



THE BABE OF TANGIER: AN ENQUIRY INTO THE LIFE AND CIRCLE OF GENERAL
GEORGE WADE

Author(s): Stephen Dodgson

Source: *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*, Summer 2004, Vol. 82,
No. 330 (Summer 2004), pp. 109-131

Published by: Society for Army Historical Research

Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/44231055>

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <https://about.jstor.org/terms>



Society for Army Historical Research is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research*

JSTOR

THE BABE OF TANGIER: AN ENQUIRY INTO THE LIFE AND CIRCLE OF GENERAL GEORGE WADE

STEPHEN DODGSON

And pray, who so fit to lead forth this parade,
As the babe of Tangier, my old grandmother Wade?
Whose cunning's so quick, but whose motion's so slow,
That the rebels march'd on while he stuck in the snow.

(anon. 1745)

Recent work on Richard Boyle, 3rd Earl of Burlington¹ has revealed a far more complex, even enigmatic figure than the accepted portrait of loyal Whig, cultural Maecenas and standard-bearer of Palladianism. The inclusion in his circle of George Wade has always been noticed, but linked solely to the house Burlington designed for him. The purpose of this article is to inaugurate an investigative interest in Wade equal to that already fruitfully set in motion with regard to Burlington, and, incidentally, to delve a little deeper into the link between the two men.

Reasonably enough, Wade has always been seen as an impeccably steadfast Whig, enjoying the intimate and enduring confidence of both George I and George II. He came under attack in later career for lack of initiative and a tendency to dither, amounting to culpable weakness in the field. George II called it 'always having black atoms before his eyes'. Nevertheless, in retiring from his thankless and inglorious command of the British forces in Flanders in 1744, and despite all the critical flack he had suffered from Lord Carteret voicing continual royal displeasure, he was thanked and forgiven on reaching home, tired, ill and disenchanted.²

His illness, described by himself as 'astma', subjected him to severe attacks accompanied with 'spitting of blood'. These had been specially incapacitating in Flanders. The majority of reported attacks, both before and after, lasted a matter of days only. Those in Flanders laid him out completely and necessitated Ligonier temporarily taking over his command. Stress played a significant part, as is evident from the letters Wade wrote in reply to Carteret, or dictated via Joseph Yorke, his adjutant, when too ill to write himself.

Nothing is reported of Wade between his return to England in early spring 1745 and his return to active command in September, following the alarming news of the rebel army assembling round the Stuart prince in the North. Wade's ill-health and poor record in Flanders made a sufficient case against recalling the now seventy-two year old Field Marshal to lead the royal armies in Scotland. But his twelve years of experience quelling latent Jacobitism in Scotland between 1725 and 1737 formed a powerful argument on the other side. Moreover, he was the country's

¹ Jane Clark, 'Lord Burlington is Here', *Lord Burlington Architecture Art and Life*, ed. Toby Barnard and Jane Clark (London, 1995). It was Jane Clark, through this and other Burlington researches, who provided the stimulus for her husband Stephen Dodgson's current interest in Gen. Wade.

² British Library [BL], Carteret Papers, Add. MS 22538, particularly fols 197 and 214.

most senior military figure. Both the Duke of Cumberland and Ligonier were heavily engaged in Flanders, and unavailable until a later stage in the crisis. Wade was a campaigner of the old school. October was the month winter quarters began to beckon, but it was with the prospect of winter in North Britain (he had only ever been there in the summer months even when younger and fitter) that he set out for Newcastle. He was delayed a short while in Leicester with a recurrence of his asthma. How reasonable it would have been to plead his age and infirmity, and that the command would have been more wisely given elsewhere. It is curious that the Earl of Stair, unprompted, did not himself think this way. As Secretary of State, Stair was a key member of the inner council which ordered Wade's defensive march to the North, yet only six months before he had been in the front line of those urging Wade's replacement by someone more forceful. Great commanders in those days continued till they dropped, but in this case it looks as though Wade actually wanted the job. If so, for what reason?

In the aftermath of the Forty-five, other prominent figures were brought to account for perceived failures: General Durrand for the surrender of Carlisle Castle; General Oglethorpe for failing to intercept the Highlanders at Clifton Moor, having been despatched across the Pennines by Wade for precisely this purpose; and Sir John Cope for his precipitate departure from the battlefield of Prestonpans. All three were honourably discharged. But is it not odd that Wade's own perceived failure was never the subject of an inquiry?³ And is it not odder still that this in turn did not render him unsuitable to head the Cope inquiry in 1746?

James Nimmo, excise officer at Edinburgh, and brother-in-law to the Earl of Marchmont, was certainly of this way of thinking:

Mr Jack has been for two days examined by the board of general officers to enquire about Cope . . . the President [Wade] very partial for Cope, the rest acting like men who desir'd to do their duty and know the truth . . . the Duke of Richmond then told Mr Jack he was to speak out and fear nobody for he should have the King's protection and theirs, and so they got the whole matter, which was quite new to them, but Wade was cross and did not like it.⁴

This was, incidentally, the last public duty he performed.

Wade's military career, in outline at least, is well documented: as a young officer in William III's army in Flanders during the 1690s; his return under Marlborough, itself soon superseded by service in Portugal and Spain under successively the Earl of Galway and James Stanhope between 1704 and 1710; and Flanders once more in 1744–5. So too is the official side of his duties in Scotland. The more personal aspects, however, do play a part in this account, since its prime concern is a discovery of the man himself through the scattered papers that survive.

The only study yet to appear is J. B. Salmond's *Wade in Scotland* (Edinburgh: Moray Press, 1938). Though containing quite a lot of biographical material, this is

³ Frank McLynn, *Charles Edward Stuart* (London, 1988), p. 195 stresses this point.

⁴ Historical Manuscripts Commission [HMC], *Polwarth Papers*, v, 286.

somewhat incidental, since the book's clear and admirable purpose is a detailed account of the road-building, exhaustively researched at first hand. Additionally, Salmond's research papers, now lodged in the National Library of Scotland, provide a valuable supplementary source.⁵

Some puzzles of the Wade family

Salmond draws attention to several among many biographical mysteries. He quotes from a letter addressed to Lieutenant-Colonel William Kennedy by Simon Fraser, Lord Lovat, furious at being deprived of his Highland Company following the decision to form them into a regiment,

Which was only contriv'd to demolish and ruin me by that false and deceitful Barbarian, who is so by nature & face as much as by his Tangier birth, for at the same time he was belying & calumniating me to the King in the blackest manner, he and his French Secretary were writing the most kind and civil letters to me—a villainous Dissimulation.⁶

Lovat is famously guilty of 'villainous dissimulation' himself, but at times he must evidently be believed. Wade's Tangier birth, previously hardly more than a waspish quip, now seems proven by the recent discovery of his signature among the Matriculators at Padua University:

Captain GEORGE WADE of Tangier. Granadeer. 19th May 1700.⁷

Wade had been appointed Captain in the Grenadier Company in June 1695, continuing beyond the Treaty of Rijswyk into the renewal of hostilities during 1702. How surprising to find him as a cultural visitor to Italy during that peaceful interlude, especially when I and others may have presumed those tastes to have developed later as a senior (and wealthier) officer, and very likely under the tutelage of Lord Burlington.

