

Friendly Aliens on the Home Front: Migrants, Refugees and Colonial Workers in Scotland During and After the First World War¹

Jacqueline Jenkinson

At the outset of the First World War central government issued the Aliens Restriction Act designed to place limitations on the movement and access to jobs of enemy aliens. This article will consider the extension of wartime aliens' restrictions policy to people living in Scotland who were from friendly nations. In order to explore how far government wartime actions affected these groups, and using a range of archival resources, the article will discuss the process of arrival, access to employment and the post-war repatriation from Scotland of migrants and refugees from Lithuania and Belgium and colonial Britons from Africa and the Caribbean.

On 5 August 1914, the day after Britain's declaration of war against Germany, the British government introduced restrictions on enemy aliens. The Aliens Restriction Act became law the same day. The new Act created, for the duration of the wartime emergency, new powers for the Home Secretary to enact Orders in Council to place immediate restrictions on enemy aliens according to wartime circumstances and to allow future provisions as necessary to put these and future restrictions into effect. According to Home Secretary Reginald McKenna one of the main objectives of the Bill was to 'restrain the movements of undesirable aliens, especially with a view to the removal or detention of spies', before concluding: 'The arrangements contemplated by the Order have been designed with a view to cause as little inconvenience as possible to alien friends, while leaving effective control over dangerous enemy aliens.'² The placing of restrictions on foreign enemy nationals in time of war was not surprising. Less predictable was that such restrictions would soon be used to limit the movement and access to employment of those from friendly nations, including colonial peoples resident in wartime and immediate

¹ An earlier version of this paper was given at the conference of the Scottish Records Association, 'On the Move: Researching Migrants and Immigrants to Scotland', 6 November 2015.

² Statement in House of Commons (hereafter HOC) by Reginald McKenna, Home Secretary on the Aliens Restriction Bill, 4 August 1914, http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1914/aug/05/aliens-restriction-bill#S5CV0065P0_19140805_HOC_122.

post-war Britain. This article, drawing on a range of archival material will evaluate the extent to which wartime controls impinged on the lives of Belgian refugees, Lithuanian migrants and black African and Caribbean colonial subjects living in wartime Scotland. In exploring British government policy and practice towards refugees, migrants and colonial peoples using a case study of the above-mentioned groups, this article provides an historical perspective on an issue which became a wartime priority in First World War Britain and which remains globally relevant in the 21st century.

In keeping with the interests of this journal, this article draws extensively on archival material. However, it is important to indicate the extent to which this subject has been dealt with by historians. For the history of black colonial people in Britain during the period of the First World War and riots immediately after see Killingray, Evans, Fryer, May and Cohen, and Rowe.³ The history of migrant Lithuanians in Scotland in this period is covered by Lunn, Maitles, Rodgers and White.⁴ For Belgian refugees see works by Cahalan, Gatrell, Kushner and Knox, Pennell, and Purseigle.⁵ In the works just noted, while the history of Lithuanian migrants in Scotland has received some specific

³ D. Killingray, 'All the King's Men? Blacks in the British Army in the First World War, 1914–1918', in (ed.) R. Lotz and I. Pegg, *Under the Imperial Carpet: Essays in Black History 1780–1950* (Crawley, 1987), 164–81; N. Evans, 'The South Wales Race Riots of 1919', *Llafur*, 3, no. 1 (1980), 5–29; N. Evans, 'The South Wales Race Riots of 1919: a documentary postscript', *Llafur*, 3, no. 4 (1983), 79–85; N. Evans, 'Red Summers 1917–1919', *History Today*, 51, no. 2 (2001), 28–33; P. Fryer, *Staying Power: A History of Black People in Britain*, 2nd edn (London, 2010), 298–316; R. May and R. Cohen, 'The Interaction between Race and Colonialism: A Case Study of the Liverpool Race Riots of 1919', *Race and Class*, 16, no. 2 (1974), 111–26; M. Rowe, 'Sex, "Race" and Riot in Liverpool, 1919', *Immigrants & Minorities*, 19, no. 2 (2000), 53–70.

⁴ K. Lunn 'Reactions to Lithuanians and Polish Immigrants in the Lanarkshire Coalfield 1870–1914', in (ed.) K. Lunn, *Hosts, Immigrants, and Minorities: Historical Responses to Newcomers in British Society, 1870–1914* (Folkestone, 1980), 308–42; H. Maitles, 'Attitudes to Jewish Immigration in the West of Scotland to 1905', *Scottish Economic & Social History*, 15, no. 1 (1995), 44–65; M. Rodgers, 'The Anglo–Russian Military Convention and the Lithuanian Immigrant Community in Lanarkshire, Scotland, 1914–1920', *Immigrants & Minorities*, 1, no. 1 (1982), 60–88; M. Rodgers, 'The Lanarkshire Lithuanians', in (ed.) B. Kay, *The Complete Odyssey: Voices from Scotland's Recent Past* (Edinburgh, 1990), 19–25; J. D. White 'Scottish Lithuanians and the Russian Revolution', *Journal of Baltic Studies*, 6, no. 1 (1975), 1–8.

