Title: 'Harry the Ninth (The Uncrowned King of Scotland) Henry Dundas and the Politics of Self-Interest, 1790-1802

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Abstract: The career of Henry Dundas, 1st Viscount Melville underscores the importance of individual self-interest in British public life during the 1790-1802 Revolutionary Wars with France. Examining the political intrigue surrounding Dundas’ 1806 impeachment, the manner in which he established his political power, and contemporary critiques of self-interest, this thesis both complicates and adds nuance to understandings of the political culture of ‘Old Corruption’ in the late-Georgian era. As this thesis demonstrates, despite the wealth of opportunities for personal enrichment, individual self-interest was not always focused on obtaining sinecures and financial windfalls. Instead, men like Henry Dundas were primarily focused upon amassing their own political power. In the inherently chaotic politics of the period, the self-seeking concerns of individuals like Henry Dundas, very quickly could, and indeed did, become the thread upon which the whole British political system turned.

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Effigies of Dundas, known as "the uncrowned king of Scotland", were burned rather than those of the King during the political and social unrest that accompanied the outbreak of revolution in France. He is commemorated by the 150-foot high Melville Monument, designed by William Burn in 1823, in Edinburgh's St Andrew Square. "Their influence over the government, politics and society of Scotland was extensive - and their legacy lives on Scottish public life today, in our street names, our statues and now, in this public collection." The purchase of the collection was funded by £725,000 from the Scottish government, and £625,000 from the National Heritage Memorial Fund. Share this story About sharing. Email. Between the ninth and tenth centuries, the kings of Wessex evolved into the kings of the English, crowned by the Archbishop of Canterbury. Consequently, no one is universally recognized as the first King of England. An uncrowned king, the fifteen-year-old Edgar's claim was supported by two English earls and an archbishop, before William the Conqueror took full power. He survived, eventually fighting for and against the king. 26. Henry came to the throne as a child with a regency, but after a power struggle took personal control
in 1234. He fell out with his barons and was forced by rebellion to concede to the Provisions of Oxford, which created a privy council to advise the king. "Henry Dundas, the first Viscount Melville, was the Pharos of Scotland. Who steered upon him was safe; who disregarded the light was wrecked."1. Yet the phenomenal career of Harry the Ninth has been little appreciated by historians. Born three years before the '45 and before the curbing of the Highlands, and eighteen years before Scotchmen were butts for political ridicule in London, he was yet, before he was fifty, to run the affairs of Scotland and India, and simultaneously to direct the War with Revolutionary and Napoleonic France and the war against the forces of revolution at home. Not th