The Society of Running Stationers or Cadies – 'useful and intelligent servants of the public'

When Edmund Burt visited Edinburgh in 1725 he was at a loss as to how to locate someone he wished to visit.

> I was amazed at the Length and gibberish of a Direction given me where to find him. I was told that I must go down the street, and on the North Side, over against such a place, turn down such a Wynde; and on the West Side of the Wynde, inquire for such a launde (or building) where the Gentleman stayd at the third Stair, that is three Stories high. This Direction in a Language I hardly understood, and by Points of the Compass which I knew nothing of, as they related to the Town, put me to a good deal of Difficulty.[1]

He had no signage to help him for the Town Council did not instruct the painting of the names of closes in the Old Town until 25 August 1790, ten years after a similar order for the New Town streets. As he admitted later, Burt did not know then of the existence of the cadies whom he said:

> know everybody in the town who is of any kind of Note, so that one of them would have been a ready Guide to the Place I wanted to find.[2]

Although they existed in other towns the cadies are particularly associated with eighteenth-century Edinburgh and they feature in both contemporary sources and in a number of literary works. Although the evidence is not abundant, some impression of who the cadies were and what they did can be attempted.

The *Concise Scots Dictionary* defines cadie and variant spellings – cadee, caddy and cawdie – as 'a messenger or errand boy; in the plural an organised corps of such in Edinburgh and other large towns' in the eighteenth century. The cadies, however, were far more than messengers; 'cadie' being a colloquial name for the formal title of Running Stationer'. *The New Canting Dictionary* of 1725 explained the term 'Running Stationers' as 'Hawkers or those that cry News and books about the street'.[3] James Jamieson, in an article on Edinburgh street cries in the 1909 *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club* suggested that the cadies originated in the seventeenth century when ballads, almanacs, gazettes and other papers were 'cried' in the streets by boys who also sold flowers and acted as link or flaming torch bearers. Certainly the earliest mention of the running stationers found to date is from 1699 and is an attempt by the Edinburgh Town Council to control them. Running stationers provided the quickest way for publishers to get their words on to the street and into the hands of their readers, but printers themselves had first to obtain permission to publish from the Privy Council. On 10 March 1699 James Donaldson obtained an Act from their Lordships authorising him to print the *Gazette* containing 'ane abridgment of foreigne news tigether with the occurances at home'.[4] The paper criers would then buy copies at a special rate but according to number two of the

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[1] Edmund Burt, *Letters from a Gentleman in the North of Scotland to his Friend in London,* first published 1754 (London, 1876), pp. 22-3.
[2] Ibid., p. 24.
[3] *The New Canting Dictionary*, (London, 1725).
[4] Maitland Club, *Miscellany*, vol. II, (Edinburgh, 1840), pp. 232-3.

Town Council's *Rules and Instructions* issued around the same time, none should sell papers or pamphlets without these being approved by the Magistrates – 'in order to prevent the dispersing of profane and scandalous Papers'.[5]

The Council also stipulated that everyone who entered the Company should give security of ten pounds Scots for his honesty and good behaviour and pay 14 shillings and six pennies into the Company's box which would be opened each August and the funds dispersed according to need. The other regulations indicated best practice or perhaps the Council's wish list for this company of paper criers, namely:

> Everyone of the Companie shall behave himself Decently, and shall not use any unbecoming Language (such as Son of a Whore or the like) to one another, much less to any other Person. Members of the company shall go to Church every Lord's Day, and therein behave themselves Discreetly during Divine Worship; And such as cannot already Read and write, shall go to school one Dyet every Week-day.
>
> Whoever be found fighting with any, Beating his Neighbour or keeping Correspondence with Thieves, Pickpockets, debauched Persons, or shall buy any Paper or Pamphlet in a clandestine manner, shall lose his Privilege.
>
> When one is called to go on an Errand, or to sell a Paper, where two or more are present, he who cometh first to the Person who called him, shall have the Benefit of what is sold or had for going the Errand, unless the Person who called otherways determine it. And when they are sent an Errand, if the Business wherein he is instructed, or thing committed to him, be miscarried through his Default, he shall lose his Privilege and be further punished as the Magistrates or their Foresaids shall think fit and his Cautioner shall make good the Damage to the party injured, to the value of Ten Pounds Scots.[6]

