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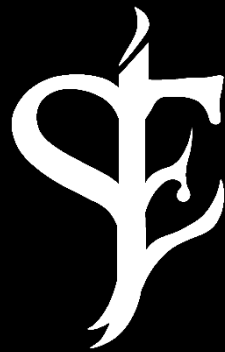
Playing the Rise and Fall of the Anglo-Scottish Border Reivers



by

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Independent Project submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree BA History, in the Department of History, Politics and Philosophy, at Manchester Metropolitan University – 19th May 2024

I certify that, apart from the guidance provided by my supervisor and the references cited in the text and bibliography, this dissertation is the sole work of Samuel Ethan Jolly and has not been previously submitted as part of the assessment requirements for any academic award.

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Abstract

This dissertation aims to create a model for simulation of the socio-economic dynamics of the Anglo-Scottish Border Reivers from the 14th-17th centuries using the medium of game. It also seeks to create this model based on solid historical research and examine the utility of game and reenactment as a heritage tool. It aims to highlight how games provide a unique angle to public history which does not participate in the top-down model of historical education suggested by Raphael Samuel. After analysing the historical research behind the period, a prototype was created and used to explore the creation of a game with history in mind. The prototype was created with Multi-Agent Systems as a particular rubric for creating the game systems.

Assessment coversheet

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Figure 1 'Loch Duich' by Ian Cheyne (1934).

Premise

This alternative project is made of several parts. First is the historical research, which explores the evidence for the socio-economic factors of the existence and persistence of the Border Reivers along the Anglo-Scottish frontier until their decline with the unification of the kingdoms of Scotland and England in 1603.¹ Second is a board game prototype to demonstrate how games can function as a teaching tool and piece of public history engagement with Reiving as the historical topic. The game material comprises a

¹ G. M. Fraser, *The Steel Bonnets: The Story of the Anglo-Scottish Border Reivers*, (London: Harvill, 1971), pp. 3-9.

rulebook, game pieces and a video demonstrating play. Third, a reflection discusses the successes and challenges of creating the board game, as well as its historical utility.²

The topics covered in the historical research are the economic interplay between the Reiving surnames, the socio-economic trends within the borders and the significant resources that drove regional friction. These topics particularly lend themselves to ludographical analogies, as exemplified by Leeson's article on 'The Laws of Lawlessness'³, and Stenros & Montola's *The Rulebook*.⁴

This project aims to create a board game that reflects the border-reiving period's socioeconomic trends whilst imparting an understanding of this border-reiving world to players. In *The Use and Abuse of Historical Reenactment*, Cook states that the reenactment of history for the public is most useful when approached as 'investigative re-enactment'.⁵ Thus, this game will re-enact history to help us understand it further. Whilst academics generally have their 'suspicions' around many forms of historical reenactment, Cook typically considers it to facilitate 'fruitful reflections', and academia is even served by reenactment.⁶ He provides principal ways in which reenacting the past can fall short of providing a meaningful educational tool. The psychological differences between the modern audience and the historical population act as a barrier that makes true parity impossible, even in analogous situations.⁷ He also suggests that typically, emotionally visceral qualities in games are preferred over analytical ones.⁸

² S. Deterding, 'The Ambiguity of Games: Histories and Discourses of a Gameful World', in *The Gameful World: Approaches, Issues, and Applications*, eds. by S. Deterding and S. P. Walz, (London: MIT Press, 2014), p. 27.

³ P. T. Leeson, 'The Laws of Lawlessness', *The Journal of Legal Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 2, pp. 471-503.

⁴ M. Montola & J. Stenros, *The Rule Book: The Building Blocks of Games*, (London: MIT Press, 2024).

⁵ A. Cook, 'The Use and Abuse of Historical Reenactment: Thoughts on Recent Trends in Public History', *Criticism*, Vol. 46, No. 3, (2004), p. 488.

⁶ Cook, 'Historical Reenactment', pp. 488-489.

⁷ Cook, 'Historical Reenactment', p. 489.

⁸ Cook, 'Historical Reenactment', p. 490.

Reconstruction and re-enactment of a historical past are ‘techniques frequently used in heritage centres... to support the public in visualising and experiencing a version of the past.’⁹ As Raphael Samuel said, ‘History, in the hands of the professional historian, is apt to present itself as an esoteric form of knowledge.’¹⁰ This project aims to provide this re-enactment experience on a smaller scale, giving players a more comfortable setting to *discuss* history communally rather than be *taught* directly and to challenge ‘the unspoken assumption that knowledge filters downwards.’¹¹

A reason for adopting the medium of game as a rubric to share history is its accessibility to the ‘social form of knowledge’ that is history.¹² Heritage institutions are rarely accessible to everyone, whether through financial, physical or social barriers.¹³ Providing a way for individuals to participate in historical conversations around a fixture that offers genuine historical research in a digestible fashion circumvents many of the problems heritage institutions face.

With board games, the financial and logistical barriers to entry are lower than in other mediums of game. Board game cafés allow players to play cheaply while providing personalised assistance. Without the need for a device (personal computer or console), the financial investment that video games require is not present here for smaller-scale games. These make board games an accessible format for providing public history, especially with printable and digital versions of the games.

⁹ F. Sayer, *Public History: A Practical Guide*, (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), p. 58.

¹⁰ R. Samuel, *Theatres of Memory: Past and Present in Contemporary Culture*, (London: Verso, 1994), p. 3.

¹¹ Samuel, *Theatres of Memory*, p. 4.

¹² Samuel, *Theatres of Memory*, p. 8.

¹³ N. Sacco, ‘Making Public History More Accessible During Times of Uncertainty’, *National Council of Public History*, 15 December 2020, <<https://ncph.org/history-at-work/making-public-history-more-accessible-during-times-of-uncertainty/>> [accessed 15 January 2024].



Figure 2 'Glen Cluanie' by Ian Cheyne (1928)

Part 1: Research

1: The Major Socio-Economic

The Anglo-Scottish Border Reivers are difficult to define. Despite being nationally claimed by writers like Walter Scott as Scottish, they escape clear national categories.¹⁴

The geographic location of the Reivers in the Anglo-Scottish hinterland relegates them to the footnotes of most research that focuses on Anglo-Scottish relations. In discussions of Anglo-Scottish relationships, discussions of parliaments, crowns, and religions are favoured over the borders. This project places the Reivers at its core, synthesising the socio-economic factors that influenced them into a public history tool, i.e., a game. A

¹⁴ J. Gray, 'Lawlessness on the Frontier: The Anglo-Scottish Borderlands in the Fourteenth to Sixteenth Century', *History and Anthropology*, Vol. 12, No. 4, (2001), p. 398.

precise figure of the 'Reiver' becomes definable in the early modern period, despite its 13th-century origins working as the basis for the project's historical period.¹⁵ Their end is triggered by James VI's English inheritance from Elizabeth I in 1603, which made a hinterland frontier into 'middle shires' of one monarch's united realm.¹⁶

Academic interest in the Reivers is limited. Due to its locality and absence from national memory, most research is from those with personal experience of the borders.¹⁷ One of the most popular books on the Reivers is *The Steel Bonnets* by George Fraser, though academically dubious. Modern academics, notably J. W. Armstrong, have written several valuable texts on the concept of 'frontiers' and, more particularly, the Anglo-Scottish frontier during this period. Anna Groundwater has also published helpful research on kinship and obligations within the borders. Their work is beneficial for painting an image of the social aspect of the world of the Reivers. Cynthia Neville's work focuses mainly on contemporary enforcement and perceptions of law in the borders from more local perspectives. The following study of the Reivers draws on the works previously mentioned and those from other historians discussing relevant topics: agriculture, economics, social factors, and archaeological or legal doctrine.

Causes for the Reivers

The range of causes for the Reiving practice in the borders is broad. The frequent Anglo-Scottish conflicts of the Wars of Independence, 1296-1357, raiding campaigns and land disputes are argued to have 'turned the region into a lawless international frontier.'¹⁸ The

¹⁵ Fraser, *Steel Bonnets*, pp. 21-24.

¹⁶ A. Groundwater, 'The Chasm Between James VI and I's Vision of the Orderly "Middle Shires" and the "Wicket" Scottish Borderers between 1587 and 1625', *Renaissance and Reformation*, Vol. 30, No. 4, (2007), pp. 105-107.

¹⁷ C. Etty, 'A Tudor Solution to the 'Problem of the North'? Government and the Marches Towards Scotland, 1509-1529', *Northern History*, Vol. 39, No. 2, (2002), p. 209.

¹⁸ Gray, 'Lawlessness on the Frontier', p. 386.

area's geography permitted mainly pastoralism, which 'afforded one other economic activity: ... Reiving'.¹⁹ Although there were areas where sedentary economic activity survived, these were only prevalent in the lower valleys or 'Merse.'²⁰ Considering the frontier's unique geography and prevalent lawlessness, the attempts to codify border laws have had varying success since 1249. Still, due to 'open war... [it was] brought to an abrupt end' as during conflict, 'felonies done against the king's enemies were widely pardoned, if not encouraged.'²¹

Social units in the borders could be seen to have caused and compacted Reiving. Firstly, the 'units of lordship' provided a strong sense of local authority.'²² Second, Wardens cast social shadows when prominent national place figures like John of Gaunt or local individuals such as members of the powerful kin groups of Maxwell, Hume, or Kerr surnames occupied the offices.²³ Bishops of the borders were often neglectful of their religious and social units (dioceses), looking towards the national governments over local parishes or being engaged in raiding and policing themselves.²⁴

Economic Factors

Food is an essential economic factor.²⁵ The manoeuvrability of livestock led to a society that was not solely bound to defend localities but instead comfortable with movement.²⁶

¹⁹ D. Hay, 'England, Scotland and Europe: The Problem of the Frontier', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Vol. 25 (1975), p. 81.

²⁰ Hay, 'The Problem of the Frontier', p. 80.

²¹ C. J. Neville, 'Keeping the Peace on the Northern Marches in the Later Middle Ages', *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 109, No. 430, (1994), p. 4.

²² R. Britnell, 'Lords and Tenants', in *Northern England and Southern Scotland in the Central Middle Ages*, eds. By K. J. Stringer & A. L. Winchester, (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2017), pp. 219-236, p. 218.

²³ Fraser, *Steel Bonnets*, pp. 128-131; J. Wormald, 'Bloodfeud, Kindred and Government in Early Modern Scotland', *Past and Present* 87 (1980), p. 67.

²⁴ S. M. Keeling, 'The Reformation in the Anglo-Scottish Border Counties', *Northern History* 51/1 (1979), pp. 32-34.

²⁵ R. C. Allen, 'Economic Structure and Agricultural Productivity in Europe, 1300-1800', *European Review of Economic History* 4/1 (2000), p. 1.

²⁶ Fraser, *Steel Bonnets*, p. 50.