As for Tangier, army records for the twenty-five years of British occupancy (1660–84) do not reveal anyone of the name of Wade. The suggestion was always that any connection in Tangier was not military but through trade, where specific references by name are rare. Such connections went back purportedly to George's great-grandfather, William, baldly described as 'Merchant in Tangier' (*DNB*). It was his presumed son, another William, a major of dragoons under Cromwell, who was granted land in Co. Westmeath, founding the line of Irish Wades, a line continuing into modern times. But he too may have been no stranger to Tangier, since George's own father, Jerome, is said to have been born there, and George's elder brother, William, likewise. Who their mother was is beyond the range of conjecture, but, one way or another, the Wades as a dynasty appear as much Tangerine as they do Irish. Indeed, there looks to be a rift in the family. Brothers George and William are credited with an older brother—Jerome, like his father—who became the 'Irish

⁵ National Library of Scotland [NLS], MS 7188, 3 vols.

⁶ J. B. Salmond, *Wade in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1938), p. 29.

⁷ Brinsley Ford Archive; discovery made by Jane Clark.

descendant', inheriting the Westmeath property. I am inclined to think (on no very good grounds) that Jerome had a different mother. Certainly, there is no hint of contact between him and his two distinctly English brothers, themselves very close.

The handsome baroque monument which George erected to his elder brother's memory in St George's Chapel, Windsor, on his death in 1732, says 'that he received his first education at Westminster School from whence he was elected to Trinity College in Cambridge'. It makes no mention of a father or mother. Somehow, the two boys were well looked after in early life, for George too, as is evident from his elegant letter-writing and lively interest in opera, antiquarian books, painting and architecture, certainly received a good education. Strangely enough, though, this was not at Westminster School like his brother and all the male descendants of both men.

Who, then, was Wade's early patron? And do we perhaps not know because of a necessary delicacy? The fact that Wade himself only fathered illegitimate children is no indication that he himself was illegitimate, but I find the possibility difficult to dislodge.

Interestingly, it was Dr Freind, celebrated headmaster of Westminster at the period, who composed the Latin inscription for Wade's (and William Adam's) magnificent bridge at Aberfeldy.

Wade and Forbes

It is more than likely that Duncan Forbes became known to Wade before ever Scotland entered the latter's thoughts. Wade himself became an MP in 1715, for Hindon. Forbes became a Scottish MP, for Nairnshire, in 1713 and was frequently in London as a result. After Wade's appointment to Scotland in 1724, they quickly became close allies by natural inclination. Wade's perceptions of Highland loyalties, and his humane reaction to them, developed strongly under Forbes's influence.

In August 1729, each received a duplicate communication from the Duke of Newcastle, alerting them to rumoured reports of a pending return by some exiled Jacobites. Wade thereupon reported his observations to Forbes, writing 'from my hutt at Dalnacardoch', a summer lodge from which he supervised the loftiest sector of his road-building:

I have wrote to Willy Grant [Colonel William Grant, commander of one of the six Independent Companies] to be vigilant toward Gordon Castle, and to observe Glenbucket's motions, who I think a dangerous fellow, and who I believe will be ready to play the fool if he is in any way encouraged by the Agents from Abroad. I think the Troops are so disposed that nothing can give us any sort of trouble, unless with the assistance of a foreign force.⁸

He looks forward to their meeting in Inverness in three weeks' time. Forbes's copy of the Duke's letter caught up with him at Inverary, but Wade's reaction to it he only read on getting home, whereupon he repaid the compliment by letting Wade know his own thoughts:

⁸ Culloden Papers [CP], 142.

In my progress from Argyleshire through Lorn, Mull, Lochaber, &c. I have been as inquisitive as prudence could permit; and I have answers of some Letters which I wrote from Inverary to Edinburgh upon this subject; and the result of all confirms my former Opinion; that no Emissaries are come into Scotland; at least, that the Highlanders have not any knowledge of their coming; and this I am resolved by the next post to signify to his Grace . . . I am so damnably tired of the Highlands, that I durst not venture on your Mines.⁹

The overlap in attitude and reaction is striking, including even a slight hint of complacency as to their vigilance. Ten years later, when both spoke in Parliament on the Porteous Riots, Wade followed Forbes and opened his speech: 'I am very sorry, Sir, that I should differ from my honourable and learned Friend who spoke last; I think it is the first I ever had occasion to do so, and I hope it will be the last.'¹⁰ Wade held the citizens of Edinburgh responsible for the fracas, through foreknowledge and collusion. Forbes did not.

The Culloden Papers are an obvious prime source concerning Wade's personal conduct and motivations in Scotland. This appears almost as much indirectly as through their own direct exchanges. There are also some surprises for the reader, and, frequently, salutary warnings, lest any of us should too readily interpret warmth of association between Jacobite and his pursuer as connivance. These are most strikingly exhibited in the amazing letters which, in 1745, passed between Lord Lovat and 'My General', as he liked to address Duncan Forbes.

As to surprises, perhaps the greatest is the mutual, though independent, support each gave to Colonel Francis Charteris, the notorious gambler, swindler and rapist (who lurks in sinister silhouette in the background of the first of Hogarth's *Harlot's Progress* prints). Charteris was imprisoned for rape in 1730, his estates held in forfeit. It was entirely due to brilliant legal representation by Forbes that a royal pardon was obtained. Wade's undated letter to Charteris, obviously written some time before, offers a kindly explanation of an unattractive web of nepotism and jealousy which was having the side-effect of prolonging Charteris's incarceration. He had been at some pains to ascertain what was going on, so underlining the need for patience. He concludes: 'I shall continue to do all I can for your Service, being most heartily concerned for your misfortune.'¹¹

Charteris's only child, Janet, was wife to the Earl of Wemyss. Their anxiety was great lest the Colonel's death might precede the hoped-for pardon. Luck was on their side. The second son, christened Francis on account of his grandparent, inherited his largely ill-gotten fortune, part of which was later swallowed up in the £1500 loan his elder brother, David Elcho, delivered to the Jacobite Prince on joining him in Edinburgh. The equally Jacobite Francis narrowly avoided his brother's coercions, while the Colonel nobly acknowledged Forbes (for his 'Quixotic Honesty')

⁹ CP, 143.

¹⁰ *Parliamentary Debates*, Vol. X (1737), p. 290b.

¹¹ NLS, MS 17703, fol. 156.

by the lifetime bequest of his beautiful mansion, Stonyhill. Wade became a frequent visitor at Stonyhill, doubtless finding it handy for his periodic military reviews on Musselburgh Links.

The King's Instructions

The King's Instructions to Major General Wade: 1st June 1725 reflect very closely the report Wade had submitted at the end of his first tour of duty in 1724 as commander in Scotland. They concentrate on submission of the rebellious; the giving up of arms; power to grant licences to carry firearms where appropriate; measures to police the Highlands, to repair and/or extend existing forts and barracks; and on the need for a vessel to patrol Loch Ness.