A cautioner was someone who was bound as security for another. The number of the Company was not to 'exceed Twenty Persons' who would be recognised by the wearing of 'a kind of Apron of Blew Linnen made in the Form of a Bag.' Furthermore the Council authorised James Donaldson to inspect the company to ensure observance of the rules 'for this present year to August 1700'.[7]

That the measures of control had a limited effect is evidenced by the Privy Council's 'Warrand Anent Pamphlets and the sellers of them' of 17 April 1704.[8] A great amount of unlicensed material was being printed and publically sold in Edinburgh and their Lordships warned the town magistrates to take action by examining both printers and sellers and committing the offenders to prison. As a licensed publisher James Donaldson had his newspaper monopoly challenged by Adam Boig whom the Privy Council authorised on 13 February 1705 to print the *Edinburgh Courant* thrice weekly with foreign, home and shipping news. When the Lords refused Donaldson's petition against what he considered a breach of his exclusive license, he then alleged that Adam Boig gave the *Courant* to the paper sellers at four shillings a quair below the common price and had similarly undercut

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[5] National Library of Scotland, MS/1.22 (201), *Rules and Instructions by the Town Council of Edinburgh to be observed by All who are permitted to cry Gazettes and other Papers, or to sell Roses and Flowers, or to Carie Links upon the Street of Edinburg, (Noblemen and Gentlemen's Servants excepted)*.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Maitland Club, *Miscellany*, p, 239.

the *Gazette* with the Postmaster: Donaldson in turn lowered his prices but Boig persuaded the paper criers not to sell the *Gazette*, to deny that it had been printed and 'to extol Mr Boig and the *Courant* as a paper much preferable to the *Gazette* both in respect of foreign and domestick News'.[9] Donaldson had to suspend publication for a month. Clearly the paper criers had been able to exercise a degree of power but some agreement seems to have been reached as, on 3 August 1705 and in several subsequent editions, the *Edinburgh Gazette* announced:

> Matters being adjusted between the writer of the Gazette and the Paper-Cryers; the Gazettes are only now to be sold by the said Paper-Cryers and by none else.[10]

While Boig was allowed to continue publishing material officially approved, he sold the *Courant* at the Exchange Coffee House.

By 1710, however, the apparent 'scandalous livings' and 'many wicked and debauched practices' of the paper sellers caused the City printers to complain to the Town Council who dissolved the Society of Paper Cryers and allowed all persons to cry papers within the City and Liberties upon their first giving Bond and Caution to the Clerks.[11] Accompanied by his cautioner, a prospective paper crier had to promise to conform to the specified regulations which included the requirement to cry papers from nine in the morning to eight at night; to attend at the Council Chamber in case of fire and to hand about and carry water, buckets and lights; to wear honest and suitable apparel, with clean linen; and if unable to read, to attend the Town's public Charity School. He was then registered in the Town Court Books, and issued with a certificate authorising him to sell papers.[12] The Council appointed James Wardlaw, stationer, to oversee the act and set out a table of prices to be paid by the paper criers to the printers for various publications. Wardlaw, assisted by the Town Guard, had the authority to arrest unauthorised paper sellers.

On display in the People's Story Museum is a Cadies' box on which appears the legend :

> Act: of the Town Council of Edinbr in favour of Cadies Paper Criers Incorporated 1714. These are hereby granting Warrant to any of the Town's Guard to take and apprehend all persons that shall be found crying Ballads or Other Papers upon the streets of Edinburgh except those that are incorporated in the Society of Paper Criers and that upon application of any of the said Society and that the Person or Persons so found crying be imprisoned in the Town Guard of Edinburgh till they are examined by the Magistrates.

