

# Gordon Craigie



An independent mind...

## House Jock

[noun]

A Scottish person who seeks the approval of English people, usually in order to further their careers.

A House Jock will modify his or her accent, language, and behaviour, in order to appear acceptable to an English audience.

A House Jock will never criticise England or Britain, and will usually claim to be pro-monarchy and anti-independence – see also “Better Together”!

\*Definition entirely author's creation!

LAST MONTH, I went off on one about House Jocks and ran out of space to explore how that whole malevolent sphere of influence came about. I could sum it up in one word – colonialism – but that would leave an awful lot of blank space in the magazine! Plus, mentioning “House Jocks” again gives me the excuse to reuse last month’s graphic, of which I’m irrationally proud! And to create a new one – everything comes to those who wait...

Since 1707, and particularly since 1746, British/English colonialism has manifested itself in Scotland, and in Scots, in countless ways, many of which are now so taken for granted that, on a day-to-day basis, most of us don’t even realise that they’re there. But they are, and the very existence of House Jocks is only one example. Last month I used that “national treasure”, Ken Bruce, as an illustration of how easily House Jock behaviour is slipped into daily life. One example of Mr Bruce’s sycophancy that I quoted was:

... there’s the bold Ken waxing lyrical about St George’s Day ... nothing wrong with that of course, he was just informing his English listeners of the fact that, due to Easter, the Church of England had decreed that their National Day had been rescheduled because it can’t fall in the same week as Easter – who knew? But, and this is a huge but, what he actually said was that “we” can celebrate St George’s Day in a few days’ time...

Does anyone seriously believe that our erstwhile compatriot will make

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similar happy, inclusive, better together (!), noises when St Andrew’s Day rolls around in November? My guess is that if he mentions it at all it will be accompanied by some derogatory-yet-apparently-jokey reference to kilts/haggis/bad weather/undecipherable accents/drunken behaviour etc., purely designed to make his English audience feel better about their unquestionable superiority. And, before this particular rant gets severely out of control, what is this whole “national treasure” thing about? Is it ever clarified what nation the treasure belongs to? Can’t be “Britain” as that’s not a nation. “United Kingdom”? Nope, not a nation. Or is it just an “acceptable” – to those and such as those in political and media circles – description of exemplary “Britishness”, all the while ignoring the indisputable fact that Britain is not, never has been, and never can be, a nation? Once again, knitting well and truly ripped!

Even before the ink was dry on the treaty signed by the parcel o rogues back in 1706, the English had already declared their intentions. Before the new “British” parliament was convened in 1707 one of their spies in Scotland, Daniel Defoe, observed:

*The Scots will be allowed to send to Westminster a handful of men who will make no weight whatever. They will be allowed to sit there for form’s sake to be laughed at.*

What the actual??? This, by the way, is the same Daniel Defoe who had previously reported back to his masters that:

... for every Scot in favour of union, a hundred are against

And, in one of the first sittings of that new parliament, the Speaker declared:

*We have catch’d Scotland and will bind her fast.*

So many early promises of fairness and respect were quickly shown to be so entirely false that it almost makes Keir Starmer’s present-day duplicity seem reasonable! But it was the Jacobite uprising of 1745 that really forced the colonial power into overdrive and, after the Battle of Culloden in 1746, the Britification of Scotland, by whatever means necessary, swung into action. The 1746 Act of Proscription – *An act for the more effectual disarming the*

*highlands of Scotland; and for the more effectual securing the peace of the said highlands; and for restraining the use of the highland dress* – decreed:

*That, from and after the first day of August, one thousand seven hundred and forty seven, no Man or Boy, within that Part of Great Britain called Scotland, other than such as should be employed as Officers and Soldiers in his Majesty’s Forces, should, on any Pretence whatsoever, wear or put on the Clothes, commonly called Highland Clothes; (that is to say,) The Plaid, Philebeg or Little Kilt, Trowse, Shoulder belts, or any Part whatsoever of what peculiarly belongs to the Highland Garb, and that no Tartan, or Party-coloured Plaid or Stuff, should be, used for Great Coats or for Upper Coats, under the Penalties therein mentioned ...*

