**THE DAYS OF DUCHESS ANNE:
LIFE IN THE HOUSEHOLD OF THE
DUCHESS OF HAMILTON, 1656-1716**

Rosalind K. Marshall. East Linton, Tuckwell Press, 2000.
256 pp. £14.99. (Paperback)

irst published in 1973, this detailed study of life in the household of Anne, Duchess of Hamilton, from the Cromwellian period until a few years after the union of 1707, was hailed at the time as a fascinating reconstruction of the way of life of one of the greatest families of Scotland. The book, for some time out of print, is published now in a new edition at the suggestion of the admirable Tuckwell Press. Undoubtedly the exercise has merit. Dr Marshall's use of some twelve thousand letters and assorted household and estate accounts from the Hamilton Archives is skillful and thorough, as reviewers of the first edition pointed out (see, for example, Rosalind Mitchison, *History* 60 [1975], 125.).

The *Introduction* sets the long-lived Duchess Anne (1632-1716) firmly at the centre of the stage. Part 1, *Life Restored*, loosely covers the period of the family's recovery from the confiscations and depredations of the Commonwealth period; there are sections on servants, clothing, food, entertainment, recreation and celebrations. Part 2, *The Great Design*, describes the vision of the future in the minds of the Duchess and her husband, William, 3rd Duke of Hamilton, and the means taken for its realisation. Their aim was the establishment of the political, religious and social pre-eminence of the House of Hamilton and its continuation in future generations (p.130). Chapters are devoted to the creation of a suitable setting, the new Hamilton Palace, the education of the Duchess and Duke's numerous progeny (they had thirteen children), and the marriage of the heir, the Earl of Arran. The increasing English influence on all aspects of the life

of the family, from the education of the heir (we see that James, Earl of Arran, attends Hamilton Burgh School before continuing his studies in Glasgow, while his own son, after a few years at Hamilton School, is swiftly dispatched to Eton) to the decorative styles employed at the new Palace, is skillfully described, and not just in the chapter of that title: it is a process which forms a sub-text of the whole book.

The material setting of the Duchess's life is delineated in lively fashion; we share the Duke's impatience when he misreads "palatine" (a furred scarf) as "sallantine" in one of the Duchess's long lists of items she wishes procured by the Duke in London (p. 93); predictably, no-one had ever heard of it. We admire the spirit of the Duchess and her daughter Katherine (seven months pregnant at the time) when they can "laugh heartily" remembering the recent overturning of their coach en route to Kinneil Castle (p. 109); we sympathise with the frantic efforts of the Duchess and Duke as they attempt to rein in the extravagant spending of their heir, who was 10,000 sterling in debt by 1687, and to move him in the direction of an advantageous marriage.

Yet in the end one is left with some reservations about this book, both in its original form and in this new edition. Actual textual alterations are slight. Dr Marshall has discovered an entire set of inventories of furnishings for both Hamilton Palace and Kinneil Castle; a sentence of chapter 2 has been changed to refer to this and transcripts of several of the inventories form an appendix. A useful glossary of Scottish terms has been inserted at pp. 267-8. The reproduction of some of the illustrations in colour, including the splendid Kneller portrait of Duchess Anne, and the expansion of the illustrations to include, among other things, more of the Hamilton offspring, are welcome: although one wonders why the new edition's numbered list of illustrations now lacks accompanying page numbers, a particular annoyance since the illustrations are themselves unnumbered. The footnote reference to the Duke's Rubens painting of *Daniel in the Lions' Den* was accurate in the old edition but mangled in the new (p. 45). It is also a pity that the endnotes do not seem to have been cleaned up; for example, note 4 to chapter 1 still gives a reference to "Burnet, op.cit..." when this is the first mention of

Burnet's *History of His Own Time*. Moreover, it is not helpful to the serious reader when all references to the Hamilton Archives which form the backbone of the book are omitted and the reader simply referred to the author's Ph.D. thesis. Other missed opportunities include the failure to provide brief notes on the difference between pounds Scots and pounds sterling and on how the transcriptions have been modernised for quotation purposes. The list of sources is unchanged, not unreasonably since, with the exception of the trifling alteration already alluded to, the text is also unchanged. This does not mean, however, that the work of the past twenty-five years goes unnoted.

This book remains an excellent example of old-fashioned social history (and is based on the type of solid primary materials which some old-fashioned social historians neglected); perhaps we should not castigate it for failing to address in any depth such matters as the secret of the remarkable financial recovery of the Hamilton family in the Restoration period or the real scope of the activities of the redoubtable Duchess Anne, who held the title in her own right until her death, resisting all suggestions for its legal assignation to her undoubtedly incompetent son. Did the Duchess work as hard at estate management and political manipulation as her contemporary, Lady Grisell Baillie? Certainly, a recent study of her daughters refers to the Duchess as an excellent role model for women's political activism.¹ And what of her activities as one of James Anderson's *Ladies of the Covenant* (beyond the connection between her Presbyterianism and her dress habits: pp.85-6)? It is clear that in various ways this new edition could and should have been better: the improvement wrought by G.W.S. Barrow in the third edition of his *Robert Bruce and the Community of the Realm of Scotland*, where a work first published in the 1960s was harmonised with the state of learning nearly twenty-five years later, might serve as an example.

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1. Karl von den Steinen, "In Search of the Antecedents of Women's Political Activism in Early 18th Century Scotland: the Daughters of Anne, Duchess of Hamilton", Eliz. Ewan & Maureen Meikle (eds.), *Women in Scotland c.1100-c.1750*, (Tuckwell Press, 1999), p.112