This transient quality encouraged the crime of Reiving due to the unique pastoral character of the borders. Combined with the destruction of much of the sedentary infrastructure in the Anglo-Scottish war, desperation forced the population into Reiving as a means of survival.²⁷

The transhumance quality of the border regions was found in a yearly cycle wherein agricultural activity followed livestock movement.²⁸ The border wastes were the location for summer shielings, where livestock was grazed on the commons.²⁹ The borders were geographically characterised by large expanses of unenclosed wasters on both the muirs and merse; this destined a transhumance economy.³⁰ These 'incapable of reclamation' uplands and their cycles were embedded by the incentive of rising wool prices by almost 40% in the 15th and 16th centuries.³¹

This cycle was also encouraged by the destruction of sedentary infrastructure through warfare and mandated raiding like Teviotdale.³² During the Anglo-Scottish conflicts, a move to retreat was often followed by a 'scorched earth' strategy favouring destruction over fortification.³³ The Anglo-Scottish conflicts in the early 16th century favoured *chevauchee*-style tactics, replenished dwindling resources from local land, and boosted 'common soldier' morale via plunder.³⁴ In 1513-1514, there were clear examples of raids financed by the Crown of England.³⁵ Small raids containing the 'burning crops,

²⁷ G. T., Lapsley, 'A Study in English Border History', *The American Historical Review* 5/3 (1900), p. 441.

²⁸ A. L. Winchester, 'Shielings and Common Pastures' in *Northern England and Southern Scotland in the Central Middle Ages*, ed. K. J. Stringer & A. L. Winchester, (Woodbridge: The Boydell Press, 2017), p. 273.

²⁹ Winchester, 'Shielings and Common Pastures', p. 273.

³⁰ Winchester, 'Shielings and Common Pastures', pp. 273-276.

³¹ Winchester, 'Shielings and Common Pastures', pp. 273-276; I. Blanchard, 'Population Change, Enclosure, and the Early Tudor Economy', *The Economic Historical Review*, Vol. 23, No. 3, (1970), pp. 437-438.

³² For more detail, see M. Brown, 'War, Allegiance, and Community in the Anglo-Scottish Marches: Teviotdale in the Fourteenth Century', *Northern History*, Vol. 41, No. 1, (2004), p. 219.

³³ G. Philips, *The Anglo-Scots War 1515-1550: A Military History*, (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 1999), p. 97.

³⁴ Philips, *Anglo-Scots War*, p. 97.

³⁵ Philips, *Anglo-Scots War*, p. 133.

driving off livestock, seizing hostages...' were also joined with plans for 'the execution of large-scale raids'.³⁶ *Chevauchee* was present even in Edward III's Scottish forays, in 1332-1357, resulting in the 'destruction of enemy land which could not be held.'³⁷ This vast destruction and 'brutal use' of the borders by both forces meant that the borderers themselves hardened to not only 'guerrilla warfare but guerrilla living.'³⁸ These factors starkly affected the region's economic future due to the regular destruction of property. This left the borders to a future of lawlessness and transhumance living.

Social Factors

The wending of social factors is an influential and unique aspect of the Anglo-Scottish borders. In lieu of stable settlements and an atmosphere of constant warfare, little reliance was placed on centralised authorities hundreds of miles away. Instead of top-down security and order, local communities filled the vacuum, opting for a more horizontal structure.

Kin groups, lordships, and officials all meshed into the social fabric of the borders. This was woven by kinship-patronage, rarely grassroots fealty to a nationality.³⁹ Communities played a more significant part in border society than the whims of distant monarchs. Surnames were so crucial to local societies that they overcame feudal and legal obligations, spurring feuds along kin-group lines.⁴⁰ This culture was challenging to supplant; the less need communities had for 'supranational' organisation, the more resistant they were to it.⁴¹ The more habitual their ways of life became, the more they

³⁶ Philips, *Anglo-Scots War*, pp. 133-134.

³⁷ M. Brown, *The Wars of Scotland: 1214-1371*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2004), p. 240.

³⁸ Fraser, *Steel Bonnets*: p. 29; A. R. Bell, A. Curry, A. King & D. Simpkin, 'New Regime, New Army? Henry IV's Scottish Expedition of 1400', *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 125, No. 517, (2010), p. 1382.

³⁹ Fraser, *Steel Bonnets*, pp. 48-49.

⁴⁰ T. M. Devine, *The Scottish Clearance: A History of the Dispossessed*, (London: Allen Lane, 2018), p. 84.

⁴¹ Leeson, 'Laws of Lawlessness', p. 476.

abandoned external considerations. They saw themselves as neither Anglo nor Scot, but Borderer, and even more critical to their identity, was their surnames over being a borderer.⁴² This communal organisation was the central social factor that led to the prevalence of the border Reivers.⁴³

A challenge that faced the Anglo-Scottish crowns in the borders was jurisdiction. When a criminal crossed the border, how did the judiciary hold that criminal to account? Experiments with border laws lasted from the 13th–16th century.⁴⁴ 'A patchwork of local jurisdictions overlaid the entire Border region', be that common law, local custom or *Leges Marchiarum*, with the *Leges Marchiarum* or Border Laws attempting to regulate cross-border crime.⁴⁵ Much of the borders were 'associated with 'genuine' liberties', meaning that either crown struggled to supplant the implementation of customs from local surnames.⁴⁶ Surnames and their feuds directed the social dynamics of the borders. Often, 'local or regional legal traditions were scarcely superseded; nor... challenged' as 'kinship justice co-existed with and supplemented royal justice'.⁴⁷ Blood feuds are explicitly treated in contemporary laws, with the terms 'Kinbut'/'Manebote' used throughout the period to describe 'compensation to the kin [of a murdered kinsman]'.⁴⁸

These social factors led to a prevalent culture of raiding and feuding, where surnames would fight over jurisdictions and uphold customs, with little fealty to the

⁴² C. J. Neville, 'Remembering the Legal Past: Anglo-Scottish Border Law and Practice in the Later Middle Ages', in *North-East England in the Later Middle Ages*, ed. Christian D. Liddy and Richard Britnell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023), p. 37.

⁴³ A. J. L. Winchester, *The Harvest of the Hills: Rural Life in Northern England and the Scottish Borders, 1400-1700*, (Keele: Keele University Press, 2000), pp. 147-151.

⁴⁴ Neville, 'Keeping the Peace', p. 2.

⁴⁵ K. Stringer, 'Law, Governance and Jurisdiction', *Northern England and Southern Scotland in the Central Middle Ages*, (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2017), p.131.

⁴⁶ Neville, 'Remembering the Legal Past', p. 37.

⁴⁷ Stringer, 'Law, Governance and Jurisdiction', p. 92.

⁴⁸ Wormald, 'Bloodfeud', p. 62.

distant royalty. With primary obligations focused inwards, the borderers' main priority lay in their immediate land and kin.

Conclusion

Socio-economic factors positioned the borderers uniquely to engage in Reiving and transhumance living. These factors are generally consistent throughout the 13th to 16th centuries with some fluctuations. Their climax and disappearance occurred at the inheritance of the English crown by James VI in 1603, ending persistent Anglo-Scottish conflict and turning the borders from a peripheral buffer into a middle shire thorn.

2: Geographic Factors and Seasonal Effects.

Land was the most crucial factor that influenced the lives of borderers, particularly the Reivers. The weather changed land from useful and fertile to a flooded and sodden landscape that would drown the crops growing.⁴⁹ Crops were wiped out by harsh winters, and the scarcity of arable land made the borderers' relationship with it poignant.⁵⁰ Particular pastoral practices were defined by the land's soils and rocks or by the animals that particularly populated the landscape, creating the 'head-dyke' and 'Infield-Outfield' systems.⁵¹ Due to the variety of factors such as land use, culture and geography, it is useful when designing a game model of the socio-economic factors to use 'multi-agent systems.'⁵² Due to the nature of multi-agent systems used in the 'modelling [of] a

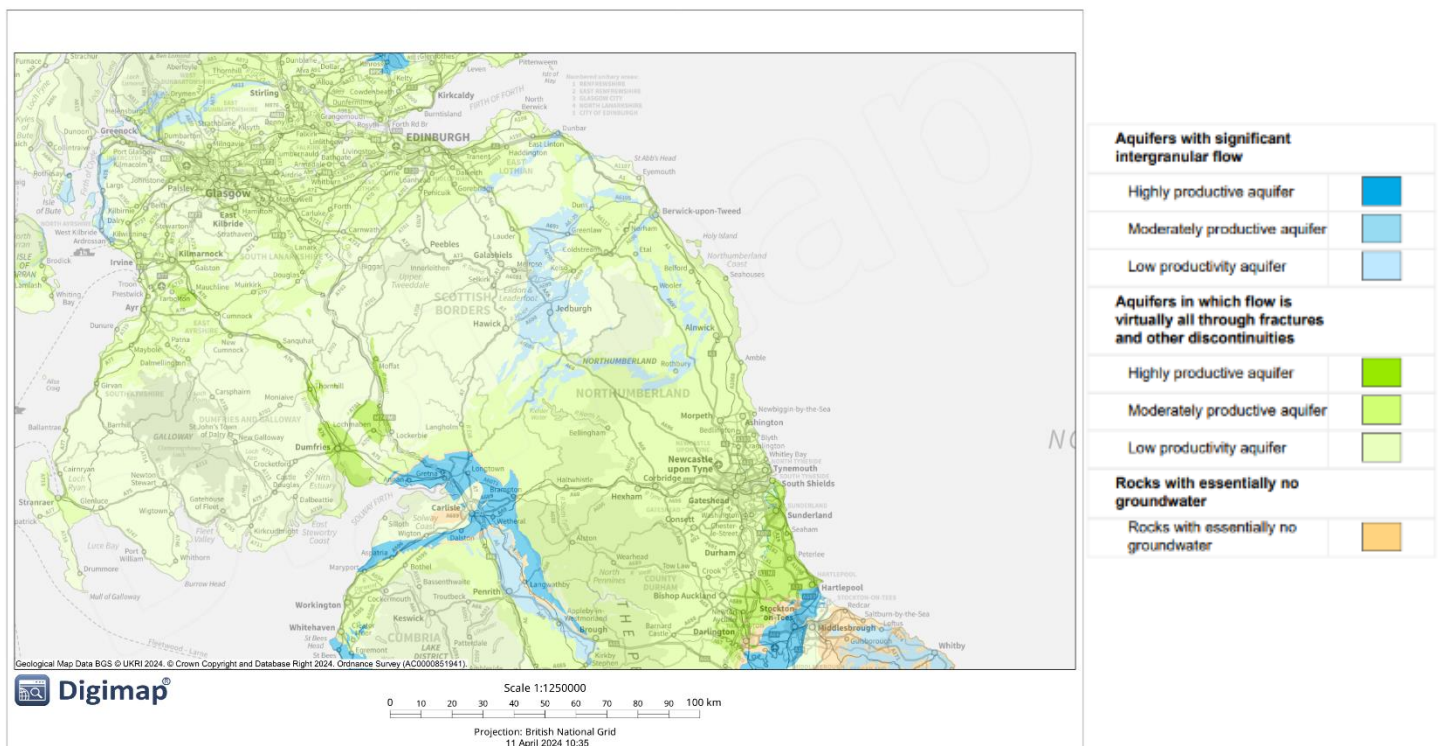


Figure 3 Hydrogeology of the Borders, "Hydrogeology in the Borders" [PNG map], Scale 1:1250000, Hydrogeology, [geospatial data], Updated: August 2014, British Geological Survey (BGS), UK, Using: EDINA Geology Digimap Service, <<http://digimap.edina.ac.uk/>>

⁴⁹ Winchester, *Harvest of the Hills*, pp. 8-9.

⁵⁰ Winchester, *Harvest of the Hills*, p. 7.

⁵¹ R. A. Gailey, 'Agrarian Improvement and the Development of Enclosure in the South-West Highlands of Scotland', *The Scottish Historical Review* 42/134, (1963), pp. 106-107.