These *Instructions* in turn governed the report compiled in the winter of 1725 and signed by Wade on 3 January 1726. However, more than once, his words have a different colouring. The following paragraph,

These and other your Majesty's Commands I have endeavoured to the Utmost of my Power to put into Execution, rather by a mild and moderate treatment of your Majesty's misled Subjects, than by Acts of Rigour and Severity, as a method of proceeding in my humble Opinion, the most agreeable to your Majesty's gracious Intentions,¹²

was surely intended to prompt a more clement policy. Later on, he goes as far as he dares, arguing leniency as the wisest course. The length of the passage is striking in itself (and my quotation considerably compresses it). Voicing his conviction of the benefits to be expected through the powers of submission granted, Wade says of the 'common folk':

The greatest part of them were drawn into the Rebellion at the Instigation of their Superiors and in my humble Opinion have continued their disaffection rather from Despair than any real dislike of your Majesty's Government . . . for it was no sooner known that Yr Majesty had empowered me to receive the submissions of those who repented of their Crimes and were willing and desirous for the future to live peacefully under your mild and moderate Government, but applications were made to me from several of them to intercede with Your Majesty on their behalf—declaring their readiness to abandon the Pretender's party . . . to which I answered that I would be ready to intercede in their favour when I was further convinced of their Promises.¹³

First, they must surrender their arms and then:

I made proper arguments to convince them of their Folly and Rashness, and gave them hopes of obtaining Pardon.

¹² BL, King's MS 101, fol. 3.

¹³ BL, King's MS 101, fols 18, 19.

He would, however, require:

Gentlemen of unquestioned Zeal to Yr Majesty's Government to write to me in their favour, which was accordingly done.

When news of acceptance arrived,

It was received with great Joy and Satisfaction throughout the Highlands, which occasioned the Jacobites in Edinburgh to say, by way of reproach, that I had not only defrauded the Highlanders of their Arms, but had debauched them from their Loyalty and Allegiance.

An Appendix to the Report includes instructions given to officers commanding Highland Companies, the Form of Summons sent to the estate of the Earl of Seaforth, an exemplar of *Licence for Carrying Arms*, plus an interesting file of *Letters of Submission to His Majesty from Persons Attainted of High Treason: directed to General Wade*. Most plead youthful rashness and indiscretion at the time, maturer years having revealed their earlier folly. Roderick Chisholm of Strathglass concluded:

The success your undertakings have always had owing more to your courteous and affable behaviour than to the Terror of Arms, I presume to throw myself under your protection . . . Pardon, Sir, this trouble which your great and universal good Character draws upon you.

Laying it on still thicker, Rob Roy McGregor must have enjoyed penning the effusive words with which he signed off:

The great humanity with which you have constantly acted of the Trust reposed in you, and your having ever made use of the great Powers with which you are vested as the means of doing good and charitable Offices to such as you found proper Objects of Compassion which I hope excuse my Importunity.¹⁴

It was as if the kindly General stood at their elbows, suggesting acceptable phrases. Wade would have got them all pardoned if he could. He was far too shrewd not to notice that he was being handed rather high proportions of rusty old arms at the musters, and that an excess of honeyed compliments about his 'charitable offices' made the submissions seem no more than matters of form.

Dubious Acquaintances

It did not take George Lockhart long to see it all as a bit of a sham. Writing to his master, the exiled King James in Rome, while Wade was in the midst of these proceedings—September 1725—Lockhart brought matters back down to earth.

No doubt the government will be at pains to magnify and spread abroad their success in disarming the Highlands, but depend upon it it is all a jest. For few or no swords or pistols are or will be delivered, and only such guns as are of no value, so that a small recruit of good arms will put them

¹⁴ BL, King's MS 101, fols 28–35.

in a better state than before . . . I now plainly see that this Highland expedition is at bottom a money-job. The General has got £40,000 to pass through his hands for it, and his scheme is to be very civil to the Highlanders, under the colour of his having perswaded them to give up their arms (which the trash they give him will enable him to represent) to make himself pass for a useful person, and fit to be continued in Scotland with a good salary. But at the same time I know that some of the Government are heartily vex'd that the Highlanders made no resistance, hoping if they had, in this time of tranquillity, they might have extirpated them, whereas as matters have been managed, they will remain and be in capacity to serve the King when fair occasion offers.¹⁵

There is something else he might have added, had he believed it, that Wade was quite coolly duping the Government with exactly the circumstance Lockhart points out as favouring another rising. In fact, this treasonable imputation was far from his meaning, as another letter to his exiled sovereign, on 8 August 1726, makes clear:

General Wade is still at Edinburgh, and does all he can to gain an interest with the Scots Jacobites. A friend of his and mine (a very honest English gentleman in the army)¹⁶ told me t'other day that General W. wondered Mr L. never came to see him, and that tho he knew my character well, yet nobody would be wellcomer. Mr L. replied that as the other did not come to see him when he was in London, neither would Mr L. wait on him at Edinburgh.¹⁷

Lockhart had by now grown extremely wary of the General, suspecting his solicitousness to be a trap. Only a month earlier he had earnestly recommended Alexander Murray of Stanhope as the ideal go-between 'to carry on intelligence betwixt the Highlands and your Trustees at Edinburgh'.¹⁸ Murray had formed a close personal contact with Wade through his mining venture at Strontian, Argyllshire. The Duke of Norfolk was the major partner in Murray's syndicate, with Wade and his close friend, Sir Robert Clifton, as the other two of the six with real significance to this enquiry.

When Lockhart first approached him, Murray had been evasive, as well he might, having been implicated in the Fifteen. Now he was pardoned and outwardly at least desiring to be free of the Jacobite allegiance of his family. (Murray of Broughton was his much younger half-brother.) After a second interview three weeks later, and reported in the same letter of 8 August, Lockhart reversed his previous recommendation. Murray was no longer trustworthy. Small wonder! He had got cold feet. Sharing a business interest with the Government commander specially appointed to sniff out agents and plotters made Lockhart's proposal an impossibility. There is a distinct chance that Wade had caught hints of his

¹⁵ Daniel Szechi (ed.), *Lockhart Papers* (Scottish History Society, Edinburgh, 1989), pp. 238–40.

¹⁶ ? Joshua Guest.

¹⁷ *Lockhart Papers*, pp. 292–4.

¹⁸ *Lockhart Papers*, pp. 289–92.

continuing Jacobitism, easily demonstrated by scanning the extensive Murray of Stanhope Papers,¹⁹ and even, maybe, a rumour of Lockhart's recommendation.

Whatever the personal anxieties of each in the summer of 1727, Wade's instructions on 20 July to Sir Duncan Campbell, commander of one of the Highland Companies, brought matters to a head:

Whereas I have rec'd Information that sometime in the months of Feb. or March last, several broadswords, Belts and other warlike Stores were carried and lodged in Mingary Castle²⁰ in Ardnamurchan and to other places in the Western Highlands, you are hereby ordered to make a diligent search for said stores, taking a Constable with you and such military assistance as you shall judge necessary.²¹

Murray was elsewhere at the time; very likely an intentional aspect of Wade's plan. On 23 August, from Fort William, he wrote a stern letter to Murray. We have to guess at what precisely provoked it.

Sir, I have received favour of your letters and am sorry you have been deceived in recommending a person to the Liberty of carrying Arms, who had other use for them than to insult your tenants. As to those who carry Armes without Licence you are to apply to Sir Duncan Campbell in whose district they inhabit, and who already has my order to seize such persons in order to their prosecution, as also to protect the countrey committed to his care, and least Sir Duncan should renew the Licence to McNivan you will do well to advise him of it, for when I came from Edinburgh I left some Licences in his Hands to be exchanged for those which expire in September next, and on your application he will put in what names you please to recommend. I fear I shall not be able to comply with your request of having a power of arming so many of your servants, but when I am at Stirling, which I suppose will be about the middle of September or sooner, I shall be glad to do you any service that may not be inconsistent to the rules his Majesty has laid down for preserving the peace of the Countrey.²²

On 21 September Murray wrote a long and abjectly cringing letter to Wade from Edinburgh, having to his great chagrin missed the mid-September rendezvous.

