discuss the symbolism of English queenly coronations and the Scots was clearly similar in essence though, for de Guise and some other Scots queens, coronation was delayed until pregnancy and so the potential birth of an heir was confirmed (Thomas 2005, 196-8).
Christmas meal, also in 1549, albeit huddled in the vestry of the chapel itself and albeit, too, there is no record of a ‘priests and friars’ table as a regular entry in her accounts for that year. An Elimosinar or official manager of her alms appears on the ‘Early List’ of her household. So far, so conventional.

It is when we move to other, more active examples of her role that the story becomes more interesting. For example, the fostering of marriages between courtiers was a well-established queenly activity (Griffiths 1991, 58-60). On Sunday 15 April 1543, less than six months after her husband’s death and at a time when her position was far from certain, de Guise sponsored the wedding feast at Linlithgow for Robert, Lord Graham, son of the earl of Montrose and Margaret, daughter of Lord Fleming, including costs of kitchen equipment brought from Stirling (NAS E33/3). This marriage at Linlithgow suggests that Fleming was already close to de Guise and is interesting as perhaps the only ‘celebration’ held during these months following the king’s death. Fleming was one of those to sign Beaton’s band at Linlithgow in July (Cameron 1927, 14, 15(n), and 16). On 3 February 1549 de Guise attended the marriage of Lady Barbara Hamilton, Arran’s daughter and one of her most regular companions, to Lord Gordon (Huntly’s son) though both were very young the marriage may not have been fully completed and its later status remains doubtful (E34/15/ E32/10; Paul, IV, 370). A month later, on 3 March, she sponsored the nuptials of the Master of Erskine, son of John, 5th Lord Erskine and of Margaret Graham, the governor present at the banquet she gave (NAS E34/15).

Marriages of this sort were important for creating and cementing alliances within Scotland – and the surviving records must significantly understate de Guise’s involvement with them. Equally important were marriages of her French attendants to Scots nobles. For example, Jehan Pedefer or Pieddefer was a Frenchwoman first mentioned in 1538-9 when she was a Maid of Honour to the queen, paid 50 livres tournois. She then married and became Lady Livingstone and does not appear on the Early List for de Guise’s household. But between June 1548 and September 1550 she was making very substantial payments to other servants, suppliers and others on behalf of de Guise (NAS E34/14); in 1549 she dined at de Guise’s table more frequently than anyone else (NAS E34/15). She appears on the later household list as a Lady of Honour and payments to her from about 1551 further underline her importance (Wood 1925, 208-210). Mary Pierress, another French attendant, became Lady Seton and was one of those regularly eating with her in 1549 (Marshall 1977, 70-1; NAS E34/15). Others of her attendants
made similar marriages with Scots so that she and her household became a link between two key potentially competing parties, the Scots and the French, again putting her in the role or reconciler, she had close contact with important noble Scots families.

Even more directly, she was involved in attempts to reconcile parties to feuds. In 1544 she was involved in forging a reconciliation between Bothwell and Creighton (Cameron 1927, 114-6) In April 1545, Lord Methven wrote to her, saying (albeit with considerable exaggeration) that she was the principal mediator to win peace between all the lords, particularly Huntly and Argyll and reconcile them to each other and the kirk; if she could unite Ruthven, Craig and Moncrieff on one side and Gray, John Charteris and Kinfauns on the other, it would unite their whole district (Cameron 1927, 132-3). Before embarking for France, the feuding Huntly and Mackintosh upheld their hands before her, she taking each man’s hand in token of reconciliation (Ritchie 2002, 66n).

These peacemaking efforts, successful or not, extended into the international sphere from an early stage. In October 1543, hearing of a French victory against the emperor, orders were given (presumably by Arran) for bonfires to be lit throughout the kingdom and for the bishops to hold services of thanksgiving ‘and in this place, Stirling, a procession was made throughout the town in which the Queen took part and also the said Cardinal’ but, less triumphantly, de Guise proposed that the ambassadors should arrange for Scots prisoners in England to be exchanged for English prisoners in France (Dickinson 1942, 21n; Wood 1923, 236-7). This was very much in the queenly mode and was presumably designed not just to show her in a merciful and powerful light but also to win the gratitude of both Scots and French, showing that they had common cause. In more martial mode, she visited army camps (Aikman 1827 II, 376; Merriman 2000), exhorted the troops to further efforts, and must have received hundreds of military officers of many nationalities at her table over the years; people even wrote to her urging specific military strategies, pointing out how fiscal control could help military success and so on (Beaugué passim).

Also related to Stirling de Guise was amongst those directly involved in sponsoring the building of the new town walls, under way by October 1544 and completed around 1547 (Merriman 2000, 206-7; SCA B66/1/24 Oct 1544; Renwick 1887, I , 50, and 61) and explicitly said to be for defence against ‘our old enemies of England’. To involve herself in such work of
national defence (and doubtless she involved herself elsewhere also) was to identify herself with the national cause. That she had achieved this to a considerable extent as early as late 1543 is shown by moves to have her included on the Council, alongside Arran or even to supersede him (see Chapter 4 and Appendix 1). That she achieved this as a proxy for her daughter was entirely consistent with Scotland’s previous experience. The Stewart dynasty, Mary’s ancestors, had become closely identified with Scotland and their role as rightful monarchs was not challenged – even when, for example, James I and James III were murdered. To identify the interests of the ruler and their rule with those of the territory was an ancient and obvious strategy for such rulers and ritual underpinned the strategy, encouraging unity (see, eg Nijsten 2004). There was an obverse to that argument, too; for Arran could be and was depicted as representing merely sectional interests, those of the Hamiltons and their kin and followers, just as Lennox (a Stewart and Arran’s rival) could also be presented as representing only his own faction and interests.

Wedderburn’s *Complaynt of Scotland* was published about 1549 by a keen supporter and is expressed in the most flattering terms. It is certainly not solid evidence (at least on its own) of her achievements or her methods. But the author, though dedicating his work to de Guise, clearly sought to influence others and provides a fascinating insight into the relationship between the projection and the reception of the image of de Guise as queen. The tone is set from the outset, with the dedication to the ‘margareit ande perle of princessis’. It was conventional enough to say that queens, princesses and so on, were the acme of perfection but this goes on to emphasise, for example, her extremely illustrious descent and in particular the ways that she and her ancestress embodied so many of the great female virtues (including wisdom and magnanimity, not merely purity!). It recognises that she could well have returned to France but, instead, had sacrificed its comforts and the happiness of being close to her daughter, for Scotland’s sake; this is a particularly fine touch, turning what could have been interpreted as abandoning or rejecting her daughter into an act of self-sacrificing maternal love. In spite of the English attempts to destroy Scotland, God had inspired her to be the instrument of delivery. It was she who comforted and reconciled the ‘desolat’ people who had ‘disparit of mennis supple’, the classic, queenly healer, in fact. It continues praising her ‘regement ande gouernyng’ – a direct acknowledgement of her established place in the government of Scotland four years before she would be formally appointed regent. It avers that her virtuous dignity is increased daily by her role in advancing the defence of the country, a virtue which excels those
of the exemplary females of the Classical past. It is for the fervent love which she bears her
daughter, the rightful heir of Scotland, that de Guise suffers all these difficulties and
vicissitudes, with the sole view of delivering Mary’s heritage from English captivity.

It is, in short, by exemplary exercise of the female (and particularly the queenly) virtues, that de
Guise becomes so admirable for the writer. Her symbolic virtues provide real hope; the
emblem becomes a concrete reality. And, significantly, extravagant though the terminology is,
it is not totally lost in the clouds; she did rule, she did reconcile, she did inspire, she did
sacrifice her own comfort for her daughter’s sake. Scots knew this and Wedderburn demands
that they give her the credit.

Although there does not seem to be a Scots model for de Guise to have followed there were
certainly examples from other states within the European tradition and government by women
was not an impossible idea. De Guise’s own grandmother, whom she had known as a child and
young woman, was a friend of Marguerite of Navarre, one of the most influential and cultured
European women of her time whose authority is now thought to have stemmed, in part, from
her ability to form links and bonds between disparate and more formal networks of power
(Stephenson, 2004). Isabella D’Este ruled Mantua whilst her husband was a hostage of the
Venetians (1509-12) and later ruled Italy on behalf of her son. Mary Tudor became queen of
England in her own right in 1555 to be followed by Elizabeth in 1558. And just as Wedderburn
in his ‘Complaynt’ could point to illustrious and effective female leaders and queens, the early
16th century Scot Gavin Douglas in The Palice of Honour, depicts the mythical Queen of
Sapience accompanied by the 12 Sibyls as her ‘damisellis’ as well as by lords, ladies, prelates
and others, described as the sages of antiquity. So even the ideal – at least in literature – could
be a queen. More prosaically, even in late 1543 the French were already hinting that de Guise
might side-step the Governor and take full authority herself, albeit Grimani advised caution
(Hannay 1914); achieving acceptance by the Scots was to take time, effort and skill.

The time, effort and skill required would be the greater since, in the meantime, that though
monarchical systems are based on the assumption of a single power centre, there were two
main power centres within Scotland’s own administration, de Guise’s and Arran’s, and
tensions between them were inevitable, even without the added complication of English
attacks and occupation –and it has to be agreed that it was at least in part Arran’s failures as
well as de Guise’s successes in dealing with that threat and coming to be seen as the best instrument of national salvation, which brought about her eventual victory.

Few historians of royal courts would now accept the view that monarchs and quasi-royals were mere marionettes, so tied to ritual and precedent that they could take no independent action, a view which is clearly incompatible with de Guise’s story as just outline or, indeed, with the real biography of countless such people. They could and did mould, not just their political habitat but also the smaller habitat of the household; queens seem to have had particular freedom to do so. That may well reflect the even greater diversity of their situations, the variety of their backgrounds (foreign or native, royal or noble) and living as new brides, as established queens, as widows with or without children. De Guise found herself in a unique situation and dealt with it in a unique way – but the broad outlines of her strategy were limited by expectations derived from that common culture of European courts and of the realities of power in Scotland and beyond.

That brings us to a final point for this section. How far were de Guise’s court and household ‘Scottish’, how far French and how far simply a local manifestation of the international court culture? The question distils a problem which faced all these courts, though it is rarely directly expressed by historians; how did they negotiate the balance between fashion and tradition? Thomas (2005) is at pains to emphasise the fashionable renaissance attainments of James V’s court, whilst recognising that he was certainly not a recognised exemplar of the style, as his father had been. But if the court was to provide a national focus, to underscore the links between rulers and ruled, to identify the interests of the dynasty with those of the nation, then it had to have a local (national) dimension. The dilemma was well-known to contemporaries and Castiglione, for example, discusses how far courtly literature should be vernacular and how far Classical; in that context, it is important that Scotland was moving towards use of the vernacular in literature and history and that de Guise’s records are in French and Scots rather than Latin and doubly important that de Guise herself spoke Scots (Marshall 1977, 72). Scots monarchs, like others, used heraldry, courtly sports such as tournaments, royal entries into towns amongst many other strategies as ‘local’ manifestations. Most relevant to the present study, the Stewarts had come to be closely identified with Scotland (there were no dynastic wars in fifteenth and 16th century Scotland) and had adopted a style of rule which was accessible and informal, a ‘Scottish way’ which was national in tone which will be discussed in
detail in the next chapter In essence, de Guise’s strategy was to identify her own interests closely with her daughter’s and so with Scotland’s, to maintain the informal and approachable style appropriate to a Stewart monarch, even when only Queen Dowager and (supremely) to identify her own and her daughter’s interests with the ‘national cause’ of resistance to English aggression.

2.8 The Scottish Court, European Court Studies and the Stirling Palace Project

There has been a tendency to see the Scots court and courtiers as merely the occupiers of the architectural spaces of the residences, though more modern studies have recognised that it shared much with France and with England – indeed, have expended a good deal of effort trying to decide which provides the better model (Dunbar, 1999; Thomas, 2005; Juhala, 2001). Cuddy (1987), noted two contemporary comments comparing the court of James VI with that of but this important lead has not been followed through, except in regard to the major court rituals (Lynch for processions etc). Further, one of Cuddy’s sources included other material, comparing James V with his grandfather.

Book-length studies covering several renaissance courts have tended to consider them in distinct and separate chapters (eg Dickens 1977; Asch & Birke 1991) and there are few truly comparative studies, Evans (1991) being one of many to recognise the difficulties of comparison. The analysis of Norbert Elias had been useful (1969) but is now recognised to be too closely based on the court of Louis XIV of France to have universal application (eg Paravicini 1991: Vale, 2001; Nijsten 2004; Scott, 2007). Fradenburg (1991) looked at the medieval Scots court, a study amplified for the court of James I by Scott’s recent thesis (2007). Vale attempts a comparative study of ‘the princely court’ of north-western Europe from 1270-1380 and sees important common ground between them and continuities into later periods, but he does not include Scotland in his study (2001). For the English court of the late fifteenth and 16th centuries there is a wealth of specialised and of general studies, not least on account of the wealth of archival material available (eg Thurley, 1993; Guy, 1997; Starkey, 1987; Laynesmith, 2004) and all of these excellent studies make some comparisons, particularly with France and consider the relationship between the court and its architectural environment; Griffiths (1987) mentions Scotland in passing. For France, considerations of time have forced me to rely heavily
the superb book by Chatenet (2002) with its wealth of architectural context and detailed, contemporary descriptions of court etiquette. I have also used Vaughan’s useful book on Burgundy (1975 and itself a distillation from a much larger work) as well as de la Marche’s astonishing contemporary if idealised description of Burgundy in the later 15th century. Nijsten (2004) writes about Guelders, a court which survived alongside neighbouring Burgundy until being subsumed into it in the 1470s; but Gueldres is of particular interest for Scots as James II of Scotland married Mary of Gueldres who provides one of the closest parallels to de Guise whilst the court was probably, at that time, of size comparable to the Scots court and a court which, until Nijsten’s work, was even less studied.

As Nijsten (2004, 5) points out the great wealth of France, of England and of 15th century Burgundy, makes them less than perfect models for other, more modest courts whether in the medieval period or later. Paravicini (1991), too had questioned what had become the commonplace of court studies, that Burgundy was the source or inspiration for the renaissance notion of magnificence. Again, many older studies presented the renaissance as marking a pretty decisive break with the past, even with late medieval experience. But Vale (2001, 17-20) joins Paravicini in emphasising the importance of continuity for princely courts of the medieval period and on, into the renaissance, a theme also remarked by Griffiths in Starkey (1987). In those circumstances, it is not amiss to look to the smaller courts of north western Europe and to Scotland’s own past for comparisons, though noting that it is a shame that there is little available in English on the 16th century Scandinavian courts.

There is another problem about our knowledge. Most court studies seek to explain the diffusion and transmission of ideas, the relationship between courts and urban society, to investigate whether renaissance courts presage wider culture change or reflect it; these are wide, general cultural issues as they apply to the courtly society. They are often underlain by a concern about ‘high art’, whether the plastic or performing arts or they concentrate of the major rituals and rites of passage, in entries to towns, on coronations and funerals and so on. Fradenburg (1991) Lynch (1990; 2000) and Thomas (2005) have done important work for Scotland on just such issues. The Stirling Palace Project, on the other hand, is very concrete, local and specific and closer to the day to day than to the high festivals of court life. Real artefacts will be presented, real people will be represented. Where did these people have their breakfast and what did they eat? Who served it to them and how much were they paid? Did de
Guise find it all rather fun and interesting or was she bored to tears, knowing she had to go on with the show, or her daughter’s entire future would be compromised? We are concerned with the particular circumstances at Stirling during a fairly short time span much more than with general issues. However, those more general insights remain of great value since they not only point to some of the major questions of protocol, of layout and so on and they can also guide us in interpreting the specific local information for Stirling. So, most of the rest of this report will address those concrete issues which the sources allow us to investigate, however incompletely.

2.9 Politiccal and military events 1542-1550

This was, of course, one of the most dramatic periods in Scotland’s history, not just on account of the wars and their consequences but also because of the alliances formed, alliances with the potential to link Scotland permanently to England or to France; we must be clear that there were always people favouring both of those options and few sensible players of the political game can really have believed that Scotland could ‘go it alone’ in the 1540s. Those wars and tensions were themselves part of wider European disturbances whilst the issues surrounding protestant reformation were obviously important, albeit it was to be another decade till they would become decisive.
3 THE ROYAL RESIDENCES AND THE TRAIN IN THE 1540S

‘… hir court was then lyk venus and cupido in the tyne of fresche maii’ (Pitscottie, Vol II p. 15, describing de Guise at Stirling in late summer 1543).

3.1 INCOME AND COSTS

Display and expense were inescapable elements of the royal lifestyle. Some economies could be made but rich clothes, stylish building and entertaining, jewels and artworks and so on were ‘essentials’ in a way that is now unimaginable. Winning political influence was even more expensive – hence de Guise’s increasingly heavy dependence on France. The political aspect of affairs will be considered in the last chapter. Here, rather artificially, we will be concerned more with the domestic and the routine, though recognising that her dinners, her guests, her entertainments and her moves all had a political dimension.

Her income came from three main sources. Firstly, from lands in Scotland, allocated to her by marriage contract; secondly, from her French estates and the various pensions and grants made to her by the French crown; thirdly, she also had a substantial store of jewellery and other valuables which (as was quite usual at the period) could be pawned or sold in an emergency. Additionally, the Scots parliament granted some of the income nominally assigned to the late king’s (‘illegitimate’) sons for the (Little) queen’s support, cash which de Guise might have been able to use, if she ever fully got it (Murray 1983, 58). But, by early 1549, after a period of complaints from unpaid soldiers, she was forced to melt down some of her plate and turn some of her jewellery into cash to pay the French soldiers and to send to France for more (Wood 1925, 29-30; Ritchie 2002, 134). In 1550 she was reported to be making something of a nuisance of herself in France as she pleaded for further essential support (Ritchie 2002, 89), a reminder of how stark things were in the later 1540s.

In theory the Scottish lands should have brought her an income of £10,000 Scots per annum and she had formal title to collect this income from early 1543; it was a sum significantly less than her husband’s household costs towards the end of his life. She promptly sent heralds to the relevant areas to proclaim her rights to collect the money (NAS E33/3 extra-ordinary costs, February 1543), though her later correspondence sometimes shows her writing rather
desperately to her local agents for prompt payment of rents. One of the more secure sources was probably the Lordship of Stirling, scattered but quite extensive lands in the Stirling area which was should have yielded around £452 in cash with 600 loads coals, 30 salmon, 9 chalders wheat, 17 chalders malt, 17 chalders bere and 4 chalders oats, a chalder of grain being very roughly a tonne (NAS E40/10 The Lordship of Stirling, 50-55). There would be collection costs for the grains so they would bring in less than the nominal £700 or so per annum (a total which anyway depended on the price that year). And the coalmine appears to have failed some years before this rental was made up so de Guise had to buy coal, an expensive but essential item. There were, surely, similar shortfalls from the other Scots lands.

The king’s accounts for late 1542 suggest that his household expenses had risen from the £16,000 of earlier years to £19,000 per annum (Murray 1983, 58) so de Guise’s theoretical Scottish income was not sufficient to compete though we don’t know how far the other sources would have made up for the difference. In February 1543 de Guise’s household costs for bread, wine, candles, food and other incidentals was 769 livres Tournois or around £338 Scots though wages and other costs would have to be added to that for her real total (NAS E33/2 February 1543). In August 1543, the first full month at Stirling, the total was £1005 livres or £442. The daily rate was £12 in February and £14.3 in August but costs fluctuated quite widely from day to day (min £24 and max £41 in August) so no significance can be attributed to the slight increase 5. It is unfortunate that the accounts are either missing, damaged or defective over the next few years and the only basis for comparison is, therefore, the bread issue. In the first week of February 1543 the baker of the pain commun, the bread which supplied most of the calories of most people, was supplied with 1, 1.5 or 2 bolls of wheat each day, a total of 13 bolls for the week, making 234 dozen ‘loaves’ or 19.5 dozen per day, a value which stayed roughly the same that month and was similar over the months to August (NAS E33/2). But by 1549 far less bread was being provided with from 235 to 347 dozen per month for the months for which there is full data (NAS E34/15); so almost as much was eaten per week in 1543 as per month in 1549, suggesting a much reduced entourage. True, the early figures have a suspiciously ‘rounded’

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5 We might have expected August to be high as she had just moved house and was preparing for the coronation which was held in September; however, those costs would have been met from the ‘extra-ordinary’ expenses which are not considered here.
look but such a sharp discrepancy must point to real change. So, it is the more astonishing to realise that some people had only half a loaf per day and the maximum was probably one per day so 2825 corresponds to a minimum of 91 people per day whilst the high figures of 1543 would feed a minimum 234 per day.

But financial problems can be the result of rising costs or of falling income. And we do not have firm data to say which was the most important in this case. De Guise spent hard, in the later 1540s, on buying Scots support and paying military personnel; she probably also invested in military hardware, including the town walls of Stirling, perhaps the French Spur at Stirling Castle and other fortifications. Her Scots income could have dwindled as war drove into national finances, her personal French income might have fallen following the death of Francis I in early 1547 even though his son, Henry, was a keener supporter of her military purse (Ritchie 2002, 73ff). Perhaps the key question for the project is exactly when she began to feel the pinch. If we had a continuous series of household records from 1543 to 1550 we would be able to answer the question. But, we don’t. And we can’t.

In one sense, she was fortunate. The court of James V (as of other monarchs of the period) was cluttered with hereditary office holders, people with magnificent titles who represented costs, expected to be fed and have right of audience; but who performed only the most ritualised of functions, perhaps on special occasions. To a large extent de Guise was freed from that problem. She could appoint people, Scots or French, more or less at will and for their efficiency, political utility or even personal preference. Like James V and James VI she probably spread her patronage by having some (Scots) staff serve for limited terms on rotation, typically by the quarter though sometimes for six month or other terms; that could mean that many more families, spread across the nation, felt a close tie to her and her household and extended her reach from her base or centre into the localities (Paravicini 1991; Thomas 2005; Nijsten 2004; Brown 2004).

And people wanted to serve in such households. The greatest gentlemen (French and foreign) sought places for their daughters in the household of Anne de Bretagne (Chatenet 2002, 191). Royal service provided an income for some, for others it was a political reward, indicating to the wider society their ‘good connections’, for young people in particular it could provide training, social awareness, contacts who might be useful in future. Her contemporaries were as
aware as we are that she was mother of the Queen of Scots; it was not too soon to invest in the hope that the Queen of Scots, the future Queen of France and perhaps Queen of England too, would remember her mother’s old friends and loyal servants. The surviving and located letters can represent only the tip of the iceberg of job applications – and many applicants must have used direct, personal contact with her existing staff or herself – one reason why the letters are so biased towards French rather than Scots applicants since the Scots could apply in person or on behalf of friends. In 1545 Mons d’Angerville wrote to her explaining that his nephew had visited her mother with a view to entering her service and he also had a little girl who was very pretty and who he also intended for her service (Wood 1923, 120-1). In April 1548 de la Brousse wrote asking if his daughter and brother in law might be found places in the establishment which would probably soon be needed for ‘a certain little lady in France’ ie Mary Queen of Scots (Wood 1923, 192-3). Nicaise Sevyn had been working for M. de Lorges who could not spare him when de Guise first proposed that he would be suitable to be her controller but when, later, she lost many of her gentlemen and officers (at Pinkie), it was agreed that Sevyn would be appointed and even before this was confirmed he proposed that it might be more useful for her to have her money sent in food or in silver for making coin than in the usual cash (Wood 1923, 177-8, 181-2, 187-8 and 242-3).

Either Claude Antiez, ‘called Villebeton’ or some other member of the Villebeton family had appeared intermittently amongst the household, at least down to 1549. By 1555 he was back in France and making purchases for her but his letter reminds her that before he had left she had promised to find him a post within a year and he has heard nothing. Sometimes these French contacts were mediated through her mother, to whom she wrote about many of her concerns. In 1545, for example, the mother was trying to find suitable people to serve as doctor and apothecary (Wood 1923, 121-2). And in such a household, Francophone Scots, familiar with French ways, would be of particular value; in June 1547 Mons de Lorges wrote to de Guise, about Archibald Crawford, a kinsman of the house of Eglinton, who had studied in France and, on his return to Scotland was recommended as suited to the service of de Guise and her daughter (Wood 1923, 166-7).
3.2 The itinerant court

James V had around 30 residences though some of them were seldom (if ever) used and Edinburgh/Holyrood, Linlithgow, Falkland and Stirling accounted for the majority of his recorded time in Scotland. As a widow de Guise was less mobile than her husband had been, sometimes sedentary for months but then embarking on periods of hectic activity. Her longer stays were almost entirely in Edinburgh and Stirling and her commonest single journey was between the two (sometimes with a stop in Linlithgow en route). Her best recorded period of travel was in October 1549 when she travelled from Edinburgh to Kirkcaldy, via various sites in Fife, Perthshire and Angus, so on to Stirling and back to Edinburgh. It cannot always be assumed that in Edinburgh she stayed at Holyrood and she certainly sometimes rented accommodation in Linlithgow rather than using the Palace, though she presumably used the Palace at Linlithgow and the royal residence at Pitlethie near Leuchars (in early 1550). She visited the non-royal Castle Campbell twice in 1550 and a number of monasteries (such as Lindores). But when the records say she was in Kirkcaldy or Perth, for example, it is not clear where her exact residence was.

When James V moved rapidly, indeed for most of his moves, his household accounts say rex *equitavat* that is, ‘the king rode on horseback’. That is most probably what de Guise usually did though there is the possibility that she (and more likely ‘the Little Queen’) would be carried in a litter or even in a modified cart or carriage, at least on occasion. Ships were certainly sometimes used – as when de Guise moved from Edinburgh to Kirkcaldy in early October 1549 (NAS E34/15) and perhaps also for some of her moves from Stirling to Edinburgh in one day.

Any rapid move precluded a slow-moving baggage train and substantial numbers of people, though she would always have had a sufficient retinue for security (a significant factor) and sufficient female attendants to provide for modesty and to give adequate service at her stopovers and destination. The numbers of horses and mules in her own stables (little over a dozen) were inadequate for such numbers but doubtless many of the men in attendance had their own horses whilst some could be hired for particular purposes.

Courts moved for many purposes. Residences became filthy and dishevelled when occupied by hundreds of people for an extended time. Monarchs moved on pilgrimage or to go hunting. But politics were also a major factor and Nijsten (2004, 75) shows how fourteenth and 15th century
duchesses of Gueldres, who had been comparatively sedentary for years, suddenly became mobile when they became politically involved. Politics was certainly the main reason for many of de Guise’s moves – whilst making Edinburgh her base from late summer 1548 put her much closer to the focus of political and military events as Edinburgh was not just the political and diplomatic capital, by this time, but was the communications centre for the Scots war effort and close to such important hot-spots as Haddington, so stasis, too had a political dimension.

Politics meant meeting people. We will look at the issue of who she met and of how she met them in detail in a later section. But, briefly, like contemporary kings, she would wish to meet people in the regions, to display her power and authority and she had to attend or be close to meetings of the council, of parliament or the estates and so on. Her role in visiting the sites of military camps and sieges is very much a part of that, she used them to encourage the troops and, doubtless, to inform herself about progress, problems, requirements and strategy. On her progress through Fife, Perth and Angus and so back to Stirling in October 1549 she entertained numerous people for meals at almost every stop (NAS E34/15).