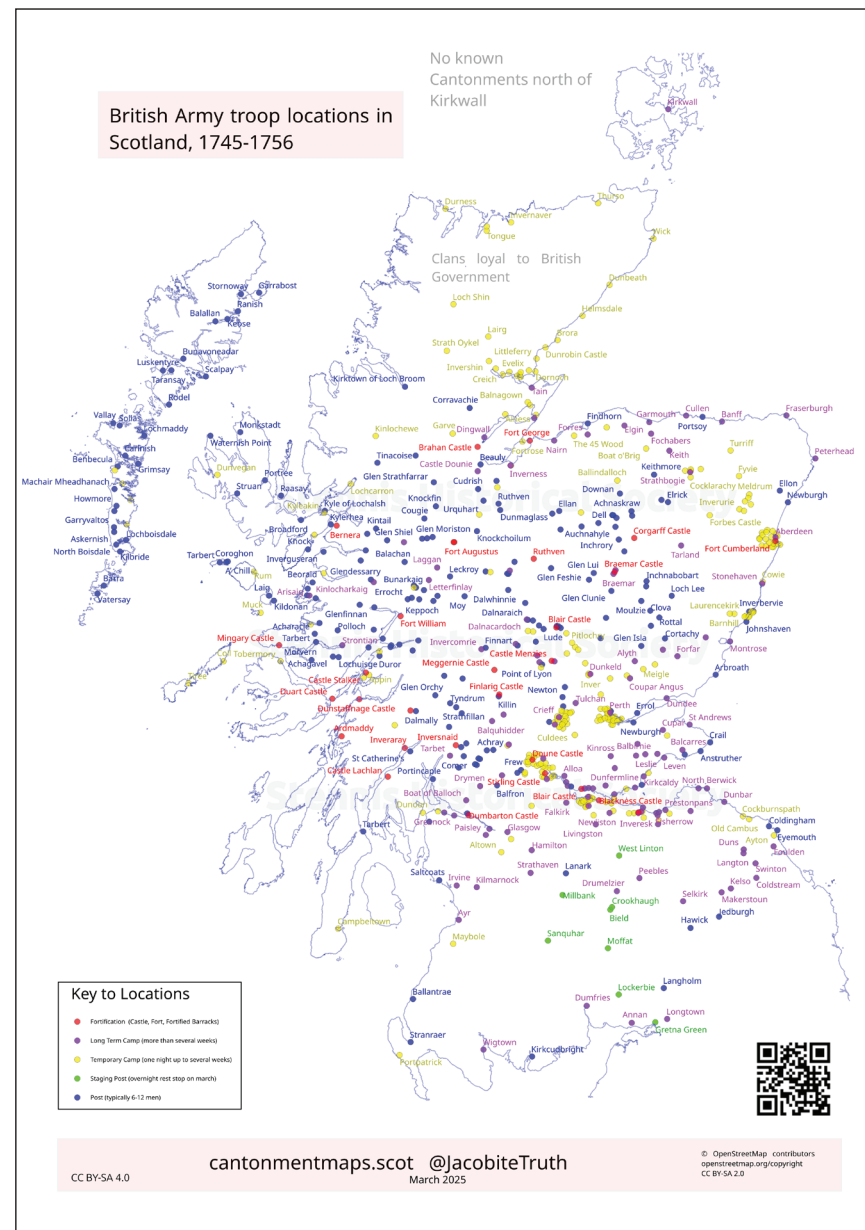
In classic British/English double-speak, this meant that although tartan wasn’t technically *banned*, it pretty much was! See also the Gaelic and Scots languages, history, customs, bagpipes, and any aspect of identifiably Scottish culture that displeased our British/English masters...

We’ve seen before the extent of British/English military

Our colonising power even attempted to eradicate the name of our country by using the description “North Britain” to try and eradicate any lingering attachment to, or identification with, Scotland

encampments in Scotland after 1746 and we reprint the most recent map here (courtesy of the Stennis Historical Society). This is colonisation by force. We know that English placeholders were parachuted (not literally, obviously!) into positions of prominence and influence in Scotland and that their insistence on “speaking the King’s/Queen’s English” meant that many Scots had a choice to make – fit in with the language or else! This is colonisation by stealth. Disappointed that so many Scots continued to use their native language in private, despite more than a century of... discouragement... the Education (Scotland) Act of 1872 decreed that teaching in schools should be in *English* in order to promote common standards of literacy across the whole of Scotland. While it didn’t *specifically* outlaw the use of Gaelic or Scots, it effectively did! This is colonisation through education or indoctrination. Our colonising power even attempted to eradicate the name of our country by using the description “North Britain” to try and eradicate any lingering attachment to, or identification with, Scotland. Although each of these attempts to destroy our languages, culture, and customs, have failed, they have severely disrupted them to the extent that our national confidence has been steadily eroded over these past three centuries. Ladies and gentlemen, I give you, the Scottish cringe...

We’ve become so accustomed to hearing posh English accents in positions of power that we subconsciously associate those voices with intelligence and capability. If we hadn’t already realised how wrong that was surely the rise of the uber-buffoon Alexander Boris De Pfeffel Johnson into power must have finally made the proverbial penny drop? I remember watching a TV documentary a few years back – I think it was Darren McGarvey’s Class Wars – and being absolutely bealin about almost everyone he interviewed either being, or at least sounding, English. Now – and this is most definitely not anti-English racism – why is this the case? It can only be the product of the previously outlined campaign of colonisation. We’d all agree that appointments should be based on “the best person for the job” criteria irrespective of nationality, religion, colour, or whatever, but the over-representation of English accents in Scottish positions of power surely belies that? Are we really meant to believe that there was no Scot who met the criteria for these elevated posts? Even Britain’s very own Office for National Statistics has recognised that “Scotland is the best educated country in Europe”!