I was not a little vex'd upon my road to Stirling to hear you was sett out for England, seeing thereby I am deprived the Advantage I proposed in having an opportunity of explaining my case more fully . . . Yet my uneasiness was yet more increased when . . . I was told of an information having been lodged against me as having contrary to Law and the sacred

¹⁹ NLS, Murray of Stanhope Papers, Adv 29.1.1. (seven vols).

²⁰ Murray's residence at the mouth of Loch Sunart, with a commanding view over the Sound of Mull.

²¹ BL, Add. MS 23671, *Wade: Orders 1726-7*, fol. 15.

²² NLS, Adv 29.1.1., ii, fol. 103.

ties of Gratitude & Honour lodged a quantity of arms and warlike stores in my house of Mingary . . . [great protestations of his honour and innocence follow, till] . . . So I do hereby bid defiance to all Mortals to lay one undutiful action to my charge ever since I got my Liberty.²³

By which we know that Murray knew, that Wade knew, that Murray had been imprisoned for his part in the Fifteen.

Furthermore, the two letters taken together seem to demonstrate two things: first, Wade's moment of fear that his personal association with Alexander Murray could have an extremely serious professional repercussion if he did not at once act the cold official, and second, that in order to achieve this effectively, he had to scare Murray out of his wits.

Murray was habitually inspired by the most grandiose schemes. Mining and canals were his particular obsession. In 1724 he had purchased the peninsula of Ardnamurchan with a view to exploiting its deposits of lead. Soon convinced of its promise, a partnership was set up consisting of himself and an interesting mix of adventurers. The Duke of Norfolk had much the largest share. Sir Archibald Grant of Monymusk, Robert Clifton, Sir Robert Sutton and George Wade were on virtually equal terms, as was Clifton's father, Sir Gervaise, spurred on by his son's enthusiasm. There were also three prominent merchants: Richard Graham and Peter Murdoch, of Glasgow, and William Neilson of Edinburgh. The last doubled as mine manager for a time, but soon left under a cloud.

There were constant tensions between Murray and his workforce, and the partners, for the profitability of the mining operation, never satisfactory, soon declined further. And it was at this point that the York Buildings Company took it over in 1731. Alexander Murray was by this time virtually bankrupt, but remained a partner with a now diminished interest. Wade and both Cliftons were—on the face of it—quite well placed by the terms of the transfer. Grant and Sutton inevitably grew to greater prominence in its future, because of the clandestine share-dealing in YBC by the Charitable Corporation, in which both were key figures, with full knowledge of what was going on. Both were found guilty of serious misdemeanours in the complex parliamentary inquiry into the Corporation's shady dealings during 1732, and were lucky to be as leniently treated as they were on their plea of suffering loss equally with the needy public that the institution had been set up to assist.

The Charitable Corporation scandal is dwarfed by the South Sea débâcle which preceded it. Wade was not involved in either, but the subsequent inquiry into the York Buildings Company touched him much more nearly. The company had been granted an improbable extension to its charter (to raise Thames water for the benefit of Londoners) to take over the business of the post-1715 government commission set up to dispose of forfeited Scottish estates. In March 1725 the commission reached the end of its appointed time, but not the end of its task; there had been problems disposing of a good number of the estates. This coincided with the

²³ NLS, Adv 29.1.1., ii, fol. 104.

moment Wade's task of securing peace in the region began in earnest. At his side, in a civilian capacity, he had Edmund Burt (of *Letters of a Gentleman in the North of Scotland* fame) to act as agent for those estates still undisposed. Burt's activities later branched out and, in 1733, he was appointed Manager of the Strontian mines when they passed into the care of the York Buildings Company. Burt is something of a historical curiosity, but possesses little of that dubiousness attaching to Wade's fellow speculators, all of whom have their shadowy side.

The ever-greedy Archibald Grant, in a consortium with two of his brothers-in-law, acquired huge interests in the Panmuir, Marischal and Southesk estates, while the Company itself turned avid speculator, in mining, forestry and other exploits, and without exception lost money in them all.

Governor at this period was Colonel Samuel Horsey (or Horsley, as he sometimes appears), an emphatically shady figure. The title of 'colonel' is itself dubious. Inescapably, Horsey figured prominently in the parliamentary inquiry into YBC which took place in June 1733.²⁴

A mines expert, Francis Place, a celebrity in his field, gave the opinion that YBC had made a bad bargain at Strontian. Prospects were favourable, but not at an annual rental of £3600, with a sixth Dish to provide in addition, plus a no-escape thirty-year lease. He repeated this opinion several times, and had indeed been saying the same thing ever since his first involvement. Horsey blithely disregarded the warning at all times, replying to Place on 23 May 1730:

You will have received two Letters, signed by the Court of Assistants, relating to the Swinart mines; the accounts I have seen, and have been given me by General Wade and Sir Robert Sutton are very extraordinary; and I am satisfied, if we come to work there, under your Management, we shall find great riches.²⁵

This makes clear that Wade was very much on Horsey's side; or that Horsey was prevaricating. For before ever the inquiry began, on 10 November 1732,²⁶ Wade and his fellow shareholders had taken out a Decree of Adjudication against the Company for arrears. This descended on the General's death to his two sons, George and John, and from them to his favourite great-nephew, Captain William Wade, celebrated Master of Ceremonies at the Bath Assembly Rooms.²⁷ Presumably, none of them ever received a penny.

William Caulfield shares with Edmund Burt a significant place in Wade's history. As a young ensign serving in Scotland, he supplied working parties for the road-building programme. His exceptional aptitude for this vital task led to his appointment as Inspector of Roads in 1732, from which date, if not earlier, he became effectively *the* Highland road-maker, continuing in this capacity long after Wade's retirement from Scotland. In 1745, Caulfield acted as quarter-master to Sir

²⁴ *House of Commons Journals*, Vol. 22, pp. 172–98.

²⁵ *House of Commons Journals*, 22, p. 193b.

²⁶ NLS, MS 1506, fol. 63.

²⁷ NLS, Ch.B. 18.

John Cope, and in 1747 became Deputy-Governor of Inverness Castle. By which hangs a tale.

Wade had lobbied for this very appointment five years earlier, only to be thwarted behind the scenes. He confided his frustration with some choler in an undated letter to Forbes:

As to Caulfield's affair, I can hardly think of it with patience. I had obtained the Royal Consent, & the commission was drawn at the closet door in order to be sign'd; when a malicious gent, to put a stop to it for the present, positively asserted, that the Lt Govr was not dead. This I had heard, but took no notice of it, since I knew the next post would clear up that matter; but fresh objections were raised every day, & the nation raised, to support the most malicious & ill-natured act ever done by one gentleman to another; & was very near determining me to turn country gentleman; which when it was apprehended, to palliate matters, I had my new employment²⁸ given me, without asking. The Lt Government is not yet given to any body, & the commission remains unsign'd in the Secretary's bagg. There are some other circumstances not to be committed to writing.²⁹

Caulfield was a nephew of George Carpenter, an old campaign comrade of Wade's earlier days, who was left his ring as a token of an enduring friendship.³⁰ This likely reason for their initial introduction has not been noted hitherto, and seems corroborated by the almost filial interest apparent in this letter.