Organising the moves could be a major headache. At the 16th century French court the *fourrière* department organised the moves. A few highly privileged people were allocated quarters in the royal chateaux where many of the more menial were also tucked into odd corners near their work places; most had to find (or were allocated) space in the local towns and villages. The department had four sections, one left behind to clear up the mess, one with the king, one a day in advance and one two days in advance to prepare, so that people could find their niche when they arrived (Chatenet, 2002, 63-4). Comparable systems were found at most courts (Vale 2001, 62, 67-8, and 154). In England, where most moves were more planned than in France, arrangements may have been made further in advance (Thurley 1993).

In Scotland, too, space was limited with quarters allotted to the privileged few in the castles, many probably forced to squeeze in where they could find a space, near their workplace but others staying in local towns etc. New information has emerged for Scotland to add to knowledge of occasional messages sent ahead ordering preparations to be made for arrival. When the king was in Jedburgh for a justice ayre in 1529 the burgesses of Jedburgh were to supply lodgings as allocated by John Lawson, a royal official; a proclamation was made and Lawson visited premises with two of the magistrates, though on this occasion, they met some
fairly stiff resistance from a local chaplain who resented his goods and space being taken. There is other evidence of accommodation being requisitioned and it is clear that there was a well-recognised system (Harrison 2007). There are many records of messages being sent ahead of Arran for preparations to be made for his arrival (eg NAS E32/9 f. 132r) and there must be many more such records in James V’s household accounts, of which only fragments have been published.

De Guise herself had a *fourrière* department which comprised five people on the Early List of her household generated about 1543 (see below). The *fourrière* is mainly mentioned in relation to coal supplies to the residences and in August 1543 coal was brought from Dunscore (Fife) to Stirling and stored under lock and key in the *fourrière* (NAS E33/3 f. 24v). Indeed, coal supplies were central to the whole issue of quarters. In January 1554 Mons de Courtery wrote from Stirling to the comptroller in Leith that all that now needed to be done for the ambassador’s arrival was to hang the chamber with tapestry and lay in coals (Wood 1925, 191-2). In 1549 the Offices for the Queen’s Lodging and for the Court Lodging are mentioned intermittently – the same office given its Scots name- springing into greatest prominence as the Progress was organised in October when they was usually allocated three or four loaves each day between them – suggesting a staff of between three and eight; some of these may have been seconded from other duties as need arose (NAS E34/15). These offices would also have coped with the constant flow of visitor and other arrivals at the court – from ambassadors to prisoners, so it was needed even when de Guise herself was sedentary. The issues of coal supply, transport and so on will be considered again below.

### 3.3 Hygiene, washing, water supply and toilet facilities

Stirling had one serious disadvantage – water supply. Water was required for drinking (including brewing of beer) washing of clothes, dishes and bodies and for cleaning of all sorts as well as for horses. Supply within the castle came from wells and must have been very limited. Arran’s accounts show regular payments for carrying water at his various residences and de Guise’s household included ‘The Says’ – who appear to be water carriers, usually allocated two loaves per day. The supply problems could be reduced in various ways, most obviously by moving some of the more ‘thirsty’ activities (including gardens, fish-ponds,
Stirling was more fortunate when it came to disposing of the mess. A latrine chute within the King’s Old Building simply discharged over the cliff (Fawcett 1995, 37). That was the answer for a lot of the castle’s mess. The main kitchens were against the outer walls above Ballengeich; the king’s and queen’s kitchens seem to have been to the west of the palace and in 1531-2 were fitted with a jaw holl, a hole for discharging waste (Paton 1958, 105 –110; RPC 10, 517). When Friar John Damian tried to fly with artificial wings from the castle walls to France in 1507 he landed in the dunghill – at least according to the court poet, William Dunbar. Dunbar had his own motives and his story has been questioned. But anyone walking along the walk below the south side of Stirling Castle today can find plenty of pottery and other rubbish which has clearly been ejected from windows, jaw holls, latrine chutes or simply thrown over the walls. There were latrine chutes at other residences, too, including Doune and Linlithgow.

So much for the eventual disposal. What of the more immediate and personal problems? A recess within the king’s closet was probably for a stool of ease – which would, of course, be emptied by others (Dunbar 1999, 140-148) - no need for latrine chutes in the palace block itself, just a servant to carry the container to an outer wall. In this, James was being more modest than some of his contemporaries. In England, there was a Groom of the Stole, whose job included helping the king when he used his close stool whilst in France, the witness who reports the king using his commode in public sounds rather shocked, though the king himself was unabashed (Thurley 1993, 93 and 176; Chatenet 2002, 114). Apart from the palace, most of the 16th century latrine chutes reported seem to be in the more prestigious parts of the castle and people lower down the social scale may have had very limited facilities, a problem that continued into the 19th century when the castle housed substantial numbers of soldiers and their families and in 1831, it was reported ‘nuisances to a disgusting extent are constantly to be met with …in every corner and place not immediately to view.’ Urinal bottles (piss-pots for men) are well known from Scots monastic sites though there seems to be no information about their use in the royal residences in Scotland. One commentator complained that, whilst they

6 Welander 2005, this brief article includes illustrations of the items in question, as does Harrison 1999.
were readily available in Germany, they were not provided at the French court, so that the
gentlemen had to piss on the fire; in England, pissing on the fire was forbidden and in some
palaces there were actual urinal stalls or pissing points provided around the courtyards
(Chatenet 2002, 100; Thurley 1993, 173-4). Obviously, there was no need to forbid it if nobody
ever did it!). One problem was to ensure that the human wastes did not get mixed with kitchen
effluents and the vastly greater volume of rain water and accumulate as stagnant pools in or
around the premises7. Some monasteries had quite elaborate, stone-built arched drains to carry
the bulk effluent away – though the scale of the problem was very much less than for a busy
court and no such arrangements have been found in Scots royal residences8.

The evidence for personal washing is again confined to the immediate royals. James V certainly
had a bath tub, probably to be set up in his closet and filled with hot water when required
(Dunbar 1999, 197). There is no evidence, either documentary or archaeological, for the sort of
quite elaborate baths, some with running water, reported from France and England by
Chatenet and Thurley.

Finally, in this section, when de Guise and her train left, whilst it was very much quieter, it was
not abandoned; staff were involved in cleaning up, maintenance and care of the grounds,
perhaps chaplains and other administrators, stable staff and so on. Some of these were actually
permanent residents at Stirling but sometimes, too, substantial sections of the household were
left behind whilst de Guise was travelling; they would require to be fed (or to be paid in lieu of
their food).

3.4 THE RESIDENCES, THE ITINERARY AND DE GUISE AT STIRLING

De Guise moved to Stirling in July 1543 with her daughter, the Little Queen. Within a month
she had established a flock of poultry in the castle. The fact that cockerels were bought ‘to go
with the hens’ indicates that this was a breeding flock (NAS E33/3 f. 9v; ibid f. 42r). They were

7 Even in modern Britain, surface rain-water is from 40 to 150 times the volume of sewage, White, quoted Harrison
1999.

8 The great drain at Paisley has been investigated and the drains at Crossraguel and Glen Luce are notable features.
probably ornamental fowls, exotic pets, pertaining to the menagerie rather than to the larder. I think it is fair to think of her feeding them herself after a tough day and perhaps, too, taking her little daughter with her, cooing to the birds, watching them scuttle to pick up the scattered grain, laughing at their silliness and quaintness. The chickens are a reminder that, apart from the great political, cultural and military events, from 1543 to about 1549, Stirling was de Guise’s main domestic setting. With the chickens, she tried to make it a home for herself and her daughter and also participated, however modestly, in the great Europe-wide fashion for exotic animals, animals outnumbering people at some of the wealthier courts (Chatenet 2002, 30).

The primary reason for de Guise’s use of Stirling was that it was her dower house, allocated to her by her marriage contract in the event of her being widowed. Earlier in the year, Arran had wanted to gain control of the important stronghold but it was in the hands of Lord Erskine who would not hand it over, albeit it was only after a stand-off in July between her supporters and Arran that de Guise was herself able to move from Linlithgow. Stirling’s long use as a royal residence was a positive attraction in a society which valued tradition; like the Valkhof, an important residence of the dukes of Guelders, it had even acquired (spurious) associations with the Romans (Nijsten 2004, 324). Doubtless there were then old buildings still upstanding which have now been lost and there are records, for example, of a Wallace Tower. Poetic names such as Snowdon added to Stirling’s air of antiquity, the ‘ancestral home’ with (again spurious) Arthurian links. Its use as dower house went back several generations; indeed, it seems to have been assumed that royal heirs would have it as their nursery, perhaps on account of its healthy situation. Finance was allocated from the Lordship of Stirling for its upkeep. It had undergone considerable modernisation over the previous 50 years or so with the addition of the Great Hall and King’s Old Building for James IV and (most recently) the new Palace for James V. The chapel royal at Stirling was the main focus of royal religious life during the late king’s lifetime, Stirling the place where he usually spent Easter. The park and gardens were important amenities for leisure but also for pasture for horses and even for cattle awaiting slaughter for the kitchens (NAS E33/3 extra-ordinary costs August 1543, f. 23v). The town could provide supplies and accommodation for the inevitable overspill when the full court was at Stirling. It was fairly central – Edinburgh could be reached within a day’s journey but was far enough away to encourage a sense of ‘getting away from it all’. So Stirling, uniquely amongst Scotland’s royal residences, combined a degree of security with accessibility and comfort and had a full range of facilities. James V and James VI both used it as a springboard for hunting
expeditions in Menteith and further north. And it was secure, the defences steadily improved over the decades, a point we will return to later. So Stirling had a lot of attractions for de Guise – and security, the antiquity of its use, its healthiness and the religious associations all made it particularly suited for the upbringing of the Little Queen. And, although the arrangements seem to have been ad hoc and lacking in splendour, it was also the setting for her coronation\(^9\).

During October de Guise (and perhaps the Little Queen with her) visited Edinburgh, Dunfermline, St Andrews and Falkland (in that order) before returning to Stirling (NAS E33/3 extra-ordinary expenses) and de Guise was in Edinburgh again in December when she lodged at Holyrood (NAS E33/3 extra-ordinary costs December 1543 f. 37r). In early February 1544 she and her ladies were in the town of Linlithgow then took boat from Blackness, travelled to Edinburgh and returned via Linlithgow to Stirling. She entertained in her lodgings in Linlithgow in July 1544 though again this seems to be a brief visit (NAS E33/3 extra-ordinary costs, February 1544, f. 2r-v; ibid July 1544, f. 15v). The assumption that she was, otherwise, most of the time in Stirling is supported by the correspondence and other evidence. She had met Grimani in Stirling on 14 October 1543 (Hannay 1913). On 2 March 1544 Gray wrote about events since she had left Edinburgh and of his intention to come to Stirling to see her. She certainly was close to the Convention held at Stirling in late May 1544 (Cameron 1927, 88, note). When, in June 1544, Arran issued a proclamation against de Guise’s authority, the herald was sent to Stirling (\(TA\) VIII, 301). Over the next few years, it is rarely possible to pin de Guise down except for a few days together. She was with her party of supporters in Stirling in November 1544 (\(APS\)). In late May 1545 Arran was planning to see her in Stirling shortly; both Arran and de Guise attended the Privy Council in Stirling over the next few days (Cameron 1927, 139-140; NAS E32/8). She spent Christmas 1545 in Stirling though Arran, who had been expected to join her, actually spent it in St Andrews (Camerson 1927, 126 and 152). After the murder of the cardinal in May 1546 Arran, after nominating his brother to fill the vacant bishopric, came to Stirling to consult with de Guise and the Privy Council met for several days (Merriman 2000, 213; \(RPC\) 1 passim) She was at meetings of the council again in Stirling in March and May 1547, throughout that period being present at other meetings elsewhere. She

\(^9\) Guy describes what is readily available; the accounts add little beyond the provision of some cheese and cattle from Menteith, presumably for the ‘feasting’ (NAS E33/3 extra-ordinary expenses, August and September 1543).
was at Stirling with the Little Queen when Arran appeared to report the disaster at Pinkie in September 1547. In 1546-7 William Bell contracted to supply meat for her court and household in Stirling (below). She can also be tied to other specific sites from time to time, for example being present at the siege of Haddington. But the best general guide is that at least intermittently until mid 1548 and the departure of the Little Queen for France, correspondents assume she will be at Stirling or that she had been there recently or would be there shortly. Almost all her appearances elsewhere can be explained by political imperatives, particularly her need to be present at meetings of the council but also her wish to involve herself with the defence of the nation by French and Scots troops. In the same way, Arran’s periodic if brief appearances in Stirling also had a political motive, to attend meetings of the council or estates, for discussions with de Guise etc. For example he spent most days from 22nd October to 6 November 1547 in Stirling returning from 10 to 17 November and then spending much of December, including Christmas, in Stirling with de Guise and a total of 11 days in early January. For parts of this series of visits he lived (very unusually) at de Guise’s expense (NAS E32/9). These visits followed the decision to appeal directly for French military help and to seriously consider sending the little queen to France with a view to her ultimate marriage – so de Guise and Arran had a good deal to discuss and she had every reason to use all her charm, to waste no effort, to persuade him of her goodwill. A convention of estates to discuss the new treaty with France had him at Stirling again from 16 to 20 February (Merriman, 2000 305-6; NAS E32/9). Significantly, on 29 February 1548, Sir John Erskine accompanied the Little Queen from Stirling to Dumbarton, where she was to await her eventual departure for France.

After this, de Guise also spent less time in Stirling, apparently being in Dumbarton herself in early May though expected in Stirling shortly (Cameron 1927, 231-2) though her apparent absence for much of the rest of the year may have been due to fears of plague (Renwick 1887, 53). She was in Edinburgh for Christmas 1548 where she and Lady Huntly welcomed Huntly back to Scotland after his escape from captivity in England (Lesley 1830) they were all back in Stirling for New Year and for the whole of 1549, the Bread Book gives a day by day itinerary for de Guise. She stayed in Stirling till 6 January, stopping in Linlithgow on the next day and arriving in Edinburgh on 8 January. She dined (main meal of day) in Linlithgow on 14 January but returned to Edinburgh for supper in the evening. On 19 June she had her dinner in Leith, with the gentlemen, officers and others, apparently waving off the French force to recapture the islands of the Forth, returning to Edinburgh for supper (NAS E34/15; Merriman, 2000). On 22
June she had both dinner and supper at Corstorphine with 'the general' (NAS E34/15); Arran also visited Corstorphine several times around this period, evidently also seeing the general (NAS E32/10). On 25 June de Guise gave a supper in Edinburgh for the Governor, the ambassador and many other distinguished guests (NAS E34/15). She entertained the general and many of his staff again at Corstorphine on 22 July for both dinner and supper (NAS E34/15). On 5 September she had dinner with de Charmes at Elphinstone in East Lothian again returning to Edinburgh for supper (NAS E34/15). Then on 1 October, after dinner in Edinburgh, she and her entourage took ship and landed in Kirkcaldy, where she dined with a fairly extensive company (NAS E34/15). The following day she moved to St Andrews, on 5 October to Falkland, on 7 October to Lindores, the following day to Perth; over the next few days she was in Dundee, Red Castle, Forfar, Coupar Angus, Perth and Tullibardine, to arrive in Stirling for supper on 16 October. On 18 October she was off to Linlithgow, arriving in Edinburgh for supper on 19 October and staying there till setting off for Stirling via Linlithgow on 11 December.

She stayed in Stirling (Arran visited again over Christmas and the New Year though staying in the town not in the castle) until after dinner on 16 January, having supper and spending the night at Castle Campbell, then on to Falkland the next day where she stayed till the end of the month, with a visit to Coupar on 30 and 31 January. Then it was to Pitlethie (near Leuchars) till the 13 February, then she left most of her train at Pitlethie, going herself to Dundee, living at the expense of the governor till 16 February when she returned to Falkland. There were short visits to Coupar on 16 February and perhaps Edinburgh on 22 February, Falkland again on 23 February and so, via Castle Campbell for the night of 24 February, back to Stirling on 28 February. She stayed this time till the middle of the month and then, by way of Linlithgow (night of 16 March) she returned to Edinburgh till the end of the month. There are no records for April but in May she was in Edinburgh probably till 23rd when she set off again, via Linlithgow, to Stirling and so on to Tullibetton, Perth and St Andrews arriving there at the end of May, the series of accounts then ending until her return from France in late 1551 (NAS E33/4).

It should now be clear that, though our information has gaps, de Guise was sometimes at Stirling for quite extended periods in the early years but less so from mid 1548. In 1549 she spent a total of less than a month in Stirling divided between three stays; she spent rather more
than that at Stirling in the first three months of 1550 but then went off to France for over a year. These moves were tremendously troublesome and uncomfortable for everyone, subject of complaint across Europe, but it had to be done.

3.5 Building Work at Stirling – and the Question of Completion

Doubt has been expressed about whether the palace at Stirling was completed and ready for occupation by 1542-3 or even by the later 1540s. This section draws together some of the relevant arguments but does not provide a definitive answer.

The traditional view is summarised by RCAHMS (1963, 184). There are few accounts, one for 1538 suggests that major work was not under way, preparation was under way by October of the following year and work in progress in 1540; the monogram appears on the wall-heads, numbers working at Falkland fell in 1540 and this might indicate a move to Stirling and several specific men seem to vanish from other sources. RCAHMS concludes that ‘the building was approaching completion’ by the time of the king’s death. This conclusion is echoed by Dunbar (1999, 50-2) who also calls in support that the tofall of the queen’s lodging was roofed in December 1541 and the absence of later recorded expenditure. Fawcett (1995, 63), on the other hand, is at best sceptical, agreeing that the appointment of Robert Robertson to oversee the woodwork in 1541 might indicate an advanced position, but questioning if the entire construction could have been completed between Hamilton of Finnart’s arrival in 1538 and the king’s death in December 1542.

The situation is complicated by uncertainties about the precise locations of the few apartments named in the early sources, about whether the king’s chamber in Stirling referred to in 1533 was within what is now the palace, much less that it corresponds to the suite of rooms now thought of as the king’s. Royal visits continued almost throughout the period so there must always have been a king’s chamber somewhere. But the location of the tofall of the queen’s lodging does seem certain. In July 1550, the Regent is recorded dealing with legal business ‘in the chamber of the queen’ in the castle of Stirling (Renwick 1887, 269). By that time, surely, we can assume that the palace was a functioning building and the rooms had something like their presently-understood names and functions from outer halls to closets.
Tradition (with all its dangers) endorses a James V date. John Ray, who saw the palace about 1662, mentions the palace as ‘the building added by James V’ and comments on the ‘many stately rooms both for lodging and entertainment’ as well as on the ‘good carved woodwork on the roofs’. Similarly, in 1681, a history of the Drummond family claimed that John Drummond of Milnab ‘wrought for King James the Fyfth’ the timber work which adorned the castle (quoted Dunbar 1975). In the 18th century, the palace and its carved work were routinely attributed to James V 10 though some of these writers call on the evidence of the monograms in support.

The comments of two 16th century figures are relevant if somewhat opaque. Bishop Leslie, writing about 1571, credits Hamilton of Finnart with ‘reforming the palaces of Stirling and Linlithgow’ (quoted by McKean 2001, 91) - an interesting phrase, suggestive of radical remodelling rather than of starting from scratch, particularly since it so nearly equates the work at Stirling with work at Linlithgow, where re-modelling was certainly what was involved. Leslie also comments, more generally, that it was following the marriage to Madeleine de Valois, that there were:

\[\text{mony new ingynis and devysis, alsweill of bigging of paleicis, abilyementis, as of banqueting and of menis behaviour, first begun and used … eftir the fassione quhilk thay had sene in France…}\]

Buchanan, in discussing the minority of James V, says that Stirling was one of the few strong places at his disposal. It had been:

\[\text{allotted to the queen for her residence, but had been, at the time when the queen herself was under hiding, from a dread of the Douglases, deserted by her servants and, on the disturbances subsiding, was fortified more for show than defence (Aikman 1827, II, 298).}\]

Buchanan then goes on to imply that it was its security that made Stirling so attractive to the king when he escaped from the Douglases. Of course, there are difficulties about this tale. Buchanan seems to place it early in the reign but does not give dates, he seems to contradict himself about the level of security Stirling offered and at a later stage in his narrative he says

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10 e.g. J Mackay, 1723; NAS GD18/5013 W. Stirling to Sir John Clerk, 1741; Pococke, 1887.
that it was following the births of two sons (1539 and 1540) that the king, feeling secure of heirs, ‘turned his attention to useless building’ (Aikman 1827, II, 318). There is no other evidence that James spent much on building prior to 1528 and finances were then tight whilst it is certain that his main building work started before the births of the two sons. But Buchanan had been around the court from 1536 and his inventions usually run more to moral smears than to ‘castles in the air’.

The difficulty of imagining the work compressed into a four-year time scale is also reduced by the finding that much earlier work has been incorporated (Gallagher and Ewart, 2005). That might (or might not) be related to Buchanan’s and Leslie’s comments. Fawcett cautions against assuming that the ‘palace’ in Stirling mentioned in 1532 is the present building (Fawcett 1995, 55-6; Paton 1957, 108). The word was being increasingly used in Scotland around this period. At Holyrood, Falkland and Linlithgow its first use corresponds to significant new work being carried out. James, of course, was comparatively prosperous by the later 1530s and his marriage contracts obliged him to provide suitable accommodation at Stirling for his wife (of course, his ‘unusual’ arrangement with Hamilton of Finnart obviated many of the financial problems at Stirling). Other royal buildings were constructed rapidly, most strikingly the chapel royal of 1594, completed in a matter of months, during which time it was said that ‘all the best workmen in the country’ were assembled and encouraged by the king with liberal gifts (RCAHMS 1963, 186). Work elsewhere could be stopped to ensure that the royal work proceeded as required and materials were commandeered or presented as gifts.

Further support for a date close to 1542 has come from the dendrochronological studies showing that in situ joists were felled in 1539 and that the boards used for the heads were also felled around the same time or earlier. Of course, they were not necessarily carved and inserted into the ceilings immediately though that was the most likely plan. The pattern of royal use yields few clues since both presence and absence can be used to argue almost any case. James V spent up to 44% of his nights Stirling in some years early in the adult reign (Thomas 2005, 244). He was frequently present in the early 1530s when building work included re-roofing his bed chamber and other work on the residential ranges, apart from on stables and grounds, was under way (Paton 1957, 103-111). His reduced presence in the later 1540s has been attributed to his marriages and the political situation but could, in part, be due to major work. But he was
always present for Easter (probably with a considerable court) and (except when in France) never spent less than 8% of his recorded nights in Stirling (Thomas 2005, 244). In 1542:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11 -13 January</td>
<td>Edinburgh to Stirling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 January</td>
<td>Stirling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 -2 February</td>
<td>Stirling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 -16 April</td>
<td>Stirling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 June</td>
<td>Stirling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 June</td>
<td>Edinburgh to Stirling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19, 23 -25 June</td>
<td>Stirling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 June</td>
<td>Stirling and Edinburgh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 2 July</td>
<td>Stirling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 -23 August</td>
<td>King in Edinburgh, Queen in Stirling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thereafter, de Guise travelled to Stirling with part of her household on 26 March 1543; she was back in Linlithgow from 27 to 29 March, visiting Stirling again on 30 March, again returning the next day. But a substantial part of her household was in Stirling from 26 March to 13 April, arguably preparing it for occupation (NAS NAS E33/3). She moved to Stirling with ‘the little queen’ on 26 or 27 July and was to live there for much of the next five years, until the departure of the Little Queen in 1548; her chamber is specifically mentioned in relation to her meals (see below) as are chambers allocated (whether temporarily or long-term is not usually clear) to others. During the extended discussions and arguments about her move, the incomplete state of the buildings or lack of suitable furnishings is not mentioned nor is it commented on by the various visitors or correspondents. Any continuing work paid for via the traditional Scots funds would have involved discussion and debate, of which there is no sign. The coronation was the first great state event following her arrival and, whilst the circumstances must have limited the attendance, it was very desirable to put on a show –de Guise bought some cattle (probably for the feast) but there is no sign of building work.

De Guise herself did pay for some work. In November 1543 payments were made to close up a window and to repair a chimney and some other modest work in the cuisine de bouche; the total cost was a modest. That encourages the idea that if there were other work carried out, it would be recorded here though it must be admitted that there are gaps in the surviving records. The
work was supervised by Mr Nicholas Roy, mason, who had been involved with the building of the palace and who appears on the ‘early’ household list (NAS E33/3 Extra-ordinary expenses, November 1543 f. 33). Roy was also involved in building work involving 10 chalders of lime on the walls of ‘le chastel et place de Stirling’ in March and April 1544 (NLS Adv Mss 29.2.5 f. 9r). A chalder was a bulk measure and might weigh a tonne but the total cost of the lime and the work of around £10 indicates that the overall scale was modest. On the other hand, there could have been other work recorded on similar sheets now lost.

The next substantial run of accounts is for work, mainly on windows, in 1558 (Paton 1958, 293-297). The headers of the accounts refer to mending and pointing the slate work of the New Work and the Old Work and the Chapel, to iron work for the palace, to work on the glass and timberwork of the windows of the palace. The sense of the document, consistent with later usage, is that the New Work refers to the palace and the Old Work to the King’s Old Building whilst several of the summaries (eg that for the glasswork) refer to the work being in the palace 11. It may be that the dormers, one with date 1557 and the other with the monogram MR date from this period (Dunbar 1999, 50).

11 Buchanan refers to the ‘New Work or Palace’ in a document completed about 1568 (see below).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rooms mentioned in MW Accounts 1558</th>
<th>Work carried out etc</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The New Work</td>
<td>Slating and pointing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chambers of the Old Work</td>
<td>Work by the slater, sand and lime supplied for repairs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chapel</td>
<td>Work by the slater, sand and lime supplied for repairs, ‘the Chapel window’.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The rawestrie [ie Vestry]</td>
<td>Window repaired with an iron glass band</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Queen’s Hall</td>
<td>Windows on the east and west sides glazed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Queen’s chamber</td>
<td>Door fitted with new lock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Queen’s outer chamber</td>
<td>The window repaired with lead and glass</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mons. De Rubay (the chancellor)’s chamber</td>
<td>Two new doors hung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Gardemange</td>
<td>A lock, two keys and a band supplied</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The gardemange in the Queen’s Kitchen</td>
<td>The wright is paid to ‘make’ the gardemange, which takes 10 days and required 5 deals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lord Argyll’s Tower</td>
<td>Locks and keys for the doors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The workhouse</td>
<td>Locks and keys for the door</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The workhouse of the fore entrance</td>
<td>A lock for the door</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The fore work</td>
<td>Slated and some glass put in a window of the ‘uversyd’ of the forework</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The turnpike</td>
<td>The turnpike head slated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Turnpike Hall</td>
<td>The door supplied with a lock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larder</td>
<td>Some glazing work done</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The entries referring to the Queen’s Hall and the Queen’s Chamber are not consecutive in the document so it is not clear if they are the same room or not. Mons. Le Rubay seems to have used his chamber as an office ‘where he holds chamber’. Finally, there is a receipt by Servais de Condez valet de chambre of the queen dowager in favour of Robin Gourlay, a merchant of Edinburgh for the sum of 1000 francs tournois ordered to be paid by the treasurer Robert Richardson for making all things needful for the ‘fous’ or ‘fons’ of the ‘grand salle du chasteaux destrellin’, dated at 25 October [c. 1560] (NLS Adv Mss 29.2.5 f. 129r).
There are major difficulties in understanding what these various entries mean. Gaps in the
record mean that because something is not recorded, does not necessarily mean that it did not
happen. It could be argued that even the late references to ‘the queen’s chamber’ refer to
apartments elsewhere, particularly as the queen’s apartments as now understood do not have
any east windows. The ‘grand salle’ could be almost any large space and the word ‘fons’ or
fous’ remains obscure.
So, there are uncertainties about whether and how far the palace was completed and fully
occupied at any specific date though a case can certainly be agued that it was in use from 1543.
But it must be recalled, at all times, that the royal suite was not independent of the rest of the
castle; it was not just a case of accommodation for staff and courtiers but of services (from
cooking to wardrobe) of providing security and so on whilst, even if the suite in the palace was
fully available, that would not mean that the older suite, in the King’s Old Building, would be
abandoned.