⁵ P. Cahalan, *Belgian Refugee Relief in England during the Great War* (New York, 1982); P. Gatrell, *The Making of the Modern Refugee* (Oxford, 2013); T. Kushner, 'Local Heroes: Belgian Refugees in Britain during the First World War', *Immigrants & Minorities*, 18, no. 1 (1999), 1–28; T. Kushner and K. Knox, *Refugees in an Age of Genocide: Global, National and Local Perspectives during the Twentieth Century* (London, 1999); C. Pennell, *A Kingdom United? Popular Responses to the Outbreak of the First World War in Britain and Ireland* (Oxford, 2012); P. Purseigle, "'A Wave on to our Shores": The Exile and Resettlement of Refugees from the Western Front, 1914–1918', *Contemporary European History*, 16, no. 4 (2007), 427–44.

coverage, the history of black colonial settlers from Africa and the Caribbean, and that of Scotland's Belgian wartime refugees have been less well covered. However, the current author has written extensively on these subjects with particular reference to public reactions and official policy development and implementation towards migrant and refugee groups.⁶

In the course of researching wider British official and public reactions to migrants, immigrants and refugees during the years in and around the First World War a distinctive Scottish experience has been evident in a range of archival material accessed in local Scottish and wider UK archives. This article focuses on three groups of wartime or recent late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century arrivals in Scotland – Belgian refugees, Lithuanian refugees/economic migrants and black British colonial migrants. For the purposes of this article three areas which affected these groups of settlers in Scotland have been selected for discussion. By way of introduction the varied reasons for, and processes of the arrival of, these groups will be set out. This is followed by an investigation into access to employment of these groups, including both supportive and hostile local reactions this often provoked. Finally, the implementation of a government policy of repatriation which impacted on all three groups during and after the First World War will be considered.

During the First World War Scotland housed around 20,000 Belgian refugees. This constituted about 8–10 per cent of Britain's wartime Belgian refugee population of up to 250,000, prompted by the German invasion in August 1914.⁷ Arriving at a time of wide media circulation of German atrocity stories and in many cases in a distressed condition, Belgian refugees were given a warm reception.⁸ This was particularly so in the early months of the war before Britain experienced its own mass wartime casualties. In delivering 'Home Front' support for Belgian refugees, Glasgow, the 'second city of Empire' and

⁶ The present author's most recent relevant works include J. Jenkinson, 'Black Sailors on Red Clydeside: Rioting, Reactionary Trade Unionism and Conflicting Notions of Britishness following the First World War', *Twentieth Century British History*, 19, no. 1 (January 2008), 29–60; *Black 1919: Riots, Racism and Resistance in Imperial Britain* (Liverpool, 2009); "'All in the Same Uniform'?: The Participation of Black Colonial Residents in the British Armed Forces in the First World War', *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, 40, no. 2 (2012), 207–30; 'Welfare Agencies and Migrant Settlers in Scotland, c.1919–1922', in (ed.) M. Freeman, E. Gordon and K. Maglen, *Medicine, Law and Public Policy in Scotland c.1850–1990* (Dundee, 2011), 49–68; 'The Impact of the First World War on Migrant Lithuanians in Scotland, c.1917–1921', *Immigrants & Minorities*, 31, no. 2 (2013), 171–88; 'Introduction: Soon Gone, Long Forgotten: Uncovering British responses to Belgian refugees during the First World War', *Immigrants & Minorities*, 34, no. 2 (2016), 101–12; 'Administering Relief: Glasgow Corporation's support for Scotland's c.20,000 Belgian refugees', *Immigrants & Minorities*, 34, no. 2 (2016), 171–91.

⁷ For example, injured Belgian soldiers were treated in autumn 1914 at Glasgow's Victoria Infirmary: *Glasgow Herald*, 'Belgian refugees – what Glasgow has done', 23 October 1914, 8.

⁸ Pennell, *A Kingdom United?*, 129.

with a tradition of municipal innovation, desired to play a prominent role, independent of central government financial support.⁹ In early October 1914 the first large group numbering 3,000 refugees arrived in Glasgow. In making arrangements for the reception, dispersal and accommodation for such a large influx of refugees, a hastily arranged subcommittee of Glasgow's magistrates was formally constituted as the Glasgow Corporation Belgian Refugee Committee.¹⁰

As refugees continued to arrive in late 1914 and into 1915, the Glasgow Committee arranged to house the majority of Scotland's Belgian refugees within the city. Other cities, notably Edinburgh, Dundee and Aberdeen, and smaller towns such as Dunfermline and Kirkcaldy, paid for the rent, furnishing and upkeep, and for the costs of feeding and clothing the refugees housed in designated hostels in Glasgow. Other smaller groups were welcomed into those parts of the country (including Paisley, Dumbarton, Helensburgh, Crieff and Perth) that were not designated wartime 'prohibited areas', which prevented refugee settlement anywhere down the east coast of Scotland.

Belgian refugees were, however, financially supported from all areas of Scotland. Members of the Glasgow Committee travelled all round the country attending dozens of meetings each year of the war, raising awareness of the ongoing plight of Belgian refugees and accepting donations to support their upkeep. For example, the magistrates' committee minutes recorded for 1915 that it had held meetings in 79 towns around Scotland from Aberfeldy to Wick.¹¹ By the end of the war the Glasgow Committee had itself raised £190,000 (around £11.8 million today) and a further £170,000 (equivalent to £10.5 million) was raised around the rest of Scotland.