# Scottish cringe

[noun]

The result of 300+ years of subjugation and indoctrination, the Scottish cringe manifests itself thus:

A widespread lack of personal and political confidence in Scotland's ability to govern itself, e.g. voting against the restoration of Scottish independence in 2014

Feeling inferior to, and dependent upon the largesse of, England, e.g. believing the lies of the Labour Party and inexplicably voting in 37 Labour MPs in 2024

A belief that Scottish culture is not equal to that of English

A tendency to be overly self-deprecating

A reluctance to challenge colonialism for fear of being seen as anti-English

\*Definition entirely author's creation... again!

It has to be said that modern media consumption habits aren't helping – I've got a wee cousin in Fife whose accent is a hybrid of London and Los Angeles despite being brought up in Lower Largo! – and seem to be accelerating the rise of strange accents that bear no relation to our local surroundings... think Lulu's mid-Atlantic accent despite her Gallowgate/Dennistoun roots! In contrast, I had an aunt who lived in Canada for nearly 50 years and still spoke with the broad Dundee accent that she had left Scotland with in 1963. Our accents are mainly ridiculed in England – who hasn't received the "I don't understand a word you're saying" insult? – yet many English companies choose Scottish voiceovers for their marketing campaigns because we're deemed to be "more trustworthy"... make your mind up! Our politicians, at least those of an independence persuasion, are routinely insulted in Westminster for their accents – take Mhairi Black as just one example – but it's all good fun and jolly japes, isn't it? No, it is absolutely not!

An example from 2018 that hit the headlines was when the Tory MP (surprise!) Sir Paul Beresford twice asked the SNP's David Linden to repeat his question because he couldn't understand his accent – how they laughed! From memory, David Linden has a mild Scottish accent and yet it still provided an opportunity for some Tory toff to ridicule him. It should be unbelievable, but we've all been there! Twas ever thus... an E.B. Ramsay book published in 1861, *Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character*, recounts

*This form of belittlement, in public and in private, over more than 300 years, has led to a reluctance to not use the Scots language in "official" settings but has even caused us to moderate our accents for fear of being laughed at or not taken seriously*

the story of John Clerk, an Edinburgh judge, presenting a case in the House of Lords somewhere around the turn of the previous century:

*John Clerk (afterwards a judge by the title of Lord Eldin) was arguing a Scotch appeal case before the House of Lords. His client claimed the use of a mill-stream by a prescriptive right. Mr. Clerk spoke broad Scotch, and argued that "the watter had rin that way for forty years. Indeed naeboddy kenn'd how long, and why should his client now be deprived of the watter?" etc. The chancellor, much amused at the pronunciation of the Scottish advocate, in a rather bantering tone asked him, "Mr. Clerk, do you spell water in Scotland with two t's?" Clerk, a little nettled at this hit at his national tongue, answered, "Na, my Lord, we dinna spell watter (making the word as short as he could) wi' twa t's, but we spell mainners (making the word as long as he could) wi' twa n's."*

This form of belittlement, in public and in private, over more than 300 years, has led to a reluctance to not use the Scots language in "official" settings but has even caused us to moderate our accents for fear of being laughed at or not taken seriously. I've learned more about Scottish history and culture from The Proclaimers' lyrics than I ever learned at school! As they so brilliantly put it in *Throw the 'R' Away*:

*Some days I stand  
On your green and pleasant land  
How dare I show face  
When my diction is such a disgrace*

I suppose my point is that colonisation is manifested in many forms, and not all of them are obvious or appear to be particularly harmful, they can all too easily be explained away – but this is a form of Colonial Stockholm Syndrome, a coping or survival mechanism where colonised peoples develop positive feelings or attachments towards their colonisers and their customs and values. We have to learn to "speak properly"; our history has been written by the coloniser; the colonial power controls our national finances and has the power of veto over localised decision making; the coloniser can take our resources freely while ensuring our charges are higher, and can prioritise their local needs over our national interests – renewable energy, fishing rights, whisky exports, oil, Grangemouth...

When prominent, supposedly independence-supporting, politicians dismiss the notion of Scotland having been colonised without apparently seriously considering the evidence... I despair. The SNP, as the lead political party of the "independence movement", should be taking this seriously and supporting the efforts of Salvo/Liberation Scotland in their presentation to the United Nation's Special Committee on Decolonisation. They should also be burying whatever hatchets require burying to unite with all of the other independence-supporting parties, organisations, and individuals, ahead of next year's pivotal Holyrood election. They absolutely *should*, but will they? Now is the time for bold and decisive action, not for politically exhibiting the Scottish cringe!

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The book *Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character* by E.B. Ramsay (1861), can be viewed at the magnificent Random Scottish History website, <https://tinyurl.com/iScot-RSH>

Read more about the Salvo/Liberation Scotland presentation to the United Nation's Special Committee on Decolonisation, <https://tinyurl.com/iScot-Liberation>