3.6 STIRLING’S GROWING MILITARY ROLE

Stirling’s military importance seems so obvious that to question it might look like foolishness.
However, foolish or not, the questions need to be asked, given the growing academic
recognition that castles (however martial their appearance) were typically, first and foremost,
residences and administrative centres, an architectural and landscape re-enforcement of the
lord’s or king’s social/ political dominance (Tabraham 1997; Creighton 2002; Liddiard 2005).

That Stirling was militarily important at times is not in question as its role during the Wars of
Independence shows; it had probably had artillery fortifications since the reign of James II
(Fawcett 1995). Certainly James IV’s forework had a defensive role – though it was also a
consciously handsome piece of architecture, the principal ornament of the castle, according to a
late 16th century comment. But there is no evidence that James V regarded Stirling as primarily
defensive (his personal guard, as an adult monarch, seems to have consisted of a single archer).
There is little evidence of a permanent garrison prior to the 1540s and Buchanan (who was
around the court from 1536), in discussing the minority of James V, says that Stirling was one
of the few strong places at his disposal. It had been:
allotted to the queen [his mother] for her residence, but had been, at the time when the queen herself was under hiding, from a dread of the Douglases, deserted by her servants and, on the disturbances subsiding, was fortified more for show than defence. (Aikman, 1827 II, 298).

Tellingly, in early 1543, whilst the issue of whether de Guise would move to Stirling or not was being discussed, it was said that her presence would pose no great military threat to her opponents as there was no artillery within the castle which could command the bridge or impede its control by others (Sadler 1809, 203-4). The move to Stirling introduced a new element as de Guise had 30 ‘men’ about her and the little queen was watched over by Lords Erskine and Livingstone, each with 24 men. On 31 July 1543 Sadler was told that the guard allowed only two nobles or prelates at a time to see the Little Queen with a single companion and that though de Guise wanted the cardinal to be lodged in the castle, the nobles commanding the guard had insisted this was not allowed (Sadler I, 245, 31 July 1543). These guards were distinct from the personal staffs (Hannay 1914, 10 August 1543) and their presence was sufficiently obvious for Grimani, who visited in October, to comment on the ‘numerous guard. In 1545 the guard was still headed by Erskine and Livingstone who were excused attendance at council or parliament if it would impede their duties (RPC I, 11-12; RPC I, June 1546) and there is no reason to believe the guard was withdrawn prior to the Little Queen’s departure for France. Indeed, some of them seem to have accompanied her there and witnessed a charter at St Germain on 25 August 1549 (RMS IV, Entry 434). There is no indication of how these men were paid nor of their living and eating arrangements though they must have served ‘by turns’ ie would not all be present at any one time.

Nor was that all. In the ‘early’ household list, probably dating shortly after de Guise’s arrival in Stirling, there are 19 names including Pourie Daffy, under the heading of ‘canoniers’ of whom at least 12 were Flemish; Daffy is sometimes described as the ‘marshal’ usually seen as a glorified blacksmith or farrier though Daffy was perhaps more of a military engineer as in March 1544 he was being paid for his needs in regard to the artillery of Stirling. The artillery might have been put in Stirling in anticipation of the English invasion of May 1544– though the feared attack on Stirling did not then occur. The artillery was later greased and moved to ‘the place formed for it’ and then towed west in June or July with leather thongs, probably to Glasgow or Dumbarton (NAS E33/3, extraordinaries for March 1544).
This more or less corresponds to the first positive records of town walls at Stirling in October 1544 when John Graham agreed to pay 6s 8d the boll for salt ‘to the wall of the toun’; several similar payments follow, in effect taxing local trade and building work to pay for the walls (SCA B66/1/24 unfoliated). The main –and better known –work on the walls was in 1546-7 when there were contributions also from de Guise, nobles, clerics and others. That work was explicitly ‘at this present peralus tyme of neid for resisting of oure auld innimeis of Ingland’ (Renwick 1887, 50 and 61). Also in 1547 an English spy reported that a blockhouse was being built at the entry to Stirling Castle and expressed concern that if it was completed it would make the castle difficult to capture. Merriman suggests that this work was taken over and modernised by the Italian engineer Ubaldini in 1548 arguing from evidence of its similarity to Ubaldini’s documented work in Edinburgh (Merriman 2000, 323 and 327).

The blockhouse and Ubaldini’s work correspond to two distinct phase of Scotland’s defences against English attack and it appears that during these years, Stirling became a much more modern fortress, more able to be defended against artillery and also to deploy artillery of the most modern patterns. The building work would involve many labourers but certainly some officers and engineers also and it all presupposes suitable accommodation for the gunners and others and probably accounts, at least in part, for the French and Scottish Officers supplied with food in 1549 (NAS E34/15).

The usual image of Mary’s Scots infancy, protected from direct exposure to the tensions and threats of war, is at odds with this sort of evidence. Her home was a base for major engineering work and to a large number of boisterous soldiers with their games and crudity and the nationalistic pride and tensions which must have gone with such arrangements.

3.7 **King’s side and Queen’s side**

To have separate accommodation for the king and queen had been common European practice for centuries and Scotland had done so since at least the reign of James II. The division was about status, rather than about modesty, a point Laynesmith (2004, 244-5) emphasises by reminding us that their separate kitchens or spaces in the chapel were not to protect the king’s modesty. Nor, as will be seen later, was the whole ‘queen’s side’ exclusively female. Stirling is a classic example of 16th century practice, with the two essentially similar ranges side by side on
the same level (Dunbar 1999). That raises the issue of who used what after 1542 in the years when Stirling was home to two queens, the ‘Little Queen’ and the ‘queen dowager’. There is little direct evidence. However, using comparisons with other lodgings, with the palaces of other queens, with Mary’s own practice in the 1560s and a few documentary hints, I will suggest that de Guise would continue to use the queen’s side whilst the king’s side would be reserved for ‘the little queen’ at least ritually or ceremonially, recognising that on a practical, day to day basis, she probably had a warm, comfortable nursery elsewhere. The argument requires a fairly extended discussion of aspects of 16th century royal culture as they might have applied in the peculiar circumstances of Scotland in the 1540s.

In the 16th century both the monarch and the consort (particularly after the anointing of the coronation) acquired sacerdotal qualities which set them aside from others (Laynesmith 2004, 94-9). Monarchs have been described as having ‘two bodies’, the fleshly mortal body and the undying legal body of the institution, represented by the attributes of monarchy such as the orb, sceptre and crown. The most successful monarchs of the period would parade themselves in appropriate finery, emphasising the importance of the mortal body; failure to do so was dangerous. Images of the monarch, such as appeared on the Great Seal or (much more widely distributed) on the coinage, multiplied the body of the monarch. The royal coat of arms or even the intimate servants and advisers of the monarch could carry some of the authority, the awe and respect due to the mortal body (Starkey 1997, 42-6). Mary’s Great Seal was in use from May 1545 (RPC I p. 24). When she was in reality an infant this first image presented to the world depicts her as a (recognisably female) adult on an elaborate Italianate or renaissance throne, dressed in regal robes, crowned, sceptre in hand.

Later designs varied. The joint seal for Mary and Francois as monarchs of Scotland, England, Ireland and France portrays both, again on a very elaborate, two-seater throne whilst as widow of Francis there is a return to the single figure with variations of the design of throne and draperies (Birch 1905, 68-76).

The throned figure represents one of the key aspects of monarchy, the ruler sitting in judgement. In Scotland, the reverse of the seal usually depicted the other key aspect of monarchy, the warrior-defender of the nation (Starkey 1997, 44), a knight on horseback, sword in hand, bearing a shield with the lion rampant. For Mary, in all stages of her career, this is
replaced by some variant of the royal arms of Scotland, clearly on the assumption that a queen will not be a military leader, indeed, that in the fullness of time, that role will be taken by her husband. On her coinage Mary appears as an adult, crowned as her father had been, even when she was an infant (Burns 1887). So, whilst there can be some accommodation to ‘reality’, at every stage of her career Mary is represented as the monarch. That accommodation to reality was necessarily limited. In fact, as an adult Mary not only sat in judgment at Justice Ayres but came closer to battle than either her father or her son would ever be and proved more martial than at least two of her three husbands. But that was not ‘ideal’ for a queen and was not represented on the seals of the later part of her reign. Anticipating their joint appearance on the seal following their marriage, at Henri II’s triumphal entry into Rouen in late 1550, Mary appeared beside the dauphin, a direct recognition of her own sovereignty (Ritchie 2002, 69). Doubtless she stood to his left, the ‘sinister’ and inferior side, as she does in the double portrait of them as king and queen of France, where she is also slightly behind him; but it was much closer to equality than most were permitted to approach.
In late August 1571, the five-year old James VI performed his first public engagement, processing from the castle to a parliament in Stirling’s Tolbooth where he made his first public speech. He was dressed in royal robes though the sword and crown were gilt replicas, the originals being held in Edinburgh by supporters of his deposed and imprisoned mother (Juhala 2000, 194). The mortal body of the child, re-enforced by the emblems, incorporates all the majesty of monarchy itself, as he himself, his mother and grandfather had all done during their coronation ceremonies, none of them then aged much over a year. The gilt replicas, despite their air of the dressing-up cupboard, protect the child-king from aspersions of being unkingly, doubly dangerous at a time when his mother’s supporters were asserting, with armed force, that he was not the rightful king. The enactment creates the reality of regal authority.

Many other examples could be adduced (most obviously the creation of effigies of dead monarchs, to which food was presented until the funeral, when the full accession of the successor was recognised) to show that it was not necessary for the monarch to be an active ruler to be represented as ‘monarchical’. The point, for the present project, is that Mary has to be treated as the monarch – and that, I suggest, would involve her being placed in the monarch’s (ie the king’s) apartments for formal events.

The suggestion is supported by evidence from England where Mary Tudor as (adult) queen occupied what, during her father’s and brother’s reigns, had been the king’s side; her husband (albeit he was King of Spain as well as of England) lived in what had been the queen’s or consort’s side (Guy, ‘The Marian Court’ website). Even more strikingly, in 1496 the Pope directed that Ferdinand and Isabella, married but both sovereigns in their own right, he of Aragon, she of Castille, were to be known as the ‘Catholic Kings’ (Starkey 2004, 14).

At Stirling the two suites are ranged side by side, though it was common for them to be stacked, one above the other. It is thought that in England, as in most of continental Europe, the king’s were usually above the queen’s (Thurle 1993, 29-31: Chatenet 2002, 194) though at Hampton Court Henry VIII initially placed the queen’s apartments above the king’s, revering the arrangement some time later (Thomas 2005, 61). In 1528, at much the same time as Henry was introducing his initial anomalous arrangement at Hampton Court, James V was building his new tower at Holyrood, placing the king’s apartments on the first floor and the queen’s above with a communicating stair from the one to the other (Dunbar 1999, 142-3; Thomas 2005,
61). At Linlithgow, the other potentially stacked royal lodging in Scotland, the situation is less clear-cut since, whilst the king’s apartments were certainly in the west wing on the first floor, it is uncertain whether the queen’s were above that or were on the first floor on the north side (Dunbar 1999, 138; Juhala 2000, 140).

At Holyrood, whilst married to Darnley, Mary certainly occupied the original queen’s apartments, formerly occupied by her mother, as is clearly shown by detailed descriptions of the murder of Riccio. Melville of Halhill, who was familiar with Mary and her arrangements and was at Holyrood close to the time of the events, says that the murderer’s ‘passit up throw the Kingis chamber’ and that the king ‘was past up to the Quen of before’ from his own apartments (Melville 1827, 149). Buchanan, who was similarly well-informed if less well-inclined, says ‘The king ascended from his bedchamber, which was below the queen’s, by a narrow stair’ to enter the queen’s closet (Aikman 1827, II, 480). Guy, in the best-researched modern account, says that Darnley led the conspirators up the stair (2004, 48). Darnley, though called ‘the king’, did not have the Crown Matrimonial and Mary bitterly resented his implication that, as his wife, she owed him obedience (Guy 2004). Unlike her first husband Francois, who had the Crown Matrimonial, he did not appear beside her on the seal or the coinage. It seems most likely that she took these apartments immediately on her return to Scotland – any move at the time of her marriage would, surely, have been recorded – and regarded them as being the monarch’s space, as they would have been in France. The usage of the apartments, like the coins and the seals, is a representation of monarchy and is idealised. So, as monarch, Mary takes the superior position and, on that basis, the king’s apartments at Stirling would become hers as soon as she and her mother arrived in July 1543.

The slight, direct evidence for Stirling supports this, at least for later parts of her reign. According to comments made by George Buchanan about 1568, Mary ‘causit begin to mak a passage betuix hir chalmer in the New Work or Palace, within the Castell of Streuiling and the Great Hall thairof...’ Buchanan’s claim that this passage was to facilitate her access to Bothwell can be dismissed and the story was actually removed from his final, more formal accusations (Mahon 1923, 17; Hosack, 1874). But it is unlikely that he would have made the comment if the physical evidence of ‘a passage betuix her chalmer in the New Work ... and the Great Hall’ did not exist and the comment would lose all meaning if the king’s side was (even potentially) occupied by Darnley as king ie if Mary did not use ‘the king’s side’. I find it difficult to believe
that any such passage was not on the line of the present bridge as (a) it is the only convenient line and (b) a passage at any other point must have left some indication on the surviving structures.

It might also be relevant to note that Prince Henry was born in the king’s chamber at Stirling in 1594 (Juhala 2000, 77) and that at his baptism he was also displayed before attendant ambassadors and favoured guests, laid on his bed of estate, with his robes and regalia in the king’s presence chamber (My thanks to Prof. Mike Bath for this information from the Manuscript ‘Form and Order for the baptism’). That use of the king’s chambers for formal occasions involving the heir whilst his father was still alive argues strongly for the use of this space for formal occasions involving the ‘Little Queen’, specifically at the time of her coronation but perhaps other events also.

As an infant and heir to the English throne Mary Tudor had two rooms within her mother’s larger suite, an inner one where she slept and an outer where ‘she received visitors in infant state’ and in 1500, when not yet four years age, she formally received her New Year guests and played the virginals (Starkey 2004, 167, and 170). It is unfortunate that Sadler’s description glides over the issue of exactly where the infant Mary was then he saw her at Linlithgow, merely saying that during his discussions with de Guise ‘she caused me to go with her to the chamber where the child was and shewed her unto me’ (Sadler 1809, 84-90).

There might, from de Guise’s perspective, have been an added attraction in ensuring that these apartments were her daughter’s. If Arran claimed that he should have the use of them as regent, she had a ready rejoinder. He had adequate space at Holyrood for his formal functions and, de Guise could say, these apartments, in her own dower house, were already spoken for. The prior claim literally put Arran in his place. And, as is indicated elsewhere in this report, though space in the castle was sometimes made available for the governor’s meetings when he visited Stirling and he sometimes dined with de Guise, sometimes in her chamber, he appears to have stayed in private rented accommodation in the town, rather than in the castle (NAS E32/10 f. 167r). That still leaves us with the teasing problem of which apartment was involved when, on 26 July 1550, Arran granted sasine of Corgarff ‘in the chamber of the queen’ in Stirling Castle (Stirling Extracts I). Which queen?
3.8  Queens’ households in Scotland and beyond – Sources and background

The household of James V has been researched by several historians – most recently and comprehensively by Thomas in her thesis and, rather more briefly, in her book, *Princelie Majestie* (Thomas 2005) and Dunbar (1999) is another key source. Aspects of de Guise’s household are mentioned by Marshall (1977, 1993). Ritchie (2002), de Guise’s most recent and thorough biographer, is concerned only with overtly political matters and touches on the household only lightly. There are few records of the major part of the costs met from her French income though some payments, particularly to the Scots in her chamber, stables etc were paid through the Scots exchequer. Many of the officials are referred to by their French titles; for example, her household was overseen by the *maitre d’hotel* and her finances by the *contrôleur* (Thomas 2005, 45-6). Nonetheless, the archival material has turned out to be richer than anticipated – albeit, one could always wish that the records were more continuous and complete. There is also important new evidence about such issues as formality and informality but this will be considered along with other, more general issues, in the next chapter.

There are three household lists for de Guise. None is dated but one (which I will call the Early List) is probably from around 1543 or a little later since, for example, it includes the nurse and staff of the infant Mary Queen of Scots and others who left Scotland in later years. The other two are from the early 1550s and I will call them the Middle List and the c. 1554 list. They are all in the National Archives of Scotland (NAS E34/23/1 and /2 and 3 respectively ). There are also various accounts and receipts – for example receipts by servants and others for their wages and pensions in this section NAS E34. The most useful of those is NAS E34/15 which I am going to call the Bread Book. Sadly, it covers only 1549 – earlier and later volumes must have been lost - and its main purpose was to record the distribution of bread in de Guise’s household. But it is an archival gem, revealing far more than this prosaic description suggests; in particular, it lists those who ate with de Guise at each meal and also the bread distribution to the other tables about the court, from lords and ladies to the mule-drivers’ servants and the water carriers. Lists of people dining at Stirling on specified dates will be found in Appendix Two. There are also some household books (*Libri Emptorum*) and other items which have been used to follow de Guises’ travels and aspects of the kitchens and food, which will be considered elsewhere but also allow some comparisons with The Bread Book and some estimates of running costs, as noted in the Income and Costs section above. Other sources – such as the published Treasurer’s Accounts, are only modestly useful by comparison.
All three household lists are either implicitly or explicitly arranged into groups by ‘department’ and within groups according to status. The Early List records around 100 males and 36 females – a vastly higher proportion of females than for James V. The ‘Middle List’ has around 50, all male but is clearly only of parts of the household. The ‘1554 List’ has around 41 females and 71 males. In some cases there are only names and in some only nicknames; some of those named were boys and girls – particularly likely for male chamber staff in a female household. The lists were clearly made for different purposes and the 1554 list includes salaries for some of the posts but does not always give the name of the office holder. The ‘Early List’ is the best guide to the situation c. 1546-8 but the probable reduction in household size from 1543 to 1549 (see Income and Costs, above) needs to be born in mind.

In some respects, particularly as regards the lower reaches, de Guise’s household was similar to her late husbands; there was a queen’s kitchen and a court kitchen (for everyone else) there were stables and water carriers and so as, as there had been for the king. There were also some quite senior male servants whose titles (French for de Guise, Scots for the king) are comparable, men whose nominal jobs concerned the distribution of bread and wine and the actual service of the food, though we will shortly see that probably the titles do not describe their real tasks in de Guise’s household. It is in the upper tiers of the household that they differ and where most of the female staff are found in de Guise’s household.

Other queens and noblewomen of the later medieval and renaissance period also relied heavily on female staff. Of course, there was an element of ‘modesty’ about this whilst for 15th century English queens consort, appearing splendid and beautiful was a part of the role of the queen’s ladies in the king’s court where they were seen at feasts etc by visitors; on special, very formal occasions, 15th century English queens were accompanied by additional ladies. In this role they dominate many literary all-female courts (Laynesmith 2004, 227) though in Gavin Douglas’s Scots *Palice of Honour*, the (allegorical) Queen of Sapience on her progress is accompanied by the 12 Sibyls (usually emblematic of wisdom) as her ‘damisellis’ as well as by lords, ladies, prelates and others of varying degrees, described as the sages of antiquity (p. 4-5). The female element of queenly courts seems to have grown with time. Again, in England, in 1452-3 Margaret of Anjou’s household accounts refer to four ladies who were her personal attendants, nine damsels of ladies in waiting, who were of slightly lower status and mostly wives of her or her husband’s household and two chamberers and there might have been some additional...
damsels who might not actually be distinct from chamberers. In 1466-7 Elizabeth Woodville had five personal attendants, 7 damsels and 2 chamberers but two of her personal attendants were her sister and sister in law and very well paid (Laynesmith 2004, 224-5).

Chatenet (2002, 26-7) notes the growing importance of women at the 16th century French court. Elizabeth I had substantial numbers of female attendants, again in three tiers of descending status (Wright 1987). There is certainly evidence of far more women in de Guise’s household than in those of Joan Beaufort or Mary of Gueldres in the 15th century though they also had more females than their husbands (Downie 2006, 115-8) and the narrative of the murder of James I, for example, implies far more ladies in the queen’s entourage than appear in the formal records. So, having a substantial number of women (many of fairly high status) was to be expected. The other contrast with the king’s household, however, is the absence of a whole tier of national administrative staff such as the great officers of state, the Chancellor, Treasurer, Keeper of the Great Seal and so on; though her female staff were often well-connected they certainly did not have the political clout of men of that kind.

3.9 The ladies of honour

We will start with the females. The 1554 list divides them into Dames d’Honneur, Desmoisselles and Femmes de Chambres [Ladies of Honour, Maids of Honour, Ladies of the Chamber] corresponding to the three tiers at Elizabeth’s court (Wright 1987, 147-8)12. The Ladies of Honour were the leading ladies of the household and most of the seven named were of important Scots noble families with a few French women probably of similar standing; it might be that the formal category was only created when de Guise became Regent in 1554. The first few names on the Earl List, however, must also correspond to Ladies of Honour – for example Lady Fleming who was an illegitimate daughter of James IV. The ladies who dined at de Guise’s table in 1549 are of very similar standing and include some on the lists, though the diners also include men. It is probably safe to think of the ladies who dined with de Guise as Ladies of Honour; they will be considered below, recognising that there would not be space for

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12 Wood 1925, 314 prints the names of the females.
all of them at once; any overspill probably sat at the Ladies Board, mentioned in the Bread Book. There was sometimes, additionally, a Lords and Ladies Board, perhaps even set up in the Queen’s chamber and with its own bread supply.

3.10 MAIDS OF HONOUR OR LADIES IN WAITING

The c. 1554 list calls them ‘Desmoisselles’ though other sources assign them various titles such as Ladies in Waiting. There are about 20 in the c. 1554 list and 14 in the Early List though they shade off, socially, into the Ladies of the Chamber, the next lower rank. Again they include both French and Scots women. Only one name (Barbara Sandilands) appears on the Early List and the c. 1554 list and it seems that turnover was quite rapid; even Barbara Sandilands is not mentioned in the Bread Book of 1549. Marriage would be one reason for turnover. Jehan Pedefer or Pieddefer was a Frenchwoman first mentioned in 1538-9 when she was a Maid of Honour to the queen, paid 50 livres tournois. She then married and became Lady Livingstone and does not appear on the Early List. But between June 1548 and September 1550 she was making very substantial payments to other servants, suppliers and others on behalf of de Guise (NAS E34/14); in 1549 she dined at de Guise’s table more frequently than anyone else (NAS E34/15). She appears on the later household list as a Lady of Honour and payments to her from about 1551 further underline her importance; there is a letter to her from Captain Faucher in ?1554 (Wood 1925, 208-210) and her story indicates that rise within the hierarchy was possible, at least for some.

Renee D’Avantigny, Mme de la Touche, who appears on the early list, is recorded elsewhere as ‘gouvernante’ (supervisor) of the Maids of Honour (Wood 1923, xxx). Her husband, Urban de la Touche, had been a carver (écuyer trenchant) in the household in 1538 but he does not appear on the Early List and by June 1546 he was a prisoner in England (Wood 1923, xxxii). Madame de la Touche had left de Guise’s service some time before September 1547 when he died, at which time she was still trying to obtain payment of his back wages and later pressing for appointment to Mary’s court in France (Wood 1923, 214-6; Wood 1925, 10-11; Wood 1925, liv-lv). Perhaps, in practice, at the time when the Early List was made, she had been superseded as Gouvernante or Mistress of the Maidens by Janet Lady Fleming, since Lady Fleming and her three girls (filles) head the early list; she was an illegitimate daughter of James IV and was another who would accompany the little queen to France as her governess (Guy 2004, 43). The Bread Book intermittently mentions the Mistress of the Maidens as an evidently well-connected
post (NAS E34/15) a reminder that courts were lively and potentially dangerous places for young people and de Guise and her senior staff would in a sense have acted in loco parentis for younger women or even girls, living away from home for the first time as was the widespread European practice (Bertelli 1986, 16). Lady Ogilvie was the only other on the Early List to be allowed a ‘fille’ at this stage. These women must have been recruited through family contacts – and the astute de Guise would have realised the value of favouring supporters. In the 1550s Lady Livingstone and Lady Cassillis were Ladies of Honour whilst their daughters were Maids of Honour – Livingstone’s daughter can only have been a child and probably several of the other Maids of Honour were children or very young women being introduced to court life, perhaps in hopes of promotion or of finding a suitable husband.

Interestingly Beaugué (1830, 37) says that it was accompanied only by her desmoisselles that de Guise rallied the deserters from the siege of Haddington, who had hidden themselves in the houses of Edinburgh’s High Street.

3.11 Ladies of the Chamber

The c. 1554 List has 13 of these women under their own heading, below the Maids of Honour; the earlier list does not give a separate heading but around 25 women might fall into this group. These are not ‘titled ladies’ or even the daughters of titled ladies. Rather, they are the servants of titled ladies who hold higher offices, wives of male members of the court and others who perform practical tasks. The later list includes Lady Cassilis’s ‘woman’ (femme), Lady Livingstone’s, Lady Sauchie’s etc. They are not ‘merely’ menial servants but several of them are given just a single name which appears to be a familiar or nickname; in such a formal hierarchy this indicates that we have moved to a lower social echelon. So there are Marion, Cirrotte and Bouttie (the last two both provided with shoes in September and October 1545). Not appearing on either list was Senat, de Guise’s French, female ‘Fool’ (Marshall 1977, 70). The majority of these women probably ate at the ‘fames board’ [for femmes] which is placed well below the ‘ladies’ board’ in the lists, at the upper level of the below-stairs household.

A key group in the earlier list is the little queen’s nurse, her daughter and five or perhaps six assistants whose Scots job-description would include the ‘rockers’. The nurse herself, Janet Sinclair, had previously been nurse to Prince James, had continued to serve de Guise since his
death, would accompany Mary to France where she fiercely resisted being marginalised and managed to obtain a job for her son as well as herself when Mary’s young adult household was set up in 1554 (Guy 2004, 43; Wood 1925, lv).