Unlike Belgian refugees there was no wartime settlement of Lithuanians. Instead, refugees and migrant workers came to Scotland, particularly into Lanarkshire, in the last decade of the nineteenth century and in the early years of the twentieth century. Many Lithuanians fled the 'Russification' process which denied the use of the Lithuanian language, led to the suppression of Lithuanian literature and enforced military conscription. Between 1891 and 1901 the number of people generically recorded as 'Russian Poles' in the Scottish census rose from 478 to 4,929 and by 1911 it was over 11,000.¹²

The majority of African and Caribbean people who came to Scotland lived and worked in Glasgow, whose black colonial population was established in

⁹ Jenkinson, 'Administering Relief', 171–91, especially 173–4.

¹⁰ *Glasgow Herald*, 29 July 1916, 9.

¹¹ Glasgow City Archives (hereafter GCA), C1 3.54, Minutes of Glasgow Corporation magistrates' committee, November 1915–April 1916, 4 January 1916.

¹² The 1911 census recorded a combined total of 11,032 Russians, Poles, Lithuanians and Finns. Only from 1921 were Lithuanians separately recorded: [http://www.histpop.org/ohpr/servelet/PageBrowser?path=Census%20\(by%20date\)/1921&active=yes&mno=168&tocstate=expandnew&display=sections&display=tables&display=pagetitles&pageseq=37](http://www.histpop.org/ohpr/servelet/PageBrowser?path=Census%20(by%20date)/1921&active=yes&mno=168&tocstate=expandnew&display=sections&display=tables&display=pagetitles&pageseq=37).

the nineteenth century. Glasgow was a thriving port and the black colonial population included many merchant sailors although earlier arrivals included individual slaves and servants who were employed as a form of 'status symbol' in Glasgow's great houses. This is shown by the marginal anonymous black slave just visible in the portrait of Glasgow tobacco lord John Glassford and his family on display at the People's Palace in Glasgow.¹³ By the early twentieth century the Glasgow black colonial population included families, students, professionals and skilled workers as well as sailors. This community supported its own political organisation, the African Races Association of Glasgow and a social club, described in the press as a private 'coloured men's club' named the Order of the Star of Bethlehem's Shepherds.¹⁴

Numbers of African and Caribbean merchant sailors rose during the War to fill the void left by white British merchant sailors who volunteered for the Royal Navy or after 1916 were called up for conscripted military service. There are no precise numbers for the black colonial population in Glasgow since census records did not identify heritage when listing colonial subjects by place of birth. However, the signing of a petition by 132 black colonial sailors left unemployed and destitute in Glasgow in March 1919 indicates a presence of hundreds of sailors alongside other working-class people as well as a middle-class presence of students and business people. One of the signatories to the letters protesting about post-war unemployment among black colonial sailors was West Indian Cornelius Johnstone who had set up the Order of the Star of Bethlehem's Shepherds in the Gorbals district in late 1918 to cater for the increased wartime black colonial population.¹⁵ Employment opportunities for overseas settlers including black British colonial people were expanded during the First World War although this often generated concern, in particular among local trade unions, as will next be discussed.

In spite of the initial welcome and long-term humanitarian commitment shown by Glasgow and other local authorities, concern was expressed that Belgians had the potential to become a cheap replacement labour force and drive down wages. For example, at a meeting of Glasgow Corporation in November 1914, Labour councillor Patrick Dollan posed the question: 'how many Belgian joiners had been engaged in the erection of huts for the Corporation battalions at Gailes [in Irvine, Ayrshire] to the exclusion of home joiners?' Baillie Mason replied that there had been difficulty finding 'good' local joiners and the Belgian joiners had received full wages 'and gave satisfaction'. His concession that any good local joiner who went to Gailes would be engaged drew applause from the

¹³ John Glassford and family, portrait by Archibald McLauchlan, c.1767. View the image at *The Glasgow Story*: <http://www.theglasgowstory.com/image/?inum=TGSE00539>.

¹⁴ *Glasgow Herald*, 3 November 1919, 9.

¹⁵ The National Archives (hereafter TNA), Colonial Office (hereafter CO) 323/812, Letter from sailors in Glasgow to the offices of *John Bull*, forwarded to the CO, 4 March 1919 and CO 323/813, Letter from 'delegates of coloured seamen in Glasgow' to CO, 7 May 1919.

meeting.¹⁶ Labour councillor John Wheatley raised the issue again two weeks later. This time Baillie Mason replied that the whole question of Belgian refugee employment had been referred by the government to the labour exchanges and that Belgians in work were getting ‘trade union rates of wages’.¹⁷

Note the more general point that both trade unions and socialist groupings at times supported and at others challenged the rights of Belgians, Lithuanians, and African and Caribbean colonial people resident and working in Scotland. For example, in June 1915 the National Amalgamated Furnishing Trades Association, Glasgow branch number 23, wrote a letter to the Glasgow Corporation Belgian Refugee Committee expressing concerns over the employment of Belgian refugees.¹⁸ Meanwhile trade unions were among regular subscribers in support of the refugees. For example, the Lanarkshire Miners’ County Union gave £100 in October 1915 and £130 in May 1916 to the same committee in subscriptions towards the upkeep of refugees.¹⁹

