

claiming that the Glasgow bishopric was coterminous with the kingdom of Strathclyde⁷.

Nevertheless, even while we emphasize the fact that in securing a well-defined Border on the Solway-Esk-Cheviot-Tweed line the rulers of England and Scotland were prepared to see ancient units of kingship (to which they laid claim) cut in half, we need to make one important qualification. The English kings of the twelfth and thirteenth century were heavily committed to territorial and dynastic ambitions south of the English Channel, as dukes of Normandy, counts of Anjou, dukes of Aquitaine or Gascony etc. It would have suited their interest to preserve and consolidate the West Saxon character of their kingdom, even if this had not already been deeply entrenched in the geography of English government, the location of royal headquarters at Westminster, Windsor, Winchester, Clarendon and Gloucester, the distribution of royal demesne and of the richest sources of royal revenue. Although the kings from William Rufus (1087-1100) to Edward I took very seriously their grip upon Cumbria and Northumbria, they could not spend much time visiting these regions which were remote from the castles, hunting lodges, monasteries and rich trading towns of southern England, Normandy, Maine, the lower Loire valley, Poitou and Gascony whence their power was derived and where, one feels, their hearts really lay.

The much poorer Scottish kings, by contrast, were drawn to the northern sections of Cumbria and Northumbria which the Solway-Tweed Border allowed them. Even a casual glance at the maps which scholars have constructed of twelfth- and thirteenth-century Scotland would show how important in this period were the valleys of Tweed and Teviot, the (by Scottish standards) agriculturally well-favoured province of Lothian, and, further west, Clydesdale and the Ayrshire plain⁸. Here with few exceptions were the wealthiest Scottish trading towns ('burghs'), Berwick upon Tweed, Roxburgh, Haddington, Edinburgh, Stirling, Rutherglen, Renfrew and Ayr⁹. Here also, again with relatively few exceptions, were the religious houses on which the royal house and its most favoured followers lavished their surplus wealth (chiefly in the form of land), the abbeys of Jedburgh, Kelso, Dryburgh, Melrose, Newbattle, Holyrood and Paisley, the priories of Coldingham, Haddington, Manuel and Lesmahagow¹⁰. Of the numerous centres of royal government in active use in the earlier medieval period only Aberdeen, Perth and Forfar, north of the Forth, could compare in importance with Stirling, Linlithgow, Edinburgh, Roxburgh, Jedburgh, Rutherglen, Ayr and Berwick south of the Forth.

The consequence of this was that the Border was of much more immediate concern to the rulers of Scotland than it was to the rulers of England. At least this was true

⁷ *Chronicon de Lanercost*, ed. Stevenson, J. (Glasgow, Maitland Club, 1839), 65.

⁸ E.g., McNeill, P. and Nicholson, R., *An Historical Atlas of Scotland, c.400-c.1600* (St. Andrews, 1975), maps 22-3, 28-30, 36-8, 50-1.

⁹ *Ibid.*, maps 28-29; Pryde, G., *The Burghs of Scotland* (Oxford, 1965).

¹⁰ Cowan, I.B. and Easson, D.E., *Medieval Religious Houses, Scotland* (1976).