Margaret Pignon who appears on the early list, was described as a femme de chambre in 1538-9. By 1549 she was back in France, writing to de Guise that she was now aged and ill and hoping that her salary would be continued; she had formerly had a salary of 70 livres tournois per year (Wood 1925, 22-3.). There are three washerwomen in the list and two had previously served James V in the same role. The other of James V’s laundresses had been the wife of one of his senior advisers (Thomas 1997, Appendix 1, part 2, 346). Those named women may have been supervisory and eaten at the fames board but the ‘lavanders’ board ‘is placed well below the ‘fames’ and even below the kitchen staff. These were probably the women who really did the washing, care of the difficult, delicate fabrics being a very skilled if sometimes arduous task. The lavanders got two or three loaves most days.

3.12 THOSE WHO EAT AT THE QUEEN’S BOARD

Eating with the Queen, albeit a dowager queen rather than a queen regnant, was a considerable honour. The Bread Book (NAS E34/15) provides all the information, providing a list for each day of 1549 and a good deal of time has been expended on this important source. Whilst actual numbers varied sharply from day to day, there were typically around a dozen people for each of the two daily meals – that’s around 4,400 place settings over the year, so this section inevitably concentrates on the most frequent and the most important; more could certainly be gleaned. From time to time, mainly on busy days, the Lords and Ladies Board appears in addition as the next below the queen’s; more often that place is held by the Gentlemen’s Board and the Ladies’ Board. It seems that, if there were a lot of guests, people who sometimes ate with the queen would have to move down a rung. Although there were two main meals and the system attempts to differentiate between people who dine (the earlier and more important meal) and people who sup (the evening meal) the distinctions are not always clear. In any case, similar people are found at both meals.

On most days, it was ‘mixed company’ the largest single group probably Scots nobles and their wives but ‘mixed’ too in the sense that there were clerics and laics, French and other foreigners
as well as Scots, soldiers and civilians. Interestingly on 1 January 1549 the list is headed by the Earl of Huntly and his Lady; Huntly had escaped from prison in England and returned to Holyrood just in time to brighten the Christmas of his wife and de Guise who were then there – so they had made it hotfoot to Stirling in the interim. It is worth emphasising that not all these people were well-known about the court. The clerk did not have names for the ‘two French gentlemen’ present on 21 January, perhaps the two who had brought news to de Guise from Germany a few days before, probably arriving with the Rhinegrave, de Rubay and others. Such flurries of arrivals and departures of groups are quite common.

Some of those who ate at de Guise’s board in 1549

Lord and Lady Huntly, Lady Gordon (Huntly’s mother), Bishop-elect of Caithness & Alexander Gordon (brothers of Huntly, the bishop elect never achieved full appointment).
Lady Livingstone, Frenchwoman married to a Scot and present at almost every meal.
Lord and Lady Methven
Lady Cassillis
Lady Home (Lord Home very rarely but see Christmas Day).
Lady Seaton
Lady Barbara [Hamilton] – Arran’s daughter (who had nursed de Guise when ‘suspect of the pest’ in late 1548); till about March 1549.
Lady Croft
Argyll and Lady Argyll (she more often than he)
Lady Lothian.
Laird of Fyvie (probably)
Bishop of Whithorn (Dean of Chapel Royal, particularly frequent at Stirling)

Many people appeared only occasionally, usually at special occasions. Of these the most important were Arran and his wife. Lord James Stewart, illegitimate son of James V, appears several times. The Sheriff of Ayr was sometimes present. They also include the Earl Marishall (nephew of Lady Huntly), Lord Sutherland, Sir George Douglas (brother of Angus) and probably Lord Rothes.

Bishops of Dunblane and of St Andrews,
Abbots of Dunfermline, Cupar Angus, Culross; Prior of St Andrews.

More difficult to identify are people of lower status (Mrs Buchanan, Mrs Graham) and others whose names and titles remain uncertain, such as Lord Monchayt or Monthayt and his lady who are probably the earl of Menteith and his wife though the spelling is very odd.

Some foreigners can be readily identified. For example, the Rhingrave, Mons de la Chapelle, Mons D’Essay etc. Whilst the frequently present ‘ambassador’ (sometimes with his Lady) might look straightforward, in December 1549 there are references to the new ambassador and the old one without any indication of who either might be. Lord Anderpassara (or Enderpassara) was quite a frequent diner but remains mysterious as do Mons de Villehamzon and Captain Ashoe and numerous other foreign officers. Captain Bashe, an Italian sea captain and Captain Myleroyne (otherwise the Sieur de Mailleroy) are both mentioned by Beaugué.

These meals were potentially serious political events –day after day under de Guise’s watchful eye, important people warmed by her fire, filled with her food and drink and mixing with senior French officials; the inclusion of some middle ranking officers brought her closer to the troops and was, presumably, a morale-raising exercise. Some of the diners were amongst her correspondents. De Guise herself had invited the wife and the heir of Hew Campbell, Sheriff of Ayr to come to her at Dumbarton in May 1548 as the Little Queen waited to board ship for France, though transport and security difficulties had prevented them going but he expected to see her in Stirling a few days after writing (Wood 1927, 231-2). Marion Haliburton, Lady Home, wrote several letters to de Guise and the Homes were significant supporters from 1544 (Sanderson 2002, 141; Cameron 1927, 280-1). The Gordons (Lord and Lady Huntly, his brothers including the would-be Bishop of Caithness and his mother) formed a major bloc and one or more were present at a great many meals throughout the year whilst Lady Huntly’s family, the Earl Marishall and his wife also appeared from time to time. The Gordons were also amongst her most regular correspondents (Cameron 1927). Even more important, many of these regular diners were amongst her companions when she travelled to France in 1550; Cassillis, Huntly (with his wife and his mother), Marishall, Sutherland, Home, the Sheriff of Ayr, Sir George Douglas, the bishop-elect of Caithness, the Bishop of Galloway and, doubtless many more (Ritchie 2002, 70-1 and Appendix).
3.13 CLOSET, PRESENCE AND OUTER HALL

The innermost parts of the royal apartments, the closet, bedchamber, presence and outer hall of James V were the province of the chamber staff. James V’s chamber staff were men of modest standing, lairds and so on, who appear to have been his friends and perhaps his advisers (the whole issue will be considered again when we come to look at issues of formality and informality). In de Guise’s household that role, so far as a parallel is valid, seems to have been played by the senior ladies, as was the case at the court of Elizabeth I, for example (Ward 1987). They must have performed many of the practical tasks including serving the food, cleaning, dressing, keeping the fires burning and much informal entertainment (music, games, chat) and some of them would always have accompanied de Guise when she travelled.

In 1541 whilst her husband was still alive, Walter Scrimgeour was the Master Usher of de Guise’s chamber, with John Montreis, Alex Lindsay and Gilbert Montreis as Ushers (though all had the same provision for livery, provided at the king’s expense (NAS E34/5/2); Sandy Lindsay appears on the ‘Early’ list but without indication of his post. That list also names John Allentot, valet de chambre, followed by Jacques Tubol and Jacques de la Grange, whose posts are not given; but in 1544 Jacques Tuboll was paid as a valet de chambre whilst Jacques de la Grange was now a valet in the gardrobe (NAS E34/12/25; NAS E34/12/2). Perhaps some of these male chamber staff were actually children. By the time of the Middle List there were also several staff for the ‘salle’ including eight aides; the ‘salle’ would correspond to the outer part of the queen’s apartments, sometimes now called the Guard Hall and a much less ‘intimate’ space than the chamber itself. It will later be suggested that this was where de Guise routinely ate.

There are few direct glimpses of this milieu and Dunbar’s poetry from the court of James IV perhaps gives as good a guide as we can hope for to the general tenor, when he describes ‘A Dance in the Queenis Chalmer’ which involves four men (including Dunbar himself), two ladies – and the queen’s dog which ‘stinkett lyk a tyk, sum saed’. The whole thing is a joke in France the queen’s outer hall was an important venue for dancing. De Guise and her guests probably usually ate in the outer hall whilst sometimes an overspill (most often of ladies) dined in her ‘chamber’ – perhaps actually the Presence. On 29 May in Edinburgh the ambassador and several French officers had their disjune or breakfast in the queen’s hall (probably her outer hall) (NAS E34/15).
The outer tier of security would have been provided by men. In Stirling under James V and James VI this tier operated in the transe between the King’s and the Queen’s suites and was supervised by the Porter, a senior member of the Hall staff. But during the 1540s we might expect it to have been the task of the gentlemen serving on the queen’s guard (above). When de Guise was in France in 1550 there were complaints that Sandy Coquitan had forbidden Sandy Baron de Guise’s door, contrary to normal usage as he was ‘a good and loyal servant’ who should not be denied the presence of his queen (Wood 1925, 84-5). The potential for such staff to filter and control was a serious, political issue and will be considered in the next chapter.

3.14 THE HALL

The Hall had been a prominent feature of the earliest castles and in the 13th century, Scots kings ate their main meals each day in the hall in considerable splendour. But, by the reign of James V, the monarch probably only ate in hall for special festivals, more typically eating elsewhere in a more private setting (Dunbar 1999, 108). At Stirling, in addition to the Great Hall, there may have been halls in the King’s Old Building whilst the outer parts of the royal apartments were also, sometimes, called halls, though they were probably more exclusive and were controlled by the staff of the chamber (above). The great halls at Henry VIII’s great houses were in daily use and everyone was free to enter. The hall was a busy place and was where most people ate. Great Halls ceased to be built in the later part of Henry VIII’s reign (with the exception of Hampton Court) and some were demolished or radically altered. Where they were retained, they were used for big court feasts and festivals that demanded much space and for feeding the large numbers of the greatly-expanded court. Indeed, they were the only place where the numbers could be accommodated (Thurley 1993, 113-4). Something similar was happening in Scotland. The Great Hall at Holyrood, used by wrights as a workshop during building work of early 1530s, had to be vacated for the Yule celebrations. From about 1544 it was unroofed and from that time, the ceremonial events were held in the Council Chamber (Dunbar 1999, 64 and 71). With no Great Hall at Edinburgh, the two major festivals of the later 16th century, the baptisms of Prince James and of Prince Henry, were held in Stirling (Lynch 2001, 15).

This history is reflected in the architecture of Stirling’s Great Hall with the dais (warmed by its own fireplace, lit by the very splendid windows) which would be meaningless if it was not to
be used by the monarch on occasions – but, as already indicated, these were very special occasions. Similarly, the provision of the minstrels’ gallery points to its intended use for the major indoor entertainments and there is documentary evidence of the minstrel’s having accommodation conveniently close to the gallery in the 1580s (above). Parliaments might also (albeit rarely) have been held in the Great Hall at Stirling and elsewhere; Privy Council meetings, which were much smaller, would have been held in a more convenient space either in the castle or, perhaps, in Stirling’s Tolbooth.

In the later part of the reign of James V the staff of the hall was around 3 dozen, headed by the principal steward, the principal marshal with keepers of the silver vessels, cuphouse, napery and ewery; the usher of the hall door, who was also responsible for coal supplies and a good many cupbearers, ushers, porters and others of fairly lowly status who must have been responsible for serving the majority of people who ate in hall. De Guise’s Early List makes no specific mention of the Hall staff though Sandy Charpentier is recorded as ‘porter’ in 1543/4 (NAS E33/3) and also on the ‘early list’; a castle porter. This was a key Hall office (above) an important post with wide responsibilities including the outer layer of personal security for the lord or, in this case, de Guise. In 1544 Charpentier was ‘servant to the queen’ (NAS E34/12/10 and NAS E34/12/22) and by 1552 was guard vaissell [keeper of the table ware and probably of the silver] (NAS E34/18/31). The Middle List records a Valet de Hall and the c. 1554 list some porters in the Hall. But the Bread Book lists boards for the (small) staffs concerned with silver, pewter and tin vessels (though napery and perhaps cups were taken care of by the sommeliers of the bread and wine departments whilst the household accounts show the echansonnerie department dealt not just with wine but with the ale supplied to ‘the hall’, presumably as this was again where most people routinely ate. The Bread Book also indicates more exceptional uses of the hall. For example, on 18 June 1549, when de Guise dined in Leith and had supper in Edinburgh, some gentlemen dined ‘in the hall’ (NAS E34/15) on 6 April the ‘gentlemen strangers’ had their collation in the hall, on 5th May some gentlemen strangers dined in the hall and on 10 May the Ambassador and other gentlemen were at the buffet for dinner but dined in

13 Sir David Christison, Thomas App A part ii; ibid p. 57, present at the king’s death.
14 John Lawson of Bowanshaw, Thomas App A, part ii; there had been three ushers of the hall in 1507-8, Thomas, App B.
the Hall. On 16th May half a loaf was supplied for the French captains ‘playing at the tabylls in
the hall’ (perhaps some sort of game) and there are occasions when gentlemen and officers
drank in the hall. On 21 October at Stirling, the gentlemen servants and the French captains had
disjune (breakfast) in the hall, consuming four loaves. On 14 May de Guise held a supper for
her ladies and gentlemen, French Officers, the Lord Prior of St Andrews and his servants, Lord
Home’s servants and many others including Lord James in the Red Hall of her Edinburgh
lodging; the occasion is uncertain but she was clearly there herself. But that was clearly
exceptional as was the event on 24 July (a period when the provision of bread for masons,
wrights and slaters indicates that some building work was taking place, when the
ambassador’s ladies attended the queen’s collation (light meal) ‘in the hall’, and later had their
supper in the chamber.

So most of these events are exceptional, the overspill when people who might usually have
been accommodated elsewhere, had to make do and use the hall. De Guise herself dined in
hall on one confirmed and special occasion, a big meal for large numbers in Edinburgh.
Otherwise, it can only be assumed that most of de Guise’s ‘below stairs’ household, from water
carriers, to laundry and kitchen staff and so on, ate in relays in ‘the hall’. At Stirling they would
eat food prepared in what was known as the cuisine de commun or court kitchen, now the Great
Kitchens to the east of the Hall (Fawcett 2001, 6).

Food for those who ordinarily ate in hall would be served according to a strict hierarchy. Those
of higher status would have had the best food brought directly from the kitchen, have the
choice of the best dishes and what they did not take would be passed down to the second tier,
who might have had some supplement of fresh food as well. But lower tiers would have had
only what had been rejected by those above – presumably there was some system to ensure
that there was at least something left! Wine would be served only to the top tiers and beer to
those below.15 In England a ‘mess’ was a quantity of food designed for four people divided at
the table by the officers; the term was in use in Scotland around 1300 when the division of the
messes was supervised by the Clerk of the Kitchen (Bateson 1904, 41) Below the level of those

15 Gibson and Smout, 1988, 33-39. See also Scott, 1870, Chapter 20 for a vivid description of a noble feast in the 18th
century highlands organised on just such lines.
who ate in hall were some more or less manual servants such as kitchen staff who ate in their workplaces. Certainly, in England, the ambitious tried to escape from the hall to eat somewhere more prestigious and there are indications that something similar was happening in Scotland too (Thurley 1993, 150; Dunbar 1999, 110).

3.15 THE GUARD, OFFICERS, MILITARY PERSONNEL ETC.

The guard instituted by parliament for the Little Queen and de Guise’s personal guard in the early 1540s have already been mentioned as has the flow of French, Scots and other officers at de Guise’s table in 1549. The need for military personnel for the building work at Stirling in the later 1540s has also been noted. The ‘early’ household list includes around 17 men under the heading ‘canoniers’ (cannoneers) at least 12 of whom were Flemish. In 1549 bread was regularly supplied to ‘The French Officers’ Board’ and ‘The Scottish Officers’ Board’ at Stirling and elsewhere but numbers, judged by the bread supplied, varied markedly. At a ‘banquet supper’ in Edinburgh on 28 January there were 13 or 13 ½ loaves for each board; on 17 October at Stirling the French Officers’ board had 17 and the Scots Officers had 13 whilst on Christmas day it was 18 and 16; but at other times there were far fewer; on 17th October at Stirling the French officers had two and the Scots only one. There is periodic mention of ‘the officers’ house’ in Edinburgh and for a few weeks in the summer there is mention of ‘the queen’s guard’ getting so many as eight loaves for their dinner and collation, separately from the ‘officers’.

These numbers are difficult to interpret but probably an allowance of from half to one person per day would be about right (see Bread Board discussed elsewhere) but perhaps the officers had to share this allowance with their ‘men’ who do not appear as a distinct group. The separation of boards for Scots and French is significant as there were certainly mutual resentments and there were also concerns about pay, de la Chapelle writing to de Guise in March 1548 that some of the officers could not leave Stirling as they had no money and there was none to pay them (Wood 1923, 186-7).

This brings us back to a point previously made, that the military presence was very fluid, parties arrived and left sometimes after just one or two days. The ‘officers’ are the social elite, sometimes eating with the ‘gentlemen’ and sometimes, a select few, eating with de Guise. Commanders such as the Rhinegrave brought forces of hundreds and even thousands of men who, whilst not likely to be found within the palaces and residences, would not have been far
away. There are also occasional records such as of bread provided for the gentlemen officers of
the galleys, evidently naval officers, at Stirling on 6 January, some more appearing on 6 May
and other dates in Edinburgh also.

3.16 THE SENIOR GENTLEMEN

The c. 1554 List has a heading Gentillhommes (Gentlemen) with 11 names; the Early List has
only around 5 or 6 in the corresponding section and the other has five with titles ‘Le Sieur de…’
and all at salaries of 80 livres, the highest. It is this top echelon we are concerned with here. The
first entry on the early list is Monsieur le Maitre, ie the Master Household with overall charge
of domestic arrangements. Patrick Wemys had been Master Household for James V in 1541
(NAS E34/5/2) and John Wemys, the son of the Master Household, had been captain of Dunbar
but was imprisoned in April 1548 (Cameron 1927, 228) so his father had presumably continued
to serve de Guise up to this time.

Le Sieur de Betttancourt’s family had served the de Longueville’s in France; in the mid 1550s he
was acting as messenger between Paris and Edinburgh and by 1555-6 Le Sieur de Bettancour
was écuyer d’ écurie [esquire of the stable] in Mary’s French household but without salary ‘as
his wages were paid in Scotland’ (Wood 1925, liv, 136, 137, and 165). Monsieur de Sauchie, on
the early list, should be the Laird of Sauchie who was amongst Lord Erskine’s team in 1545
(this Sauchie is near Alloa) and Madame de Sauchie was amongst the Ladies of Honour
(above); their daughter, Elizabeth, had had an illegitimate son by James V and Shaw himself
wrote to de Guise informing her of events at Hamilton in October 1545 (Cameron 1927, 145-6).
Alexander Stuart who is on the early list, was the brother of Lord Methven who describes him
as de Guise’s servant and used him as an intermediary (Cameron 1927. 25 November 1544;
ibid, 132-3 April 1545) and many other of the letters to and from de Guise mention her
‘servants’ as trusted intermediaries both within Scotland and abroad. A letter from Claude
Antiez ‘called Villebeton’ to de Guise dated from Villebeton and dated, 25 June 1555 is
published by Wood (1925, 242-3) he had evidently previously been in Scotland and remained
hopeful that she would find a post for him. Monsieur de Villebaton and gentlemen in his party
were several times supplied with bread; Villebatton, presumably a relative, had appeared
amongst the Maids of Honour on the Early List. Bartilmo Willmore was to be Comptroller for
Mary in the early 1560s; on 28 June 1549 The Treasurer Vilmore got half a loaf, on 1 August Mr Veylmor and the ambassador got a supply and he is fairly regularly present thereafter.

These men are of some standing but not so high as the Ladies of Honour; they do not appear amongst those who ate at the queen’s table and they do not include men with formal title as Lord, Earl etc. On 31st January, the day of the banquet supper, 13 loaves were supplied for the Ladies Board, 9 for the gentlemen and 8 for the Master Household – more than the usual rate. On 1 October, de Guise set out on her Progress; 46 loaves were provided for the ladies, gentlemen and French officers for dinner in Edinburgh and 44 for ladies and gentlemen at the queen’s supper in Kirkcaldy – but these were not people dining at her board. Sometimes there was an extra bread supply for the gentlemen’s servants – who were placed at much lower boards. The Master Household had his own ‘board’ and was sometimes even allocated his own chamber; on Christmas Day at Stirling he and the ladies and gentlemen ate dinner and supper there, consuming 13 loaves. But, like others, he could be pushed into odd corners so on 10 July he ate his breakfast with the abbot of Culross and the governor’s gentlemen in the gardemange or meat pantry, where they consumed 2 ½ loaves. But the Master Household had his own servants who had their own board, very much lower down the ranking.

Again, this was a fluid group with people joining and leaving for many reasons. On 15 January bread was supplied for a French gentleman who brought ‘novelles’ or news for the queen ‘from Almayny’ or Germany. Monsieur d’Asquin (ie Erskine) was a servant of de Guise’s, present in Edinburgh c. 1543, who advised Francois du Feu about arrangements for de Guise’s dowry (Wood 1923, 89); he must be one of Lord Erskine’s extensive kin, conceivably the Alexander Asquin who appears on the c. 1554 list but there are no Erskine men on the early list. Many of the French gentlemen certainly passed back and forth between Scotland and France fairly freely.

Grander visitors had their own entourages of ladies and gentlemen and on 17 October at Stirling, Mons and Madame de Termes dined and supped with the queen with several other French nobles but there was extra bread for Madame de Termes, with her ladies and gentlemen, in her chamber and yet more for other attendants for disjune. Similarly, on 6 January at Stirling, Lord Huntly and his mother and his lady and other sundry gentlemen dining in his chamber consumed 3 loaves. These gentlemen, with or without a formal title within the household, may have provided a guard of honour for de Guise, a posse riding
before and after her, probably carrying her standard and making way for her, as much about honour as about security.

### 3.17 Chapel and ‘professional’ services

Stirling’s chapel and its staff had been of great importance under James IV and V and the staff was also involved in important national administrative duties. Those with national administrative roles would have become attached to the Governor and it is possible that the whole department was moved to Edinburgh. And whilst there are too few records to be certain, it does not appear as though de Guise kept Easter with any great ceremony at Stirling in the years in question. She was still (albeit reluctantly) in Linlithgow for Easter (25 March) 1543 and she must have been in Edinburgh for Easter 1549 (NAS E33/3; NAS E34/15). Arran was at Linlithgow for Easter (10 April) 1547 and in Edinburgh for Easter (1 April) 1548 (NAS E31/9) when de Guise may well have been at Stirling. Of course, she (and her daughter before she went to France) would have attended chapel regularly and they certainly required chapel staff – though they could pray and make private devotions anywhere and would have had a prayer desks or *prie dieu* in their chambers. Unlike Arran’s household accounts, de Guise’s do not note when the day was a religious feast, major saint’s day etc though that does not imply that these days were not marked in some way and on 28 June 1549, a day noted in Arran’s accounts as the Feast of St Peter the Apostle, the Bread Book shows two loaves given to the people of de Guise’s household who lit St Peter’s Fire\(^16\). In April 1544 silver dishes and other items were purchased at the substantial cost of over 80 *livres* for *Jeudi Absolut*, the French form of the Maundy ceremony, known in Scotland as Skire Thursday; this was arguably one of the Little Queen’s first ‘public engagements’ when alms would be given to the poor in her name (NAS E33/3 extra-ordinary costs April 1544, f. 8 r.-v.).

The Early List includes a chapel clerk (who would have been a priest), an Elimosinar (another cleric responsible for the royal alms) and Mr David Christison, who had been a chaplain under James V. It also includes the organist, Jacques Sainpair, whose main tasks were probably to

\(^{16}\) II Peter, Chapter 3, v. 7; the festival was (and in some areas seemingly still is) marked by the lighting of fires.
accompany church services though he might also have played secular music at other times. In 1549 Andrew Durie, bishop of Galloway and dean of the chapel royal, its most senior official, was amongst those who most regularly dined with de Guise, particularly when she was in Stirling. His most important role during this period would have been to officiate at Mary’s coronation. The bishops of Caithness and of Dunblane also appeared at de Guise’s table from time to time (above). Other senior clerics were also important contacts, Cardinal David Beaton until his murder, Paniter the bishop of Ross and several abbots. Curiously, there was no chaplains’ board and the only reference to the feeding the clerical staff was the supply of 4 loaves for the priests’ and friars’ dinner in the chapel vestry on Christmas Day 1549.

Unrelated to the chapel but most conveniently dealt with here were various ‘medical’ men. The early list mentions the Doctor (‘medecin’) and the ‘barber’ (probably a barber surgeon, the ‘second’ list mentions the surgeon (‘chirurgien’) and the third list has both posts whilst an apothecary and a pottinger (pretty much synonymous) are also mentioned. The distinctions were of education, areas of skill and of status with the doctor being a graduate, whilst the apothecary would dispense drugs and the ‘surgeon’ probably mainly dressing wounds and perhaps bleeding etc – a very much less prestigious role than the doctor’s. A doctor gave de Guise some admirably sensible advice about taking fresh air and exercise in about 1543. In 1545 de Guise’s mother proposed to send a doctor and an apothecary from France, though it was a year or more later until either was ready to set off (Wood 1923). But in 1544 the pottinger was acting as mediator and messenger on de Guise’s behalf Cameron 1927, 114-5.). No medical men are mentioned in the Bread Book until 18 March when the medicinar begins to appears intermittently; he was probably the late King’s medicinar, appointed to serve de Guise from 18 June; on 31 July, the pottinger also appears and on 17 October at Stirling the servants of the Scots gentlemen and of the medicinar got three loaves at their board.

The six doctors of the 15th century dukes of Burgundy were men of means who were also consulted on other issues and one of their main responsibilities was to watch the food served to the dukes as a guard against poison; the surgeons, though much humbler, were expected to be kept busy with the injuries so common in a chivalric household – and war injuries might well have been an issue around de Guise’s house, too (de la Marche 1825, 492-3). Various notaries are recorded as witnessing documents and might have been attached to her household (eg NAS E34/14/2, Thomas Hill, notar in 1548) but the legal figure most closely and regularly associated
with her household was Sir George Scott had been Abbreviator of the Household Books for James V and was present with some significant gaps through 1549, usually getting bread for disjune or collation though he must have sat at one of the other boards for his main meals; he was still present in the household when the Late List was made (see Dramatis Personae).

3.18 Administration, Finance and Secretarial

As daughter of a French noble house, widow of a French nobleman and mother of the holder of extensive lands, de Guise would have had to manage considerable French assets. Her marriage to James V, however, gave her further income both from France – some directly from the King of France – and also in Scotland where her marriage contract guaranteed her houses (including Stirling castle) and lands to support the houses and households in a manner appropriate to her royal dignity. And, perhaps increasingly as her widowhood passed, she had to entertain important visitors from France, Ambassadors, the Papal Legate and others and to either pay herself or persuade France to pay substantial sweeteners to keep some of the Scots nobility on board (Ritchie 2002). For James V such tasks had been part of the national administration going on around him with major departments to oversee the various functions. In this regard De Guise was more like a private person. Much of the routine, the administration of the household, ordering meals and organising moves, must have been done by others and she had secretaries, advisers and so on. However, she had oversight of the administration both of income and expenditure with attention and personal care (Thomas 1997, 78-9).