The government policy of employing Belgian refugee workers through labour exchanges with payments at the going rates led to the widespread employment of adult refugees within months of their first arrival. By April 1918 a total of 57,000 Belgian refugees were registered as employed around Britain. This information was included in the 1920 overview report on the settlement of Belgian refugees in Britain produced by the Ministry of Health.²⁰ Securing employment meant that refugees could contribute towards their own living costs, and also allowed them to move out of hostels and into private accommodation. Among the 57,000 Belgian refugee workers were 10,000 women or 17.5 per cent of the workforce. This compares unfavourably with the relative percentages of local Scots women in the Scottish workforce which according to Scottish census statistics was 28.7 per cent in 1911 and 29.2 per cent in 1921.²¹ Using a 25 per cent sample of the 10,000 working female refugees, the 1918 survey discovered that 95 per cent of these were employed as domestic servants. However, the survey acknowledged that many other Belgian refugee women were employed outside the formal labour market. An estimated 1,000 ‘girls’ were teachers in specially created Belgian schools.²² Female refugee employment patterns on arrival in Scotland, although broadly similar, showed that Belgian women’s occupations were more

¹⁶ *Glasgow Evening Citizen*, 12 November 1914, 2.

¹⁷ *Glasgow Herald*, 27 November 1914, 5.

¹⁸ GCA, C1 3.53, Minutes of Glasgow Corporation magistrates’ committee, April 1915–November 1915, 15 June 1915.

¹⁹ *Glasgow Herald*, 4 October 1915, 7 and 20 May 1916, 10.

²⁰ Ministry of Health, *Report on the work undertaken by the British Government in the reception and care of the Belgian refugee* (London, 1920), 87.

²¹ *Report on the Thirteenth Census of Scotland, 1921, III: Occupations and Industries*, vi, <http://www.histpop.org/ohpr/servlet/PageBrowser2?ResourceType=Census&SearchTerms=female%20occupations%20scotland%201921&simple=yes&path=Results&active=yes&titlepos=0&mno=227&pageseq=6>.

²² Ministry of Health, *Report on ... reception and care of the Belgian refugee*, 87.

varied at home than the formal jobs taken up by female refugees in Britain. The 1914/15 register recorded 2,730 females over the age of 12; of these, 668 had listed occupations (24.5 per cent). The largest occupation undertaken at home in Belgium among women refugees recorded in the Scottish register was domestic service of some kind, with 155 women recorded as employed in occupations ranging from housekeeper to ladies' maid, and from cook to charwoman, but when grouped together (among 193 different job descriptions supplied) this amounted to 23 per cent of the jobs undertaken by working women in Belgium. The next most common occupations were dressmaking and tailoring which accounted for 101 females in the Glasgow Belgian refugee register, 62 of whom were dressmakers. A 1916 survey of Belgian refugees undertaken by de Jastrzebski, a member of the General Register Office tasked with compiling the central register of Belgian refugees for the government, also gave these two jobs combined as the next highest occupation of women.²³ Thereafter, the varied original occupations of fleeing female refugees did not follow such predictable patterns and included 32 nuns and 15 fish merchants, an inspector of Bell telephones and a level-crossing keeper.²⁴

Lithuanians formed a reserve army of labour in the pre-war Scottish workforce, chiefly employed in mining and iron and steel production. As with Belgian refugees in the wartime labour market, Lithuanians in the mines attracted the adverse attention of trade unions such as the Ayrshire miners' union led by James Keir Hardie who, while supporting the rights of refugees to enter the country, vocally opposed the hiring of cheaper, unskilled foreign labour in his evidence to the 1889 Select Committee on Emigration and Immigration.²⁵ Mining remained the main employment for male Lithuanians into the twentieth century. Of the 5,000 Russian Poles, including Lithuanians, recorded in the 1901 Scottish census, 1,135 were coal miners. By the time of the 1911 census, 2,611 Russian Poles among a population of 11,000 were employed as coal miners.²⁶ Few Lithuanian workers were employed in mining elsewhere in Britain. In 1912 Home Secretary Reginald McKenna enumerated roughly 2,400 'Poles' in Scottish mines and only around 100 elsewhere when questioned on the numbers of 'foreign colliers' in parliament.²⁷ By the time

²³ T. T. S. de Jastrzebski, 'The Register of Belgian Refugees', *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*, 79, no. 2 (March 1916), 133–58, especially 146.

²⁴ All Scottish Belgian refugee employment figures obtained from digitised version of GCA, D-CA12/2–4, *Glasgow Register of Belgian refugees* 1914/1915.

²⁵ 1889 Select Committee on Emigration and Immigration (Foreigners), http://parlipapers.chadwyck.co.uk/fullrec/fullrec.do?area=hcpp&resultNum=23&entries=86&source=conficfg&queryId=.../session/1450451927_15287&fulltexthits=1167. See also Maitles, 'Attitudes to Jewish Immigration in the West of Scotland', 44–65, especially 57–8.

²⁶ Lunn, 'Reactions to Lithuanians and Polish Immigrants', 310, 314.