⁵² F. Bousquet & G. Trébuil, 'Introduction', in *Companion Modelling and Multi-Agent Systems for Integrated Natural Resource Management in Asia*, ed. F. Bousquet et al. (Los Baños: International Rice Research Institute, 2005), p. 2.

biophysical environment', consideration is given to 'time steps and spatial units' to give a better understanding of the 'simulated period'.⁵³

Seasons

The livestock management in the borders followed a pattern linked to the seasons where livestock was moved, depending on a community's access, around particular commons.⁵⁴ This pattern acts as a practical 'time step' in modelling.⁵⁵ Livestock management produced transhumance living and affected much of the seasonal lives of those living within the borders. The year was divided by the position of livestock: 'closed seasons' had livestock closed out of crop-growing arable fields to 'fell grazing' commons in warm months, whilst 'open seasons' allowed livestock into arable fields so manure could replenish the nutrients of the soil in colder months.⁵⁶ This division of the two types of land is referred to as 'Infield-Outfield' and was facilitated by the 'head-dyke model' to control livestock's movement between open fell or farmland with a physical boundary.⁵⁷

In the cold open seasons, the shorter days and allowance of livestock into fallow fields was when Reiving was expected due to the long nights and collection of animals in one area.⁵⁸

⁵³ G. Lacombe & W. Naivinit, 'Modelling a Biophysical Environment to Better Understand the Decision-Making Rules for Water Use in the Rainfed Lowland Rice Ecosystem', in *Companion Modelling and Multi-Agent Systems for Integrated Natural Resource Management in Asia*, ed. F. Bousquet et al. (Los Baños: International Rice Research Institute, 2005), p. 197.

⁵⁴ W. O. Ault, 'Open-Field Husbandry and the Village Community: A Study of Agrarian By-Laws in Medieval England', *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society* 55/7 (1965), p. 8.

⁵⁵ Lacombe & Naivinit, 'Modelling a Biophysical Environment', p. 197.

⁵⁶ Winchester, *Harvest of the Hills*, p. 54.; W. O. Ault, 'Open-Field Husbandry', p. 8.

⁵⁷ J. Gray, *At Home in the Hills: Sense of Place in the Scottish Borders*, (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2000) p. 105; Ault, 'Open-Field Husbandry', p. 8; Winchester, *Harvest of the Hills*, p. 52.

⁵⁸ Fraser, *Steel Bonnets*, pp. 92-93.

Geography

The geography of the borders is also a strong reason for the unique social and economic factors that led towards Reiving as a practice and makes modelling the ‘spatial units’ in a game environment, as described by Lacombe and Naivinit, important.⁵⁹ The late medieval/early modern borders were bare of woodland. Peat was a main fire fuel source, and building resources were scarce except stone and turf.⁶⁰ The obstructive terrain of the dales made travel long and arduous and physically separated one community from another. John Leland noted the lack of woodland in his 16th-century *Itineraries*: ‘the great wood of Chiveot is spoyld now, and crokyd old trees and schrubs remayne.’⁶¹ This meant that the inhabitants of the Cheviots and other muirs and merse had to rely on their rights held in common to collect peat, soil, turf, and stone from the wastes.⁶² Woodland coverage in the early medieval period, as evidenced by archaeological evidence of primarily wooden settlements, increased population, destructive ‘slash and burn’ practices, pastoral grazing habits, and irrevocable deforestation.⁶³

⁵⁹ Lacombe & Naivinit, ‘Modelling a Biophysical Environment’, p. 197.

⁶⁰ Winchester, *Harvest of the Hills*, pp. 123-124; This can be seen in the modern superficial soil in Figure 4.

⁶¹ J. Leland, *The Itinerary of John Leland*, ed. by L. T. Smith, (London: G. Bell and Sons, 1910), pp. 66-69.

⁶² Winchester, *Harvest of the Hills*, p. 126; ‘Landscape Character Assessment: Borders – Landscape Evolution and Influences’, *NatureScot*, 2019, p. 15. <<https://www.nature.scot/sites/default/files/2021-08/NatureScot%20LCA%20Review%20-%20BORDERS%20-%20LANDSCAPE%20EVOLUTION%20AND%20INFLUENCES%20-%20pdf%20-%20July%202021%20%28A3509487%29.pdf>> [accessed 11 April 2024]

⁶³ A. Crone & F. Watson, ‘Sufficiency to Scarcity: Medieval Scotland, 500-1600’, *People and Woods in Scotland: A History*, ed. by T. C. Smout, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2003), pp. 63-64; Winchester, *Harvest of the Hills*, p. 124.

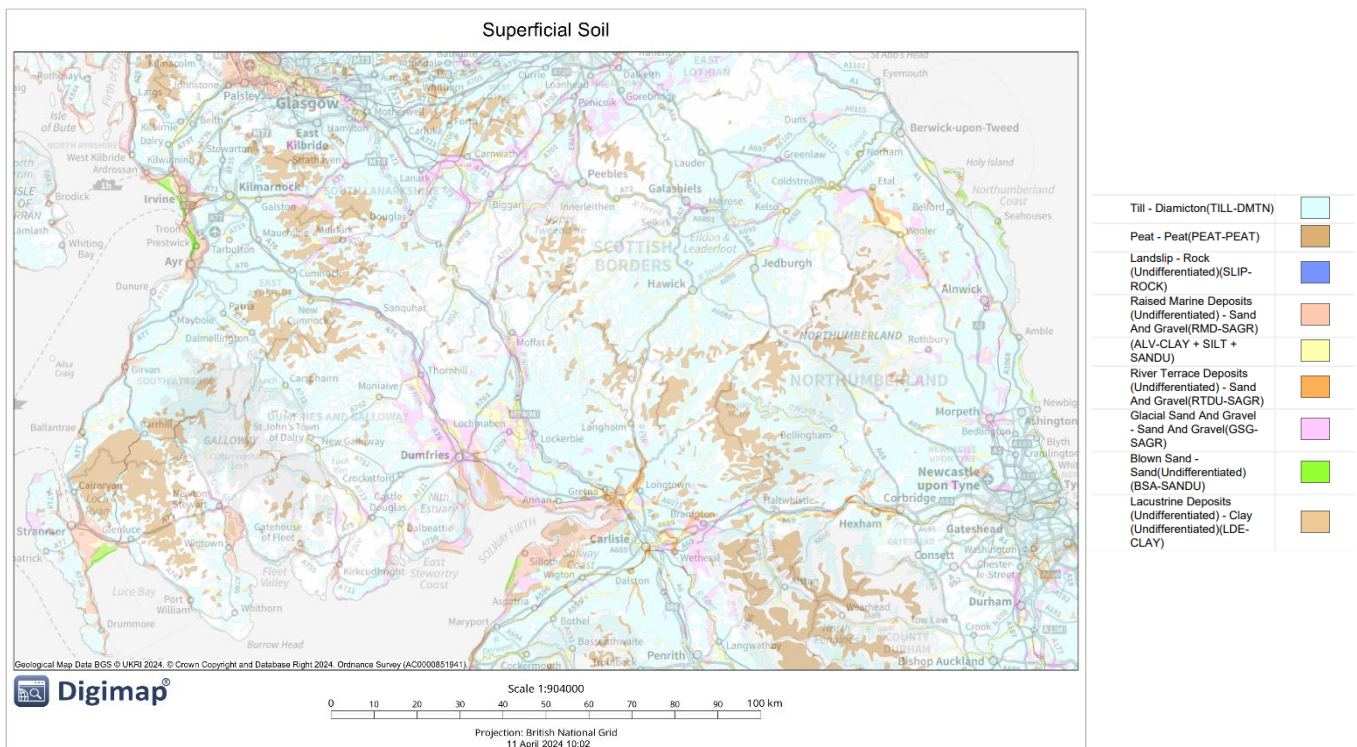


Figure 4 Superficial Soil in the Borders.

Life

The flow of livestock in the borders dictated the flow of life. Losing a person's livestock usually meant damage to the laird or hedgesman who lent their livestock to kinsmen.⁶⁴

Their livestock was at the centre of the borderers' lives: sheep, cattle and horses. Of these three, cattle populated the borders the most.⁶⁵ Typically, the herds of cattle were the core of the 'Infield-Outfield' cycle. Though there were no particularly distinct breeds, they likely were similar to the Galloway breed (mixed with others like Frisian cattle).⁶⁶ They

⁶⁴ Winchester, *Harvest of the Hills*, p. 18.

⁶⁵ Winchester, *Harvest of the Hills*, p. 18.

⁶⁶ R. Trow-Smith, *A History of British Livestock Husbandry*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1959), p. 114; J. Thirsk, *The Agrarian History of England and Wales, Vol. 4, 1500-1640*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), pp. 186-187.

were common prey for Reivers, and whether sold legitimately or fenced as stolen goods, livestock was often exported to lowland areas.⁶⁷

Sheep also populated the open wastes during the summer months. The White-faced, horned hill-sheep breeds were often used primarily for their dairy, wool, manure and meat in descending order of importance.⁶⁸ They were driven like cattle by both Reivers and herdsmen.⁶⁹ As important private property often mixed with other herds on open commons, they were marked with unique earmarks and brandings.⁷⁰ These marks created physical ties to the livestock. The markings were developed into intricate systems of symbols that linked land, people and animals.

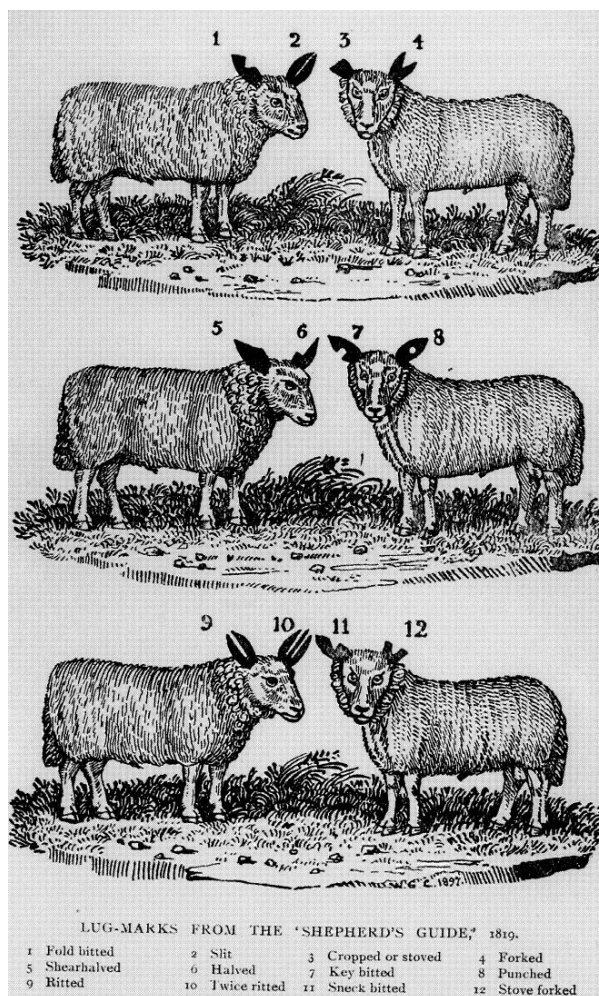


Figure 5 A diagram of different types of ear-markings made on sheep, taken from Winchester, *Harvest of the Hills*, p. 106.