29 Old Burlington Street

For the better part of fifteen years (1724–38), Wade's life followed a fairly regular pattern: November to June in the south, late June to late October in the north. On his journeys he frequently stayed with Sir Robert Clifton (KB in 1725; succeeded to the baronetcy, 1731) at the ancient family home at Clifton, on the Trent, a few miles south of Nottingham. There are surviving letters of Clifton's recording such visits, and letters written by Wade while his guest.

In 1735 Wade headed south rather earlier than usual. On 11 September, conforming exactly to his normal pattern, he reviewed troops on Edinburgh Muir on departure. On the 28th, Lord Burlington, returning from church at Londesborough—it was a Sunday—found Wade and Clifton already arrived.³¹ If there was a special purpose to the visit, and how long it lasted, are unknown. (Wade did not reach London till 16 October.) And if there was not, it confirms what can be surmised from other factors, that there existed a close rapport between the three of them.

Burlington designed a garden pavilion for Clifton, which survives, though now ruinous, and No. 29 Old Burlington Street for Wade, demolished in 1935. Clifton

²⁸ Wade was appointed Lt-Gen. of the Ordnance 31 Jan. 1742.

²⁹ CP 389.

³⁰ E. Curll, *George, 1st Baron Carpenter* (London, 1736), App. p. v.

³¹ Devonshire MSS, Chatsworth, letter to Lady Burlington.

Hall boasts a handsome Octagon Hall, remarkably similar to the central Salon at Chiswick House, designed a generation later by Robert Carr of York. It might well have been undertaken in Sir Robert's day but for his crippling craze for mines—Strontian was only part of the story—which eventually landed him in prison for debt in 1746. A second marriage staved off ruin, and his powerful new mother-in-law, Lady Lombe, did her best to get him re-elected MP for Retford, a seat he had held since 1727. Part of her boost for his cause, contained in a letter to the agent, urged that 'he is now as great a Whig as any in the world'.³² In earlier life he had been erratic politically. A fascinating item, addressed to 'Robert Clifton at his house in Dover Street' from Newgate Prison, at some time between late 1723 and early 1725, even offers a glimpse of a subversive recipient.

This six months past I have been confin'd in a messenger's house, I could find no opportunity of acquainting you with my misfortune till now, that I have been committed to this horrid place . . . to be tried . . . tomorrow at the Old Bailey by Lord Mayor and Recorder . . . who are Whig Judges in that court . . . the crimes alledged are . . . bringing over declarations of the Chevalier, and recruiting men for him. The latter crimes you know, Sir, I had the misfortune of being impeach'd with in Ireland some years ago, as falsely as I am now . . . The Duchess of Buckingham I believe would befriend me if she knew my case . . . be pleased to enquire if the Duchess of Tirconnel be in town, likewise the Lord Dillon you know in Dover Street or thereabouts, and if the Duck of Worton be in towne.

signed: C. Lucas³³

The *Survey of London*,³⁴ aided by architectural drawings and photographs, tells clearly and distinctly all there is to be known concerning Wade's London house, 29 Old Burlington Street, built for him in 1725. Horace Walpole, in a well-known letter, visiting the house after Wade's death in 1748, thought it 'worse contriv'd on the inside than is conceivable', and that it was 'literally true that all the directions he [Wade] gave my Lord Burlington was to have a place for a large cartoon of Rubens that he had bought in Flanders'.³⁵ Here Wade enjoyed almost twenty-five rent-free years, a concession granted, the *Survey of London* reasonably believes, out of esteem, rather than as recompense for condemning the occupant to a comfortless interior.

If Walpole is to be believed, Wade's sole stipulation was not met. There was no wall space for the Rubens cartoon. As a result, it was sold to Horace's father, Sir Robert, to add to his famous collection at Houghton.

But this was not Wade's only Rubens. On 25 May 1765, Lord Irwin wrote to his wife: 'I have bought two pictures formerly belonging to General Wade, and now to his son, a Claude for £100 and a Rubens for £200.'³⁶ I am unable to throw much light on why 1765, or on which son. I can shed no light at all on what Rubens.

³² R. Sedgwick (ed.), *History of Parliament: The Commons, 1715–54* (1970).

³³ PRO, SP 35/78/1.

³⁴ *The Survey of London*, Vol 32, p. 501 *et seq.*

³⁵ *Private Correspondence of Horace Walpole* (1820), i, 172.

³⁶ HMC, *Various Colls*, Vol. viii (1913), pp. 182–3.

Horace Walpole wrote, in that same letter of 1748, 'I went yesterday to see Marshall Wade's house, which is selling by auction.' Strictly, this cannot be correct. Only the contents—and evidently not all of them—were for sale that day. The house was of course still Burlington's, and now became home to Richard Arundell, who enjoyed the lifelong favour of the Earl. He was the only other occupant of a rent-free house on Burlington's London estate. Arundell moved a short distance from No. 34 to 29 Old Burlington Street, and on his death it passed to his heirs until 1785, when another sale took place. Again it was of contents only, and was advertised interestingly by Mr Christie:

Household Furniture, Pictures, a Chamber Organ, An Elegant Statuary
Marble Chimney Piece and other Effects At the HOUSE of the late
GEN. WADE, deceased.

The sale was conducted, room by room, just as though Wade's personal effects were still much as he left them—which is hard to believe, nearly forty years after his death and having been at the disposal of an array of Arundell descendants.

Wade as collector of pictures was still a significant selling-point in 1797 when Christie's, in their own 'Great Room', offered:

A small but well-chosen Collection of Pictures Late the Property of
John WADE Esq, deceased, and originally collected by his Father,
FIELD MARSHAL WADE, who was long distinguished for his correct
Taste as a Connoisseur during his Command on the Continent.³⁷

Scanning the sale catalogue, one's eye rather easily slips by the Correggios, Leonardos, Raphaels, and Holbeins as likely copies (even if good ones); and past Stubbs (*A Fox dog, highly finished and enamell'd on copper*) as an improbable acquisition by the General, since Stubbs had scarcely begun his career at Wade's death. But it does linger over item No. 75: *Hogarth, Portrait of the well-known Heidegger*, bought by Birch for three guineas. Heidegger, the Swiss-born London impresario and an important figure in Handel's life, was a beneficiary of Wade's will, indicating a closeness we can only guess at. And the likelihood that Hogarth and Wade were well acquainted is also high.

Through the 1797 sale we learn that John, the younger of Wade's two sons, had recently died. The elder of the two, George, was still living at the start of 1765, which makes less likely a similar link in the case of the Claude and the Rubens acquired in May that year by Lord Irwin.

In common with many of Burlington's circle, Wade was subscriber to architectural publications and to John Gay's *Poems* (1720). Likewise, he was one of the original subscribers to the Royal Academy of Music in May 1719. In 1721 he is listed as one of its Governors, virtually the only one with no aristocratic background, and a London newspaper, on 17 December 1726, shows him still among the twenty-two named Directors, headed by the Duke of Richmond.

³⁷ I am indebted to Dr Pamela Kingsbury for drawing my attention to both sale catalogues.

At first sight, it might seem that it was Burlington who first aroused Wade's cultural interests, but a little investigation shows this to be unlikely. The Chatsworth collections include a rare Missal, originally a gift from King Henry VII to his daughter Margaret. On the flyleaf, over his signature, Wade describes how it came into his possession:

Aprill the 23rd 1718 This book was for above 50 yeares in the hands of Monsieur Le Pin a Majestrate of Bruges and after his death in the year 1717 purchas'd from his Executors by me George Wade

Below this, in the Earl's own hand, appears: 'given to me by Genl. Wade, Burlington'.