²⁷ HOC, Home Secretary McKenna questioned on foreign colliers, 27 March 1912, XXXVI, col. 568, http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/written_answers/1912/mar/27/foreign-colliers.

of the First World War many Lithuanians, not only miners, were active trade union members and had formed left-wing political groups with links to British political movements. For example, delegates from the Lithuanian Working Women's Association set up in Scotland received support from Sylvia Pankhurst and other members of the Women's Suffrage Federation during a visit to London in 1917.²⁸

Under the Anglo–Russian (Military Service) Convention passed in August 1917, Lithuanian men of military age were given the choice of enlisting in the British Army or returning to the former Russian Empire to join the Russian Army.²⁹ While recognising the 'useful work' undertaken by Lithuanians in key areas of Scottish war production such as mining and the iron and steel industries, Home Office officials decided that 'it would be impossible to extend any special concession to any classes of men, as this would lead to complaints of unfair treatment by the English workmen'.³⁰ Around 1,100 Lithuanians left Scotland under the Convention to join the Russian forces and a further 700 joined the British Army.³¹

Home Office files searched in The National Archives reveal government and police concerns over socialist tendencies among Lithuanians in wartime influenced the decision not to exempt Lithuanian miners from military service. A Home Office memorandum of August 1917 noted:

The great majority, if not practically all the miners of military age have elected for Russia: in the belief, according to the police, that they will somehow or other evade service there. The Chief Constable of Glasgow says of the 500 Lithuanians in Glasgow that they are all regarded as Socialists or revolutionaries.³²

The view of Hamilton's Chief Constable Despard was similar: 'Bellshill is the centre of the largest Polish [*sic*] population in Lanarkshire, and is the place where the meetings of the most advanced Socialistic and Anarchist Poles have been held over the last twenty years'.³³

²⁸ For more on this visit see Jenkinson, 'Impact of the First World War on Migrant Lithuanians in Scotland', 171–88, especially 177.

²⁹ The Anglo–Russian (Military Service) Convention passed in June 1917 was an agreement reached between the British and the Provisional Russian government as part of the Military Service (Conventions with Allied States) Act. See parliamentary debates for a full discussion of its contents at <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1917/jun/08/military-service-conventions-with-allied>.

³⁰ TNA, Home Office (hereafter HO) 45/10821/318095/421, Home Office memorandum on applications to return to Russia under the military service convention, 16 August 1917. See Rodgers, 'Anglo–Russian Military Convention', 60–88.

³¹ TNA, HO 45/10821/318095/421, Home Office memorandum on applications to return to Russia under the military service convention, 16 August 1917.

³² TNA, HO 45/10821/318095/421, Letter from Captain H. J. Despard, Chief Constable of Hamilton, Lanarkshire to Mr J. F. Henderson, Home Office, 15 August 1917.

The proclamation of Lithuanian independence in December 1917 and the signing of the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty with Germany in March 1918 left many Lithuanian soldiers stranded in Russia. It also left their families in Scotland without a crucial breadwinner since those who could not prove they had fought alongside the Allies rather than switch to the revolutionary Soviet forces were not permitted to return to Scotland.³⁴ In the enforced absence of adult males many hundreds of wives and dependent children were faced with destitution. Lithuanian women took jobs locally in brickmaking and as surface workers in the mines in order to augment the family income.³⁵

Lithuanian families also received trade union and left-wing political support. Some families were directly helped by the Lanarkshire Miners' County Union which had also contributed financial support to Belgian refugees. The union threatened strike action if Lithuanian dependants living in company houses were evicted.³⁶ William Adamson, leader of the Labour Party, MP for West Fife (and a former miner and miners' union leader), voiced concerns over the poverty among Lithuanian and Polish miners' families in parliament in November 1917 asking: 'whether steps can be taken to provide these people with financial assistance in view of their being bereft of their breadwinners.'³⁷ Replying for the government, Secretary for Scotland Liberal MP Robert Munro recognised that this was an exceptional case beyond the scope of regular local poor relief arrangements: 'I am in communication with the Treasury in the hope that some special and immediate form of assistance may be granted'.³⁸

From 1918 the government provided an emergency destitute aliens' grant to families who could not support themselves which was paid out by local parish councils and reclaimed from the Treasury. On application to the parish an adult received a destitute aliens' grant of 12s. 6d. per week plus an additional 2s. 6d. per child. This sum was well below the average miner's wage of eight shillings per day and led to further hardship. A call for government action to end the 'depression, disease and death' among west of Scotland Lithuanian families formed part of the celebrated 'speech from the dock' by John Maclean, Glasgow teacher and Marxist member of the British Socialist Party, at the High Court in Edinburgh on 9 May 1918 following his arrest for sedition the previous month. He blamed the suffering of Scottish Lithuanians on the British government decision to 'send Russian subjects back to Russia

³⁴ White, 'Scottish Lithuanians and the Russian Revolution', 1–8, especially 7.

³⁵ Jenkinson, 'Welfare Agencies and Migrant Settlers in Scotland', 49–68, especially 54.

³⁶ Jenkinson, 'Impact of the First World War on Migrant Lithuanians in Scotland', 178.