Routine supervision was in the hands of the Secretary/Controller; in 1543/4 this was Francois Duffon. De Guise’s mother was looking for a suitable controller in May and June 1546 (Wood 1923, 134-5, and 138-140). In January 1548 Nicaise Sevyn seems to be appointed Secretary and Controller and advises about how her money might best be sent from France, either as food or as silver suitable for coining (Wood 1923, 181). By 1552 this role was probably filled by Astier and later records of his specific duties include purchase of wine from French shippers and negotiations with people in Berwick, whilst in January 1554, de Coutery (writing from Stirling to the controller in Leith) assures him that all that now needs to be done for the ambassador’s arrival is to hang the chamber with tapestry and lay in coals (Wood 1925, 114; and 191-2.). But there was sometimes more than one secretary; in July 1548 Jehan Bourgoyne was the ‘ordinary secretary’ (NAS E34/14/13). The ‘two secretaries’ are included in the c. 1554 list, probably a
French and a Scots secretary, though none can be identified from the other lists. Secretaries did not just write letters but would certainly have offered advice and could, presumably, cipher and decipher letters sent in code. They would have to be profoundly trustworthy as incoming letters (sometimes highly confidential) presumably came first to them whilst letters were often written fairly opaquely and the real information committed to memory by the messenger in case letters went astray, were stolen or captured.

The post of Argentier appears on the second list immediately beneath the Controlleur, though at the same salary of £50 but this was probably a new post in the 1550s; it might have involved dealing with actual cash, rather than with financial management and certainly under Mary and the young James VI it became a major office.

There was no distinct table for these administrators and they are probably included amongst those at the Gentlemen’s or the Master Household’s Board, though there are passing mentions of bread for the secretary, ambassador and gentlemen dining together at the buffet on 2nd April 1549 and the secretary was sick and got half a loaf on 10 May. Below that overarching level, each of the household departments had its own system for financial supervision and record keeping (below). And one of the most surprising finds is a series of receipts mostly to Lady Livingstone (the French Lady of Honour, above) for quite substantial sums for wages, purchases and other purposes in 1548-9; it is more likely that earlier and later receipts have been lost than that these are all sums she ever paid out!

An important ‘communication’ department of a monarch’s court were the heralds who carried many official messages, cited people to the royal courts, issued official proclamations and often acted as diplomats. Though Ormond Herald appears on the early list his role is unclear; Merriman thought that Arran’s control of the Scots herald’s department was a key factor in his control of the national administration.

### 3.19 Domestic Departments – Kitchens, Wardrobe, Water etc

Here, it should be noted that the kitchens, particularly, were big departments – one entry on the Early List is for 20 ‘boys’ for the kitchen apart from the cooks and more senior staff. Bread will be considered in a separate section, reflecting its distinctiveness and the importance of the
information available. The Kitchen was divided into the Cuisine de Bouche or Queen’s Kitchen, producing food for her table and the Cuisine Commun or Court Kitchen, producing food for most of the rest. This was a widespread or even universal arrangement in such grand households. Having a separate kitchen freed the most senior figures from the otherwise rather rigid timetable of the court kitchen, it made it easier to provide a quick snack at odd hours or for unexpected but important visitors. It reduced the risk of deliberate poisoning as the staff (at least in Burgundy) were very carefully chosen and supervised and it allowed for special diets and preferences (Thurley, 1993, 160; Petitot, 1820). Again, as was usual, there was also a specialised patisserie department with its own staff and supplies. At Stirling the Court Kitchen corresponds to the Great Kitchen, now open to the public, the Cuisine de Bouche more likely being at the west end of the palace, perhaps below modern floor levels where ovens were found during the excavations of the Ladies Lookout. That sort of location allowed food to be brought up quickly to the royal suite; in England the privy kitchen was typically below the secret chamber. Some repairs or improvements were carried out to the cuisine de bouche under the supervision of Mr Nicolas Roy in late 1543. Roy, a mason who had formerly worked for James V, was involved in military work and accompanying artillery to the west coast the following spring (NAS E33/3 extra-ordinary costs; Thurley 1993, 161).

On fish days (at least 100 days a year) fish supplies for the two kitchens were not distinguished, but are described as ‘tant pour la bouche que commun’ [as well for the bouche as the commun] (see NAS E33/2 and NAS E33/3). But on other days the supplies, including the fish, were usually procured separately. Fish cost considerably less than the corresponding meat so fish days were economical. Lent began on 7 February 1543 so there were only three meat days all month, the 4, 5 and 6 February when daily costs were 54, 50 and 61 livres tournois, compared with daily average of 26.5 livres. In August that year kitchen supplies cost an average 11 livres 7 sols on the ten fish days and 17 livres 4 sols on the 19 meat days for which there are data. The commun usually cost more than the bouche though the difference was not very great, rarely twice as much and sometimes even slightly less, though the commun was, of course, feeding far more people. That month, kitchen supplies were around 35% of the total daily costs; for comparison, bread would account for a little under 25% and the rest was for wine and beer, candles, ‘verdure’ (a very mixed category), patisserie (usually small but very variable), transport and stables, fourrière (mainly coal) and wages (not all expressed in cash and for some a fixed and clearly nominal sum was entered every day).
The senior kitchen staff of James V had liveries and salaries around £13 6s 8d per year, well below the £50 of the master household and significantly below the £20 of the chamber staff (though with few opportunities for other rewards); the patissier had only £10 as had the some of the grooms in the kitchen and bake-house. But other grooms had only £5 and the turnbrotches (who turned the spits) had only £1 6s 8d (NAS E34/5/2 List of liveries and wages under James V); the ‘boys’ (who were not necessarily children) could even have been unpaid, learning skills which they hoped would be useful or perhaps hoping to be noticed and get promotion. The ‘says’ who appear to have been water carriers, probably got even less than that and may have been employed on a casual basis, taken on locally when required (NAS E32/9 Arran’s accounts show the payments). The Early List shows that de Guise had a very extensive kitchen staff in the early 1540s:

**Kitchen Staff in the Early List**

*Jacques de Sanglier, Esquire in the cuisine de bouche*
*Francone Camin, cook and Jacques Roy, his assistant*
*20 ‘boys’ in the said kitchen*
*Two porters in the said kitchen*
*Two ‘boys’ to turn the spits*
*John Grimault, keeper of the vessels and a boy to wash them*
*Laurence [?] Dog, Esquire in the cuisine commun*
*Two ‘pilliriver’ who cook in the said kitchen [the word is mysterious!]*
*Two porters in the said kitchen*
*Two ‘boys’ who turn the spits in the said kitchen*
*A keeper of the vessels and a ‘boy’ to wash them*
*Jacques Hallane, baker of the pain de bouche and ‘boy’ to help him*
*Houlle Semeson [perhaps Will Simpson] patissier and a boy to help him.*

All these people got food. The senior figures, including the patissier, might have eaten at one of the higher boards, even the gentlemen’s, since the cook’s board is sometimes is called the cooks’ servants’ board. On 17 October 1549 the cooks’ board got 6 ½ loaves as did the queen’s kitchen; the court kitchen got four and the says got two; they are listed in that order, below the muleteers but above the laundresses. On Christmas Day the cooks’ servants got eight, the queen’s kitchen 13, the court kitchen 10 and the says three (NAS E34/15). But those were
unusually busy days, the figures were usually less and it is another indication that the household was considerably reduced by 1549 compared with the Early List. We will look at the food and its service and the serving staff elsewhere.

The Wardrobe does not seem to be directly mentioned in the Early List though Robert Spittal, whose name appears without any role assigned, had been tailor to James IV, Margaret Tudor and had supplied clothes to James V; he was one of the household men most closely associated with Stirling, where he established a charity which still exists. This seems to be the last record of him – and as the first was in 1509 he might now have been a pensioner rather than actively working. The Early List also includes an embroider and probably a couple of wardrobe assistants, though there might have been other staff at that stage, though the wardrobe, like other departments, might later have been reduced. Marshall (1978) has described some of the clothes worn by de Guise and prepared in her wardrobe for herself and others.

3.20 STABLES, TRANSPORT AND FOURRIÈRE

The stables and the fourrière were two distinct departments but were clearly closely related and both will be considered here. There were stables associated with all the royal residences usually outside the castles, so as to reduce the nuisance of water, fodder and bedding having to be brought in and of muck being carted out. In Stirling the stables were beside the park, just below the castle and probably formed a pleasing landscape feature. De Guise, who does not seem to have hunted and would hardly need war horses, did not need a big stables department and she had around a dozen horses and five mules around 1550 (NAS E33/4). They did not all move everywhere with her, not least as a horse bringing a messenger might have to be rested and fed before it could return with a reply and there would always need to a few spares for that sort of eventuality. Extras could be hired if needed and extra horses, mules or oxen would have been needed if heavy artillery was to be moved. On the other hand, in early 1549 she had complained that she needed more horses and mules as hers were then being used for the wounded at a difficult point of the war (Merriman 2000, 337).

One of the main functions of the horses was to transport household requirements, kitchen equipment and even furniture from residence to residence as de Guise moved about. So, tapestries were taken to Falkland when the ‘maids’ were there in late 1543. In December 1543
the maidens coffers, equipment for the bread department (the paneterie), panniers for the fruiterie (which mainly provided candles) and much of the kitchen equipment along with the queen’s chair were taken, some by ship and some by horse, from Stirling to Leith and so to Edinburgh for what was to prove quite a brief visit (NAS E33/3 extra-ordinary costs f. 36r).

Whilst the king was alive her stable had been headed by an Esquire of the Stable (Marshall 1979, 118) but the most senior man identifiable in the early list is Pourie de Boye, the pallfrier or horseman, Jacques Dorat was his ‘ayde’ or assistant and there were twenty unnamed assistants. The early list has two men for the mules, one being Anthone de Podye, who seems to have had special charge of the mule litters (a vehicle containing a couch, enclosed by curtains and carried by the mules) the other Jehan Vallice [probably John Wallace] the head muleteer; wages were paid to both in 1544/5 (NAS E34/12/11 and NAS E34/12/17); the Middle List records only one man in the mule department whilst the last mentions the supplier of straw [for bedding for the horses]. The marishall or blacksmith was Pourie or Purrie Daffy; he appears on the Early List and in March 1544 his wages were paid but he was given a separate series of payments in regard to preparing the artillery then at Stirling (NAS E34/12/13; NAS E33/3 extra-ordinary costs March 1544). But again there seems to be considerable turnover since in 1545 David Makley appears as Marishall and Andro Angoux has charge of the horses; at that time, too, work was carried out on a saddle for de Guise herself indicating that she did not just ride in the litter but rode, herself, as well (NAS E34/11/2; NAS E34/11/4). In February 1548 Jacques Smart was described as marishall (NAS E34/12/32).

One of the most intriguing findings is of receipts by Jehan de Bonlommoye maître chariotier des chariots branle de la royne [master charioteer of chariots ‘branle’ of the queen, chariots branle seemingly being wagons with suspension and perhaps a carriage for passengers] and one by another man described as chariotier de la royne both for 10 livres tournois for wages and dated at Stirling on 27 May 1552. A ‘chariot’ can be a cart, wain or carriage and this would be the first carriage in Britain by several years – though sadly, the ‘cart’ meaning seems more likely. However, fabulously, Bonlommoye draws a spoked wheel as his ‘mark’ NAS E34/18/21 and /26) and de Guise did order a carriage from France some years later, still very early but after 1550.
Interestingly, given de Guise’s concerns that her mules and stable staff were being pressed into military service, the muleteers sometimes get bread and sometimes vanish from the list; on 17 October, the muleteers and gentlemen’s servants got 12 loaves and the muleteers’ servants a further 2 whilst on Christmas Day the muleteers got 16. Also associated with the stables was the ‘avery wife’ whose role must have been to supply hay and perhaps other fodder for the stable; who she was is unclear though she regularly got 1 loaf per day, placed fairly low down the list.

Clearly, the senior court figures (the ‘gentlemen’ and those who dined at the table of the queen) would have their own horses. But there cannot have been sufficient for all the rest so that whilst de Guise herself could walk locally, be carried in a litter for a modest journey, take ship or more likely ride for a longer trip, most of her household would always have to either precede her or be left behind, perhaps to follow later as transport became available.

The moves, as noted, were organised by the fourrière department which also dealt with coal supplies and the allocation of lodgings. The Early List indicates a staff of five, the fourier himself, probably two assistants and two porters for barrels though in the more stringent economic atmosphere of 1549, the establishment seems to have been reduced with people seconded to the ‘Lodgings Office’ for the October Progress. During the progress there was a bread distribution of three or four loaves most days for this staff but presumably at other times they were at one of the other boards. Coal was purchased in barrels, seemingly as required for each residence; the presence of a coal cellar at Stirling where it could be kept securely has been mentioned, a reminder that this was a valuable commodity and there were a lot of cold people about, both inside and outside the royal residences. There must have been some system for distributing coal to the chambers assigned to the various courtiers as well as to the kitchens, bakeries, brew-house etc.

### 3.21 Porters, Varlets and other Assistants etc.

The Porter has been discussed above as a man of some prestige. But there were plenty of people whose job was simply moving things about – for example, two barrel carriers on the Early List. There were also very substantial numbers of general ‘assistants’ for example ‘aydes’ in the kitchens and stables; some of these may have been unpaid, learning the job and hoping to be noticed and gain promotion. They are sometimes referred to as ‘boys’ or ‘childer’
[children] but this says more about their status than their age. In the hierarchy of tables, these sort of people obviously appear at the bottom and whilst we cannot be sure where they ate, it was probably in many cases near their place of work rather than in any of the more prestigious spaces.

3.22 Household and Supplies

It is apparent that this large (and fluctuating) body of people had huge and diverse requirements for supplies, from the mundane but essential coal and hay to exotic fabrics, jewellery and fresh trout, skylarks and other foodstuffs. Some came as ‘rent in kind’ from de Guise’s estates and there were occasional gifts (quite frequently the Bread Book records loaves for messengers who brought venison to de Guise from Scots noblemen) but most had to be bought. The overall co-ordination of the purchases was probably in the hands of the comptroller though exactly how he operated, particularly as most were French and can have little initial knowledge of Scotland, is unsure. They appear to have re-organised many aspects of procurement, with much more emphasis on long-term contracts, a French purveyance system which evened out costs replacing the piecemeal purchases which had been traditional in Scotland (Harrison 2007)\(^\text{17}\). On 31 October 1547 Arnault de Sollanoue, a merchant, made a contract with de Guise at Stirling to provide supplies \textit{viz}:

\begin{quote}
For ten years to supply 60 casks of wine of Gascony, 15 red, 10 white and 35 claret.
1200 lb lard, a cask vinegar, a half-cask verjuice 18, 4 barrels peas, 1 barrel beans, 2 barrels onions.
\end{quote}

This was all to be paid for by her treasurer in France and the agreement assumed that clearance for the exports would be forthcoming. He would supply more wine if required at the same price of 30 \textit{livres tournois} per barrel. On 23 January 1548 Sollanoue wrote to de Guise from Rouen; he had got permission to export part of the wine and, rather than delay, was sending that without waiting for the full permission; he has laden two ships to the west coast, equally laden with peas, beans, grapes, figs, capers, olive, vinegar, verjuice, onions and lard so that at

\[\text{\textsuperscript{17}}\text{ The first evidence of a procurement system actually dates back to the return of James V and Madeleine from France.}\]

\[\text{\textsuperscript{18}}\text{ The sour juice of unripe grapes, apples and other fruit, prepared as preserve and an accompaniment for food.}\]
least one should arrive safely; he now hoped to procure and send the rest of the wines (Wood 1923, 182-3). He repeats part of this information on 3 February 1548; the ambassador’s maitre d’hôtel would accompany it and deliver it to de Guise (Wood 1923, 186).

An undated letter from Peirre le Neveu, a merchant of Dieppe, however, complained to de Guise that wine delivered to her by Guillaume Chevalier ‘called Dudin’ at Stirling two years previously had still not been paid for, in spite of repeated requests to her family and the controllers of her assets in France so that they have incurred heavy costs trying to recover the money (Wood 1923, 210-1). In 1552, Astier (the comptroller) wrote to de Guise that the bearer was a wine merchant, Guillaume Personne, who had supplied 4 tonnes and a barrel of wine for her household as ordered by the sommelier; he wanted payment before his ship sailed (Wood 1925, 114 and passim). Another letter confirms that the wine was delivered to the sommelier, this time after purchase in Leith and also discussing purchases for d’Oysell (Wood 1925, 185). In 1554 Astier was in France and carrying messages etc (Wood 1925, 212-3). An undated letter of Astier’s (Wood 1925, 288) relates to similar purchases from shippers by Astier and passed to the butler, the shippers to be paid before they sail again. There were central stores for wine (again under the management of the sommelier) which must then have been distributed to the residences as required; in 1548 two cellars for the purpose were taken in Leith (RPC XIV, Addenda 1545-1625, 5-6).

There are also details from 1552 about purchases of red silk and gold and silver thread and gold gauze to be brought from Paris by Timothy Cagnioli, a merchant who writes to her from Edinburgh on 5 July 1552 about supplying her with red silk and gold and silver thread and gold gauze (Wood 1925, 119-120). In 1553-4 arrangements were underway in France for carts and carriages to be made and to be sent to Scotland for de Guise; there were initial difficulties about payment but on 24 May 1554 the Controller, Jehan Bouguin reported from Offemont that the carts were ready and would be sent to Scotland, the carriages would be sent as soon as they were paid for, the chairs were not ready as the cabinet-maker would not work without pay, the ermines were ready (Wood 1925, 214-6; for more about this see Wood 1925, 222-6). In June 1554 the ermines were sent and cost 211 francs, with one carriage which cost 183 francs including taking it to Dieppe and another was being made as were the chairs and stools (Wood 1925, 227). It is the more surprising to find de Guise also marketing parts of the ‘rent in kind’ income
from Orkney, with permission to export it to any port except those of Flanders (NAS RD1/2 p. 92); the early volumes of the RD series indicate other royal interests in imports and exports.

Most of the items like flour (several different sorts), barley, eggs, cheese and butter would have been of Scots origin and so would the great quantities of beef and veal, mutton and lamb, poultry (including farmed geese), offals (including tripe, cow heels and other cheaper cuts). Wild birds included plovers, Skylarks, grouse and black-game, geese and occasional quails; pigeons were also supplied and might have been wild or farmed. There was a big range of fish and shellfish (mainly oysters and buckies) and including fresh, salted and dried fish of many kinds. Occasionally there is direct evidence about how they were obtained so in August 1543, shortly before Mary’s coronation, a quantity of cheese and several cows were bought at Doune and Dunblane, the cattle brought to Stirling and kept in the park, till they were killed, butchered, probably salted and stored in the gardemange, evidently a cold meat store (NAS E33/3 extraordinary costs, August f. 22r-v).

A Stirling man called William Bell had probably been a royal servant for some years before the king’s death. In 1546-7 he contracted to supply meat in Stirling and around the same time he held the moneys for rebuilding the town walls. In June 1548 letters were sent to Bell and Walter Cousland to attend the [Privy] Council to receive instructions about providing supplies for ‘the Frenchmen’ whilst in August 1549 Bell was paid £216 for butter supplied for Edinburgh Castle. In 1550 Bell was described as merchant and provisioner to the queen and was paid for goods supplied; he also ran Stirling’s royally-sponsored tennis court (Harrison, 2007). In late May 1549 he is recorded several times, supplied with bread for meetings people including Mr Alexander Gordon and Lord Anderpassara (a frequent presence at de Guise’s court who has not been further identified); significantly, several of these meals were eaten in the pantry in Edinburgh.

Also important were fruit and vegetables. Onions were grown in several of the royal gardens of the time though, as just noted, de Guise also imported some from France; they certainly figure prominently amongst supplies, perhaps more for the cuisine de bouche than the commun. But if carrots were available, they were not a frequent purchase, nor were turnips. Apples and pears do figure, often 50 or 100 at a time, so they must have been available to people at some of the lower boards; they would certainly have needed some source of Vitamin C, a potential
problem as I have certainly not noted much in the way of green vegetables, such as cabbage and it is far too early for potatoes (both good sources).

Some further specialised items, including sugar, almonds and mustard, were the concern of the *verdure* department (which we might expect to have dealt with salads though there is little direct evidence for that). Spices pertained to the *fruiterie* and will be considered along with the candles.

### 3.23 BREAD, WINE AND WAX – THE INTERACTION OF FUNCTION AND MEANING

The household hierarchy is most vividly seen in the distribution of food and drink, particularly bread and wine, though to an observant stranger, allocation to the different tables or boards would also be very striking. So would the groupings formed around the fires, fuelled with coal and allocated to focal people, household organisers and key visitors. Only the queen and her guests got the *pain de bouche* – but even the lowliest assistant would require some form of heating to survive in the colder winter months, albeit there must have been sharp competition amongst those allocated to the less prestigious fires to get as close as possible to the warmth. So, the allocation of these commodities and of warmth cut across the formal departmental structure; heads of several departments ate together whilst their subordinates ate elsewhere.

The different sorts of food had their own hierarchy. Few people would choose boiled tripe in preference to roast beef! Gibson and Smout (1988) showed how, at the court of James VI, the wine was supplied only to the higher tables, those at the lower getting only beer; the highest tables got all their food direct from the kitchen, those a little lower getting their leftovers topped up with some fresh items, whilst those at the bottom got only leftovers (though there was presumably some system to ensure that these were sufficient). A similar system is described from the 13th century and was, in fact, widespread (Bateson 1904; Thurley 1993). But the departments dealing with bread, wine and wax (for candles) always appear first on the daily listings and these commodities had a special significance, expressed directly by de la Marche in his description of the court of the 15th century dukes of Burgundy as being due to their sacramental role in the Mass.
**Bread, supply and service**

Bread was an important part of the diet. Fortunately, it is very well recorded. The Bread Book (NASE34/15) is the most important source for the supply of bread and related items and also gives details of where de Guise was for every meal in 1549, about who ate with her, how much bread was supplied overall and how it was distributed within her household. Since just such books, organised on a ‘page a day’ basis and current for just one year, were used to record bread distribution in 15th century Burgundy, we can feel some justification in assuming that the rituals surrounding bread were similar. This source has been compared with de Guise’s own household accounts and with Arran’s *Libri Emptorum* or books of purchases, which provide supplementary information or clarify details. The sources include material in Scots, French and Latin and many of the words do not appear in the standard dictionaries, though some can be elucidated from the context or by comparisons between the sources.

In a pattern common to other late medieval and renaissance royal and noble households, there were two sorts of bread supplied by two different bakers whilst pastries were the concern of a separate department. The more prestigious bread type, supplied only to the highest table, was called *pain de bouche* or *petits pains* or small pains (in Arran’s Latin accounts *pastilles*) and referred to once as pain blank; it was made with wheat flour (NAS E32/9 f. 19r for *triticum* [wheat] for *pastilles* for Arran; NAS E33/3 passim for *farine de ble* for de Guise). In 1543 there were usually two dozen per day. In 1549, when there is more detail, numbers varied roughly in proportion to the numbers of diners at de Guise’s board; totals varied from 310 in October to 469 in June (roughly 8 to 16 per day) allowing for one or two per person per day. But for the banquet of 17 November there were 67 *pains de bouche* for around 16 named people for the two meals but with other, unnamed French captains. Having a dedicated baker (who even had an assistant) for such small quantities confirms that, as at other courts, the *pain de bouche* is not just food but had an important symbolic role, an importance reflected by the manner in which it was served.

The less prestigious, supplied to all the boards including the queen’s, was called *grandes pains* or *panes magni* or *panes vanales* (big or merchant loaves) and corresponds to the French *pain commun*. On 1 August nine score (180) loaves were received ‘of 8 unce weyt’, that is around 250g. This was probably brown bread, though perhaps not so heavy as wholemeal. In 1549 the supply for months with data available ranged from 2825 to 4160, the low during October when...
de Guise made a progress through Fife and Angus. The daily range would be much wider with lows around 60 and highs approaching 200. Most went to the lower boards, the soldiers, cooks, laundrywomen and so on. Most entries give no hint about how many people one loaf was meant to feed. However, in March 1549 the ‘twa prisoners’ got two of these loaves ‘for the whole day’ and later ‘the prisoner’ got just one whilst in April the sick Englishman also got just one. We can probably assume that a loaf was enough for someone who did not get much else. On the other hand, Sir George Scott was one of many people who usually received only half a loaf when present; my assumption is that some people who got one had to share it with a servant, whilst Sir George got his for himself. The possibility the numbers supplied to military officers might have been divided with their ‘men’ and so on must be born in mind.

Pain commun would fill a role now often taken by potatoes, pasta or rice as the main source of carbohydrates and to soak up juice and gravy for those fortunate enough to have any. It was provided at both the main meals and, for the upper strata, for their disjune or breakfast and their collation (a snack or light meal) with occasional special allocations such as to some gentlemen drinking in the hall or some officers playing games. As disjune and collations are not usually mentioned for other strata, perhaps they had none or had to keep bread back from the previous day if they wanted to have food before the first main meal of the day.

Whilst the king was still alive, the pain commun was produced by the king’s staff and the pain de bouche by the queen’s, perhaps in two different bakeries (NAS E32 passim); de Guise employed two bakers later, though where they baked is not clear. De Guise’s household accounts for early 1543 show that the baker of pain de bouche was paid monthly according to how many ‘bakings’ he had made that month, the number corresponding to the number of days in the month so that in February 1544, a leap year, there were 29 bakings (NAS E33/4 extra-ordinaries f. 30r; NAS E33/3 f. 4v). So, the pain de bouche, at least, was baked fresh every day.

It at first seems surprising that there is no sign of oat cakes, bannocks or other ‘hearth breads’, the usual breads for most Scots of the period. However, hearth breads require almost individual attention in cooking, crumble to pieces if handled too much and were then usually reheated to eat. That was fine for ‘home cooking’ over an open fire. But oven breads (modern loaves and rolls) are much more convenient when many people are to be fed from a single, central supply; they also save on fuel.
The bakers gave the bread to the sommeliers or butlers of the paneterie department who, having reserved the *pain de bouche* to the queen and her guests, allocated the *pain commun* to the various boards and meals (NAS E34/15 f. 2 for Guillaume Raymonet of the paneterie). Most went to feed the extensive staff, guests and others at their various boards or tables (discussed elsewhere). A lesser quantity was allocated for favoured residents (including the queen) for their disjune or their collation (breakfast and light refreshments respectively) and a number also allocated to the benburd or babrod 19, from which stock the queen’s own boards at her main meals were supplied – again, that would have been served with some ritual, to be discussed below. On some days, too, some was allocated for ‘tostes’ as, for example on 22 February when 1 loaf was ‘to be tostes’ to Mistress Grahame (a close attendant on de Guise). Tostes were then supplied for the ladies more generally and, from 10 March, there is a daily entry for some weeks of a loaf for ‘the queen’s tosts’; this appears to be exactly what it sounds like, toast! Toast was historically often eaten with wine and was sometimes seen as medicinal, even steeped in water to make a drink for invalids - which sounds so nasty that I prefer to think of de Guise and her ladies making toast round the fire late at night and dredging it with butter, though on 11 July there were tostes for the comptroller who was a man. Bread had other medical uses and on 3 and 4 August bread was also supplied ‘to be a dressing to Mistress M’ – clearly a bread poultice, perhaps for a burn or other injury (NAS E34/15) and on 21 and 22 November several loaves were used by the pottinger ‘to be drogs to the queen’, the word ‘drug’ having a very wide connotation at the time and the pottinger might, for example, have made an infusion of the bread with spices to use as a medicine.