William Maitland also asserted in his *History of Edinburgh* published in 1753, that the 'Cadees, Errand-men, News or Pamphlet-sellers' had 'no Manner of Government among them' until 1714.[13] With little variation such as omitting the phrase 'son of a whore', he sets out the orders previously issued but dates them as 1714 as does the cadies' box so it may be that the society was reinstated in that year. Certainly a

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[9] Ibid., p. 252.
[10] NLS, R.291.b.6, *The Edinburgh Gazette*, 3 August 1705.
[11] Edinburgh City Archive, SL1/1/39, *Minutes of the Town Council*, 6 September 1710.
[12] There is a certificate in the collections of City of Edinburgh Museums.
[13] William Maitland, *History of Edinburgh from its Foundation to the Present Time*, Book V (Edinburgh, 1753), p. 326.

petition of 30 June 1739, given in to the Lord Provost and Magistrates of Edinburgh by George McLaren Preses on behalf of the Running Stationers of the City, refers to the Town Council having 'many years ago' erected them into a Society 'under the name and designation of running stationers'.[14] McLaren alleged that they had been serving the public for upwards of fifty years which, allowing for exaggeration would date their origins to sometime before the 1699 rules. Editions one to four of the *Gazette* were published in 1680.[15]

McLaren's petition concerned the infringement of the privileges of his society to which, he said, everyone before admission had to pay ten guineas for the benefit of the sick, to find caution for his behaviour and to be on regular duty at the City Guard as per the orders of the Town Council. However a number of persons:

> some of them claiming as old soldiers the benefit of an act of parliament and others without any authority at all take upon themselves to act in the character of running stationers or cadies.[16]

McLaren submitted a list of offenders whom he wished the Town Council to prohibit from acting as running stationers or cadies. While the magistrates granted the petition they subsequently published an *Act and Ordinance for Regulating the Street-Cadies* as complaints had been made about exorbitant fees for services as well as the operations of non-authorised persons. A Cadie now had to wear a numbered badge on the left breast of his upper coat; and failure to comply entailed a fine of five shillings sterling and 48 hours of imprisonment for each offence.

David Allan, *An Edinburgh Porter or Caddie*, 1785, National Galleries of Scotland.

Any refusal to go on an errand without a reasonable excuse meant a fine of two shillings and sixpence and imprisonment of 24 hours; and for any demand above the published scale of fees, a fine of five shillings and 48 hours in the City Guard-house.

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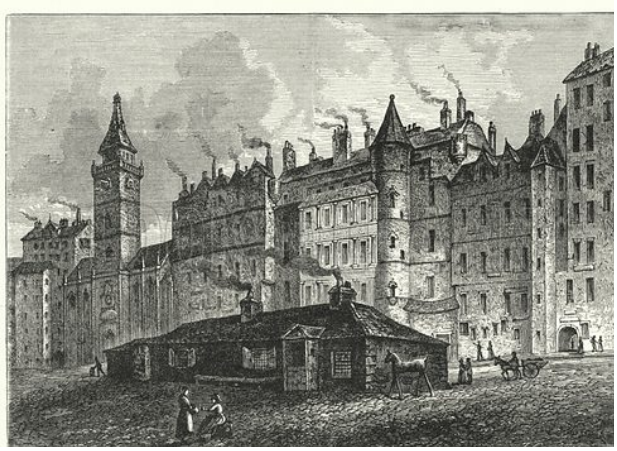
[14] National Records of Scotland, RH9/14/131, *Petition of George McLaren*, 30 June 1739.
[15] NLS, Ry.II.a.20.
[16] NRS, RH9/14/131, *Petition*.



James Grant, *Old and New Edinburgh, City Guard-house*.