Separate from livestock, horses provided a means of travel, the means to plough the land⁷¹ and ease in driving livestock.⁷² Notably, the extinct Galloway Nag was renowned

⁶⁷ Thirsk, *The Agrarian History*, pp. 186-187.

⁶⁸ M. L. Ryder, 'Medieval Sheep and Wool Types', *The Agricultural History Review*, Vol. 32, No. 1 (1984), pp. 15-23.

⁶⁹ J. W. Armstrong, *England's Northern Frontier: Conflict and Local Society in the Fifteenth-Century Scottish Marches*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2020), p. 231.

⁷⁰ Winchester, *Harvest of the Hills*, pp. 105-109.

⁷¹ J. Langdon, 'The Economics of Horses and Oxen in Medieval England,' *The Agricultural History Review*, Vol. 30, No. 1, (1982), p. 31.

⁷² A. Moffat, *The Reivers: The Story of the Reivers*, (Edinburgh: Birlinn, 2017), p. 9.

for its small stature and utility.⁷³ It is often the focus of Scott's ballads; in the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*, a nag is described as 'small and shaggy... that through a bog, from hag to hag, could bound like a Bilhope stag.'⁷⁴ The Galloway Nag was offered as a gift from the Archbishop of St. Andrews to Francis Walsingham, indicating that Galloway Nags were a desired breed in the 16th century.⁷⁵

The animals on the borders were keenly controlled with bylaws surrounding their keep, maintenance and trade.⁷⁶ Other animals like goats and pigs were kept but less common, tightly controlled, and often relegated to more low-lying areas or large estates.⁷⁷

In Suphanchaimart et al.'s discussion of role-playing games to understand farmers' land use, they note that 'resource management... is constrained by both biophysical and socioeconomic conditions.'⁷⁸ The way around the drawbacks of 'conventional methods of study' like interviews, discussions or 'goal-seeking modelling' is by utilising role-playing with multi-agent systems.⁷⁹ This system supports Samuel's concept of a 'social form of knowledge', where information is brought to the top rather than the 'assumption knowledge filters down'.⁸⁰ 'Within this limited spatiotemporal unit, the player can

⁷³ A. Moffat, *The Reivers*, p. 57; M. Bibby, 'The (Galloway) Horse and His Boy: Le Roman Des Aventures De Fregus and "The Best Breed in the North"?' in *The Horse in Premodern European Culture*, eds. by T. Dawson & A. Ropa, (Boston: Medieval Institute, 2020), p. 236.

⁷⁴ W. Scott, *The Lay of the Last Minstrel: A Poem*, (Edinburgh: James Ballantyne, 1805), p. 96.

⁷⁵ G. Donaldson, 'The Attitude of Whitgift and Bancroft to the Scottish Church', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Vol. 24, (1942), p. 99.

⁷⁶ Winchester, *Harvest of the Hills*, p. 103.

⁷⁷ Winchester, *Harvest of the Hills*, p. 103.

⁷⁸ N. Suphanchaimart, et al., 'Role-Playing Games to Understand Farmers' Land-Use Decisions in the Context of Cash-Crop Price Reduction in Upper Northeast Thailand', in *Companion Modelling and Multi-Agent Systems for Integrated Natural Resource Management in Asia*, ed. F. Bousquet et al. (Los Baños: International Rice Research Institute, 2005), p. 121-123.

⁷⁹ Suphanchaimart, 'Role-Playing Games to Understand Farmer's Land-Use', p. 123.

⁸⁰ Samuel, *Theatres of Memory*, p. 8.

abandon [themselves] to the process,' allowing them to fit within the multi-system model and act within the more emotionally visceral style that Cook suggests.⁸¹

⁸¹ S. Bennet & M. Csikszentmihalyi, 'An Exploratory Model of Play', *American Anthropologist*, Vol. 73, No. 1 (1971), p. 46; Cook, 'Historical Reenactment', p. 490.

3: Material Culture and Daily Living.

Peter Miller mentions in *History and Its Objects* that ‘connecting object[s] with imagination can open as many doors in us as we possess’.⁸² It is the ‘isolated objects, often de-contextualized, which [historians] seek to fit within the broad narratives that preside over history as a subject,’ says Riello in their study on different approaches to material, ‘*History and Things*’ in which a ‘way of considering material artefacts is by positioning them outside history altogether.’⁸³ This ‘qualitative pay-off’ of the objects that filled the daily lives of those who lived on the borders in the period tells a story separate from the bare textual evidence and few oral traditions.⁸⁴

Combined with a historical material approach, there is also a material approach to the game. The rules for Senet's ancient Egyptian board game have no written account, yet ‘conjecture based on what is materially encoded in the discovered artefacts’ forms the current understanding of the game.⁸⁵ Wedding material culture and material play are crucial for constructing a game model of the border world.

Whether it is through the availability of resources like wool, meat, peat, bracken, and turf,⁸⁶ which are often consumed and used up, or whether it is through their currencies and means of exchange like coinage, credit and barter practices⁸⁷ or through more stationary objects from tools, clothes to entire buildings, possessions tell a unique story of the flow of daily life in the border and in turn the peoples who occupied them.

However, in terms of modelling the materials of the world contemporary to the Reivers,

⁸² P. N. Miller, *History and Its Objects: Antiquarianism and Material Culture Since 1500*, (London: Cornell University Press, 2017), p. 8.

⁸³ Riello, ‘Things That Shape History’, pp. 24-26.

⁸⁴ Riello, ‘Things That Shape History’, p. 26; *The Letters of Sir Walter Scott: 1787-1807*, ed. by H. J. C. Grierson, (London: Constable & Co, 1932), p. 120.

⁸⁵ Montola & Stenros, *The Rule Book*, p. 141.

⁸⁶ M. L. Ryder, ‘Medieval Sheep’, pp. 15-23.

⁸⁷ J. R. Wordie, ‘Deflationary Factors in the Tudor Price Rise’, *Past & Present*, No. 154, (1997), p. 67.

‘we cannot capture all possible information in a game.’⁸⁸ This means that in simulation, there will be a need to ‘simplify and abstract... to focus on the important information and round off the inconsequentialities.’⁸⁹

Consumables

Consumable items were part of the everyday flow of material objects in the borders. These objects are expected to be spent, exchanged or destroyed rather than remain in permanent possession. Consumable items like peat, bracken, turf, earth, stone, wealth, animals and timber are expected to have a limited life span.

Peat, bracken and turf are all harvested directly from the land. Their acquisition is tied to daily living. Harvesting from the muirs surrounding a particular settlement was a right reserved for locals by the ‘common right of turbary’.⁹⁰ Earth and stone were under seigniorial control, but some exceptions allowed tenants to dig them.⁹¹

Animals provided meat, wool, skins, milk, manure, etc.⁹² Wealth in the border, especially amongst peasant and tenant communities was varied. Value was found in the typical coinage of the period.⁹³ Particular archaeological evidence is sparse, so ‘all generalisations must be qualified by reference to regional variety in culture and economy.’⁹⁴ Bullion and silver were used as currency alongside minted coins throughout the medieval period.⁹⁵ Goods like border wool were traded overseas to Dublin, Flanders,

⁸⁸ T. Nakamura, ‘The Fundamental Gap Between Tabletop Simulation Games and the “Truth”, in *Zones of Control: Perspectives on Wargaming*, eds. by P. Harrigan & M. G. Kirschenbaum, (London, MIT Press, 2016), p. 43.

⁸⁹ Nakamura, ‘The Fundamental Gap’, p. 43.

⁹⁰ Winchester, *Harvest of the Hills*, p. 126.

⁹¹ Winchester, *Harvest of the Hills*, p. 138.

⁹² Ryder, ‘Medieval Sheep’, pp. 15-23.

⁹³ C. Dyer, ‘The Material World of the English Peasants, 1200-1540: Archaeological Perspectives on Rural Economy and Welfare’, *The Agricultural History Review* 62/1 (2014), p. 20.

⁹⁴ Dyer, ‘The Material World of the English Peasant,’ p. 21.

⁹⁵ C. E. Challis, ‘Currency and the Economy in Mid-Tudor England’, *The Economic History Review* 25/2 (1972), p. 314.

Picardy and Artois.⁹⁶ Whilst it is evident from textual, archaeological animal remains and agricultural structural evidence that animal products were a standard export and consumable material, as decaying material, they left little physical evidence.⁹⁷ However, understanding that the exchange of these transient materials was part of the daily lives of the borders paints a picture of their economic and social lives.

Utilities

The more permanent objects and possessions of daily life in the borders are buildings, tools and clothes. Of the buildings that the borderers, particularly the Reivers, left behind, there are several vital types: fortified, productive, and accommodative structures.⁹⁸ These types overlap, creating an interlinking system of multiple-purpose buildings (see Figure 6).⁹⁹ For example, ‘head-dykes’ are structures designed to control the flow of livestock purely, similar to Buchts, and their use for tending to livestock.¹⁰⁰ Where productive buildings overlap with another category is in shielings, the temporary accommodation designed to help herdsmen manage their livestock during the closed seasons on the muir. All three categories overlap in the Bastle houses, designed to accommodate livestock and owners and defend them from Reivers and other attackers.¹⁰¹

⁹⁶ D. Ditchburn, ‘Towns and Trade’, in *Northern England and Southern Scotland in the Central Middle Ages*, ed. K. J. Stringer & A. J. L. Winchester, (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2017), pp. 307, 325.

⁹⁷ Biggar Archaeological Group, ‘Bastle Houses and Sheep Buchts’, <<https://biggararchaeology.org.uk/biggar-archaeology-groups-current-projects/research-projects/bastle-houses-and-sheep-buchts/>> [accessed 02 November 2023].

⁹⁸ Armstrong, *England's Northern Frontier*, pp. 74-93.

⁹⁹ H. G. Ramm, R. W. McDowall & E. Mercer, *Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England): Shielings and Bastes* (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1970), p. 1.

¹⁰⁰ Winchester, ‘Shielings and Common Pastures’, pp. 277-280; Biggar Archaeological Group, ‘Bastle Houses and Sheep Buchts’.

¹⁰¹ Ramm, *Shielings and Bastes*, p. 63.