³⁷ HOC, Question by Labour leader William Adamson on destitute Lithuanians in Scotland, 29 November 1917, XCIX, col. 2219, <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1917/nov/29/polish-and-lithuanian-miners-families>.

³⁸ HOC, Reply by Scottish Secretary Robert Munro to question by William Adamson, 29 November 1917, XCIX, col. 2219, <http://hansard.millbanksystems.com/commons/1917/nov/29/polish-and-lithuanian-miners-families>.

to fight' and the inadequate level of the destitute aliens' grant.³⁹ Maclean was sentenced to five years' imprisonment but was released at the Armistice.

Throughout the period 1918–22 the Treasury grudgingly paid out the grant and often discussed ending it entirely. Payments made under the grant were placed under review, capped, and only renewed for three months at a time.⁴⁰ In January 1920 the Bothwell town clerk revealed the frustrations this arrangement caused the parish council, noting that the local authority 'resented this system of continuing the grant from month to month, which caused no end of trouble to officials and others'.⁴¹ The uncertainty this caused to the grant's recipients may be imagined. For parish councils in areas of concentrated Lithuanian settlement administering the grant and making additional payments represented a heavy financial burden. Towns in Lanarkshire were most affected.⁴² The parish of Bothwell, which included the town of Bellshill, bore the brunt of the financial cost.⁴³ The long-term absence of the breadwinner also placed a burden on local authorities to find replacement housing for the Lithuanian dependants eventually evicted from mining company houses.

During the war, black colonial sailors were employed from Glasgow and other British seaports without restrictions. However, the reduction in the merchant shipping fleet at the end of the war and the flooded job market following the demobilisation of many thousands of sailors from the Royal Navy and the other armed forces meant that black colonial British sailors faced post-war unemployment. Growing competition for employment was compounded by the attitudes of the sailors' unions which sought to enforce a 'colour' bar on black sailors. While the National Sailors' and Firemen's Union (NSFU) tolerated black members, their stated policy was to replace them with white labour (including non-British) wherever possible. In Glasgow, the Seafarers' Union led by prominent local trade union leader, and future Labour MP, Emanuel Shinwell went a step further and barred black colonial membership of the union.

Post-war job competition led to a riot in Glasgow harbour in January 1919, a few hours after a mass meeting of members of the Seafarers' Union addressed by Shinwell, when a large crowd of white sailors attacked and chased a group of black West African sailors out of the shipping yard in James Watt Street. The local press disagreed over which group was being favoured with access to jobs on the day of the harbour riot, but were in agreement in citing severe competition for jobs as the cause of the unrest.⁴⁴ The riot in Glasgow was just

³⁹ From John Maclean's speech from the dock 9 May 1918, John Maclean Internet archive <https://www.marxists.org/archive/maclean/works/1918-dock.htm>.

⁴⁰ North Lanarkshire Archives (hereafter NLA), CO1/23/18, Minutes of Bothwell parish council, 5 January 1920.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² NLA, CO1/23/18, Minutes of Bothwell parish council, 11 September 1919.

⁴³ NLA, CO1/23/18, Minutes of Bothwell parish council, 31 July 1919.

⁴⁴ *The Bulletin*, 24 January 1919, 2. For more on the causes of the Glasgow harbour rioting see Jenkinson, 'Black Sailors on Red Clydeside', 29–60, especially 29–33.

one in a wave of nine riots which broke out in seaports around Britain in the months between January and August 1919. These peaked in June 1919 when widespread riots in Liverpool, Cardiff, Newport and Barry led to the deaths of five people.⁴⁵

During the Glasgow riot, over 30 black colonial sailors were forced to leave the merchant shipping yard and take refuge in their nearby boarding house. White rioters surrounded it, smashed the windows and then forced entry. In response, some of the black sailors fired shots down at the crowd. Cornered in their boarding house the black sailors offered no resistance when the police force entered the premises. However, to restore order, the police removed 30 black people from the boarding house and into 'protective custody'. All were subsequently charged with riot and weapons offences, although only three were convicted. None of the large crowd of white rioters was arrested. This imbalance in police actions and court proceedings was reproduced in seaport riot locations around Britain during 1919.⁴⁶

Biased official responses to the riots and their causes continued with the implementation of a government policy of paid repatriation of colonial workers to Africa, the Caribbean and Arab territories in June 1919. To encourage departure and promote the idea of repatriation among black colonial sailors the government put up cash incentives of voyage and settlement allowances totalling £6. South Asian sailors were not included in this initiative because they were hired on specific 'Lascar' service contracts which meant that employers signed them on for round-trip voyages and were obliged to provide accommodation and fund repatriation in cases where the full return journey could not be completed.⁴⁷ Around 2,000 black colonial workers and dependants were repatriated from Glasgow and the other ports. For those who stayed on, as they were entitled as British colonial subjects, employment opportunities were limited. In 1920 the Glasgow branch of the philanthropic Charity Organisation Society aided some of Glasgow's destitute black sailors. Others were admitted to Barnhill poor house suffering from cold and hunger.⁴⁸ In February 1920, the Scottish Board of Health recorded that there were over 100 long-term unemployed black colonial workers in Glasgow who were no longer eligible for out-of-work payments. It was forwarded to the Colonial Office for consideration. The longer-term future of black colonial Glaswegians remained bleak as the post-war recession worsened in the early 1920s. By 1921, 20 per cent of the Scottish workforce was unemployed.⁴⁹

Schemes of repatriation were also implemented by central government after the war to end the economic costs entailed in supporting Belgians, and

⁴⁵ For a detailed discussion see Jenkinson, *Black 1919*.