An errand within the City walls merited one halfpenny sterling with one penny sterling for Canongate, the Abbey or the 'Liberties' (areas immediately outside the walls) and threepence for every mile beyond. The age of entry to the society was fixed at ten years with payment of 12 shillings sterling to the Box for the use of their poor and a quarterly subscription of one shilling sterling. Boys under 10 years could 'ply the streets' on providing caution of five shillings sterling and a certificate of age.[17]

How effective the various measures of control attempted by the Town Council were is debatable. On 20 January 1743, for example, the *Caledonian Mercury* reported that the Magistrates had intimated to the relevant office-bearers of the Societies of Barbers and Constables as well as the Tronmen (chimney sweeps), Chairmen, Creelmen and Cadies to inform their members that the laws against prophaning the Lord's Day, swearing, drunkenness, gaming and 'all manners of Vice and Immorality' would be carried out.[18] A fracas in 1747 between a soldier in Lord John Murray's Highland Regiment and several street cadies resulted in the wounding of James Petrie 'the dumb cadie' and the arrest of the soldier.[19] In the following year, however, two Running Stationers found themselves in prison after 'assaulting, beating and bruising' in Libberton's Wynd ', a Gentleman's servant carrying a lighted Flameaux before a Lady'.[20] Clearly they thought him to be an interloper and had to pay a fine of 20 shillings each for their mistake – servants of gentlemen and ladies being exempt from the exclusive rights of the cadies. However the wearing of a badge of office proved advantageous later in 1748. Several instances of gentlemen having lost their overcoats in establishments resulted in the cadies warning them that 'when a Gentleman sends for his Coat he take the cadie's name and number of his

[17] NRS, RH9/14/114, *Act and Ordinance of the Magistrates of Edinburgh for Regulating the Street-cadies*, 26 July 1739.
[18] *Caledonian Mercury*, 20 January 1743.
[19] *Ibid., 11 December 1747.*
[20] Ibid., 28 January 1748.

badge'. If he neglects to do so 'he has only himself to blame and not the Society of Cadies'.[21]

In an Act of Council of 1759 the Magistrates reiterated for the cadies a catalogue of forbidden behaviours, namely:

> swearing, profaning the Lord's Day, frequenting Houses of bad Fame or going with Gentlemen to such Houses, procuring or keeping company with Whores, Thieves or Persons of bad Character, gaming, drinking to Excess, quarrelling, fighting, neglecting to perform what they are employed to do, giving saucy or impertinent Answers, exacting a higher Fare than these after-mentioned, picking or stealing....[22]

Once again it appears that the Town Council felt it necessary to 'bring in proper Regulations for preventing the frequent and just Complaints made against the cadies'.[23] This time the Magistrates erected the cadies into a society of not more than 60 with the power to elect annually a Preses, Boxmaster, three Key-keepers and a Clerk. Entry money was fixed at a crown with sixpence quarterly for the support of sick and poor members. A new regulation with regard to the wearing of the badge appeared for a cadie who, on entering the service of a nobleman:

> Shall come to the Council-chamber and acquaint the magistrates thereof and leave his badge in a Box to be made for that Purpose where it is to remain during his continuation in that service and upon his being discharged, his Badge shall be returned to him, but he is not to ply as a Cadie during the Time his Badge is lodged in the Council-house.[24]

Cadies had to congregate at the Old Coffee-house Stair-foot but six or so cadies in rotation were to be on duty in the street or at the City-guard from ten at night until four in the morning. Fees for errands undertaken remained the same as 20 years previously. The Town Council ordered 500 copies of this act to be printed and obliged every cadie to keep one in his pocket to be shown when asked.