Tools are
an

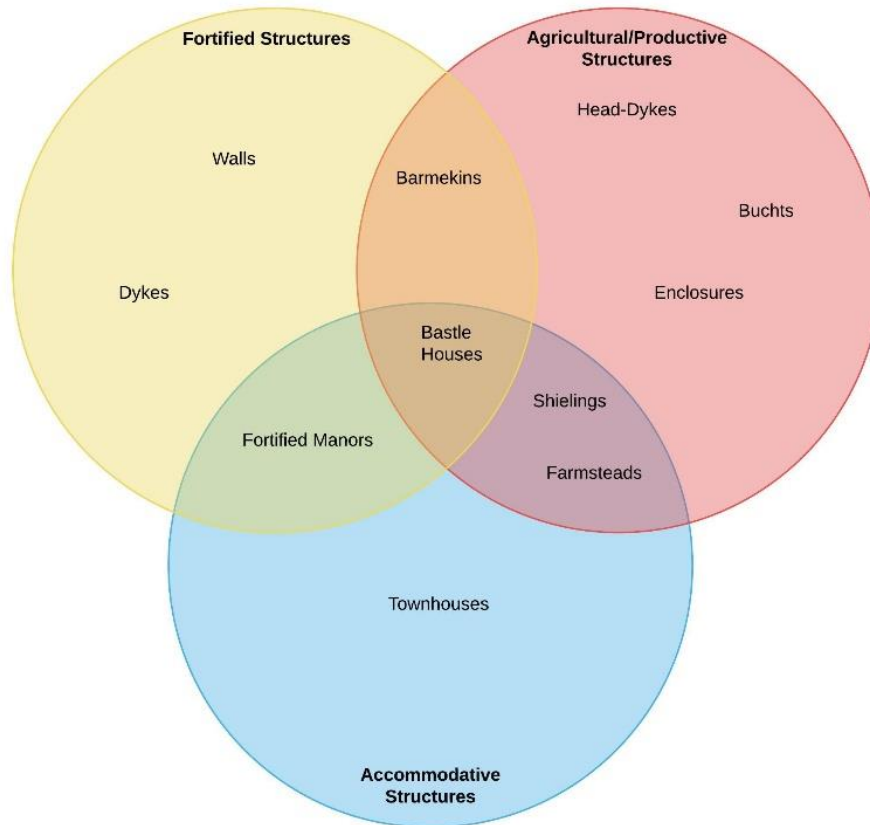


Figure 6 An Illustrative Three-Way Venn Diagram showing the diverse structures and their loose classifications.

advantageous method of understanding daily life. The various types of tools –farming equipment, weaponry, or another type– and their origin, transfer, and legality tell of a particular martial element of the border. Weaponry and armour for Reivers were produced by ‘local smiths’, as, in the 15th and 16th centuries, locals were expected to arm themselves ready for any royal need for soldiers.¹⁰² Often bought and distributed by ‘clannish border families,’ they played a significant part in defending a laird’s land from other Reivers, raiding another surname’s land, and at times of Anglo-Scottish war.¹⁰³ Laws addressing the use and ownership of weaponry in the 15th and 16th centuries encouraged widespread possession of military equipment, mainly seen with the Statute of

¹⁰² Fraser, *Steel Bonnets*, p. 86; Philips, *The Anglo-Scottish Wars*, pp. 46-49.

¹⁰³ Philips, *The Anglo-Scottish Wars*, p. 48.

Winchester.¹⁰⁴ The laws also denote how ready access and capability to respond to the obligations of warfare 'according to [an individual's] estates' were societal expectations.¹⁰⁵

Conclusion

Generally, the ownership of particular objects and possessions is linked with status. As seen with weaponry in the Statute of Winchester, wealth is directly related to the requirement to own specific weaponry.¹⁰⁶ Inheritance is a factor in ownership mentioned by Winchester, denoting that because of the particular 'partible inheritance' in the borders, individuals were left with smaller portions of possessions than previous generations.¹⁰⁷ This left them in fragile positions, as they needed to hold more land and resources to be prominent in matters of state. Thus, cohesion was found as a 'clan' system.¹⁰⁸ When not by inheritance, these goods were acquired and transferred in marketplaces.¹⁰⁹ Attempts to reflect these trends in materiality within the game model will create an extra dimension, allowing the player to 'abandon [themselves] to the process.'¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁴ J. J. Goring, 'The Military Obligations of the English People: 1511-1558' (doctoral thesis, Queen Mary University London, 1955), p. 20.

¹⁰⁵ Philips, *The Anglo-Scottish Wars*, p. 61.

¹⁰⁶ Goring, 'The Military Obligation of the English People', p. 20.

¹⁰⁷ Winchester, *Harvest of the Hills*, pp. 13-18.

¹⁰⁸ Winchester, *Harvest of the Hills*, p. 17.

¹⁰⁹ See the list in Ditchburn, 'Towns and Trade', p. 303.

¹¹⁰ Bennet & Csikszentmihalyi, 'Model of Play', p. 490.

4: The Interaction between Law and Reality.

Natural and legal boundaries are blurred in the borders: a line on paper intended to determine national boundaries realistically only noted minor burns, dykes or muirs. Distant royal governments had little effect on borderers' lives and realities. Leeson posited that whilst 'decentralised institutions can effectively create order within social groups, they cannot do so between social groups.'¹¹¹ The contemporary Anglo-Scottish governments wrestled the borders, aiming for 'overarching formal authority... needed to create intergroup cooperation.'¹¹² 'No supranational sovereign existed to eliminate this intergroup anarchy', so both governments set up various systems for frontier government. Nevertheless, stability arrived only when the periphery became the centre of a 'supranational sovereign'.¹¹³

On Paper

Several institutional structures were designed to entrench government control: jurisdictions, offices and land. Considering the period's governments' difficulty controlling their peripheries, 'privileges were wrested from the weak kings' by 'the lords of regality.'¹¹⁴ Central governments' difficulty controlling the border meant they had to form 'local government by private lords.'¹¹⁵ Despite the 'lofty claims of the English king and his ministers, ...they scarcely exercised a jurisdictional monopoly [over the borders]'.¹¹⁶

¹¹¹ Leeson, 'The Laws of Lawlessness', p. 472.

¹¹² Leeson, 'The Laws of Lawlessness', p. 471.

¹¹³ Leeson, 'The Laws of Lawlessness', p. 476.

¹¹⁴ A. Grant, 'Franchises North of the Border: Baronies and Regalities in Medieval Scotland', in *Liberties and Identities in the Medieval British Isles*, ed. by M. Prestwich, (Woodbridge: Boydell & Brewer, 2008), p. 155.

¹¹⁵ Grant, 'Franchises of the North Border', p. 184.

¹¹⁶ Stringer, 'Law, Governance and Jurisdiction', p. 113.

Regarding direct administration, the sheriff's post held duties surrounding the judicial system.¹¹⁷ Justices of the Peace also 'conducted much judicial business'.¹¹⁸ These offices, however, were often unable to extend their power into privately held liberties as the liberties frequently had their officials.¹¹⁹ However, a 'crown-appointed warden' had jurisdiction over all private liberties and was a bespoke method for central governments to control the unruly marches.¹²⁰ The wardenships were initially created as 'military officers' but consumed the roles of sheriffs in administering law and custom in the marches.¹²¹

On the Ground

Much of the official structures set up by central authorities came to be part of a virtual monopoly...by the magnates of northern England,¹²² Moreover, they were 'subject to the same self-inflicted paradox as the frontier space'.¹²³ The land-ruled border reality, not laws and central government structures. Consider that 'ownership' and 'use rights' played the ultimate part in who governed the borders, 'the territorial limitations of the warden's authority led to the acquisition of [the positions]' by those who held land directly in the border.¹²⁴

An example of corrupted wardenships and the primacy of land and family is in the general wardenship of Thomas, Lord Dacre. Accused of having 'too-close [a] relationship with the surnames... he had permitted his charges to despoil the inhabitants of the east and middle marches.'¹²⁵ It seems that in Dacre's wardenship, the influence of local kinship

¹¹⁷ Armstrong, *England's Northern Frontier*, p. 173.

¹¹⁸ Armstrong, *England's Northern Frontier*, p. 175.

¹¹⁹ Armstrong, *England's Northern Frontier*, p. 178.

¹²⁰ Armstrong, *England's Northern Frontier*, p. 182.

¹²¹ R. L. Storey, 'The Wardens of the Marches of England towards Scotland, 1377-1489', *The English Historical Review*, Vol. 72, No. 285, (1957), p. 593.

¹²² Storey, 'The Wardens of the Marches', p. 593.

¹²³ Gray, 'Lawlessness on the Frontier', p. 399.

¹²⁴ Winchester, *At Home on the Hills*, p. 26; Storey, 'The Wardens of the Marches', p. 593.

¹²⁵ C. Etty, 'Neighbours from Hell? Living with Tynedale and Redesdale, 1489-1547', in *Liberties and Identities in the Medieval British Isles*, ed. by M. Prestwich, (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008), p. 124.

outweighed that of central authority. Whilst in southern England, 'vertical' kinship ties, the 'horizontal' kinship ties of the border placed more importance on broad landowning, as seen with Dacre's affiliation with other border surnames over central authority.¹²⁶

Borderers tried to 'enumerate and recognise the wider agnatic kinship pool',¹²⁷ as seen in the appointments of Edward Charleton, William Charleton, John Halle and others to positions under the wardenship by the sixth earl of Northumberland, who 'thus purchased loyalty to the Percies'¹²⁸ and spread the ties of allegiance far along horizontal kinship ties.

Tower houses fit a role as an administrative centre with economic functions.¹²⁹

Their prevalence in the borders and ability to plant their owner's governance on the land cut off the royal patronage ties other areas depended on.¹³⁰ The ownership of land and controlling apparatus like tower houses allowed owners to supplant centralising efforts by national governments.

Conclusion

The official structures created by central governments, like the wardenships and sheriffdoms, were only effective when granted to local landed elites. Often, the elites acted self-interestedly, only using the offices they gained as warrants for their Reiving. Repeated engagement in a 'Reiving culture' by that policing proved that what was decreed on paper mattered most, regardless of what was decreed on the muirs.

¹²⁶ Armstrong, *England's Northern Frontier*, p. 125-126.

¹²⁷ Armstrong, *England's Northern Frontier*, p. 127.

¹²⁸ Ety, 'Neighbours from Hell?', p. 129.

¹²⁹ Armstrong, *England's Northern Frontier*, p. 75.

¹³⁰ Armstrong, *England's Northern Frontier*, p. 75; S. G. Ellis, 'A Border Baron and the Tudor State: The Rise and Fall of Lord Dacre of the North', *The Historical Journal*, Vol. 35, No. 2, (1992), p. 276.

As Leeson states, ‘modelling the problem situation that borderers confronted... is straightforward.’¹³¹ He models a ‘two-player prisoners’ dilemma’, where players can each choose between acting with ‘peace’ or ‘violence’.¹³² He uses the dilemma to demonstrate that players will only reach an equilibrium of either ‘peace-peace’ or ‘violence-violence’ depending on the extent of player trust. If a player chooses violence, trust diminishes, making the equilibrium of ‘violence-violence’ probable, but if both choose ‘peace’, then the ‘equilibrium of ‘peace-peace’ is possible. The dilemma borderers experienced was ‘the absence of a formal, supranational government that could regulate... and overcome this trust problem.’¹³³ Without the Anglo-Scottish unification, simulated through the ‘prisoner’s dilemma’, it seems impossible for borderers to avoid a ‘violence-violence’ equilibrium despite the offices or laws enacted by independent governments.

Arbitration surrounding the attempts to settle border law echoes the ‘prisoner’s dilemma.’ In times of war, ‘felonies done against the king’s enemies were widely pardoned’,¹³⁴ However, in times of peace, the governors of March arbitration were the ‘lordly residents of the March region themselves.’¹³⁵ ‘Days of march’, where truces and assemblies were held, where wardens ‘were charged with assessing the extent of injuries committed... and agreeing on... compensation...’¹³⁶ This attempt at supranational government fit Leeson’s prisoner’s dilemma. This model, provided by Leeson, helps provide roleplay dynamics and social rules that players can navigate to simulate the borders better.

¹³¹ Leeson, ‘The Laws of Lawlessness’, p. 479.

¹³² Leeson, ‘The Laws of Lawlessness’, pp. 479-480.

¹³³ Leeson, ‘The Laws of Lawlessness’, p. 481.

¹³⁴ C. J. Neville, ‘Keeping the Peace’, p. 4.