There were two further allocations. On most days two items were supplied to ‘the suett’ or ‘the swet’ a word which would remain uncertain but for a reference on 6 January 1549 to ‘vi gattoos ane for ye queen & v for ye suet’, an emendation at the foot of the page makes it clear that the full meaning is ‘six gateaux, one for the queen and one for the sweet-board’. There were often more items for ‘the swet’ for feasts, banquets and special days. The scherot, however, remains obscure; one or two items were allotted to it on some days, on others it is blank or not mentioned, one possibility is that it was for the sort of fancy breads and baked goods

19 The word is not recorded in this form in the dictionaries consulted. ‘Bawburd’ a variant of ‘bakbrede’ is defined in DSL as a board on which bread was baked but in this case, storage or even display must be involved.
mentioned by Pitscottie, who records ginger bread as a delicacy offered to James V on a hunting expedition (Lindsay 1899, I, 337).

We have already seen that wine, bread and wax (in that order) had sacerdotal significance at the 15th century Burgundian court and the paneterie in de Guise’s household had the same place in the household ranking, appearing first in the daily order in the household books. The paneterie department was divided into *paneterie de bouche* and *de commun*, the former at least headed by a male sommelier or butler; a bread house is mentioned for the king’s household (NAS E34/5/2; NAS E34/15 f. 2). Doubtless in the king’s household, as in those of the dukes of Burgundy, these male officials served the bread to the king and perhaps for the other ‘high’ tables. But in de Guise’s household it seems that the queen’s bread was served by her *dames d’honneur*, as indicated by supply of fabric for napkins for their use in the *paneterie de commun* (NAS E33/3 f. 36v), making it even more probable that they served the *pain de bouche*. The male staff of the paneterie might have served the higher-status male boards though, like many of the other higher-status staff, their real roles might more often have been as organisers, messengers and so on.

It is worth quoting, in full, the contemporary description of the service of bread to the 15th century Dukes of Burgundy, bearing in mind that the elaborate ritual was time consuming and was replicated, to a great extent, for many other superficially simple tasks; this was why so many staff were required!

*A varlet* should go early to the paneterie to ask for the bread, the knives and the serviettes. The butler will provide him with the bread and the linen keeper with the knives and serviettes. The varlet then wraps the hand with which he will carry the *pain de bouche* in one of the serviettes and then covers it with another and ties it below; he cuts slices of *pain bis* [brown bread corresponding to *pain commun*] making eight piles of four slices and puts them on the third serviette; he cleans the knives which will be used to cut the prince’s food at the table. And when the butler carries the *sallière* [an elaborate and symbolic salt cellar] the varlet-servant goes behind him and in his left hand he has the knives hanging in the case and in his right hand the bread for the prince. And when the panetier and the butler have sat down the varlet will place the bread on the table and, after kissing the handle, put the two big knives before the place where the prince will sit, with the blades towards the prince, covering the blades with the (table-) cloth which is folded back. He then puts the small knife between the two big ones with the handle
towards the prince and this is because the big knives will be taken by the esquire-carver and the handles will be towards him whilst the small knife is towards the prince as he will use it himself. And once this is done the varlet-servant puts the bread on the knives and the slices beside the ‘petit nef’ [a small dish with water in which the prince will wash his hands before eating]. And when the prince has arrived the varlet-servant should uncover the slices of bread and place them in piles and then take one of the big knives and takes some bread from one of the piles and tastes some as a trial and then gives it to the panetier to try the meat (Petitor 1825, 500-1).

We have no such detailed description for de Guise’s procedure but the basic distinction between the (?crusty) rolls to be cut by the Prince and the slices of brown bread cut by the servants surely applied. And there were silver dishes even for the pain commun and numerous linen serviettes for the pain de bouche so it was all clearly served with elaborate, if not identical, ritual (NAS E33/3 Extra-ordinary expenses f. 10r; ibid f. 15v).

Wine and beer supply and service

The echansonnerie was the next department, with overall responsibility for wine but also for beer supply. Again, there were probably two sommeliers, one for each and again, their main tasks in de Guise’s household were probably supervisory and administrative, rather than involving themselves with the routine service which would be by the ladies of honour for the top boards and by much humbler people for the lower ones. Marshall (1993) found that wine was mainly supplied via Leith and was put into new casks by royal coopers and then taken to where the court was living eg by boat to Blackness and so to Linlithgow or by cart to Stirling or Holyrood; the white, red and claret mentioned above seem to be typical and there was also a distinction between vin ordinaire and better quality, though details are sparse. Beer was brewed locally at the various residences, the brewsters (who might have been women) getting two loaves of bread on many days. The key distinction was between those who got some wine, however, and those at the lower end of the scale, who got only beer, again a distinction found in many similar institutions (Gibson and Smout, 1988).

At the 15th century Burgundian court the wine for the Prince was placed on the buffet shortly before the meal (not too soon or it would not be fresh); the attendant brought in a covered silver goblet in his left hand and a silver vessel of water in his right. Only when the prince
arrived was the wine tasted by the servant, presented to the licorne (the antidote or test for poison) and then offered to the prince when he gave the sign (not the word) to do so. Those who served wine at table did not enter the chamber, where it was served by the most senior servant present. The use of water to dilute the wine seems to have been usual and some princes are said to have liked it very weak indeed. For special festivals there was an even more elaborate ritual (Petitot 1820, 506-512). But again, as with the bread, it was inevitable that the upper strata would get some beer, again perhaps the very weak beer known as ‘small beer’ produced when the malt was boiled and fermented for a second time.

**Candles and spice – the fruiterie department**

This looks like a rather odd combination, explained by de la Marche at the 15th century Burgundian court as being because [bees-] wax and fruit (including dried fruit such as raisins) were the produce of flowers, though he recognised that the department also dealt with spices and with tallow candles, which are made from animal fat. In Burgundy, the head of this department also kept the silver candlesticks for the table and buffet and carried the candles before the prince on the holy days such as Good Friday. There was a huge demand for candles for such days, when there would be one for every member of the household and candle were required for the chapel(s) (Petitot 1820, 524-6). However, in Scotland the spice department emerged from the wardrobe department and the symbolism may have been different.

In de Guise’s case, the anomaly is the greater since, though called the fruiterie, the fruit was actually procured along with other kitchen supplies. Certainly the candles and other lights were the main concern for the department under de Guise. Again, we have to remind ourselves of why candles were so important. Firstly, light was one of the most distinctive features of courts. At the southern Italian court of the Emperor Frederick (Barbarossa) in the early 13th century it was said ‘… every day a festival, and evening as bright as day with torches’ (quoted Bertelli 1986, 50). Light was even more significant in Scotland, with its long, dark winter days; the burgh of Stirling sought repeatedly to regulate the price of candles as they were such a significant part of household expenditure and, for most people, sundown meant darkness. At the wedding at Linlithgow in 1543 the department provided six cirges (big, altar candles) and no fewer than 25 ‘torches’ compared with the usual four or six for a day (NAS E33/3 April 1543, f. 12r). Light was expensive but did not just allow people to see each other and the rooms they
found themselves in; without it, the glitter of gold and jewels, even the colour of the gorgeous fabrics was lost. Bright light also conveyed ideas of goodness, of virtue as well as of luxury. The department was run, throughout this period, by Alexander (‘Sandy’) Durham, another Stirling man. He appears on the Early List and he or his son (or both) are buried in the St Andrews Aisle of the Holy Rude Church (Harrison 2007). On 16 August 1549 bread was supplied for two gentlemen of the laird of Buccleuch’s in Alexander Durham’s chamber in Edinburgh. The impression that this might have doubled as his workplace is strengthened by the fact that the Dean of the Chapel Royal had his supper in Alexander Durham’s chamber in Stirling on 14th December when, perhaps, they discussed the arrangements for the forthcoming Christmas festival, which would concern them both as the liturgy, the feasts and the augmented household would all call for more lights, more of an attempt to put on a show, of which the brightness of secular candles would be a part.

The records refer to several types of lights, candles being by far the most numerous with a few torches and flambeaux supplied most days and more for feasts. In addition there were bougies (which would be small, perhaps almost like night-lights and perhaps to be lit before images in the chapel) and cierges, which are the big candles which would be placed on the altars. There were, specifically, cierges et bougies pour les chapelles de deux roynes (cierges and bougies for the chapels of the two queens).
4  DAILY LIFE AT DE GUISE’S COURT

Court etiquette is of very little value to bourgeois societies and so is overlooked – though etiquette is key to understanding the court society and its structure. In fact, etiquette is important in the control and distribution of power and illuminates aspects of the structure of court society itself (Elias, 1969, p. 29).

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In 1603 the Venetian ambassador to London wrote to the Doge and Senate of Venice about the accession of James VI of Scotland to the throne of England. He had made enquiries amongst people who understood courtly life; in the second sentence of his letter he tells them that, in Scotland, James allowed those who served his meals to keep their hats on and to talk to him and he talked to them. They were ‘rough servants’ and he lived ‘scarcely like a private gentleman’ (CSP Venetian X, 46-8). This was not just a discussion of table manners but, as he recognised, an important description of court culture; indeed, he went on to say that James treated all ‘with French familiarity’. The most ordinary aspects of court life can be the most revealing and, in court studies ‘gifts, colours, clothing and gestures’ are as important as literature, high art or learning (Nijsten 2004, 8). That is particularly true for a project such as the one at Stirling where the interpretation must depend, to a large degree, on the concrete and the day-to-day.

In the medieval period, there was a common courtly culture in north-western Europe which shared values and modes of behaviour ‘across territorial, linguistic and ethnic boundaries’ (Vale 2001, 2). That was also true for the renaissance period and the Scots court was not culturally isolated – as the presence of a French queen, embassies to and from Italy and the papal court, envoys from the Low Countries, as even invading English armies and subsequent peace-making so clearly show (Thomas 2005, 218). The usual reason cited for the Scots court being different from others is comparative poverty (Juhala 2000, 301); but I will support the argument of Cuddy (1987) that the difference was, rather, structural and went much deeper than size or lack of money. I will go beyond Cuddy and argue that the Scottish style was a matter of positive choice, that Scots familiarity was as distinctive as the Spanish insistence on narrowly marking issues of rank or the English on matters or protocol. This is an important argument which it is necessary to follow in some detail since her ability to use the Scots system was, I suggest, one of the keys to de Guise’s success. She came from the French court with its
informal tradition and would certainly have found aspects of the Scots court familiar and congenial. Much of the evidence concerns the court of James VI which we will look at first. I will then seek to demonstrate that James VI had consciously modelled himself on his grandfather and argue that this permits us to argue, albeit with some care, back from the 1590s to the 1530s and 1540s – and perhaps beyond. We will also look at the issue of formality and informality as experienced by various queens in the 16th century and so move on (at last!) to consider de Guise, taking such direct evidence as there is and also using analogy. Throughout, I will put a good deal of emphasis on the daily routine of meals and the manner of eating, a matter which, as the ambassador realised, was at the heart of courtly life.

4.2 Formality and informality

Sir Henry Wotton’s description of James VI’s dining was also written around the time of his accession to the English throne but, unlike the ambassador’s, was based on recent, personal observation. He was writing (in Italian) to an Italian acquaintance. After some general observations about his appearance, Wotton continues:

His court is governed more in the French than the English manner. Everyone can enter whilst the king is eating. He is served ‘hat on head’ [beretta in testa ie his attendants wear their hats]; he speaks with those who are present whilst he is at table, according to the occasion, and they to him (Smith, 1907. I, 314-5, translated JGH).

It is worth giving the Venetian ambassador’s description more fully, too:

Those who are best versed in the etiquette between Princes are those who most frequently enquire what the Republic intends to do about the [new] King of England. They suggest this attitude to the King who, of his own accord, would probably hardly have changed his modest habit of life which he pursued in Scotland, where he lived hardly like a private gentleman, let alone a sovereign, making many people sit down with him at table, waited on by rough servants, who did not even remove their hats, treating all with a French familiarity, reserving all expenditure and service for the Queen...(CSP Venetian, 10, 46-8).
The ambassador is clearly much more judgemental than Wotton – and the fact that informality was French does not excuse it, in his eyes! But that an ambassador, writing to his home government, should give such emphasis to matters of etiquette indicates very powerfully that we are concerned here, with something of the first importance.

And there is even better evidence for James’s style, from his own writing in his Basilicon Doron, advice to his son and heir Prince Henry on how he had himself ruled and how his own model might be improved on. His early chapters are on political and religious issues but he then moves on to what he agrees are lesser matters or ‘indifferent things’ which he divides into those which are necessary, such as food, sleeping, raiment, speaking, writing and gesture and those which are not necessary but are convenient, such as pastimes, exercise and company for recreation.

In a king, he says, ‘his manner of reflection at the table and his behaviour thereat’ is the most important of the first set.

_Therefore, as kings use oft to eat publicly, it is meet and honourable that ye also do so, as well to eschew the opinion that ye love not to haunt company, which is one of the marks of a Tyrant, as likewise that your delight to eat privately be not thought to be for private satisfying of your gluttony, which ye would be ashamed to be publicly seen. Let your table be honourably served; but serve your appetite with few dishes…_

His food should be wholesome and plain, both to avoid the implication of gluttony and for his own health. It will also mean that he can be

_the hartier [more warmly or freely] received by your mean subjects in their houses, when their cheer may suffice you… which otherwise would … breed coldness and disdain in them…_
Drunkenness was particularly ‘beastly’ in a king, he advised, ‘and increaseth with age’. Finally, it was not seemly to discuss business or to be pensive whilst at the table;

*but keep then an open and cheerful countenance, causing to be read pleasant histories unto you, that profit may be mixed with pleasure; and when ye are not disposed, entertain pleasant, quick but honest discourses.*

So, this style of dining was not an oversight or a failure to maintain the dignity of monarchy (as the Venetian ambassador had implied) nor due to lack of money or a dislike of ritual. It was a conscious choice. He thought this was the right way to behave and had clearly-expressed reasons for his views, reasons which are entirely consistent with his views about more general issues of access to his presence, to which we now turn, albeit at least one observer found that, contrary to his own expressed ideal, James did sometimes discuss business whilst at table (Courcelles, 1828).

Overall, James VI thought the Scots nobles to be over great and, to prevent the disturbances consequent on their pride and love of power, his son should ‘acquaint yourself so with all the honest men of your Barons and Gentlemen’ and be open of access and so affable to ‘every rank of honest person’ that they would not be afraid of him (not ‘make a bogle’ of him, in one version of his words) but make their own cases before him directly, rather than through intermediaries. James believed that the court should be ‘garnished’ with nobles, adding, almost as an aside, that the barons [ie the lairds] ‘are but an inferior part of the nobility and of their estate’ and clearly they were to be included as a part of the ‘garnish’.

James VI, in fact, thought that he himself had been too easy of access and tried to restrict access somewhat in the later part of his reign in Scotland (Lynch 2000, 87). But he thought that James V had erred in the other direction in denying his senior nobles proper access, an error which led directly to his defeat at Solway Moss and so to his death - though modern historians such as Cameron and Merriman disagree with him there (Basilicon Doron, 87). James thought his successor should have regular appointed hours for public audience and certainly not to be locked away from his people like the King of Persia (seen as a classic ‘tyrant’). So, he recognised that a balance had to be struck, that striking the balance was a part of the art of rule and that getting it wrong could have serious consequences.
James had recognised, in fact, that if access was restricted, those who put the restrictions into effect (either the Privy Council on the one side or the chamber staff on the other) gained power through doing so, they could limit the flow of information and opinions presented to the king and so limit his options. Politically, accessibility meant greater political freedom for others – suitors could put their own case; though, on the down side, it led to factionalism and political feuding (Brown 2003, 120-1). Architecturally, accessibility permitted a simple sequence of rooms (outer hall, presence, bedchamber, closet) in the residences, whereas where access was more restricted, the 16th century had seen a multiplication of the inner apartments of the royal suite as the monarch’s retreated further and further from the public gaze (Cuddy 1987). In summary, both king and nobles wanted fairly free access, it ‘ornamented’ the court, it provided for service and ensured that the king was in touch with events whilst it gave the nobles the chance to present their case; the Scots nobles expected to have fairly ready access. Tightly controlled access put too much power in the hands of the gatekeepers, isolated the king and would have led to complaints of exclusion.

Those who served James VI, the ‘rough servants, who did not even remove their hats’, were (principally) his carver, sewar and coppar and, whilst earls served these roles for the baptism of Prince Henry, the day to day service was by lairds or the sons or other relatives of higher nobles and men of similar rank – qualified as nobles in the Scots system, as James himself had said (above) (Juhala 2000, 311). A very similar list of men had served James V in the same roles (Thomas 2005, 227). In the main residences, they must have done so in exactly the same rooms as their successors – and, doubtless, they kept their hats on too. Interestingly, in Gavin Douglas’s Palice of Hounour (of uncertain early 16th century date) he describes an idealised royal palace. The watcher on the wall-heads [garitor], repelling the unworthy, is Lawtie [lawfulness/ respect for the law] whilst the porter is Patience (p. 58). Constancy is the king’s secretary and his other servants (master household, clerks of the closet and cubiculars [chamber staff], comptroller, ushers of the chamber, marshals, cook (who tastes the food) carver, server, coppar, chancellor and the lesser administrators are princely virtues such as Liberality, Discretion, Conscience and so on; these are precisely the titles of the servants employed by James V and VI and whilst we do not need to believe that the real servants possessed these virtues, it remains interesting as an ideal.
There were some odd incidents at the court of James VI, including one where a man claimed that it was the press of people behind him which forced open the chamber door whilst the king was inside, not his own direct action (Brown 2003, 121). And there were continuing efforts, consistent with the views expressed in *Basilicon Doron*, to regulate access. In 1601, for example, there were complaints of the ‘confusit nowmer of … all rankis’ entering the bed chamber and new rules were introduced, to control the right to be in the presence and bedchamber or cabinet. These rules do not even mention access to the Outer Hall, where the king probably ate and they left the Presence (the next innermost apartment) readily accessible to noblemen, their eldest son and to privy councillor, albeit none were to enter the Privy Chamber till called. Still, further instructions had later be issued to the Master Household to deal with members of the household seeking the king’s signature. ‘Familiarity remained the hallmark of James’s kingship’ says Brown, ‘and he persistently refused to be cut off from people, either by the administrative bureaucracy of the privy council or by attempts to formalise the household’ (Brown 2003, 121).

Though Wotton and the ambassador had recognised that the informality, the talking between monarch and spectators and so on, were similar to French procedure, French monarchs were certainly served by people of higher status than the minor Scots nobles who served these Scots kings. But Castiglione, for example, did not join in condemnation of princes whose close companions were ‘persons of little worth except in the matter of knowing how to give good personal service’ (Castiglione 1967, 127). It should also be emphasised that at more formal events (the baptisms of the princes James and Henry are the two outstanding occasions) the service was by senior nobles holding hereditary office and the seating arrangements, service and entertainment were radically different from the day to day, conveying political and ideological messages germane to the specific occasion (eg Lynch 1990; Lynch 2000).

James VI, in fact, faced something of a dilemma about the seeming ‘Frenchness’. There can be little doubt that he sought to distance himself from his mother’s example. On the other hand, one of the great influences on his youth was Esme Stewart, duke of Lennox, who had strengthened the French element when he set up the adult household in 1580. But that the tradition was older is shown by the parallels of nomenclature of the personnel and by the architectural arrangements just mentioned (Cuddy 1987, 180). And James VI specifically
wanted to model himself on his grandfather, to follow a Scots model which was also ‘French’ in
this regard.

James VI had a portrait of his grandfather James V beside his bed as a child (Wilson 1963, 19)
and it is not difficult to imagine the effect such an example must have had on an
impressionable child who was taught to believe the worst of his mother and not much better of
his father. Here was the figure which could justify the belief of all around him that he was, in
some extra-ordinary way, come of a special family in spite of the total invisibility of any close
relatives and the need to airbrush others out of the picture. Small wonder, then, that (again
according to Wotton) ‘He wears his hair short in imitation of James V who was the first of the
kings of Scotland who was contemptuous of long hair [disprezzava la zazzera]; James V’s short
hair is confirmed by his image on the later coinage such as the famous ‘bonnet pieces’ though
he had long hair on the groats of the 1520s.

As James VI came to take more personal authority, during the 1580s, the model was frequently
referred to. Officials such as the argentier, introduced by de Guise or Mary herself, vanish from
the records and the older Scots titles re-appear. In 1582 it was proposed to abandon the
‘procurement’ or contract system introduced by de Guise and consolidated by Mary in favour
of a return (explicitly) to the system used in the days of James V, details of which were to be
provided by the elderly Laird of Dairsy (Thomas 1997, 31 and Appendix B). A report of 1591
comments on how profitable the royal estates and parks had been to James V and suggests a
reversion to his system of keeping large flocks and herds of his own, both for profit and to
supply the demands for food for the household (GD26/7/393 Some articles concerning the
checker). Not surprisingly, perhaps, at just this time the works of Sir David Lindsay, writer of
advice-literature from the reign of James V, indeed, one of the former king’s childhood advisers
and supports, were twice reprinted (Lynch 2000, 81). Other courts also used such methods,
asking old men how things had been done in the past, though the information gleaned was not
always necessarily accurate nor was the proposed model always followed perfectly (Vale 2001).
James V had indirectly modelled himself, in turn, on that renaissance exemplar his own father,
through experienced courtiers (Thomas 2005, 219).

James VI did not exclude magnates from his government, nor did he advise it, though he did
use ‘lesser’ men for many offices. Again, this was not error or default but conscious choice. In
money matters, particularly, he advised his son to ‘choose honest, diligent, mean, but responsible’ men, ‘mean, I say, that you may take a sharp account of their intromission, without peril of their breeding any trouble to your estate’, a rule he admitted he had not always followed himself. Again, just such people had had charge of many of the financial affairs of James V (Murray 1983). Many monarchs had learned this lesson; people who had no power or authority except that which derived directly from the monarch, were more likely to give good, disinterested advice, than people with expectations, a strong, independent power-base and an extended kin-group.

That, surely, is an argument which provides a link to earlier Stewarts, whose employment of ‘low-born favourites’ was so often criticised by precisely the senior nobles who felt that they were being unjustly displaced. Such connections were the excuses for the murders of James I and James III; James I’s distancing himself from his senior nobles has been the subject of recent comment (Scott 2007). It is possible that even he was following earlier models. And the resentment was certainly known elsewhere, in other courts, where clerks and ‘new men’ who gained power by ‘unworthy’ means ‘such as brain-power’ were resented by the older, military nobility (Anglo 1977, 39). Cameron (1998, 3) does not expand on his comment that ‘magnate domination was incompatible with adult Stewart monarchy, as earlier examples [than James V] show’. But he was surely right. The Stewart style was of accessibility, of reliance on lairds and similar people for many administrative roles and as companions. James VI’s advice, yet again, distils the argument. In his speech and gesture when king, his son should be:

grave and with a majesty when ye sit in judgement or give audience to ambassadors, homely when you are in private with your own servants, merrily when you are at any pastime or merry discourse…

(Basilicon Doron, 181).

And this, allowing for a little slippage between the intention and the deed, is what Wotton reports; ‘With his domestics and gentlemen of the Chamber he shows himself very familiar. With the great he is more grave and severe’.

It is almost a commonplace amongst court historians that the court was organised to project an image of the nation and the ruler, that its magnificence demonstrated power, that its style demonstrated the relationship of the monarch to the nation (close and paternalistic or remote.
and sacred); few contemporaries can have been so aware of this ‘projection’ as James VI, with his awareness that not just his style of eating but his style of speech, not just his rule but his gestures, were a part of the art of rule and that the whole performance depended on what ‘the audience’ (broadly, the political ‘class’ of Scotland) wanted and expected and what the monarch wanted and could achieve.

There was a great range of practice amongst the European courts of the renaissance, a widespread assumption that ‘our ways are the best ways’ and that ‘our ways’ were unchanging, based on right traditions and a cornerstone of national identity – though none were actually nearly so unvarying as they thought, simply seeming fixed to people who saw them only over a limited time and through chauvinistic eyes (Chatenet 2002). Change might be due to a particular monarch (Henri III of France tried to make his court more formal) or to particular administrators (Wolsey’s Eltham Ordinances in England) whilst economic and political realities were constantly changing and the court was forced, to a greater or lesser degree, to adapt.

Here we are concerned only with the broadest divergences though some nuance has to be allowed for. The domestic life of the Spanish monarchs was informal (Starkey 2004, 41) though there was a minute observation of matters of rank. England, again and again, emerges as the most formal, having ‘one of the most pompous and ceremonised courts of Europe’ (Starkey 2004, 41). But even there, change could depend on the person; Henry VII never jousted or took part in public entertainments as king and prevented his son (the future Henry VIII) from doing so. But, as soon as he could escape from tutelage, Henry VIII was performing (with great skill and not without attracting some grumbles about being too informal) in the tilt yard (Starkey 1985, 13). But observers recognised the English court as uniquely stiff. The early 17th century Bishop Goodman (1839, 30) made enquiries on the topic amongst ‘several gentlemen who were in every king’s court’ and they told him, from their own experience, that ‘no king … in Christendom, did observe such state and carried such a distance from their subjects as the kings and queens of England’ adding, specifically in relation to the accession of James VI ‘there was no such state observed in Scotland’. In France, as the Ambassador and Wotton observed, the situation was very different.
Of particular importance was where the monarch ate and who else was present. The French king dined very publicly in the outer part of the royal suite (the salle which would correspond to the Outer Hall at Stirling) with crowds of people milling about the table, as easy to see, says Chatenet, as for a modern tourist to see the Changing of the Guard at Buckingham Palace today. Henry VIII ate in much greater state and seclusion, in the innermost recesses of a royal suite which had become far more extended than the short enfilade of early 16th century France or of Scotland, so that French visitors were shocked by the awe-filled respect with which he was treated (Chatenet 2002, 110; Thurley 1993).

But Italians who visited France were also shocked, as much by the informality amongst the courtiers as between courtiers and king, finding it disconcerting that they could hardly distinguish one man from another, cardinals being less revered than mere chaplains in Rome (Chatenet 2002, 111-2). This seeming casualness (which was, surely, a careful pose with its own rules) was held to symbolise the ‘communion of true love’ which united the monarch with his people and when the protocol was varied there were protests and the old system was restored (Chatenet 2002, 116-122). The English setting, by contrast, was ‘eucharistic’, the king dining alone, under a canopy with a rail round the table, the meal began with a ritualised washing of the hands and even the utensils sacralised by the touch of the monarch. The bare-headed attendants bowed to the king before serving him. The whole ritual closely resembled the Mass – but continued at the English court long after it was abandoned in the English church (Adamson 1999, 104-5)\(^20\). Although, as Adamson says, this was the procedure only for the most formal occasions and was set aside under Elizabeth, it is striking that when Henri III tried to introduce a rail round his dining table in France, albeit it was soon withdrawn, it was seen as one of the factors leading to his downfall.

These were sensitive matters and change had to be managed with care. The Scot, Melville of Halhill, says that he had been in such favour that the Elector Palatine (a German prince) had allowed him to sit at his own table and ‘the burd being drawen, used to confer with me in

\(^{20}\) There was a similar sacralisation at the 15th century Burgundian court, where the officials kissed every artefact used by the duke as they handled it (Paravicini, 1991, 73). There was a big range of practice in the Italian courts but at some, people uncovered their heads when the prince or pope ate or drank (Bertelli, 1986, pp. 20-22).
presens of his haill court’. But this caused offence to some so Melville was excused eating with the prince for the future, their consultations by appointment, privately in the chamber (Melville 1827, 113).