This seems unlikely to have been an impulsive gift of the moment, but is entirely likely if Wade's acquaintance with the young earl went back some time, and readily explains how, when building developments began at the rear of Burlington House in 1725, Wade should have been regarded like the Fairfax brothers and William Kent as an extension of the family.

Indeed, it is perfectly possible that Wade, 'Matriculator' at Padua in 1700, already possessed 'correct taste as a connoisseur' when Burlington was a mere child; that he was first known to Burlington's mother, Lady Juliana (and even to the 2nd Earl, d. 1703), and that young Richard, as it were, inherited him.

Citizen of Bath

So far as we know, Wade's association with Bath began in 1715. On the outbreak of the Rebellion, he was despatched to Bath in command of two regiments of dragoons to secure the city, in view of its reputed Jacobitism. He is almost invariably credited with the unearthing of 'eleven chests of fire-arms, swords, cartridges, three pieces of cannon, one mortar and molds to cast cannon, which had been buried underground'. At this point, most accounts then continue with the name of Ralph Allen as the person who provided the helpful tip-off. There is an aroma of legend about all this, since the tale stems from a memoir by Richard Graves, clergyman-author, with a living at Claverton on the perimeter of Prior Park. In venerable old age, in *The Triflers* (1809), Graves was looking back a long time:

In the year 1715, Mr Allen was one of the clerks in the post office at Bath; when having got intelligence of a waggon load of arms, coming up from the West . . . communicated this to General Wade; who was then quartered with troops at Bath, and who finding him a very prudent young man, got him advanced . . . and afterwards married him to Miss Earl, his natural daughter.

Allen is said to have given verbal confirmation of the tip-off towards the end of his own life, but the story about Miss Earl or Erle being Wade's thank-you present (as it were) was only recently discarded as pure fiction.

Also in 1715, but firmly back in the realm of fact, came Wade's entry into Parliament, as MP for Hindon, Wilts. This was not a seat to be won without well-directed influence. How useful it would be to know whose! In 1722, he was elected to a far more estimable seat at Bath, whose two members were elected by the city's

Council. Wade was one of those two representatives for the rest of his life. Nor was his re-election ever in doubt. The position of his fellow member was more narrowly contested. John Codrington occupied the seat in 1722 and again in 1734, but was finally ousted by Philip Bennet in 1741 by one vote. Wade's fellow MP for seven years (1727–34) was Robert Gay, an eminent doctor, solid Tory, probably a Jacobite, and a man of property in Bath. The street, later widened, which bears his name, ran down the back of Wade's house—14 Abbey Churchyard—a prime site in the city as any present-day tourist is very soon aware.

Until the early twentieth century, this house was the property of the Abbey. Strangely, the records show no trace of Wade as tenant, yet some assurance of his tenure must have existed, for it was certainly Wade's house at his death, and probably housed his family for some years afterwards. His brother, Canon William of St George's Chapel, Windsor, died there in 1732. William's widow then lived on in the house with her daughter-in-law and grandson, another William (c. 1725–1809), who had it seems lost his father. Charles Dalton does not identify a Major William Wade, serving at Culloden, as young William's father, but rank and first name agree, so this seems likely.³⁸ Yet by no means certain, since an earlier loss of his father better accounts for General George so directly adopting the boy as his heir. The closer link had the easily-understood consequence of his being reported as Wade's nephew and not, as he actually was, a great-nephew, a mistake only recently put right by Susan Legouix Sloman.³⁹

Clearly, it was Great-Uncle George who secured the boy's education at Westminster School, as he had done for two sons of his own, George and John, with military situations to follow. As a result all three are invariably referred to as 'Captain'. As already noted, George and John took joint care to preserve the interest of young Captain Wade.

There is evidence to show that Wade was a well-known citizen in Bath prior to his election as MP. The Bath Council records show Alderman Atwood paying twenty shillings for '42 years lease of messuage near Northgate Street opening into *Wade's Passage*' on 30 September 1723.⁴⁰ One imagines this familiar local name must have taken much more than a year to take root. Then there is the election of Wade as Recorder for Taunton, on 25 April 1720, when he was already being tipped as an MP for Bath. Writing from Bath that September, Tilson informed Delafaye: 'General Wade as I understand is sure of his election in this town; he is made Recorder of Taunton too; a good booted Apostle for the West.'⁴¹

Putting all this together, it looks as though Wade set his sights on Bath from the moment of his arrival with his two regiments of dragoons in 1715, and possibly even earlier.

Wade's patronage of living artists centred on Bath and on one artist in particular, Johan van Diest. Wade commissioned portraits from him of the city's

³⁸ Charles Dalton, *George the First's Army* (2 vols, London, 1910–12), i, 264.

³⁹ Susan Legouix Sloman, 'The Immaculate Capt. Wade', *Gainsborough's House Review* (1993/4).

⁴⁰ Bath Council Minutes, Book 2/72.

⁴¹ PRO, SP 35/23/44.

aldermen to hang in the Guildhall (they still do). Returning the compliment, the aldermen ordered a further portrait from van Diest—of Wade himself. In 1728, the artist was elected an Honorary Freeman of Bath.⁴²

There exist quite a number of Wade portraits, widely scattered, nearly all versions of each other; copies, and perhaps copies of copies. One of the superior derivatives is to be seen at Rokeby Park in Yorkshire, and is attributed to Vanderbank. Johan van Diest (or John, for he was completely anglicized) was still active well after Wade's death,⁴³ which makes a little puzzling Wade's bequest to Jerome Vandiest of £100; unless perhaps this is a son. But it also emphasises the strength of association.

Ralph Allen employed van Diest, or Vandiest, at Prior Park, very likely as a result of Wade's introduction; he was one of the aldermen depicted in the Guildhall series. Allen also honoured Wade with a statue in his park, dressed as a Roman; what a pity this is lost! Allen, when transporting stone to London for the building of St Bartholomew's Hospital, employed a Captain John Wade. Was this the General's younger son?

There are several hints that 14 Abbey Churchyard was the Wade family home, rather than 29 Old Burlington Street. One is the total lack of mention in his will of any possessions in Bath, for the reason, I have come to believe, that his dependents continued to live there. Wade's will is an interesting document and raises intriguing questions, meriting a section to themselves.

Lastly, we should look to Bath as the likely source of Wade's moral reputation as gambler and womanizer. As with the cache of arms in the Fifteen, this touch of colour is always turning up, and unquestioning repetition has no doubt inflated the story. Evidence of children without any evidence of marriage would be more than enough to set tongues wagging, especially in Bath. The tale was certainly well grounded by the time of the Revd James Granger's *Biographical History of England*, first published in 1769 and running through many editions well into the next century. Granger's thumbnail sketch describes Wade as 'a very worthy man where women were not concerned'. As for the gambling, Thomas Hinde puts matters succinctly in a recent book.⁴⁴ Wade 'was a regular gambler even if he "played with the caution which characterized his military tactics"'. The gambling legend owes a good deal, I suspect, to Horace Walpole's hearsay story of how Wade lost a snuffbox whilst at play. Investigations led to the discovery of half a chicken in the pocket of one suspect—a hard-up half-pay officer, to whom the embarrassed and sympathetic Wade presented £100 next morning, after finding the snuffbox in his own pocket.