Interestingly no mention of crying papers appeared in this act but the Seal of Cause given to the Society of Running Stationers or Cadees on 23 January 1771 granted 'the sole Privilege of dispercing and crying Ballads and other periodical performances' as well as the 'Privilege of….Exercising the Business of Cadee' and prohibited 'Chairbearers and others from exercising these privileges'.[25] In requesting that the Society of Running Stationers be erected into a Fraternity by Seal of Cause similar to that of the Brewers Servants, the Coach Drivers and the Firemen, the Preses George McLaren argued that this would give greater security and regularity to the management of their funds and the maintenance of their poor, widows, sick and burial of their dead. As justification he maintained that the cadies had never had recourse to seek assistance from the City's funds or from those of the hospitals; on the contrary the Society had made voluntary contributions to the support of the

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[21] Ibid., 27 December 1748.
[22] ECA, Moses Bundles, vol. VI, No 6604, *Act of Council containing Regulations for Cadies,* 14 February 1759.
[23] Ibid.
[24] Ibid.
[25] ECA, Moses Bundles, vol. VI, 6604, *Humble Answer and Petition,* 16 October 1770, *Remarks on the Seal of Cause*, December 1770, *Act of Council on Report Anent Cadees*, December 1770. Moses Bundles Supplementary, No 5 Item 222, *Answers of George McLaren, Preses to the Society of Running Stationers*, 17 January 1771.

Infirmary and Poor House, more generously than any other society. The *Caledonian Mercury* of 31 January 1767 indeed reported the donation of three guineas from the Society of Cadies for the Charity Work-house.

The grant of a Seal of Cause in 1771 gave the Society of Running Stationers an official measure of respectability which seems a far cry from Edmund Burt's 1725 description of the cadies as 'a very useful Black-guard' who 'in Rags lye upon the Stairs and in the Streets at Night' – a direct contradiction of the 1699 rules which specified 'decent Apparel and an honest Lodging place'.[26] Similarly, Tobias Smollett in his novel *Humphrey Clinker* of 1771 called the cadies 'shabby in their appearance, and rudely familiar in their address'; and Robert Chambers in *Traditions of Edinburgh* first published in 1824 when the cadies were still operating, wrote of them as 'a ragged, half-blackguard-looking set'.[27] Yet in order to become a member of the Society of Running Stationers, an applicant had in 1759, to pay an entrance fee of a crown with subsequent quarterly payments of 6d while by 1770, the entrance money had been raised to ten guineas with quarterly payments of one shilling. Such payment at a time when a day labourer earned £14 annually implies that prospective cadies had to be men of some means. And how did they earn that entrance money without being members of the Society? Perhaps it was all propaganda to comply on paper with civic regulations.

By the mid-eighteenth century, however, cadies were unlikely to be sleeping on stairs. The first mention of the occupation of Running Stationer in the parish records of marriages and baptisms is in 1752 when James Crichton married Margaret daughter of deceased wright John Denholm, both residing in the South East parish of Edinburgh. Two years later fellow Running Stationer John Newbigging of the North Kirk parish married Margaret daughter of the deceased John McNeil gardener in the Abbey in the South East parish. Between the years 1752 and 1797 the occupation of Running Stationer appeared 22 times in the marriage records and cadie once. Similarly there are frequent entries in the register of Edinburgh baptisms, giving the father's occupation as Running Stationer, or citing a witness as being a Running Stationer. For example, in March 1793 William Ross Running Stationer and Catharine Lothian his spouse of the High Kirk parish had their daughter, born on 2 March, baptised as Catherine; witnesses being Joseph Mackay Running Stationer and Peter McGregor Vitner both in Edinburgh. However lowly, William Ross, whose son was born two years later, does not sound like a wretch sleeping rough.

Some indication that the Running Stationers possessed funds comes from periodic press reports. In August 1753 they donated a plate worth ten guineas as a prize at Leith Races, followed by a ball for the benefit of the Races 'at which there was a splendid Appearance of Gentlemen and Ladies'.[28] In addition to the charity donation of 1767, they gave 30 guineas towards the raising of the Edinburgh regiment in 1778, £21 towards the University building fund in 1789, £5 towards

[26] Burt, *Letters*, p. 23; NLS, MS/1.22 (201).
[27] Robert Chambers, *Traditions of Edinburgh*
[28] *Caledonian Mercury*, 2, 6 August 1753.

making up the City's loss from selling meal at reduced prices in 1796 and five guineas annually during the wars with France in the 1790s.