4.3 Scotland in Europe

Elias (1969, 23) recognised that absolute monarchs required a tightrope walker’s skill to balance the many conflicting pressures. Amongst the pressures facing de Guise on her rise to power were issues about national identity. European nobilities and monarchs had a shared acceptance of the association between hierarchy and stability; the monarch, as the keystone of the arch, was the guarantor of stability – at least in ordinary circumstances. Perhaps the turbulence of the recurrent minorities of Scots monarchs had the paradoxical effect of strengthening the adult monarchs since powerful nobles appreciated the damage caused by factionalism and saw that it could only be healed by a strong centre (Ditchburn & Macdonald 2001, 159). More certainly, recurrent wars with England, intermittent though they were, fostered the sense of national identity and encouraged its growth and elaboration.

The monarch’s key role as military leader re-enforced the tie between the crown and national identity and that tie was further consolidated by key notions such as heraldry, a symbolism shared by king and nobles alike. Heraldry gave a unique role to the monarch, as the ultimate granter of arms, the ultimate winner in the genealogical race, the final under-writer of land titles and honours of every sort. For an earl or knight to question the identity of monarch, nation and commonweal was to question some of the deepest values of the society of which they claimed to be part.

It is clear, for example, that there was a rhetoric of ‘patriotism’ – that people taking very divergent actions might all claim to be acting ‘for Scotland’. The Assured Lords, known to be acting for Henry VIII and being rewarded by him in 1543, were derisively called the ‘English Lords’, Arran was said by his enemies to have sold out to Henry and betrayed his trust, even people who favoured a marriage between the infant Mary and Henry’s son and who desperately wanted peace, thought that Scotland should get the best deal possible. The debates are shot through with a keen sense that there was a ‘national interest’ which should be protected – and vehement arguments about what that interest was and how it might best be
served. And many of these nobles found that the national interest and their own were the same – that the nation would be best served if they got their own way.

It could be argued that Scotland’s European links made the trick easier for de Guise. Or, on the other hand, that they made it more difficult. Her obvious strength, in his regard, was the shared European culture which allowed a good deal of latitude; the obvious weakness was that she would be seen to be too French even in mundane matters, so exacerbating perceptions or arguments that she was merely a French stooge. Walking that tightrope was de Guise’s task.

We must first be clear that the Scots political class were well aware of the shared European culture. Scots nobles were used to travelling in Europe and many had served other European monarchs in a variety of capacities – the French monarchs most privileged protectors were the Scots Guard and Scots traders were widespread across Europe from Poland to Italy. To take the single example of late medieval Burgundy; Scots knights took place in the tournaments at the wedding of the duke’s son in 1385 and Scots merchants were present for the feast and pageant of Charles the Bold’s son in 1468. The earl of Douglas was entertained to a great feast by Philip the Good in 1450. The dukes commissioned the Chronicle of the Good Knight, Jacques de Lalaing, with its famous description of his fight at Stirling in 1449, and the king of Scotland was listed, along with the pope, the emperor, the kings of England, Aragon, Denmark and Portugal and the dukes of Brittany and Austria as allies of the dukes in 1471. Burgundy played a key role in facilitating the marriage between James II and Mary of Gueldres, daughter of their follower, the duke of Gueldres (Vaughan 1975; Nijsten 2004).

Indeed, all Scots queens since James I’s Joan Beaufort had been foreign (English, Gueldrian, Scandinavian, English, French and French). The people known to have been informed of the death of James V give a nice indication of Scotland’s major international interests; Henry VIII of England, Francis I of France, the Pope. In London, the Imperial ambassador heard the news and wrote immediately to Mary, queen dowager of Hungary and Regent of the Low Countries, who would have told her brother, Charles V, who was in Spain (Merriman 2000, 84-5). Scotland also had a mutual defence treaty with Denmark and a treaty of peace and commerce with Burgundy (Merriman 2000, 104). Italy had several important courts, of which the papal court in Rome attracted clerics from all over Europe including Scotland. Sir Thomas Erskine, who had spent time as an ambassador in Italy for James V, is sometimes credited with inspiring the
formation of the Court of Session, in particular in devising the scheme for financing it by taxing the church influenced by his experiences in Pavia (Cameron 1998, 269). Printing increased Italian influence in the early Renaissance period – indeed, allowed international influences of all kinds to flow much more freely.

Although the French influence was so clear during the 1540s, England was still important culturally as well as militarily. It was, for example, from England that Arran sought to encourage the importation of the first legal bibles for popular sale in early 1543, significantly, before parliament had approved the measure (HP I, 429 Arran to Suffolk, 17 February 1543). The connection is made clear by the insults heaped on the Assured Lords, men dedicated to Henry’s interest following their capture at the Battle of Solway Moss; they were called ‘heretics and English Lords’ – their opponents, the ‘scribes and the Pharisees’ were spared the nationalist smear. English propaganda and diplomacy argued, throughout the 1540s, that Scotland and England shared a common border and a common language – and there were plenty of Scots who agreed that cultural proximity was a strong argument against war and in favour of a compromise with England. Such people recognised that France made grand offers when they wanted Scots support but the, all too often, when the crisis was past, left Scotland to face English retribution – only the English alliance could bring lasting peace.

De Guise was, after all, just the most obvious personification of French influence. Scots continued to travel and to seek employment abroad (Cardinal Beaton was also Bishop of Mirepoix) whilst the Scots nobles probably drank neither more nor less French wine than they had previously done. Young Archibald Crawford, recommended to de Guise as a servant, was not the only young Scotsman to have been educated in France (Wood 1923, 166-7). The links were old-established, profound, a part of the essence of being Scots – as were the links with England.

Brown sees the Scots nobility, with its emphasis on birth (rather than on appointment or merit) as being closer to the French than the English model (Brown 2004, 5). Thomas (2005) concludes that probably the court structure of James V corresponded more closely to an English than to a French model but did not consider the issues of gesture and access which we looked at above.
Certainly, de Guise’s household drew in a wide range of nationalities. Apart from the obvious French members of the staff and people such as the Flemish cannoneers, already mentioned, the Bread Book alone mentions English prisoners, Italians, Dutch, a Gascon and some Spaniards whilst the Rhinegrave and others came from areas which are now Germany. Few are likely to have been personally either politically or culturally influential (even allowing for ‘German beer’ bought for Arran’s house in May 1549 at a time when German troops were certainly around) (NAS E32/10 f. 54r). It is hardly to be expected that there were not tensions. But they were not likely to have been round issues of protocol and procedure. Scots and foreigners could recognise that court culture was diverse; each could sneer somewhat at the others for not doing it right, not doing it ‘like we do’ as the English servants of Philip of Spain complained about him during his English residence as consort of Mary Tudor (Guy, Lecture notes). And there the Venetian ambassador of 1603 (above) is a very good guide, not allowing his patronising tone to obscure the reverence he feels for a ‘real king’. De Guise might, sometimes, have had to smooth ruffled feathers. On 23 July 1544 the earl of Glencairn, in a letter to de Guise, denied that he was the cause of the trouble caused by the Frenchmen in the park at Stirling (Cameron 1927, 98). There must have been many such incidents. But they arose anyway, between Scots kin groups, factions and regional interest groups; de Guise had to direct much more effort, it seems, to mediating between the Scots themselves than between the Scots and the foreigners.

4.4 Daily Routine Including Meals

The main evidence for de Guise’s routine comes from the Bread Book though that is supported by less systematic information from the household books. The main meals were dinner and supper, the former probably eaten in the afternoon, the latter in the evening and sometimes as late as midnight, as at Christmas 1549. These were substantial, with a choice of dishes - meat, fish, eggs, shellfish and so on, according to the day and the liturgical season as well as to the natural availability. Sometimes de Guise would have dinner before setting out on a journey, having supper at journey’s end. Arran (but not usually de Guise) sometimes had dinner at the mid point and then continued, suggesting that de Guise was less likely to make an early start. But both de Guise and Arran and senior household members also had the option of disjune (which was breakfast) and collation (a light meal); only bread is recorded as available for these though doubtless there were other titbits available, cold leftovers if nothing else. Both disjune
and collation were quite often taken in groups. Indeed (and most importantly) there were often several people present at ‘the queen’s disjune’ so on 17 December 1549 at Stirling the bishops of Dunblane and Galloway, Lady Cassillis and others were present at the queen’s disjune whilst on 24 December Arran and other lords and ladies were at the queen’s collation, Arran himself and several others also having collations all supplied with bread. The queen’s disjune, in particular, might have been something like the French king’s levée, the ceremonial accompanying his getting up in a morning (Chatenet, 2002). If de Guise did not like an early start, she was fond of late-night feasts, sometimes described as late banquets or late suppers; there were at least three (2 July, 24 July, 25 December) during 1549 and other banquets, such as those of 29 January and 17 November were also suppers.

Chatenet (2002, 112 ff) was able to give a broad outline of the daily routine of the kings of France but there is no comparable detail for Scotland. There do not appear to have been special times for meetings or doing business – though later in the century there were attempts to impose such daily and weekly routines. Grimani, for example, sent word of his arrival in Stirling, in disguise and without his retinue, and expected to have to wait some days for an audience. But he was instructed to attend de Guise that evening, had an hour’s meeting with her, was taken to another room for a further meeting with the Cardinal and arranged to return, once his retinue arrived, so he could present himself publicly and formally. James V, too, seems to have arranged meetings at short notice, just as it was convenient, seeing Sadler in the morning on one occasion and after his dinner on another. It is worth emphasising, though, that for most people attending court involved a great deal of waiting about – for those closest to de Guise this would have been done in the salle, though there can be little doubt that almost any warm or sunny corner, close to a fire, out of the wind, would have had its cluster of people waiting for something to happen, something to do. Waiting was the principal activity of the courtier.

4.5 Protocol of Queenly Dining

16th century English kings ate in great state in the innermost recesses of their apartments whilst French king’s dined with a carefully-posed informality in the salle or outer hall and probably Scots kings did too. But what of Scots queen’s – and of de Guise in particular? Is there further information about the concrete aspects of her court, from which we can deduce more
about the detailed arrangements for de Guise? First, we must review the details available for other courts to set the (slight) evidence in context.

In France, the king’s *salle* at the main residences was vast and well lit with two big fireplaces. It was a public place, open to all and probably watched over throughout the century by the guard. The *salle* was not divided in any way. The king’s table was dressed at the end furthest from the entry and close to one of the fireplaces, separated from the watching crowd only by the batons of the *maitres d'hôtel*, who beat back the recalcitrant by hitting them, in case of need. According to tradition, the king sat with his back to the fire, facing the spectators and the table was in the centre (Chatenet 2002, 144). Only the Pope, the papal legate or a very favoured prince or cardinal might have been sat to the king’s right hand; any other guest would sit to his left and though he dined in a crowded room, such guests were rare indeed (Chatenet 2002, 118). At his meals, the king sat on a ‘chaire’ though others present had only stools or benches – or stood. And when the meal was finished, the boards and benches were removed and the *salle* became a waiting room once more (Chatenet 2002, 146). At the Burgundian court, too, usually only senior clerics sat to the duke’s right, says de la Marche, other guests sitting to his left and being served after him; But the disposition could be varied (Chatenet 2002, 509) depending on the place, the light, the disposition of the table in regard to windows and the entrances to the room. Burgundian and Flemish illustrations suggest that the dukes and nobles there often ate with others at the table, sometimes with a woman (presumably the duchess) to their right, though many of these images (anyway idealised) relate to special events rather than day-to-day practice 21.

As so often, the evidence is biased and anyway there could be a difference between theory and practice. Even early in his reign, Henry sometimes only presided over the meal served in the Presence and in reality ate in his Privy Chamber; this became more usual but he would then invite people to watch him dine and, very rarely, to eat with him, a mark of great favour (Thurley 1993, 124). But Catherine of Aragon continued to dine with Henry VIII on formal occasions, even as the process of divorce ground on (Starkey, 2004).

21 Dickens, 1977 illustration facing 49 and on 69, 134-5 for the Emperor; contrast it with Holbein’s representation of Henry VIII dining alone on 161 or Charles I with his queen to his left between 204-5.
There is much less information—and less clear-cut information—about where queens took their meals and how they were served, than for kings. French queens were as accessible as the kings according to some accounts (Chatenet 2002, 187). The queen’s salle was a large as the king’s and also well-lit with two fireplaces, one in the centre of the wall and with benches along the walls. Her table was less public than the king’s and she saw people in her chambre, not her salle, though the salle might serve as a dining chamber if there was no sallette or ante-chamber. The queen’s chamber, too, was public unless the king was present (Chatenet 2002, 194-5; and 86).

As queen, Catherine de Medici abandoned Florentine formality and allowed the same rights of audience whilst she ate as did the king since this was ‘ancient’ practice in France (Chatenet 2002, 187-8 and 192). The meals of Marguerite de Navarre were served by her ladies of honour, who ate in the same room but not at the same table; favoured females ate at the lower end of de Medici’s table [lontano da Sua Mta al fine della tavola – far from her majesty at the end of the table] (Chatenet 2002, 189). In 1585 the English Richard Cook said that the chief dame d’honneur to the queen, had the right to dine apart; she herself brought the first dish to the queen’s table, the other dishes being served by the other ladies in turn, who also acted as tasters and served her drink (Chatenet 2002, 85).

Duchess Catherine of Cleves (wife of Arnold, duke of Guelders in the mid 15th century) distinguished between those permitted to dine with her in her private chamber (including her court chaplain and sundry nobles) and those who dined in the hall, such as her musicians. In England, Elizabeth usually ate alone and it was very seldom that anyone was admitted (Thurley 1993, 123). Mary Tudor, says Guy, ‘was something of a loner’. Her ‘board of estate’ was in the privy chamber, but she usually dined alone in her withdrawing chamber, attended by four or five of her servants [who were mainly female] with two grooms to carry away the dishes (Guy, ‘The Marian Court’, nd. Online resource).

De Guise, as we have already seen, regularly dined in company with others, both males and females, clerics and laics who are explicitly and on a daily basis ‘at the queen’s board’ for both dinner and supper. And she appears to have had company even for her disjune and her collation, though perhaps not every day. She was clearly much more accessible than either of the two English examples and significantly more so than the French examples. In an interesting letter which does not relate to her meals, in 1550 d’Oysel reported the concerns of Sande Baron (otherwise unidentified) who had frequently complained that the Queen’s door was refused
him though many others have it ['l’entrée de la porte de vostre Mageste luy est totallement refusse encores que elle soyt commune a beaucoup d’entrer'], and as he says, by his enemy Sande Coquitan. D’Oysel remembered the queen saying that Sandy was a worthy man and attached to her service and asked that de Guise instruct Coquitan that he should have entry or explain why ‘a good and loyal servant should be denied the presence of his queen’ (Wood 1925, 84-5). There could hardly be a stronger argument for a presumption of access rather than of exclusion, particularly when we consider the further, detailed evidence about dining.

4.6 SERVICE OF THE MEALS – SALE AND CHAMBER

The Bread Book names between two and 32 persons sharing de Guise’s board on any one day, the latter at the ‘banquet supper’ in Edinburgh on 31 January 1549. It seems improbable that so many actually sat down together at one, physical board – so ‘at the queen’s board’ is a functional term. It is often the busiest days and the variations from routine which throw the clearest light on the regular procedure. On 3 January 1549 there was quite a big crowd at Stirling.

Friday 4 Jan 1549, the queen and her train in Stirling. At the queen’s board, those dining were:

Lord Huntly and his lady
Lord Argyll and his lady
The [French] Ambassador,
Lady Gordon [Huntly’s mother]
Lord Methven
Lady Barbara [Hamilton, Arran’s daughter]
Lord Monthayt [probably Menteith] and his lady
Lord [bishop] of Galloway
Lord Huntly’s two brothers.

In addition the following ladies dined in the queen’s chamber;

Lady Methven, Lady Monchan, Lady Livingstone, Mistress Graham, Mistress Livingstone, Lady Buchanan, Harry Drummond’s wife [they had 5 ½ loaves of bread].
Further, Mistress Livingstone and Lady Buchanan had supper (where is not clear but probably with the queen) whilst Mons de Villehamszon ate at the buffet at dinner and the ambassador at the buffet at the supper.

Eating in the chamber is most often mentioned on the busiest days and it appears to represent an overspill, in other words, the queen did not usually (or perhaps ever) eat in her chamber and, in that case, the obvious place for her to eat and where I suggest she did eat, was in her outer hall, corresponding to the French queen’s salle; there is, of course, no sallette in the Scots royal residences. On 17 October 1549 at Stirling, a very busy day, Madame de Thermes and her ladies and gentlemen dined in the queen’s chamber. Again on 26 December, another busy day, the lords’ and ladies’ board was set up in the queen’s chamber and the people at it consumed 19 loaves – again an overspill and perhaps an exceptional circumstance. So it might be that the Lords and Ladies Board, always distinct from the queen’s, was more usually in the salle, too, though practice may have varied, recalling references to ‘the place where the lords eat’ and so on, mentioned above. Of course, most other people ate elsewhere, far from the queen herself, and we will return to consider those later.

Exceptions include 14 May when the queen and a large company in Edinburgh had their supper in The Reyd or Reid [Red] Hall – whilst some people got bread in the Queen’s Hall. In July, at a time when bread was being supplied for wrights, masons and slaters evidently doing building work in Edinburgh the ambassador and his ladies were at the queen’s collation in the hall on 24 July and had supper with the queen in her chamber – clearly they had to vary the routine on account of the building work. Most of those who ate in the queen’s chamber were ladies but, for example, on again on 17 October at Stirling, the ambassador and some other gentlemen did so – it was unusual but not extra-ordinary.

Another vital clue contained in the information for 4 January, in the last paragraph in the box, is the reference to eating ‘at the buffet’, sometimes ‘at the buffet at the door’. This happened quite frequently throughout the year, the people who ate ‘at the buffet’ being mainly people (usually men but some ladies) who sometimes otherwise ate ‘at the queen’s board’. Buffets are recorded in Stirling, Edinburgh and Leith and may have existed elsewhere. On 23 May in Edinburgh, a French captain ate ‘at the queen’s buffet’ – implying that there were others. On 11 June Captain Asho (frequently present, sometimes at the queen’s board) and some gentlemen
ate in the hall and at the buffet and consumed 10 loaves. But, to understand the furniture, we had better first glance at the service of the food.

One of the best descriptions is again de la Marche’s idealised picture of 15th century Burgundy, with its wealth of detail and we have already seen the elaborate ritual for serving the two sorts of bread and the wine. The service was supervised by the maitre d’hotel, the food was brought from the kitchen and arranged on the buffet ready. Once the prince arrived, the food was tasted by the écuyer and also ‘offered to the licorne’ (a piece of unicorn horn with anti-poison properties) the dishes were offered to the prince, a total of 12 or 13 dishes (first potage, then eggs, fish etc) the meal being eaten at a single sitting. Others who ate with the prince were offered food after himself and all this was accompanied by kissing of knives and serviettes, bowing and obeisance and so on. There were many variations about who might serve according to the day and season and even special rules when the first herring or other special dishes appeared each year. De la March recognises that being ‘taster’ was a good job as this official had an unchallengeable right to eat as much as he liked of everything the prince ate; the doctor, on the other hand, was to watch the service but had no right to eat this food. There were, inescapably, lots of special articles for the service (salt dishes, a dish for the prince to wash his hands in before eating etc, and when it was all over, a napkin for him to wipe himself). The leftovers, according to de la Marche, were given to the poor, though probably much was really handed down to the lower tables (de la March 1820, 515-8). As with the service of the bread and wine, the Burgundian officials such as the écuyer trenchant had their counterparts in de Guise’s household, though, as with the bread and wine, it seems quite probable that actual service was by de Guise’s ladies, as was the case at the French court.

And these officials were also found at many other ducal courts and at the French royal court of the 16th century where, also, a payment was made in 1562 for transport of the utensils and furniture of the ‘salles’ of the king of France, listed as ‘tables, bancs, treteaux, buffets, escabelles [tables, benches, trestles, buffets, seats]’ and other furniture and utensils of the salles, necessary for the service of his majesty (Chatenet 2002, 144) whilst buffets appear in many illustrations of ducal and royal meals of the fifteenth and 16th century. I am fairly confident that those who eat ‘at the buffet’ are either overspill or latecomers and they are allowed to help themselves to (or even to be served with) the leftovers from the main meal. In Stirling in
1584x1585 there was an eating ‘buird’ with trestles, two long forms, two trestles for another buird with one form shorter than the other two in the ‘hall beside the terrace’ and a great cup

There is no record of a taster at the Scots court but James V is said to have inducted a guest into the ‘order of the licorne’ and Gavin Dunbar, in his *Palice of Honour*, lists the king’s servants in the idealised palace where it is the cook who tastes the food, a man whose idealised princely virtue is temperance (*Palice*, 58 -9). But, perhaps for de Guise, this was another task for one of the senior ladies as we saw above in France.

So, to summarise this section, I suggest that de Guise typically ate in her *salle* or outer hall. She was probably served by her senior ladies with a ritual not unlike that for Burgundy. She would sit under a cloth of estate at one end (probably the right) of the board on a chair and her guests to her left, probably on benches, all the seats along one side of the table. There would be a buffet somewhere in the room, most likely near the entrance; it might have acted as a cup board as well as being the point from which food was served. There would be benches around the walls. The benches (certainly) and the buffet (in my opinion) would remain in place when the board was cleared away after the meal.

**4.7 Eating for the rest of the court**

Eating arrangements within the royal household raise both practical and symbolic issues. We sometimes say today that we ‘are what we eat’. In the 16th century court, you were what you ate but also *where you ate it*. Those at the top of the hierarchy ate a varied diet of prestigious ingredients, skilfully prepared; they ate in specialised chambers with comfortable appurtenances and with a more or less precise ritual. Those who ate in hall had a much less rich diet and eating in hall was itself an indication of modest status. Distribution of the food (and particularly of wine) was hierarchical and many ate the leftovers of those in the higher ranks. The food prepared for the lower ranks was even less varied; they were not allowed access even to the left-overs of the elite and they ate communally, close to their workplace or perhaps in it. The sensitivities are nicely shown by the complaint of Janet Sinclair, who had been nurse to The Prince (de Guise and James V’s elder son, who had died in infancy) and then to the Little Queen and was still with her in France c. 1552-3 but, she said, since Lord Erskine had left she was no longer allowed to eat with the lords daughters, as she did formally; all she
now got was her dinner and her supper, in low company and without even a glass of wine. She was clearly very miffed indeed and asked de Guise for her support, not least for some more money as she had very little and had nobody else to turn to (Guy 2004, 43; NAS E34/23/1).

Juhala lists the tables at the court of James VI later in the 16th century (see Appendix Three). Broadly, the arrangements were similar to those under de Guise (and had probably been so under James V). Once again, our main source for de Guise is the Bread Book which shows that the detail actually varied from day to day – basically, there was more mixing of departments when there were fewer people, more distinction when the house was full. Indeed, as already noted, a department such as the fourrière might be expanded to deal with moves and busy times. 17 October 1549 gives a good image of a ‘full house’ at Stirling and it will be seen that, for example, the Lords’ and Ladies’ board does not appear as such, due to the rejigging; clearly, there was an element of pragmatism about all this. Broadly, the list descends the social scale and whilst those at the top might sometimes eat with or close to de Guise, those at the bottom would be in much humbler situations.

**Boards at Stirling on 17 October 1549 with numbers of loaves for each**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Board Description</th>
<th>Loaves</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ladies board, French gentlemen with them</td>
<td>23p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The gentlemen’s board</td>
<td>22p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master Household’s board</td>
<td>7p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Officers’ board</td>
<td>17p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scots Officers’ Board</td>
<td>13p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The muleteers’ and gentlemen’s servants and ladies servants’ board</td>
<td>12p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Fams burd [ie femmes as indicated by femmes and ladies board at later date]</td>
<td>4p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Cooks’ board</td>
<td>6p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The queen’s kitchen</td>
<td>6½p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The court kitchen</td>
<td>4p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The says [water carriers]</td>
<td>2p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The lavand [washer women]</td>
<td>2p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Avery Wife</td>
<td>1p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The tin vessel</td>
<td>1p</td>
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<tr>
<td>The cellar servants</td>
<td>1p</td>
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<tr>
<td>Item</td>
<td>Rate</td>
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<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>The silver vessel</td>
<td>1p</td>
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<tr>
<td>The brewsters</td>
<td>2p</td>
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<tr>
<td>The gentlemen’s servants</td>
<td>4p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Scots gentlemen’s and medicinar’s servants</td>
<td>3p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Master Household’s servants</td>
<td>5p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The gentlemen est mon [obscure, regular entry]</td>
<td>1p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbara Kennedy</td>
<td>½p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The ‘man at dyts ye pleys’[ ? the man that dites or writes the pleas]</td>
<td>1p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morys all day [obscure]</td>
<td>1p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The muleteers servants</td>
<td>2p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The porter all day</td>
<td>1p</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The powter man dyk [obscure – might be pewter man]</td>
<td>1p</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next down from the queen’s board was the lords and ladies and we have seen that on some occasions this was in the chamber; it might, more routinely, have been in the salle beside de Guise’s. At Holyrood, as we have seen, Sadler mentions a place where the lords usually ate. But there were many expedients. On Christmas Day 1549 some of the gentlemen had supper in the Master Household’s chamber at Stirling; on 17 November everyone had supper in the hall. But things could get worse than that with dinner in the fish house in Edinburgh for no less figures than the comptroller, Mons D’Ossay and others on several occasions in February in Edinburgh and on 19 December even ‘the ambassador that is lately come’ had to dine in the fish house at Stirling. But all this was the commonplace of European court life. In France, says Chatenet, eaters were classified into groups but the real arrangements were ad hoc. There were chaotic scenes at the tables and one visitor said that even the tables of the maitres d’hôtel were in a dirty, smelly place, the noise of the conversation like the cataracts of the Nile, the tables so short that people were crowded together (Chatenet 2002, 81-4). Bertelli (1986, 198-9) describes those who ate apart from the princes in Italian courts, eating in the tinello, sitting on benches in the cold with lousy service and poor food. And those are people well-to-do enough to leave a written account of their experience – so the water carriers and the muleteers’ servants are not likely to have done well.

In England a ‘mess’ was a quantity of food designed for four people divided at the table by the officers; the term was in use in Scotland around 1300 when the division was supervised by the
Clerk of the Kitchen (Bateson 1904, 41). Below the level of those who ate in hall were some more or less manual servants such as kitchen staff who probably ate in their workplaces. Certainly, in England, the ambitious tried to escape from the hall to eat somewhere more prestigious and there are indications that something similar was happening in Scotland too (Thurley 1993, 150; Dunbar 1999, 110).

