

Prepositions: Scottish independence

Complete the following text with suitable prepositions.



Around a third (1) Scotland's four million voters believe that Scotland should leave the UK and become independent, ending the 305-year-old political union (2) England. They believe Scotland would flourish if it had much greater autonomy. A majority of Scots disagree. They believe Scotland is more secure (3) the UK, but many want the Scottish parliament to have greater financial and legal powers.

The complex and often turbulent relationship (4) the two neighbours goes back (5) Roman times, when the Roman emperor Hadrian built a wall (6) the northern end of Britain to keep (7) the marauding Scottish tribes. Yet, it turned out that the Scots more often had to fight off attempts (8) their larger neighbor attacking Scotland, rather than the other way round.

In 1613, King James VI (9) Scotland also became king of England, but the parliamentary union wasn't actually secured (10) ninety-four years later. Scottish acceptance of the 1707 Act of Union was the result (11) a combination of factors, including an economic crisis which had ruined the country financially. The Scottish Parliament was abolished (12) return (13) forty-five seats in the House of Commons (14) Westminster. The Scots began to pay English taxes, but retained their own legal and educational systems as well as their churches. Resentment simmered, but the two serious challenges to the Union in 1715 and 1745 both failed.

In the nineteenth century, the Scots played a significant role (15) the emergence of imperial Britain as soldiers, colonisers and traders. But Scottish nationalism was always present, just (16) the surface of daily life, as the Scots continued to campaign (17) some form of "home rule". In 1998, Edinburgh got a regional government (18) wide-ranging powers over education, justice and health policies, but with the UK government in charge (19) most taxation, social welfare and the economy, plus defence and foreign policy issues.

(Roland Flamini, World Affairs Journal, May/June 2013, adapted and abridged)