Wade's jaunt to Brussels in 1723

Commentators on his career invariably take note of Wade as a picture collector, but are inclined to refer vaguely to his picking up items during his campaigns on the

⁴² Bath Council Minutes, Book 5/3.

⁴³ Ellis Waterhouse, *Dictionary of British 18th Century Painters* (Woodbridge, 1981).

⁴⁴ Thomas Hinde, *Tales from the Pump Room* (London, 1987), p. 51, taking his quote from the *Bath and County Graphic* for Mar. 1899.

continent. However, he never was officially on the continent for the forty years between 1704 (following which he was in Spain and Portugal until 1710) and 1744 for the six months of frustration, rotten health and unfruitful coordination with the other allied commanders, who, Wade believed, looked down on him as a commoner. To my thinking, it is improbable that Wade had time or inclination to think of picture-collecting on either occasion. What has been overlooked, of course, is the possibility that he was abroad at other times, unencumbered by duties.

Consider, in the first place, Wade's inscription in the Missal given to Burlington in 1718, and the evident pride shown in the detail of its acquisition and previous ownership. Purchase through an agent seems far less likely than a direct personal transaction. In January 1717, the year of purchase, Wade was famously engaged in the arrest of the Swedish Ambassador in London, Count Gyllenburg, and the seizure of his papers. In the late summer of 1719 he was on the Isle of Wight awaiting embarkation for the raid on Vigo, led that autumn by Lord Cobham, with Wade as second in command. Between the two lie eighteen months in which he might well have been abroad, acquiring the Rubens cartoon, and goodness knows what else, besides the Missal. The Flanders State Papers are thin over this period, and nothing is recorded there or elsewhere.

However, on 4 July 1723 (NS)—with another sizeable gap in Wade's diary either side of that date—Lord Whitworth in Spa informs Lord Polwarth of diplomatic jockeyings to do with the Congress of Cambrai, concluding with day-to-day gossip from this popular resort:

We are hitherto in a dismal way and have no company, except two or three young English Gentlemen, but we expect soon from London, Lord Percival and his Lady, General Whetham and his Lady, Colonel Harrison, etc. General Wade is somewhere in this neighbourhood but I don't know whether he will come hither or take his tour to France by Brussels and Cambray.⁴⁵

At this time, Robert Daniel was reporting regularly from Brussels. On 14 July he informed Delafaye in London:

Major General Wade is here from Aix in his return to England. General Douglas is here also and likewise Lord Southesk who has been waited for these ten days by his Lady, and her brother and Lord Garlies.⁴⁶

Which is to say, Wade was observed amidst a dubious circle. He was still in Brussels on 22 July, by which time Robert Daniel was able to fill a little more detail about at least one of the questionable visitors:

I am not surprised at General Douglas, so called here, now Major General Wade gave me his character. That he is the man, who on Complaints and Actions brought against him, retired to the Mint, and was noted for keeping a coach there. But on the first moving of the Bill to take off the

⁴⁵ HMC, *Polwarth Papers*, iii, 278–9.

⁴⁶ PRO, SP 77/70/288.

pretended Privilege of the Place, came over here to be out of his Suitor's reach.⁴⁷

Was he not also the General Douglas prominent in the Northumberland rising in the Fifteen, who made his escape to France?⁴⁸

Robert Daniel's other reports at this time are taken up with the headline topic of the moment, Bishop Atterbury's arrival in Flanders at the start of his exile. His actual arrival, later than anticipated, was on 7 July at Nieupoort, 8 July at Brussels, though the Bishop was already rumoured to be *en route* to Aix. As has been noted, Daniel had previously observed that Wade had arrived *from* Aix on the 14th. What is one to make of this? And what a failure on Daniel's part to invite posterity to question the whole motive of Wade's visit!

The Black Watch Mutiny of 1743

Wade's connection with this ugly and distressing incident was marginal. The absence of George II in Hanover in May 1743 meant that Wade had to take the King's place and review the recently-founded Regiment on Finchley Common after its march to London by royal command. That substitution was the least of the men's grievances, but added fuel to a growing sense of betrayal. They had been told that the King would review them. They had enlisted in the belief that they would only serve in the Highlands.

In fact the royal warrant for the formation of the new Regiment (November 1739) did not preclude service abroad, and even made possible recruitment in all parts of the United Kingdom. The new Regiment was successor to the six Independent Companies, which had been set up as a direct result of Wade's early recommendations on first appointment to the Highlands in 1724. These two restrictions had specifically and intentionally applied to the Independent Companies, and were just as intentionally dropped on regimentation. It no doubt assisted recruitment not to draw attention to the important change in 'the small print'.

Wade's official duties had recently ceased at the time of the changeover. His views are unfortunately not known. But it is clear that as far back as November 1731 regimentation was already being considered. Major Scipio Duroure had been given special responsibility by Wade for the Highland Companies in December 1726, and was ambitious for them, and for himself. James Grant, their young adjutant, told his kinsman Robert Grant that

Major D'ruer wants to have the Hyland Companys regimented and himself theyr Colonell, or Lieut-Coll; how much he can doe with it I know not, but they [Captains Collinwood and Monroe] both say that the Genll refused this offer before.⁴⁹

Lovat made no secret of his fury on being deprived of his Independent Company, thereby proving his view of the unit as, basically, a private army. His loss of it was

⁴⁷ PRO, SP 77/70/318.

⁴⁸ See Leo Gooch, *The Desperate Faction* (Univ. of Hull, 1995) p. 49 and elsewhere.

⁴⁹ Letter included by H. D. MacWilliam, *A Black Watch episode of the year 1731* (Edinburgh, 1908).

one critical push towards rebellion. Wade, together with his dastardly 'French Secretary' Duroure, fell from Lovat's favour at this catastrophe. General Guest, in Scotland throughout the period and well-known to Lovat, interestingly never did.

Old and Ill in Highgate

Wade was promoted Field Marshal on 14 December 1743, to succeed the Earl of Stair following the latter's resignation as British commander in Flanders. But it was not until early April 1744 that he was fit enough to take up duties on the spot. Ligonier had stood in as his deputy prior to his arrival, and was to do so again just six months later, in mid-October, when Wade was given leave to return home, a victim to his 'astma'.

Whatever the exact nature of his progressive pulmonary troubles, it was now that Wade decided on an escape from the smoke and grime of London to the clean air of Highgate. He purchased Southwood House—the only property he ever actually owned—in 1745. Wade is thought to have adapted an existing building. He died at Southwood House in March 1748, which was then sold by his two sons. It changed hands many times subsequently, suffered terminal neglect in the Second World War, and was finally despatched by an arsonist in 1953 to be replaced by a housing estate.

It is known that Wade was in Bath, at least for a time, in the summer of 1745, and that he set out to quell the Jacobite rising in October from Old Burlington Street. It was only on his return from the north in January that he ever actually inhabited his new home at all continuously; at best as a semi-invalid for a little over two years. Two things are clear: despite everything he needed the proximity of London, and Southwood House was never a family home. That, if anywhere, lay in Bath.