⁴⁶ Jenkinson, *Black 1919*, 131–54.

⁴⁷ TNA, CO 323/814 275–78, Colonial Office memorandum on the 'Conference on the Repatriation of Coloured Men', 19 June 1919.

⁴⁸ *Glasgow Herald*, 26 February 1920, 10.

⁴⁹ I. Levitt, *Poverty and Welfare in Scotland, 1890–1948* (Edinburgh, 1988), 112, 115.

in seeking to end the financial burden associated with paying the destitute aliens' grant to Lithuanian families in Scotland. When war ended, repatriation arrangements for Belgian refugees were swiftly put into operation, utilising plans in place since 1917. The Glasgow Committee's remit over Belgian refugees in Scotland extended to repatriation, as a report in the *Glasgow Herald* newspaper was at pains to point out in January 1919: 'So far as Scotland is concerned, the work of the repatriation is under the charge of the Glasgow Corporation Belgian Committee, who, all along have had the charge of the Belgian refugees throughout Scotland'.⁵⁰

Many refugees dispersed around Britain headed for London at the end of the war hoping to make a speedy return across the Channel. The bulk of those remaining in Scotland left in December 1918 and January 1919, and totalled 2,846 refugees.⁵¹ A further group left in March and by April 1919 the Glasgow Committee reported that of 'nearly 20,000 refugees who received hospitality in Scotland only 480 remain'.⁵² Some Belgian refugees stayed on to work in Scotland after the war, although Scottish census figures recorded only a small increase in residents from 137 in 1911 to 194 in 1921.⁵³ Applications from two Belgian women to the Department of Employment to bring in workers from Belgium for their confectionery and dressmaking businesses were recorded in the Glasgow Chief Constable's letter books in mid-1919.⁵⁴

The Treasury's post-war commitment to cost-cutting meant it sought to permanently rid itself of the burden of payments to the Lithuanian dependants and became a driving force behind a repatriation scheme for Lithuanians. Domestic political reasons were a further consideration in the desire to repatriate Lithuanians who continued to be labelled as socialist agitators.⁵⁵ Only the absence of shipping facilities to states of the former Russian empire immediately after the war delayed the move.⁵⁶

The official announcement of the plan to repatriate Lithuanian dependants in January 1920 was quickly followed by the departure of the first party in mid-February. The minutes of the Scottish Board of Health show that in

⁵⁰ *Glasgow Herald*, 1 January 1919, 3.

⁵¹ GCA, C1 3.60, Minutes of Glasgow Corporation magistrates' committee, volume for November 1918–April 1919, 27 January 1919.

⁵² *Glasgow Herald*, 2 April 1919, 10.

⁵³ *Report on the Thirteenth Census of Scotland*, 1921, 'Population, ages, conjugal condition, orphanhood, birthplaces, Gaelic-speaking, housing, Scotland', xxxi–xxxii, [http://www.histpop.org/ohpr/servlet/PageBrowser?path=Browse/Census%20\(by%20date\)/1921/Scotland&active=yes&mno=168&tocstate=expandnew&tocseq=1400&display=section&display=tables&display=pagetitles&pageseq=first-nonblank](http://www.histpop.org/ohpr/servlet/PageBrowser?path=Browse/Census%20(by%20date)/1921/Scotland&active=yes&mno=168&tocstate=expandnew&tocseq=1400&display=section&display=tables&display=pagetitles&pageseq=first-nonblank).

⁵⁴ GCA, E4/2/30, Letter from Glasgow Chief Constable to Department of Employment, Glasgow Chief Constable's letter book Number 154, June–August 1919, entry for 30 June 1919.

⁵⁵ Rodgers, 'Anglo–Russian Military Convention', 76.

⁵⁶ Rodgers, 'Anglo–Russian Military Convention', 75.

Scotland the repatriation costs were met by the Board.⁵⁷ The largest party left Glasgow on 11 March on a specially arranged service by Caledonian Railway, bound for Southampton.⁵⁸ The train had about 240 women and children on board. Their departure attracted some press attention. The *Glasgow Herald* reported that ‘some 60 families from the coalfields of Lanarkshire’ were on board including ‘flaxen-haired, rosy-cheeked children’.⁵⁹ According to Rodgers over 400 Lithuanian dependants left Scotland through repatriation.⁶⁰ Bothwell parish council minutes reveal that around 100 women and 263 children from different parishes throughout Scotland had been repatriated by May 1920 and there were later departures. By September 1920, 63 women and 174 children had left Bothwell parish alone.⁶¹