¹³⁵ C. J. Neville, ‘Arbitration and Anglo-Scottish Border Law in the Later Middle Ages’, in *Liberties and Identities in the Medieval British Isles*, eds. by M. Prestwich, (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2008), p. 43.

¹³⁶ Neville, ‘Arbitration’, p. 43.

5: The Character of the Reiver

It is essential to understand the individual character of the border Reiver to contextualise the borders and the economic and social trends that encouraged Reiving. Many overlapping categories lay across the various individuals who spent their time Reiving. The demographics, personalities and stations of the Reivers reveal a unique part of Reiving as a practice and the incitement behind it. Whether Scottish or English, old or young, Armstrong or Kerr, Catholic or Protestant, rich or poor, the tapestry of border Reivers was vivid. Definitions of the character of the Reiver are rare in the surviving textual evidence.¹³⁷ Besides a few personal testimonies, most textual evidence comes from monitions and words by their opponents, complainants, officials, over-lords or decedents.

Who rode?

Demographically, the Reivers can be divided reasonably quickly. Considering the strong kinship ties, individuals tend to conform to their kinship's culture.¹³⁸ In terms of religion, it is reported that whilst some families notably held to Catholicism or ignored the reformation, such as the Maxwells,¹³⁹ Generally, religion was nothing but a veneer and outward dressing that held no internal spiritual importance to most Reivers.¹⁴⁰ Archdeacons and other churchly men 'found churches desolate, parsons ignorant, the people divided by hate.'¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ C. G. Zug, 'The Ballad Editor as Antiquary: Scott and the Minstrelsy,' *Journal of the Folklore Institute* 13/1 (1976), p. 59.

¹³⁸ Armstrong, *England's Northern Frontier*, p. 125.

¹³⁹ K. Brown, 'The Making of a "Politique": The Counter Reformation and the Regional Politics of John, Eighth Lord Maxwell,' *The Scottish Historical Review* 66/182, (1987), p. 158.

¹⁴⁰ Hay, 'The Problem of the Frontier', pp. 84-85.

¹⁴¹ Hay, 'The Problem of the Frontier', p. 85.

Given that the ‘surname’ was the most significant shared social unit, most borderers clung to their surname to protect and stabilise.¹⁴² Lists of these surnames are found mainly in the 1587 act of the Scottish Parliament, ‘For the quieting and keeping in obedience of the disordered subjects, inhabitants of the borders’, which names the Laird Maxell, Laird of Buccleuch, Armstrongs, etc.¹⁴³

Language is the most underrated aspect of life in the borders in terms of academic and popular understanding. Border Scots,¹⁴⁴ Cumbrian, mixed with English and Gaelic elements, are scattered throughout the Dales and Merse.¹⁴⁵ The Cumbrian counting system is a perfect example of preserving culture and language in the borders: a base-20 counting system that used rhymed numbering primarily for counting livestock.¹⁴⁶ When finding the unique character of the border Reiver as something neither Scottish nor English, it is essential to recognise that language formed part of that independent borderer identity.¹⁴⁷

Although often considered apocryphal and unreliable, the personality and attitudes of the Reivers are found throughout Walter Scott’s *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Borders* and Bishop Leslie’s works. Nicknames, sobriquets and epithets are a lasting monument to the culture of the Reivers: ‘Fingerless Will Nixon’, ‘Nebless Clem Crozier’, or ‘Davy the Lady Armstrong’.¹⁴⁸ In Alistar Moffat’s *The Reivers*, there is an attempt to relate the scarce remains of the personality of the Reivers in ballads and names to modern border

¹⁴² S. M. Keeling, ‘The Church and Religion in the Anglo Scottish Border Counties, 1535 to 1572’, (doctoral thesis, Durham University, 1975), p. 1.

¹⁴³ ‘For the quieting and keeping in obedience of the disordered subjects, inhabitants of the borders, highlands and isles’, *The Records of the Parliament of Scotland to 1707*, <<https://www.rps.ac.uk/trans/1587/7/70>> [accessed 21 April 2024].

¹⁴⁴ Scots Language Centre, ‘Border Scots’, *Scots Language Centre*, <https://www.scotslanguage.com/Scots_regional_dialects/Borders_Scots> [accessed 02 November 2023].

¹⁴⁵ Moffat, *The Reivers*, p. 75.

¹⁴⁶ K. Distin, *Cultural Evolution*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) pp. 89-106.

¹⁴⁷ Etty, ‘Neighbours from Hell?’, p. 120.

¹⁴⁸ Fraser, *The Steel Bonnets*, p. 102, 220, 225.

culture, particularly surrounding sports.¹⁴⁹ While it may not be accurate, there are links between border Reivers and sport. Sports similar to rugby were often practised, and the close horizontal kinship groups are reminiscent of sports teams with an absence of lineage and the presence of feuds and rivalries.¹⁵⁰

How did they feel?

Before the execution of one border Reiver, Giordie Bourne, he repented, as recounted by Robert Carey: ‘he had lived long enough to do so many villainies... lain with above forty men’s wives...killed seven Englishmen... [and] spent his whole time in whoring, drinking, stealing and... deep revenge for slight offences.’¹⁵¹ This unravelled part of Bourne’s life and crimes, common amongst secondary documentary evidence of the Reivers, shows a conflicted and self-aware person. Unfortunately, even ‘the authentic ballads’ in Scott’s collection have been altered and changed to fit the feelings of his contemporaries.¹⁵² However, the scarcity of first-hand evidence from Reivers means that exploring the Reivers’ opinions and attitudes is something through which a game can foster ‘fruitful reflections.’¹⁵³

From the perspective of games, particularly ones that include roleplaying, ‘actions hold meaning both inside and outside the game.’¹⁵⁴ Given the weight of feelings that Bourne is found to express about his actions, it is important not to separate the rules of games from the actual people who live in the simulated world. For that aim it is beneficial

¹⁴⁹ Moffat, *The Reivers*, p. 87.

¹⁵⁰ Moffat, *The Reivers*, p. 87.

¹⁵¹ R. Carey, *Memoirs of Sir Robert Carey; and Fragmenta Regalia*, ed. by R. Naunton, (Edinburgh: Ballantyne and Co, 1808), pp. 73-74.

¹⁵² R. Cronin, ‘Walter Scott and Anti-Gallican Minstrelsy’, *ELH*, Vol. 66, No. 4, (1999), p. 863.

¹⁵³ Cook, ‘Historical Reenactment’, pp. 488-489.

¹⁵⁴ M. C. Pointer, *Interpreting The Game of History: Synthesis and Shortcomings Between Reenactment, Living History, and Roleplaying* (masters thesis: University of Oregon, 2021), p. 81.

to model directly the choices presented to an individual being simulated rather than model the decisions that an individual being represented already chose.

6: Representation, 'Accuracy' and the Public:

Several different models can be used to represent the Border Reivers in gameplay. These models fit into Social Rules, Formal Rules, and Roleplay. Montola and Stenros define the social rules of a game as a 'set of cultural codes about the conduct of play that are messy and contextual.'¹⁵⁵ They go on to say that the social rules of a game are not impossible to record in full due to the messy and dynamic nature of social rules.¹⁵⁶ This dynamism is shown in Leeson's Border Prisoner Dilemma, where players' social conditions will change their choices and game framing. What might feel fair at the beginning of a game becomes the norm by the end due to the degradation of trust.¹⁵⁷ The encouragement of roleplay within a game environment is conducive to the game's social rules, but it can also be structured with the formal rules of the game in mind.¹⁵⁸ Using a Multi-Agent System to create a game model for social and formal rules has the advantage of considering both, particularly facilitating their interaction.¹⁵⁹ When representing a historical period in a game, it was mentioned by Beavers and Warnecke that visuals are often the most focused element of historical accuracy.¹⁶⁰ This dominance in visual material culture leaves out other angles of authenticity and representation that the roleplay and social rules do not. This is also seen through reenactment.¹⁶¹

Accuracy within portrayals of history through media is an oft-debated topic.

Questions surrounding the extent to which accuracy can ever be achieved, or to what

¹⁵⁵ Montola & Stenros, *The Rule Book*, p. 85.

¹⁵⁶ Montola & Stenros, *The Rule Book*, p. 85.

¹⁵⁷ Leeson, 'The Laws of Lawlessness,' p. 481.

¹⁵⁸ See Y. Holt, 'Performing the Anglo-Scottish Border: Cultural Landscapes, Heritage and Borderland Identities', *Journal of Borderland Studies*, p. 55, for examples of performance and role-play in the borders as a heritage tool.

¹⁵⁹ Bousquet & Trébuil, *Companion Modelling*, p. 2.

¹⁶⁰ S. Beavers & S. Warnecke, 'Audience Perceptions of Historical Authenticity in Visual Media,' in *The Middle Ages in Modern Culture: History and Authenticity in Contemporary Medievalism*, eds. by K. Alvestad & R. Houghton, (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2021) p. 80.

¹⁶¹ Cook, 'Historical Reenactment', p. 489.

extent it is needed, and whether any particular piece can ever be described as accurate are challenging to answer definitively. Tara Coplestone studied a divide between the creators, consumers and critics of cultural-heritage videogames. Their study found a wide range of interpretations on the defining 'accuracy'; creators and consumers tended towards 'reconstructionist and constructionist views of history' instead of the 'post-modern or deconstructionist approaches' held by cultural-heritage practitioners.¹⁶² Figure 7 portrays the difference between the importance of accuracy to different groups found in Coplestone's study. Burgess and Jones' article on Exploring Player Understandings of Historical Accuracy and Historical Authenticity in Video Games concludes their studies by defining authenticity and accuracy based on a 'player-centric' approach.¹⁶³ The definition has been reproduced here in full:

'Using historical (selective) authenticity to develop video games means that the overall appearance and significant details of the depiction of a historical context are historically accurate and thus align with the historical records and facts. However, historical authenticity allows for some artistic license in the form of speculation, changes, or additions still grounded in the historically accurate record to present an accessible narrative.'¹⁶⁴

Group	Never important	Depends	Always important	No answer
Gamers	2% (1)	94% (49)	4% (2)	0% (0)
Developers	54% (28)	42% (22)	2% (1)	2% (1)
Cultural-heritage practitioners	21% (11)	15% (8)	62% (32)	2% (1)

Figure 7 Responses to importance of accuracy in cultural-heritage from Coplestone's article.

¹⁶² T. J. Coplestone, 'But That's Not Accurate: The Differing Perceptions Of Accuracy In Cultural-Heritage Videogames Between Creators, Consumers And Critics', *Rethinking History*, Vol. 21, No. 3, (2017), pp. 420-422.

¹⁶³ J. Burgess, & C. Jones, 'Exploring Player Understanding of Historical Accuracy and Historical Authenticity in Video Games', *Games and Culture*, Vol. 17, No. 5, (2021) p. 828.

¹⁶⁴ Burgess & Jones, 'Exploring Player Understanding', p. 828.