There had been no lack of adverse comment on Wade's ineffective six-months command in Flanders. But there had also been widespread understanding of his very genuine difficulties. There is a very similar balance to Wade's still more uncomfortable experience in the North. Even the Duke of Cumberland sympathized with him on account of the Dutch auxiliaries, who proved more hindrance than help. The chorus of complaint against the ageing Field Marshal came to a head in the last two weeks of November and the first week of December 1745, and is probably best summarised in the thoughts of Joseph Yorke, now a Colonel with Cumberland's army in the West Midlands, but who, not so many months before, had been adjutant to Wade in Flanders, and his trusted scribe. Writing to his brother Philip from Lichfield, on 1 December, Joseph says:

Three accounts come in tonight make Marshall Wade at Halifax the 29th, that was Friday, but we have not yet had any accounts directly from him which makes me a little angry with my old master, considering how much depends on it.

Three days later, from Stafford, writing now to his father, the Lord Chancellor, he had become still more irritated with his 'old master':

I am sorry Marshall Wade has been so dilatory in his march westward; for had he not made 4 days halt at Richmond, he would have prevented all this by coming behind 'em some time ago.⁵⁰

Excessive caution and hesitation at moments of crisis, these were the familiar accusations of Wade's later career, but notice how kindly Joseph Yorke voices his irritation.

By 9 December the rebel army was racing northward for the Scottish border. Across the Pennines, Wade was near the end of his endurance. He warned Lord Milton in Edinburgh from Pomfret:

I fear the succours proposed to be sent from the Duke of Cumberland's army and that under my command, will be a long time before they can reach you, being already harassed by marches and counter marches, at this rigorous season. I am informed by the Duke of Newcastle that Lt Gen Handasyd is ordered back to Berwick, and a poor invalid Brigadier Fleming sent to assist my good friend Guest, who is still greater by his age and infirmities whereas, I think, they ought to have sent much younger, more active Generals, than either Guest, or Fleming, who like myself are fitter for an hospital than an active Campaign.⁵¹

During these stressful days, with plans constantly changing, Wade's mainly tactical letters to Lord Milton always find room for messages to his 'good friend Guest'. Just two weeks earlier, in Durham on 26 November, immediately after the ordeal of the abortive march to Hexham and back and the fall of Carlisle to the rebels, Wade, writing in his own hand, says:

I am sorry to hear General Guest is out of order. I hope he will live to receive the reward of his good services. I am sure I will do everything in my power to set them in the truest light.⁵²

Is this an oblique reference to the rumours of Guest's alleged Jacobite sympathies? These were retold by Robert Chambers in his *Memorials of Edinburgh*: that Guest considered surrendering Edinburgh Castle to the rebels for £200,000, necessitating an immediate return to active governorship by the implacable and still more veteran General Preston. George Lockhart had heard tell of behaviour which had suggested such sympathies in Guest years earlier.⁵³

Finally, on 3 January,⁵⁴ Wade wrote to Guest himself, telling him that Lieutenant-General Hawley knew of the approval given for Guest's retreat,

and he has promised me, that as soon as he has a little conversation with you concerning the affairs of Scotland, he will permitt you to return to England. I have likewise got my liberty to return to London, and shall call

⁵⁰ P. C. Yorke, *Life and Correspondence of the Earl of Hardwicke* (3 vols, Cambridge, 1913), i, 473–4.

⁵¹ NLS, MS 16612, fol. 83.

⁵² NLS, MS 16612, fols 80–1.

⁵³ Anthony Aufrere (ed.), *The Lockhart Papers* (2 vols, 1817), ii, 24.

⁵⁴ NLS, MS 16638, fol. 84.

on the Dean of Rippon⁵⁵ on my way thither, to thank him for his civility in entertaining me three different times in a very handsome manner & here we never failed to Drink your and Mrs Guest's healths, to whom I desire my compliments.

Wade's Will and a few more puzzles

George Wade signed his will on 1 June 1747.⁵⁶ By its terms his two natural sons, Captains George and John, were named joint executors, with an equal share in the whole estate. They were responsible for payment of bequests to both his natural daughters: Jane Erle, and Emilia Mason with her husband John; and to his great-nephew William Wade. Four of his servants are named, others collectively, and bequests go to several of his friends, all of them famous: Paul Methuen, Ralph Allen, John James Heidegger and Jerome van Diest.

These single bequests are preceded by several lifetime annuities which George and John were to provide for:

his brother William's widow
his niece, Mrs Elizabeth Jeffries.⁵⁷

But conspicuous by its prominence at the very top of this list, comes a surprise: 'One Hundred Pound a year to Mrs Sarah Guest during her natural life for the performance of which Bond . . .', at which point a heavy erasure of perhaps a dozen words intervenes to hide a revelation George Wade decided should not after all be made. This is of course conjectural, as—to some extent—is the identification of this Sarah Guest as Joshua's wife. Joshua himself is nowhere mentioned in the will.

A Memorandum was added recording a 'Deed of Disposition and Assignation of the £12,000 due to me from his Grace the Duke of Atholl [to Captains George and John]'. The *Chronicles of the Atholl & Tullibardine Families* note that 'at this time (1743) the Duke was much troubled with demands for payment of £12,000 he had borrowed from Marshall Wade',⁵⁸ but otherwise throw no light on this enormous debt. If it had been for road and bridge-building across the Blair Atholl estate, privately provided by Wade while constructing the great highway close by, this would have been in 1729, making it a long-standing debt of eighteen years by the date of Wade's Memorandum. I am at a loss to suggest how else it could have been incurred. And there is the small difficulty of the word 'borrowed'.

Joshua and Sarah Guest

Joshua bore his mother's surname. She was born in 1640, so was a maximum twenty years of age when Joshua was born. She subsequently married Mr Smith and had another son she christened Joshua, this time legitimate.

⁵⁵ Heneage Dering was Dean of Ripon for 40 years, 1710–50.

⁵⁶ PRO, Microfilm reel 761, quire 104.

⁵⁷ Elizabeth Jeffries was presumably Major Wade's sister.

⁵⁸ (5 vols, Edinburgh, 1908), ii, 467.

Our Joshua predeceased Wade by six months. He was eighty-five when he died on 14 October 1747. His wife Sarah (b. 1687) was the only person named in his will. She was twenty-five years younger than her husband, whom she survived by four years. In her own will, she left many and substantial bequests to members of her own family in Lancashire, and to the Smith family in addition, including in particular 'half-brother Joshua'.

Taken together, their two wills effectively prove that Joshua and Sarah had no children of their own, either together or separately. That is, unless Sarah already had a living family whose father was George Wade, and that she knew he fully acknowledged (except publicly) his extra-marital parenthood and had cared for their offspring handsomely all along; and indeed, posthumously, for their mother. On the other hand, those dozen heavily-expunged words may hide some still more unlikely story.⁵⁹

It is perhaps fitting that this enquiry should end with the Guests and with a question-mark. As these pages show, quite a few of Wade's closer associates unavoidably cast a dubious shadow. This makes it awkward to regard him as a soldier of simple and unspotted loyalty compared, say, to Ligonier, whose career ran parallel. I share George Lockhart's puzzlement. If Ligonier had stood in Wade's shoes in 1725, it would hardly have been roused. If anything, Lockhart's puzzlement looms still larger for the present-day enquirer, easily alerted to Wade's paramount concern to maintain a favourable position with his political masters, for which he clearly possessed a great talent.

⁵⁹ Facts in this section are gleaned mainly from J. L. Chester (ed.), *Westminster Parish Register* (Harleian Society, vol. 10).