The decision to embark on a repatriation programme for Lithuanian dependants did not end the financial burden on the Treasury and local parish councils since those who remained were entitled to poor relief as established parish residents. The economic depression during 1921 meant remaining Lithuanian miners struggled for work, while Lithuanian women had little chance of gaining employment. In fact the sum paid out in destitute aliens’ grant increased during 1921. For example, in Bothwell parish it was claimed that almost 350 Lithuanian families were ‘likely to become a permanent burden upon rates’.⁶² The grant was renewed until June 1922.⁶³ The Lithuanian population in Scotland was reduced from its combined peak of 11,000 Russian Poles in 1911 following the departure of 1,110 men to join the Russian army in 1917 and the concerted attempt to remove remaining refugees during the repatriations of 1920. Scottish census figures for 1921 recorded 3,030 Lithuanian-born people, although this does not include locally born children. Lithuanians were also among the 944 Russians, Lithuanians and Poles combined who were naturalised between 1911 and 1921.⁶⁴ Occupational tables from the 1931 census for Scotland show 1,454 Lithuanian males

⁵⁷ National Archives of Scotland (hereafter NAS), HH75/02, Minutes of the Scottish Board of Health, 13 April 1920.

⁵⁸ NAS, HH75/02, Minutes of the Scottish Board of Health, 13 May 1920.

⁵⁹ *Glasgow Herald*, 12 March 1920, 15.

⁶⁰ Rodgers, ‘Lanarkshire Lithuanians’, 19–25, 24.

⁶¹ NLA, CO1/23/19. Minutes of Bothwell parish council, 9 September 1920.

⁶² NLA, CO1/23/18. Minutes of Bothwell parish council, 13 May 1920.

⁶³ The decision by the Treasury conveyed by the Scottish Board of Health to Bothwell parish in a letter from May 1921 was to reduce payment levels per person but to maintain the payments for a further year. NLA, CO1/23/19. Letter from Scottish Board of Health to Bothwell parish council, 12 May 1921.

⁶⁴ *Report on the Thirteenth Census of Scotland*, 1921, ‘Population, ages, conjugal condition, orphanhood, birthplaces, Gaelic-speaking, housing, Scotland’, xxxii–xxxiii, <http://www.histpop.org/ohpr/servlet/PageBrowser2?ResourceType=Census&ResourceType=Legislation&ResourceType=Registrar%20General&SearchTerms=aliens&simple=yes&path=Results&active=yes&treestate=expandnew&titlepos=0&mmo=168&tocstate=expandnew&display=sections&display=tables&display=pagetitles&pageseq=37>.

‘gainfully occupied’, including 902 miners (down from around 2,500 in 1911 and 1912). The figure of female workers was only 156 (including 45 textile workers), which represented only 11.5 per cent of the 1,359 female Lithuanian-born population.⁶⁵

Neither local nor enemy, these groups of friendly aliens and colonial settlers in Scotland faced common aspects of wartime controls, particularly over employment and through post-war repatriation. Belgian refugees occupied a distinctive and transitory position in Scottish First World War history. Belgian refugees, although initially warmly welcomed, were quickly regarded with suspicion as potentially lowering wage rates and then became absorbed into the domestic workforce, as the typical pattern of female employment opportunity discussed here has shown. Moreover, Belgian wartime refugees overwhelmingly left Scotland willingly. This was not the case for the other groups considered in this article.

The First World War dramatically altered the lives of migrant Lithuanian workers and families in Scotland. The operation of the Anglo–Russian Military Convention of 1917 led to the enlistment of 1,100 Lithuanian adult males into the Russian army and 700 to the British Army, leaving thousands of Lithuanian dependants unsupported in Scotland. Those in need were assisted by local authorities, yet parish councils, including Bothwell parish, expressed anger at the government policies which caused the situation, as they struggled to cope with an increased financial burden.

Repatriation was the cure-all proposed by central government to end the economic costs entailed in preventing destitution among Lithuanian families. However, this was never a complete solution as hundreds of destitute families who refused repatriation had still to be maintained. By 1921, long-term unemployment and growing poverty levels were apparent in large sections of the working class, so that Lithuanian families in Scotland were increasingly part of a much wider group of long-term recipients of unemployment and poor relief.

The riots in Glasgow harbour and other seaports in 1919 demonstrated that black colonial workers were regarded as an ‘alien’ presence in the workforce. Following mass unrest, white rioters were appeased by the launch of an extended programme of repatriation in the summer of 1919 and over 2,000 black colonial workers were forced out of Britain under protest; meanwhile, the remainder were left facing long-term unemployment in Glasgow and other ailing seaports.

In comparing these groups it is clear that wartime restrictions initially intended to curb the freedom of enemy alien nationals were soon extended to

⁶⁵ *Fourteenth Census of Scotland, 1931, III: Occupations and Industries, Scotland*, xxxiv–xxxv. <http://www.histpop.org/ohpr/servlet/PageBrowser2?ResourceType=Census&ResourceType=Legislation&ResourceType=Essays&ResourceType=Registrar%20General&ResourceType=TNA&SearchTerms=lithuanians&simple=yes&path=Results&active=yes&titlepos=0&mno=310&pageseq=35>.

black colonial and friendly alien settlers as this Scottish case study has shown. This was evident in respect of wartime employment and military service policies and by the repatriation programmes of the immediate post-war years. While Belgian wartime refugees overwhelmingly returned home, many members of the other groups stayed on in Scotland, resisting government pressure to leave.