Burgess and Jones emphasise that the conclusion to their 'player-centric' definition means that developers of games in a historical setting should 'ensure games live up to player's expectations', 'explain what historical facts have been changed and why' and provide external historical information.¹⁶⁵ This 'player-centric' definition links back to Samuel's idea of challenging 'the unspoken assumption that knowledge filters downwards' and instead comes from 'player-centric' models of historical media.¹⁶⁶

It is never possible to fully represent the past through any medium, and there will always be an area off-screen, un-represented, and non-playable. The past is too vast to represent entirely. Creating a game surrounding the past relies on the designer choosing what elements to recreate and how much detail, whether entire cities are presented on small wooden blocks like in the board game *Settlers of Catan* or having the span of entire years pass in seconds like in video game *Crusader Kings 3*. A historical game consists of several core components as outlined by McCall: 'a primary player agent', 'a virtual gameworld', 'gameworld elements', and 'choices'.¹⁶⁷ These components cannot be all-encompassing; they are both 'enabling and constricting agents' that are not infinite.¹⁶⁸ Therefore, part of the designing process is choosing what to represent and how. These elements could be spatial, chronological, quantitative, or qualitative.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁵ Burgess & Jones, 'Exploring Player Understanding', p. 831.

¹⁶⁶ Samuel, *Theatres of Memory*, p. 4.

¹⁶⁷ J. McCall, 'The Historical Problem Space Framework: Games as Historical Medium', *The International Journal of Computer Game Research*, Vol. 20, No. 3, (2020) p. 2.

¹⁶⁸ McCall, 'Historical Problem Space', p. 9.

¹⁶⁹ Bousquet & Trébuil, 'Introduction to Companion Modelling', pp. 2-3.



Figure 8 'Arran Landscape' by Ian Cheyne (1946)

Part 2: Game Materials and Mechanics

This section includes a rules presentation video explaining the rules and mechanics of the game with a visual representation of the materials. It also contains the rulebook and a reflection.

Rules Presentation Video

Linked is a presentation of the rules: <https://youtu.be/LAdv3hfKVI>

borderers

REIVERS, LAIRDS & HEDESMEN

Designed by Samuel Ethan Jolly



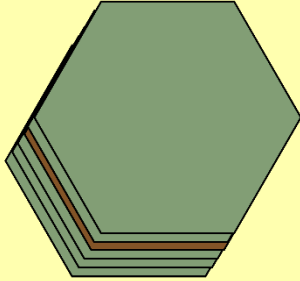
CONCEPT

This game invites you to play as one of the Hedesmen of these Surnames and play out the period from the 13th to the 17th century when reiving was the law of the land. You will live the life of a Reiver, tending to your livestock, raiding those around you and fighting for the office of Warden of the Marches. When the Kingdoms of England and Scotland unify, and the borders of the two kingdoms become the middle of one great one, the pressure is on you to evade the law and make a place for yourself in the new Unified Island of Britain.

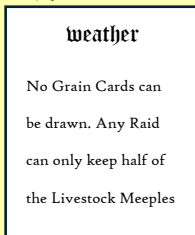
The game follows the patterns of the seasons that the Borderers would have been familiar with, taking their livestock out into the muirs in the summer and bringing them home in the winter when it is time for Reiving. You will tend to your herds, growing your wealth and improving your land. You will raid your enemies and, in turn, thwart their raids. You will steal and plunder and take until nothing doesn't belong to you. When 1603 arrives, the players who can buy their way into the Unified British World will be the winners, and those who don't will be executed or exiled.

Components

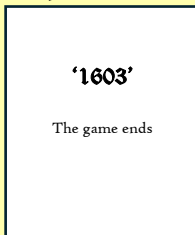
❖ Game Hexagons



❖ 35 Manoeuvre Cards



❖ 15 Event Cards



❖ 50 Raid Tokens



❖ 50 Money



❖ 60 Livestock Meeple



❖ 12 Shielings



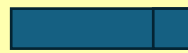
❖ 3 Peat



❖ 12 Barmkins



❖ 12 Dykes



❖ 4 Turburary Tiles



❖ Grain Card



❖ Action Card



❖ 6 Player Aid Cards

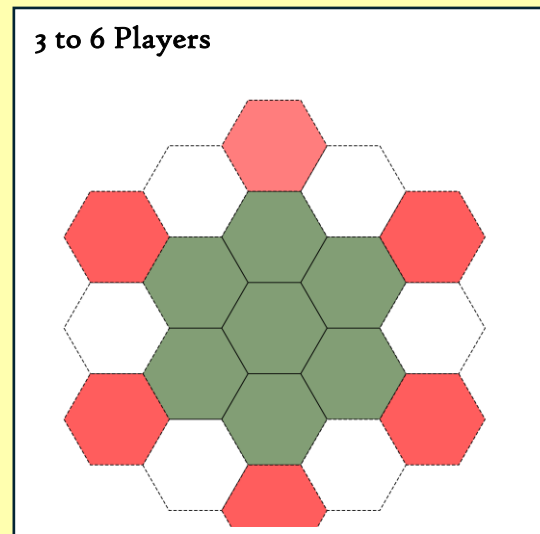
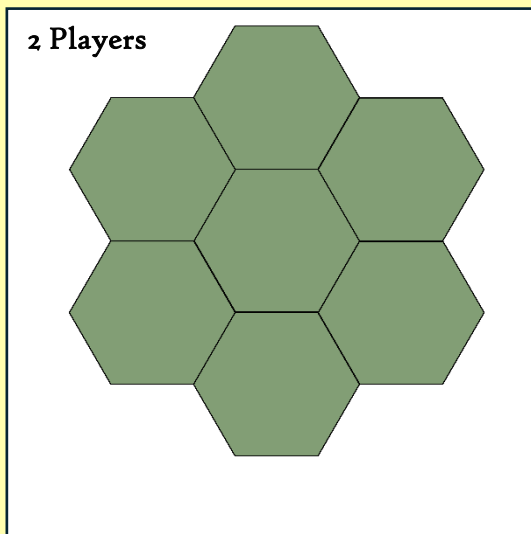


Set-up

To set up the game, collect the appropriate number of resources:

Player Count	Muir Tiles	Turburary Tokens	Peat Tokens	Event Cards
2	7	Half Player Count + 1	Half Player Count	10
3 to 6	9	Half Player Count + 1	Half Player Count	15

Depending on the **Player Count**, place down all **Muir Tiles** to fit the corresponding pattern.

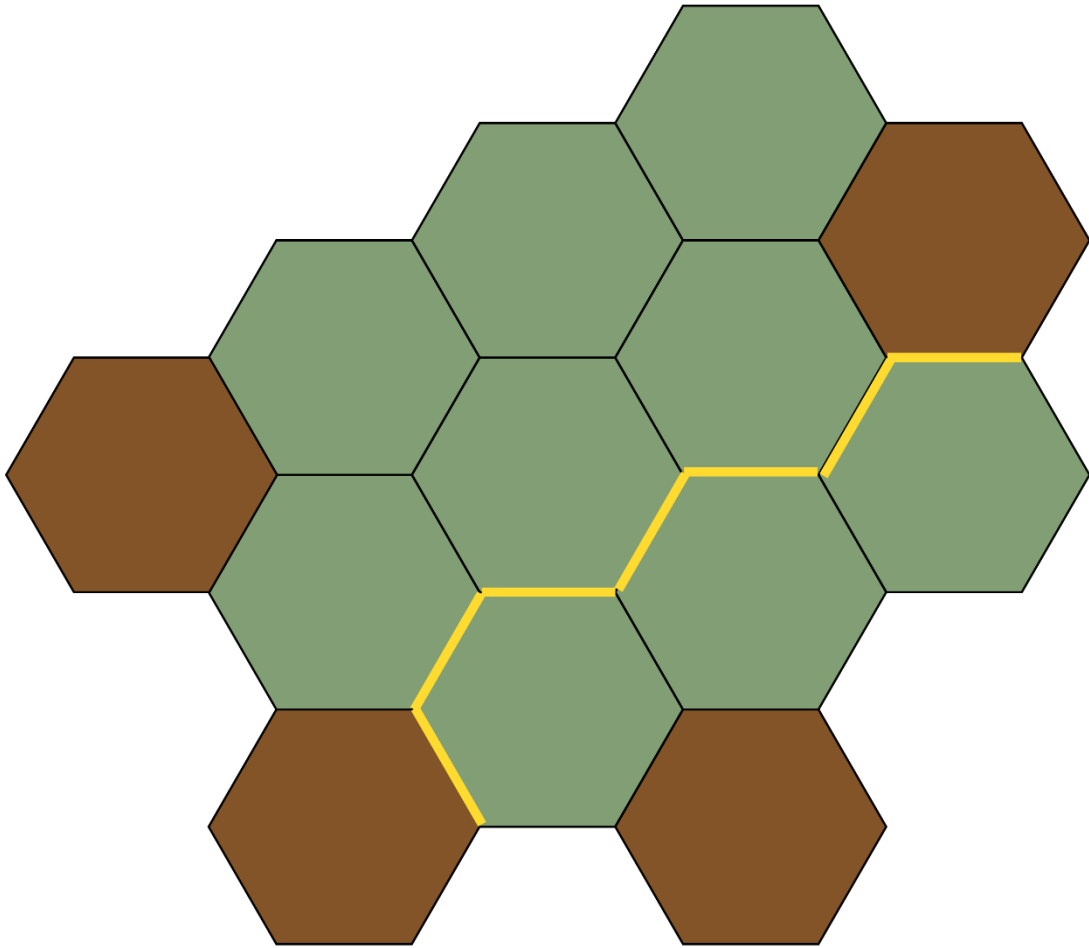


Then give all players the following:

- 1 **Livestock Meeple** (of their player colour)
- 1 **Merse Hexagon**
- 5 **Coins**
- 1 **Player Aid Card**
- 6 **Grain Cards**

Players place down their **Merse Tiles** so that their sides are attached to the sides of two **Muir Tiles**. Each player then places one of the **Turburary Tokens** or **Peat Tokens** on a **Muir Tile** until no more is left to place. A **Turburary Token** or **Peat Token** cannot be placed on a **Muir Tile** already occupied by either a **Turburary Token** or **Peat Token**. Each player then places their **Livestock Meeple** on their **Merse Tiles**. The two separate **Event Card** and **Manoeuvre Card** decks should be shuffled and placed nearby. Split the **Event Card** deck roughly into thirds. On one-third, shuffle the '1603' card, then place the other two thirds on top of the one containing the '1603' card. Players take it in turn, placing down a **Border Marker** block until a line runs from one side of the board to the other. The line of **Border Markers** must have at least 3 **Tiles** of any kind on each side. The player who goes first is the player who last stole something, has the worst criminal record, or has the most pets.

An Example of a 4-Player Game Board Set Up



Turn Overview

The game is split into seasons: Open and Closed seasons. These seasons define what type of actions can be made on any particular turn: **Closed Seasons** are when **Livestock Meeples** are moved up onto the **Muir Tiles**, kept out of the player's **Merse Tile**, and when new **Livestock Meeples** can be birthed; then in the **Open Seasons**, **Livestock Meeples** are returned to the player's **Merse Tile** and are protected from other players attempts to steal them.

The game begins in the **Open Season**. Flip the **Player Aid** card to the **Open Season** side to signify it is **Open Season**. Starting with whichever player was designated to go first, they move on their turn from the list of actions available on their **Player Aid**. They make only one action before passing to the next player and can only make an action by expending one **Grain Card**. The exception to the requirement for expending a **Grain Card** is using a **Manoeuvre Card**, **Selling Livestock**, **Buying Things**, and Making a **Counter-Raid**.

