‘Betrayed by Infamous Spies’? The Commemoration of Scotland's ‘Radical War’ of 1820

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Published: 22 November 2008

On 5 September 2001, Gil Paterson, the Scottish National Party (SNP)
That the Parliament recognises the sacrifice of the three 1820 martyrs, James Wilson from Strathaven and John Baird and Andrew Hardie from Glasgow, who were hanged and beheaded in the 1820 rising which fought for social and economic justice, workers’ rights and an independent Scottish parliament and believes that the history of their struggle should be included in the education curriculum in order to mark the anniversaries, on 30 August and 3 [sic] September, of their sacrifice for Scottish rights 181 years ago.¹

This very motion itself was a commemorative act, pointedly delivered as close as possible to the day on which Baird and Hardie had been executed in Stirling. Paterson went on to deliver...

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