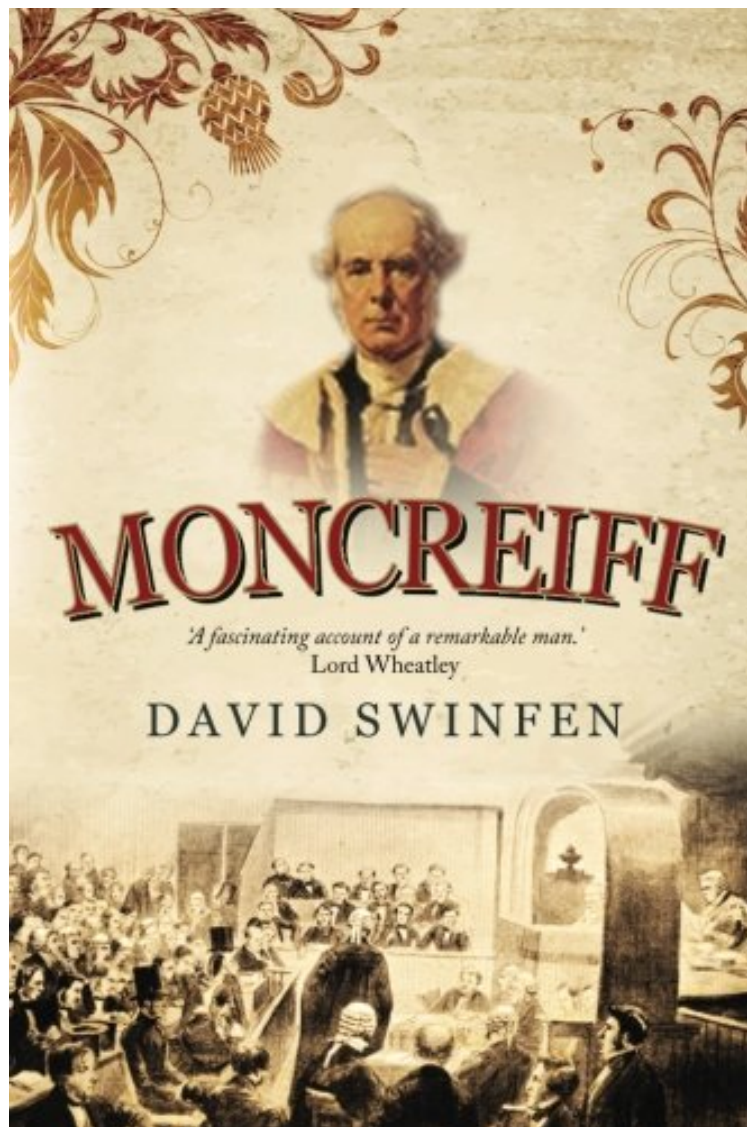


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Moncreiff: The life and career of James Wellwood Moncreiff, 1811-1895, 1st Baron Moncreiff of Tullibole

David Swinfen

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Moncreiff: The life and career of James Wellwood Moncreiff, 1811-1895, 1st Baron Moncreiff of Tullibole:

James Wellwood Moncreiff (1811-1895), 1st Baron Moncreiff of Tullibole, was a man of many talents. An outstanding lawyer, he took a leading part in some of the most high profile cases of the century defending the Scottish Chartist leaders against a charge of sedition in 1848, prosecuting Madeleine Smith for the murder of L'Angelier in 1857, and supporting Theresa Longworth in her long and very public campaign to have her marriage to Major Charles Yelverton legally recognised. Together with other members of his family he was centrally involved in the events which led ultimately to the Disruption in 1843. He wrote poetry and a novel, but his real forte was as a public speaker. Who else could have addressed the Scottish Trade Protection Society on the unpromising subject of Law Reform and the Bankruptcy Laws, and have his speech punctuated with laughter and applause? Appointed Lord Advocate aged only 39, he fought long and hard to create a national education scheme for Scotland. Described by his political opponents as the dictator of Scotland, his role in Scottish affairs was indeed extensive. After almost twenty years in office, he was appointed in 1869 as Lord Justice Clerk, a post he held until retirement in 1888. Moncreiff was an able lawyer and an effective politician, but also a kindly family man with an impish sense of humour, who enjoyed music, and the Scottish countryside, making friends (and a few enemies) wherever he went.

About the Author David Swinfen was born in Kirkcaldy, Fife, and educated at Kirkcaldy High School and Fettes College, Edinburgh. After service as a platoon commander in Malaya during the Emergency, he took up a scholarship at Hertford College, Oxford. Having gained an Honours degree in History, he embarked on post-graduate study in Imperial history at the same University, being awarded the Beit Prize and Beit Studentship in that subject, and gaining a D.Phil degree in 1965. Employed initially as an Assistant in Modern History at the University of Dundee, he served at various times as Director of American Studies, Head of Modern History and Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. In 1990 he was appointed to a personal chair in Commonwealth History and subsequently as Vice Principal of the University, a position he held for some ten years before finally retiring in 2002. He is a Fellow of the Royal Historical Society and the Royal Society of Arts. He lives in Broughty Ferry, Dundee with his wife Ann, the historical novelist.