Contemporaries generally agreed as to the trustworthiness of the cadies. Edmund Burt wrote in 1725 that they were 'often considerably trusted, and, as I have been told, have seldom or never proved unfaithful'.[29] Tobias Smollett in 1771, considered that 'there is no instance of a cawdy's having betrayed his trust'; while Edward Topham in a letter from Edinburgh in 1774, felt you could 'trust them with what sum of money you please, you are quite safe'.[30] Robert Reid, reminiscing about a visit to Edinburgh in 1784, remembered that 'the caddies bore a high character for honesty and conduct, so much so, that they were frequently entrusted with the charge of delivering large sums of money, and of very valuable articles'.[31] When incidents of the kind of behaviour banned by the magistrates occurred, the Society was quick to distance itself from the offender as in a forgery case in November 1773 which led to the statement that 'the Incorporation of Running Stationers ever since they were erected into a society have behaved themselves with the strictest candour and honesty'.[32] They therefore informed the public that 'one MacKinnan said to be one of their number' and who had been found guilty of forging a Post Office mark upon several letters, had never been a cadie but was 'an old soldier'.[33]

A case which came before the Court of Session in 1789 involved a person who held a licence from the magistrates to officiate as a cadie or running stationer but who was not a member of the society. Two years previously a country gentleman visitor to Edinburgh lost a favourite pointer dog and he asked the sedan chairman he had hired to enlist the services of some of the most active cadies to find the animal. This the chairman undertook but after a search of three hours in company with several cadies, he returned to the gentleman to confess his failure. He discovered, however, that the cadie who operated outside the society had found the dog and pocketed the guinea reward which the gentleman had intended to be divided among those involved in the search. When remonstrations by the Preses of the Society of Running Stationers had no effect, the Preses had the offender committed to the City Guard, but even when ordered in Court by the presiding Baillie to surrender his badge, licence and the guinea, he refused and was recommitted. A few days later he relinquished his badge and was freed but then sued for damages against the Magistrate, the Clerk of Court and the Preses of the Running Stationers. The Lords Ordinary of the Court of Session unanimously judged against him.[34]

When Robert Fergusson published his poem *Auld Reekie* in 1773, he attributed the incidence of fewer crimes in the City to the watchfulness of the cadies.

The usefu' cadie plies in street,

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[29] Burt, *Letters*, p. 24.
[30] Tobias Smollett, *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker*, vol. 2 (Edinburgh, 1771), p. 65*;* Edward Topham, *Letters from Edinburgh* (London, 1776), p. 359.
[31] Robert Reid, *Glasgow, past and present* (Glasgow, 1884), p. 148.
[32] *Caledonian Mercury*, 27 November 1773.
[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid., 2 July 1789.

> To bide the profits o' his feet:
> For, by thir lads Auld Reekie's fouk
> Ken but a sample o' the stock
> O' thieves, that nightly wad oppress,
> And make baith goods and gear the less.

Edward Topham agreed as he concluded that it was entirely due to the cadies that 'there are fewer robberies and less house-breaking in Edinburgh than anywhere else'.[35] A few years earlier the *Caledonian Mercury* had reported an example of the cadies' watchfulness when two young fellows who specialised in 'hawking Manchester goods through the country' were apprehended 'by the vigilance of some cadies and contained in the City Guard'.[36]

Cadies had the reputation of knowing within a few hours, everything about anyone who visited Edinburgh – a 'brotherhood of spies' as Robert Louis Stevenson called them more than a hundred years later.[37] Having lived in the City for several months, Topham remarked in 1775:

> the stranger would probably be astonished to find that, in a few hours, his caddy was acquainted with every particular regarding himself, where he was from, what was his purpose in Edinburgh, his family connections, and his own tastes and dispositions.[38]