The **Open Season** Turn:

- Build Structures*
 - **Barmkins** require 1 **Turburary Token** to be built; **Shielings** require nothing to be built, **Dykes** require 2 **Turburary Tokens**, and **Bastles** require 2 **Turburary Tokens** and 1 **Peat Token** to be built.
 - **Barmkins** can only be built on a **Merse Tile**. **Shielings** can only be built on **Muir Tiles**, absent from buildings or other players' livestock.
 - If a building is built on a **Muir Tile** that has a **Turburary Token** or **Peat Token** on, then that resource can only be harvested by the individual who has their building on.
- Move **Livestock Meeples***
 - To move **Livestock Meeples**, a player must select a **Tile** that has their **Livestock Meeples** and then move any number of them to an adjacent **Tile**.
 - There can only be one **Livestock Meeple** on any **Muir Tile** unless a **Shieling** (4 can be placed) or **Bastle** (can be placed 3) is built on it.
- Raid*
 - Any player can choose to raid another player during the **Open Season**. They must declare their target player and tile and then take all the **Livestock Meeples** in the targeted tile whether it is a **Muir Tile** or **Merse Tile**.
 - Once the raiding player has taken all the appropriate **Livestock Meeples**, they receive a **Reiving Token**. The **Livestock Meeples** go in the Raiding player's **Merse Tiles**.
 - A player on a raid can also choose to destroy one **Shieling**, **Dyke**, or **Barmkin** present in the **Tile** they have raided.
 - A player on a raid receives less of the **Livestock Meeples** if they are targeting a Tile that has built a **Barmkin** or **Bastle** built on it. If a **Barmkin** is built, the raiding player must leave 3 **Livestock Meeples** behind, and if it is a **Bastle** built on the **Tile**, then the player must leave behind 2 **Livestock Meeples**.
- Use a **Manoeuvre Card**
 - At any point, a player can reveal a **Manoeuvre Card** and enact what it says; this can be on their turn.

- Any **Manoeuvre Cards** can be revealed and enacted by any play at any time.
- **Sell Livestock Meeples**
 - Players can exchange **Livestock Meeples** for **Money** at **1 Livestock Meeple** for **2 Money**.
 - Players can only sell **Livestock Meeples** that are in their **Merse Tile**.
- **Counter-Raid**
 - A player raided in this **Open Season** can choose to do a counter-raid.
 - They select the player who raided them and a **Tile** they have their **Livestock Meeples** on.
 - They receive half of the **Livestock Meeples** on it and place them in their **Merse Tile**.
 - The Counter-Raiding player receives no **Reiving Token**.
- **Buy Things:**
 - A player can buy one of the following:
 - **Manoeuvre Cards = 1 Money**
 - **Turburary Tokens = 2 Money**
 - **Peat Tokens = 2 Money**
 - **Sheep = 3 Money**

Each Player takes it in turn to do one of the actions until they run out of **Grain Cards**. The **Open Season** ends when every player has no **Grain Cards** or passes their turn. Players then reverse their **Player Aid Cards** and can only use actions on the **Closed Season** side. Each player receives 5 **Action Cards**, which must be expended to do any following action marked with an asterisk. At the beginning of the **Closed Season**, an **Event Card** is flipped over from the top of the deck; its effects remain in place until its conditions have been met or a new event is placed on top of it. All **Turburary Tokens** or **Peat Tokens** can now be returned upright rather than lying down unless there is a **Livestock Meeple**. In that case, it is removed from the board entirely. At the beginning of the **Closed Season**, all **Turburary** and **Peat Tokens** are restored unless they have been entirely removed. The **Closed Season** Turn (for every turn a player takes in which at the end of it their **Merse Tile** is not occupied by **Livestock Meeples**, they gain 1 **Grain Card**):

- Harvest **Turburary Token** or **Peat Token***
 - A player can harvest a **Turburary Token** or **Peat Token** by simply taking it from the board, knocking it down, and picking up the relevant resource. If a **Turburary Token** or **Peat Token** is knocked down and a **Livestock Meeple** is on the **Tile** it occupies, it is removed entirely from the game.
- Resolve **Event Card***
 - A player may choose to expend resources or do anything that the **Event Card** requires to be resolved. If it is determined, a new one is placed on top of it, and the previous effects are no longer in place unless specified otherwise.
- Use a **Manoeuvre Card** (See Above)
- Move **Livestock Meeples*** (See Above)
- Build a Structures* (See Above)
- Sell **Livestock Meeples** (See Above)
- Buy Things (See Above)

The **Closed Season** ends when all players have expended their **Action Cards** or passed their turn. The **Player Aid** is flipped to the **Open Season** side, meaning only actions from the **Open Season** can be taken. At the end of the **Closed Season**, the player collects an extra **Livestock**

Meeple equal to the number of their **Livestock Meeples** on **Muir Tiles**. A new **Event Card** is flipped from the deck and placed on the current unresolved **Event Card**. This process repeats between **Open** and **Closed Season** until the **Event Card '1603'** is drawn. At that point, the game ends.

Event Cards

'1603'

- 'The game ends. Each player must count up their number of **Raid Tokens**, **Livestock Meeples**, and **Money**. If a player reaches a certain amount of each, they are granted an inevitable outcome unless they have too many Raid Tokens. In that case, they lose the game. There is a bonus for whoever has the **Warden Event Card**.

Wardenship

- The player who meets the requirements of the **Wardenship Event Card** is granted the title of **Warden**. They take possession of the card and have special abilities they can enact. The next time a **Warden Event Card** is flipped over, their position becomes biddable. Anyone who meets the requirements of the **Wardenship Event Card** becomes the new **Warden** if they are on the same side of the border as the previous **Warden**. If the people who become the Warden are not on the same side of the border as the last Warden, they also become **Warden** and do not replace the previous **Warden**.
- When a player takes the **Counter-Raid** action, the **Warden** can offer their assistance in return for removing one of their own **Raid Tokens**. When the **Warden** assists, the player who took the **Counter-Raid** action gives 2 **Money** to the **Warden**. The **Counter-Raiding** player receives all the **Livestock Meeples** from the **Tile** they selected.
- To meet the requirements of the **Wardenship Event Card** a player must bid the highest amount of **Money** in a public bid. The amount bid by the highest bidder is removed from the game and they receive the **Wardenship**.

War

- When the **War Event Card** is flipped over in **Closed Season**, each player must spend 1 **Money**/1 **Grain Card**/1 **Livestock Meeple** every turn until the **War Event Card** is resolved.
- If the **War Event Card** is active, players can take the **Raid** action this turn but only against players on the opposite side of the border from them.
- When a player takes the **Raid** action when the **War Event Card** is active, any buildings destroyed from the **Raid** are placed on the **War Event Card**. The War Event Card ends when the appropriate number of buildings have been destroyed.
- To resolve the **War Event Card**, players must have destroyed 3 buildings and/or placed three **Livestock Meeples** on the card for it to be resolved. Those who resolve it can remove 3 **Raid Tokens**.

Weather

- When the **Weather Event Card** is drawn, no **Grain Cards** can be drawn until the **Weather Event Card** is obscured by another **Event Card**.
- Any **Raid** action is taken when the **Weather Event Card** is active, the **Raiding** player can only keep half of the **Livestock Meeples** (rounded down) from the **Tile** they are raiding. The rest of the **Livestock Meeples** are removed from the game.

Days of March

- When this **Event Card** is drawn, no players may take the **Raid** action. All players with **Livestock Meeples** of another player's colour must return them to them. If they do, they remove one of their **Raid Tokens** so each player can return **Livestock Meeples**.
- Once this has been completed, the next **Event Card** is drawn and placed on top.

The Penrith Plague

- When this is drawn, no buildings can be built, until another Event Card obscures it.

Manoeuvre Cards

Sleuth Hound

- When this is played, the holder can choose a **Raid** that is underway and counter it.
- Any **Livestock Meeples** that would have been taken due to the **Raid** are returned to their rightful owner. The individual who played this card can remove one of their **Raid Tokens** and give it to the **Raiding** player.

Foreign Supply

- This card can be used as a requirement for buildings of any type.

Royal Favour

- This card can be expended to force the **Warden** to help in a **Counter-Raid**, instead of the player paying the **Warden** to assist in the **Counter-Raid**, the **Warden** pays them.

Galloway Nag

- This can be spent in return for allowing the player to make an extra raid this turn, and they do not have to spend a **Grain Card**.

Enclosure

- This card can be placed beside the player. It allows the player to build a **Dyke** around a particular tile that is adjacent to their **Merse Tile**. That **Tile** now acts as a second **Merse Tile**. If, during a **Raid**, a player targets this new **Merse Tile** to destroy, the **Enclosure Manoeuvre Card** is removed and placed at the bottom of the **Manoeuvre Card** deck.

Ending the Game

When the '1603' Event Card is drawn then the game ends. Players must count up their **Money**, **Livestock Meeple** and **Raid Tokens**.

Money/Livestock Meeples	X < 5 Livestock Meeples	X < 10 Livestock Meeples	X < 15 Livestock Meeples	X > 15 Livestock Meeples
X < 5 Money	Displaced from their Land	Displaced from their Land		Gained a Landed Title
X < 10 Money	Displaced from their Land			Gained a Landed Title
X < 15 Money	Displaced from their Land			Gained a Landed Title
X > 15 Money				Gained a Landed Title

Raid Tokens	Less Than or Equal to 5	More than 6	More than 15
Out Come	Safe	Exiled	Executed

If you ended the game as a **Warden**, you can discard 5 **Raid Tokens**.

Ultimately the choice over, who succeeded and who failed, is up to the players to decide.

Reflection

Creating the game provided a unique approach to history as a research and heritage tool. The design of pieces, materials, and rules were constrained by existing research on the Reivers and by what features effectively communicated ideas. Too many rules and pieces would dilute the communication and likely be too complicated to interpret. Likewise, rules that are too few and too simple would not communicate the complexity of the borders. The creation of the board game was a practice in balance and synthesis of information.

When designing the pieces, I chose to aim for simplicity. I wanted the game to be easy to recreate at home without the need to buy materials. The pieces are not designed to replicate material culture as the ultimate discussion is around the dynamics of the borders rather than the objects. In the future, I would prefer to spend more time creating pieces linked closer to material culture. The drawback of relying on the pieces to be materially accurate is that they cannot be exact reproductions. A representative piece in a board game will not be able to hold the same material weight and gravity that social dynamics can have. Considering the challenges in representing historical research in-game, I felt it better to focus on social and legal rules rather than material ones.

As the rules were the game's main focus, it would not take much to recreate the game with only the rulebook. Whilst there were hard rules in place, there were deliberate gaps and vagaries left to encourage players to discuss and organise their own social rules and hopefully act as part of the historical research and heritage in and of itself by allowing for the simulation of social rules. Considering that it is impossible to represent a historical period entirely in a game, synthesising and reducing certain themes became necessary to display a specific theme and focus. Most of the rules revolve around land usage and

livestock management. But there are no rules as to how players can interact. No morals are placed on the players' actions, only cost-benefit analysis. The moral and sociological questions arising from the game will be borne from the players' dynamics and actions inside and outside of the rules. The rules implemented were designed to imitate Leeson's Prisoners Dilemma and other social forms mentioned in the research and premise.

The very process of creating a board game generates fruitful reflections. Translating historical research into a board game facilitated helpful research questions. It prompted queries about how mechanics and research related: What were the Reivers' thoughts on the morals of their actions, how big a part religion played in the punishment of Reivers, and what were the more comprehensive national opinions of the borders? The process of translation was cyclical in this way. The game creation prompted research questions that could prompt different game design choices. The game becomes a part of heritage and public history education and communication and a part of the research process.

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