4.8 ‘Culture’ and entertainments

This heading brings together a number of topics which might seem rather disparate but which are loosely related and, in any case, do not conveniently fit elsewhere, whilst all must be touched on. Having said that, there is not a lot to say directly about the ‘high’ culture of de Guise’s court. Vale (2001, 250) says that attempts to find a ‘national’ court culture in the later middle ages, a culture specifically English, Dutch or French, are doomed. ‘Courts were cosmopolitan places’ and their culture reflected the wide range of people and influences and even so art might celebrate the princely dynasty, perhaps in elaborate tombs, concentrated in a recognised dynastic burial place or in portraits displayed in the princely chapel. For Scotland, the Trinity Altar Panels, celebrating James III and Margaret of Denmark, are late examples of just such a tradition, they are both cosmopolitan and specific. More in the renaissance tradition are the portraits of James V and Marie de Guise and, as Vale recognises, the renaissance provided new ways to celebrate the culture of specific courts. About 1500, Vladislav Jagiellon, king of Poland and of Bohemia, used court art to commemorate his ancestors in a bid ‘to re-establish dynastic and cultural continuity’ after the Hussite period (Vale 2001, 257); the echoes of the links between Bruces and Stewarts in Margaret Tudor’s entry to Aberdeen, noted above, are in that tradition though the image of the royal family as a flourishing tree is much older than the renaissance. Heraldry had been associated with nation as well as dynasty for centuries (not for nothing was the Scots king known as The Lion) and the 15th century had seen the emergence of the thistle as a national flower (paralleled by the rose for England, lily for France, medlar-flower for Guelders) and so on. Further, by the renaissance period, vernacular literature specifically celebrated the local and national and though that had, arguably seen its finest flowering in the later fifteenth and earlier 16th century with Henryson and Dunbar, still Sir David Lindsay was a significant writer, producing dramas as well as verse whilst also acting as head of the royal heraldry department, the Lyon court (Hadley Williams 1996; Thomas 2005). And there were vernacular histories and other works produced prior to the death of James V.
These vernacular works can be seen in the light of Castiglione’s discussions of things and appearances, content and form, of particular importance as vernacular language was developed as an elegant vehicle for complex ideas (Anglo 1977, 41).

But the 1540s were not a propitious time for further developments in Scotland – and the following decades were, if anything, even less propitious for their survival as artefacts, records or images. War and Scots support for her daughter’s cause were the most pressing demands on her limited purse. The sort of chivalric and rhetorical works favoured by James V were clearly not now relevant, though she might have sponsored (and must certainly have approved) the writing of Wedderburn’s *Complaynt of Scotland* of 1549 or 1550, a highly rhetorical plea for the nobles to support de Guise and her programme for Scotland which praises her lavishly.

It must also be significant that the complaints about the levity of her court, voiced by Pitscottie and by Buchanan relate to the earlier years of the 1540s when the funds were flowing more freely. Buchanan moans that in 1543;

The court presented one scene of gayety and pleasure, by a constant succession of games and festivals; the day was employed in tournaments and the night spent at masquerades. In these festivities, of which Lennox was naturally fond, and to which he had been accustomed in the French court [Lennox found Bothwell to be a rival]²².

Pitscottie does not intend a complement when he says that the Little Queen was conveyed to Stirling with great solemnity, triumphs [processions], plays, ‘phrassiss’ [farces/ plays] and banqueting and great dancing before the queen with great Lords and French ladies, then ‘hir court was then lyk wenus and cupido in the tyme of fresche maii’ and he goes on to mention jousts, riding and tournaments (Pitscottie II, 15-17). No independent records of these activities have been found but this does not mean that they did not occur.

²² Aikman, Buchanan II, 334; of course, Buchanan was writing in his notoriously sour old age. At an earlier stage he had himself written masques and other entertainments for the court. He is probably trying to show that Mary was always frivolous – though she can hardly be held responsible for parties held whilst she was an infant!
And, far from being frivolities, feats and banquets associated with liturgical festivals are the ‘fullest expression of courtly culture’ in the medieval period when they were associated with crown-wearing and other formal ceremonies (Vale 2001, 28). These sorts of events continued to mark all the major court festivals in England and elsewhere well into the 17th century and de Guise certainly used them, as noted above, though not exclusively around liturgical feasts. Scots were well aware that a primary function of these events was to impress. Pitscottie smugly and famously describes James V and the papal ambassador being lavishly entertained in a temporary highland ‘palace’ with prodigious feasts, the ambassador being astonished to see such a thing in a wild and remote part of Scotland and ‘considerand that it was bot the erse of the warld’ (Pitscottie, 358) [which means exactly what you think it means!]. Equally dramatic – and equally relating to ideas of conspicuous consumption as display, is Lesley’s description of the visit of the papal legate in 1543. He was entertained by the clergy, queen and governor, so that every day there was a banquet, either provided by him in the fashion of his country or received by him in the manner of Scotland (an interesting comment on cultural differences). He then recounts how the earl of Moray (James V’s illegitimate brother) who had a great deal of silverware, ‘for the greater magnificence’ set forth a cup board of glass of the finest crystal, then had the servants come in and pull the cloth. When all was smashed, he ‘caused bring ane uther cupburd bettir furnessed with finer christall nor that was’, the patriarch praising this and saying he had not seen finer crystal in Venice. Whether true or not (and I remain sceptical) there is no escaping the intention to impress!

That said, much entertainment would have been informal - singing, lute or flute music, recitation and story telling, for example; this is probably one of the roles filled by the ladies who may well have been chosen partly for such skills. On a few occasions bread was supplied for men seemingly playing board games ['playing at the tables'] though this seems to have been peripheral to the court itself, sometimes in the Hall. The soldiers and ‘gentlemen’ around the court must have organised sports, whether formal jousting and horse sports or boisterous ball games; the terms ‘gentleman’ or ‘officer’ was certainly no guarantee of decorousness.

Christmas and Easter were by far the most important liturgical feasts. Arran’s accounts are fuller than de Guise’s for the food and it is clear that he ate more lavishly on these days; on Easter Day 1549 in Edinburgh his kitchen was supplied with no fewer than 20 pigs, specially brought from Glasgow to Edinburgh (E32/10 f. 50v-51r); de Guise’s guest list (she was also in
Edinburgh that day) was not particularly extensive and if they had a lavish feast it is not recorded. For Christmas that year (and the subsequent New Year) they were both at Stirling with extensive company; details are given in Appendix Two.

Probably no significance should be attached to the fact that de Guise’s household accounts rarely record the other religious feasts, such as saints’ days, whilst Arran’s record a great many. One which was observed in de Guise’s household was Skire Thursday, now better known as Maundy Thursday, when alms were given to the poor and already noted. Beaugué’s account, written some time later, says that it was on Corpus Christi that de Guise encouraged the French fleet with a speech and meal at Leith before waving them off on an expedition against the English forts in the Forth though the Bread Book shows that it was actually the day before – the misrepresentation gave the victory a religious significance which the true date lacked. Another example, previously noted, was the provision of bread for those who lit St Peter’s Fire on the saint’s name day. De Guise’s provision of banquets for weddings (including that of Arran’s daughter) has been noted as part of her ‘queenly’ role and she and Arran did eat together several times, events usually described as banquets. And as already noted, candles and other lights were supplied in some profusion for all celebrations of this kind.

16th century royals were well aware of the benefits of fresh air, exercise and moderate diet though the exercise options open to women were less than for men; de Guise does not seem to have hunted, women did not joust and even walking was probably a rather sedate affair, given the encumbrance of heavy clothes. There were tennis courts in or around all the main residence including one in the town of Stirling and courtiers must have continued to use it. And all those moves, many on horseback, provided a lot more exercise than a drive down the motorway in the car.
5 De Guise, Household and Politics

A princess most prudent … through use and experience, she knew much of our affairs and was very expert, in so far that none was of the nobility and of the common people except very few obscure persons whose ingine, mind and manners she knew not perfectly and very well… she did justice with diligence all her days… (Bishop Lesley, Historie II, 441-3).

5.1 Introduction

Ritchie has argued convincingly that de Guise’s political objectives were essentially dynastic; she sought to bolster her daughter’s position, strengthen her claims and rights in Scotland and beyond. What the present study tries to add to Ritchie is a perspective on how one strand in her strategy was to project herself into a queenly role and the use of her household and domestic setting to create a court, a particular sort of 16th century society, amongst her entourage; she and they would recognise this as a legitimate expression of royalty, success helping consolidate de Guise’s own position. The payoff, for her, was appointment as Regent in 1554 though that was the culmination of a long process. The actual details of the political and military events are considered in Appendix One; this is a more general discussion of options, significance and implications for her life at Stirling.

5.2 The Courts and Multi-focal Power

As has been seen, the Scots nobility, who comprised the great majority of the political class at this period, expected to have a degree of access to the monarch, at least to be able to put over their point of view. It was not a homogenous group – indeed, Scotland took a fairly comprehensive view of who was ‘noble’ and up to 500 people had accompanied James V to France (Merriman 2000, 106) whilst Brown estimated that there were around 1500 noble families in Scotland somewhat later in the 16th century, towards the high end of the European average of 1 to 2% of the population, though even the greatest Scots nobles, he thought, were not wealthier than the substantial English gentry. Those towards the lower end of the scale were only of local importance but, via their more prestigious neighbours, might have links to the court or have a family member placed at court (Brown 2004, 12-16). It was certainly thought to be better to be ‘old’ nobility than new but the ranks were fluid and far from closed;
in the early 17th century Balfour of Denmylne thought the Scots system nearest to the French model (Brown 2004, 5).

It was mainly through the nobility and the clergy (and the key clergy were themselves of noble families) that the monarchy could influence the life of the nation, they were the hub and the spokes of the wheel respectively, the most powerful, regional magnates having their own satellites in the localities. Having attendance by people who served for quarterly or six monthly terms not only spread the costs but also increased the numbers of links to the localities, which could be further re-enforced by progresses around the kingdom, by entertaining visitors and guests for meals and so on. But, in the context of sixteenth Scotland, simply having a salon and being charming was not enough and de Guise quickly had herself identified with ‘the national good’, visited army and naval camps, exhorted the military to action as well as entertaining them to dinner.

Historians usually assume that there is just one court within the country or principality and that it is headed by a king or a prince or at least that there is one which far outshines the others – that of the heir, or queen mother for example. Loades says that the king’s domestic life was designed to contribute to his *maiestas*, the blend of dignity, magnificence and power which was necessary to ensure the obedience of his own subjects and the respect of his fellow monarchs. His court was the vehicle through which this was accomplished (quoted Juhala 2000, 120). In Scotland under an adult king such as James V, parliaments were hardly necessary; they become much more significant in royal minorities when they could be used to legitimise the decisions of the regent, governor or council. This was because, as La Brosse realised on his arrival in 1543, there were several foci of power in Scotland, not just Arran or de Guise but also Lennox (till he finally threw in his lot with Henry and the support of England) and the Cardinal (who would remain a powerful figure till he was murdered) whilst people such as Douglas and the supposedly ‘Assured Lords’ who looked like a single block, actually fluctuated wildly in their loyalties – as did many others who watched the political drama play itself out and acted (cynically or pragmatically) in the light of events. Each of the major players could influence

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23 Cameron, 1998, Appendix III identifies the senior figures present at the parliaments in September 1528, April 1531, May 1532, June 1535, December 1541 (continued to March 1541). Parliament met again in March and December 1543.
events and the support of all was very desirable for any scheme or policy to work – but none could decide major policy unilaterally (Dickinson 1942, 29-39). De Guise was well aware of this and so was Arran, who preferred to consult widely with his council on the marriage treaty in June 1543, in case he should be accused of deciding matters ‘privily’; the Assured Lords backed him, telling the English ambassador Sadler that the greater the numbers of nobles present, ‘the more honourable and the greater shall be the authority (Sadler I, 210-1, 3 June 1543).

One of Arran’s weaknesses was that he would be seen by many as representing (at best) his own factional interests and those of his Hamilton kin. The Hamiltons were ‘natural’ enemies of the Lennox Stewarts, for example, and the particular circumstances of 1543 threw the two into direct conflict anyway. Arran’s claim to act only in the interests of the Little Queen were certainly seen in the light of the fact that, if she died, he would become king whilst he was quite open, until 1547, that he would have liked her to marry his own son. Lennox, similarly, had his factional interests whilst Beaton had plenty of enemies, too, particularly in Fife. De Guise stood outside such factions and could (and did) present herself as representing wider interests.

For 16th century aspirants to power, to be ignored was almost as dangerous as to be attacked and it is a mark of de Guise’s success that throughout the period, diplomats and others visiting Scotland sought her out and involved her (eg Hannay 1914, 1-26; NAS NAS E34/15). She certainly made efforts to increase her formal power. Her right to a voice in decisions concerning the Little Queen was recognised from the outset. In 1544 as de Guise and Arran vied for power, de Guise tried hard to get control of some of the seals, used to authenticate official documents – though Arran resisted, successfully on that occasion (Cameron 1927, 108-111). Even during the course of 1543 there was a sufficiently substantial group of support for her to be considered as a serious alternative to Arran and to be included on the Council (a council, incidentally, which made decisions ‘by voices’ – which appears to mean that there was an open vote and majority decisions (Sadler I, 155, 20th April 1543). The rhetoric at that time (and increasingly as time went on) was that Arran was ineffective, factional or regional in his concerns and that de Guise could better support the national interest. This was inextricably linked to English attacks on Scotland and the threat to independence which they posed. Significantly, the greatest boosts to her personal prestige often followed English attacks – she carefully exploiting Arran’s failures to ward them off.
One of Arran’s weaknesses, just hinted at, was that his power-base was not only kin based but was regional, closely tied to the area around Glasgow, Hamilton (his own main residence) and Paisley (where his brother was abbot) with some rare trips from Glasgow to Dumbarton. True, his base was in Edinburgh, he spent time at St Andrews and visited Falkland (though much of that was whilst he conducted a singularly ineffective siege of St Andrews Castle); he visited Linlithgow and Stirling (both usually as part of other travels). He was once in Ayr (in November 1547) and spent a few days hunting at Meggatland near Peebles in May 1549. But he had slight contact with Perth or places north and his only ventures to the Borders apart from Meggatland were on military expeditions (NAS E32/9 and NAS E32/10).

De Guise’s itinerary covered most of these areas, albeit her visits were often quite short and involved attending council meetings etc– it is worth noting that she was present at the siege of Haddington and also at the successful attack on Langholm; she ate with the commanders of the combined army and naval force which recaptured Inchkeith in 1549, giving them a speech of encouragement before they started. And her progress of late summer 1549 took her via Fife, to Perth and as far north as Red Castle (south of Montrose) and so back to Stirling and Edinburgh. But her ‘reach’ via her household, was greater than this with nobles from almost every part of the kingdom except the isles represented at some time – including Argyll for the west coast, Lord and Lady Home and Sir George Douglas from the Borders, various Stewart interests including Lord and Lady Methven from Perthshire, the Menteiths whose main interests were in west Stirlingshire and southern Perthshire, Lady Cassillis for the south west. Further, she would have had some added political pull in her own dower lands, which were widely scattered. If there was a weakness it was that the Gordon interest, from the north-east was over-represented – the occasional presence of the young Earl Marishall and of Lord Sutherland was hardly a balance as they were all allied. A danger of regionalism and faction was that every friend she won would be countered by their enemies, automatically falling into the ‘anti’ camp – perhaps this was one reason why she played so hard on the queenly role of reconciler of quarrels.

But de Guise’s winning card, surely, was that she was Scotland’s most intimate link with France, the best hope of ending English pressures and the best route to gaining French pensions, titles and other rewards. True, the eventual French solution to the problems would be to establish a Protectorate over Scotland, a Protectorate which could well have led to the
assimilation of Scotland as a province of France (*France outre mer*, long before its time). And true, too, that introduced a new power focus into the equation – Arran was still regent in 1550, de Guise still potent but Henri was the key. There is no doubt that French money had been the key to that situation – money to support the military effort, money to support the Scots nobility, to back the promises of pensions and honours for Scots such as creating Arran as Duke of Chatelherault.

Historians recognise that de Guise had, even by the mid 1540s, become a major political force in Scotland; she was pivotal in winning French military support, French and Scots sought her advice in military as well as political matters etc and it was hoped that, having established external peace, she would embark on a process of establishing internal order. By 1550, Arran was being marginalised (Ritchie 2002, 37-40). Robert Wedderburn, the author of the *Complaynt of Scotland*, dedicated his polemic to her and it was published in 1550, before she set out for France and four years before she became regent. He compared her with virtuous women of history and antiquity and emphasised her noble descent as well as her self-sacrifice in abandoning the company of her daughter and the ease and luxury of France in the cause of duty. God had inspired her to bring peace through victory, liberating Scotland from the invading English, through her ‘government’. Such a paean certainly incorporated flattery of the most ingratiating kind. But, as the text makes clear, de Guise was not the main audience (though she accepted the dedication); the audience was the Estates, the political community of Scotland whom Wedderburn sought to stimulate to greater and more co-ordinated effort in freeing themselves from occupation and tyranny. If his image of de Guise as authoritative, as a governor, as already guarding the realm on behalf of her daughter was mere flattery, it would have been useless, eliciting a sneer rather than the assent Wedderburn wanted. De Guise did not now merely embody the queenly virtues which we glanced at in Chapter 1. She embodied power and government and also the ability to inspire the Scots, her adoptive nation. And those, surely, are princely or even kingly attributes.

### 5.3 Gifts and Bribes, Patronage and Politics

It would be anachronistic to deploy our modern notions of the distinctions between gifts, bribes, patronage, nepotism and favouritism. All were widespread at every level of 16th century society, in Scotland and elsewhere but were nowhere more important than the court.
This short section will only touch on a vast topic. ‘Liberality’ was one of the princely and noble virtues and seems to have been particularly admired in Scotland; even ordinary prudence and saving were not often praised and avarice was a vice. This was vividly explained to James V by the poet Stewart, who advised ‘Better is gutt in feit nor cramp in hand’ [better to have gout in the feet than to be tight-fisted]. Liberality took many forms, from hospitality to charity, with hospitality reaching prodigal proportions in the highlands, where both James V and Mary, queen of Scots, were entertained with extraordinarily lavish hunting parties. It was part of the Scots nobility’s image of themselves as simple, rural and hospitable – and was favourably contrasted with the life-style of the small urban elites. It is interesting that many of the tales of James V as ‘The Gudeman of Ballengeich’ refer to his appreciation of hospitality and we have seen the importance of banquets in Chapter 3.

Underlying the giving of gifts was the idea of Christian charity but, as in France, the generous person might expect to receive some reward, whether material or not, whether from God or man. But, in practice, there was a clear distinction between the gifts given as charity or alms to ‘the poor’ and gifts given to nobles or royalty – of course, both might be reciprocal, even if all the poor could return was their thanks and their prayers (Davis 2000). The ‘type’ of religious gifts was donations to shrines and religious communities. Following the death of James V alms were given to the poor at the funeral, distributed by the Almoner, the court official with responsibility for the king’s charities, who was also sub-dean of the chapel royal (Thomas 1997, 160, and 284); an almoner was one of the first officials to be appointed to the household of Scots royal infants. Royal giving to the poor was ritualised at the annual Skire Thursday ceremony.

24 There was a counter argument and courtly extravagance was criticised by outsiders, as discussed by eg Dickens 1977, 44-5 and 101 for non-Scots examples.
26 Brown 2004, 210-212; Henryson’s Country Mouse is, at first impressed by the luxury of the urban lifestyle but later decides that rural sufficiency is preferable – particularly when the costs include the terrors of the cat. Dunbar’s bourgeois wives are vain, frivolous and extravagant.
27 Thomas 1997, 166-171 for the institutions benefiting in the 1530s and 1540s in Scotland.
28 NAS E34/5/2 List of Liveries in the Lord Prince’s Household, 1541 includes the Master Elimosinar as one of only two ‘non-practical’ members; the prince died at about a year old. NAS E33/3 Household book of Marie de Guise, shows chapel offerings being made for the infant Mary at a few months old.
marked by successive monarchs of Scotland; Mary’s probable formal involvement in 1543 was one of her first ‘official functions’. The ceremony seems usually to have been held at Stirling (Thomas 1997, 176; Harrison, 2003, 4). The Treasurer’s Accounts include many payments to ‘poor’ individuals and victims of misfortune. Big events were occasions for more indiscriminate charity, the scattering of largesse (Harrison 2005).

But gifts between courtiers – and between monarchs, indeed – were different. Donor and recipient knew each other (at least through correspondence) and the gifts were part of their ongoing relationship. Gifts had to be proportional to the status of both parties and appropriate to the business in hand – Scots monarchs, who were not rich on the European scale, often gave hunting dogs, hawks and similar prestige livestock. A gift might be a reward for past services or in anticipation of future favours. The greatest of all gifts the king could give his subjects were of land and titles, and it is indicative of how important the idea of gifts was that these land transactions, which were typically much more akin to purchase, were actually called ‘gifts’ or ‘grants’. It is a polite pretence that the king does not sell honours or land titles at all – he gives them as spontaneous acts, symbols of his graciousness, goodness and power.

For the courtier, gifts from the monarch were their best hope of recovering the costs of their attendance and the poet Dunbar lamented James IV spending too long in Stirling, curtailing the flow to the poet in Edinburgh. The European literature suggests that courtiers often saw the monarch as Mr Money Bags29. James V and de Guise gave New Year gifts of jewellery (on 1 January) to favoured figures. James VI was still giving similar New Year gifts at the end of the century (Thomas 1997, 174: Harrison 2003). In 1534, after the signing of the peace treaty between England and Scotland, the English ambassadors reported that ‘after much goodly cheer done unto us the said king rewarded us right honourably at our departing’ (Hamilton Papers I, 10-11, 9 July 1534). In 1537 Margaret Tudor complained to her brother that much of her income was secured by her creditors; she had intended to live quietly at home and economise but when the meeting between James and Henry was proposed, she had to stay at court, at Henry’s request and incurred debts to the extent of £20,000 Scots partly for her own living but

29 This is graphically shown by a satirical illustration in Dickens (1977), 35 where, quite literally a shower of gold descends from the king whilst courtiers, clerical and lay, scramble about to scoop up as much as they can.
also ‘by tretying of syk as was famillyaris of his consall and propyning thame plesandly of some thingis plesand to thame’. She did not meet Henry Ray, her brother’s messenger, in 1541 but when she replied to his letter she sent him a velvet gown as a reward; a few days later, Ray was given eight crowns reward with his reply from the king and council (HP I, 47, and 75 ff.).

In September 1542, having been confined to his lodgings under guard, Ray was given three angel nobles as a reward from the Chancellor and provided with an escort to see him back to the Border HP I, 180). James V, at least as a young man, was criticised for keeping his winnings at cards – it would have been more becoming, more princely, to have given them away and to have played with men of higher standing (Williams 1996. 210). Royal figures also received gifts of many kinds and some of those received by James V (ranging from horses from Henry VIII to the golden sword with which he was to defend the true faith and given by the pope, are discussed in the report on People, Place and Process, along with discussion of the role of gifts at major royal rituals.

Gifts of venison and other delicacies were quite often made to Scots monarchs and several such gifts were given to de Guise, for example on 10 June 1549 when two loaves were provided for the man who brought the venison to the queen from Menteith and there are similar records on 4 and 7 August (NAS E34/15) Nor should it be thought that gifts were only appropriate for special occasions. They were used at the simplest level. In 1575, the Countess of Moray (whose late husband had been Regent) had business with his successor and entered a payment in her Household Book:

Item, to the porters of my Lord Regent’s utter hall dure and Inner Chalmer, to get Enteres in tyme, 13s 4d (HMC, 6th Report, Appendix, 1877, 658).

It cost money to get through the barriers that separated power from impotence. The staff were not well paid, but had to keep up appearances and be sociable with people who might be useful in the future. So, gifts helped the wheels go round and kept people sweet. ‘Tips’ and

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30 Cameron 1998, 265; see also, eg Murray, 1965, 39 for a gift of kids, capons and whisky given by the laird of Knockhill, the laird of Huntly sent a swan and wild geese by his servant and the king gave 11s Scots to a poor man at the castle gate of Stirling.
‘bounties’, looking to modern eyes remarkably like bribes, but given completely openly, were a constant presence in every courtier’s life – whether they were given or received. They contributed significantly to the costs of life at court and could not be avoided. The Assured Lords accepted big gifts from Henry VIII in addition to the regular ‘wages’ he was paying them for their support; they claimed they were essential to meet the high costs involved when, for example, Angus summoned 6 or 7,000 of his retainers to appear in Edinburgh to overawe the opposition (See Appendix One). It was suggested to Sadler that Moray, the late king’s half brother was ‘not rich’ and that money would help to persuade him to support the proposed marriage (Sadler I, 178, 1 May 1543). On the other hand, these same people reported that Seton had been ‘corrupted’ by Beaton’s money and were themselves condemned for having accepted the English ‘angels’ [gold coins]. There seems to be an irregular verb here; I am rewarded, you are paid, he is bribed. If the courtier’s income exceeded expenditure then borrowing was essential – as Margaret Tudor and many others found (Brown 2004, 71).

In this context, it should not surprise us that de Guise’s correspondence is filled with requests for recompense of costs incurred on her behalf, for rewards, gifts and ‘pensions’. Of course, some of these were not really political issues at all. So Marguerite Pinon or Pignon had been a femme de chambre in de Guise’s household in 1538-9 with wages of 70 livres tournois per year. On 1 Jan 1549 she wrote to de Guise from France asking her to continue her wages as she was now aged, ill and poor and did not expect to live long (Wood 1925, 22-3; NAS E33/3 f. 29r). The complaints of Janet Hamilton, the Little Queen’s nurse, that she was impoverished and marginalised in France, recorded in the early 1550s, have been noted in Chapter 2) ; but she had been given a liferent gift of the lands of Cornton (just north of Stirling) in 1545, clearly as a reward for her services (RPS, 1545/9/28/56. Date accessed: 4 January 2008.). Kings could make such land grants with few qualms but de Guise, with her modest income and no right to give land grants, was more restricted. That was a major reason that she became so dependent on France for financial support. The point is well made by a letter from the administrator of Mary’s household in France in 1554; the suppliers in France would have to be paid cash as Mary’s credit was not good and the servants, too ‘desire to be paid each quarter, since all they have to expect from her is their wages (Wood 1925, 238.) - that is, even though she was queen, Mary had no right of patronage.

The other problem she faced was the comparative poverty of the Scots nobility. Even major national figures (Huntly would be a prime example) had much of their income in kind as grain,
eggs, sheep-carcases and so on. Lord Methven explained to de Guise (though she was already aware of it) that these nobles could call large numbers of men out to support them in warfare (particularly local warfare) but their disposable, cash income was limited and if they were required to fight or meet any other sustained expense, they really did need support. And their income, like everyone else’s, was affected by warfare and the intermittent outbursts of plague which occurred in the mid to late 1540s. But the danger of pensions and cash presents and so on was that the recipients would pocket the cash – and not deliver on the political and military support it was meant to purchase.

One of the most intriguing ‘gifts’ found – perhaps it should be classified as an act of charity if the two can be separated – was a payment of £12 15s 4d Scots (quite a substantial sum) for the expenses of Graham and Lennox when they were ill in Edinburgh early in January 1544 (NAS E33/3 extra-ordinary costs f. 40) – though in the case of Lennox it was, surely, a cost she would later regret as he decided that throwing in his lot with the English was likely to yield better rewards.

It was, surely, in that context that de Guise’s personal entourage became so important. Giving banquets and allowing people into her gracious (anointed) company meant, too, that she could listen to their concerns, keep an eye on their doings, make them appear committed to her (a good first step in securing real commitment) and know who their friends and their enemies were. It is striking that contemporaries comment on how many people she knew, how well she knew and understood Scotland, how prudent her administration of justice was after she became Regent in 1554. It cannot be co-incidence that this conforms exactly to the intimate ideal of approachable and informal Scots monarchy, firm but prudent, just and understanding.
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NLS – National Library of Scotland
SCA – Stirling Council Archives B66 – Stirling Burgh Records