George Innes of the Royal Bank of Scotland paid the cadies one shilling and sixpence for 'finding James Colquoun' in May 1760.[39] Robert Morris visiting Edinburgh in June 1774, 'Fell in Love with a fine young Girl: sent a Cadi to finde her out; and learn her name to be Miss Brown'.[40] Similarly when the Captain of a Man of War anchored in Leith Roads in 1779, had occasion to find a 'Spanish Boy' – the naval term given to a young woman in boy's clothing – who had stowed away on board and who had subsequently escaped, he employed cadies to find her. They located her in a 'Lodging in Town not very proper for the Residence of a Virgin'.[41]

As enumerated in 1739, 1759 and 1771 charges for undertaking errands varied according to the distance of the journey. Payments to cadies appear in many eighteenth-century account books such as those of Edinburgh merchant Alexander Anderson who, for example, paid one shilling for cadies in 1774; and of John Clerk of Eldin who laid out sums ranging from two pence to two shillings for unspecified tasks during the years 1769 to 1786.[42] Receipts for the Edinburgh Musical Society in 1760 show a payment of sixpence to a cadie 'going to Sir Alexr Dicks for the plan of the new Room' in June; and one of a penny in October for an errand 'anent the new Room'.[43] Much earlier in the century George Stewart sent a cadie by post coach to Logie in Fife in 1728 but how much he paid is unrecorded.[44] A gentleman in 1788,

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[35] Topham, *Letters*. p. 87; Robert Louis Stevenson, *Catriona* (London and Edinburgh, 1893), p. 13.
[36] *Caledonian Mercury*, 4 July 1768.
[37] Robert Louis Stevenson, *Catriona* (Edinburgh and London, 1893), p. 13.
[38] Topham, p. 86.
[39] NRS, GD113/4/132/92, *Legal Account due by George Innes*.
[40] J. E. Ross (ed.), *Radical Adventurer The Diaries of Robert Morris 1772-1774* (Bath, 1961), p. 197.
[41] NRS, GD44/43/216/30, *Letter from Charles Gordon to the Duke of Gordon*, 27 January 1779.
[42] NLS, MS/8891, *Account Book of Alexander Anderson 1771-1796*; MS/102, *Clerk of Eldin's Expenditure Book 6 February1769 to 11 February 1786*.
[43] NRS, GD113/5/208/14/24, *Papers of the Innes Family of Stow*.
[44] NRS, GD237/22/23, *George Stewart to Archibald Stewart*, 1728.

however, levied a complaint against a running stationer who had been paid to deliver a letter on a Saturday evening but who had delayed until the following morning to the considerable embarrassment of the writer and the recipient. The cadie 'while he expressed his sincere contrition for the offence', pleaded as an extenuating circumstance, 'the darkness of the night' which had prevented him from seeing the name on the letter.[45] As it was his first offence in several years of service the magistrate inclined to leniency.

The Act of Council of 1759 expressly forbade the members of the Society of Running Stationers from 'procuring or keeping company with Whores', but Henry Mackenzie, writing retrospectively in 1825, claimed that 'they exercised the functions of Mercury in offices more confidential, though less moral and honourable than that of a messenger'.[46] Certainly Edward Topham thought that 'whether you stand in need of a valet de place, a pimp, a thief catcher, or a bully, your best resource is to the fraternity of Cadies'; and in the 1771 novel *The Expedition of Humphrey Clinker*, the cadies are said to be 'particularly famous for their dexterity in executing 'one of the functions of Mercury'.[47] Publisher William Creech comparing manners and behaviour in 1783 very unfavourably with those of twenty years previously, felt that in 1763 the Society of Cadies consisted of 'useful and intelligent servants of the public'; whereas in 1783 'the Cadies are few and these generally pimps or occasionally waiters at taverns'.[48]

In June 1774 Robert Morris wrote in his diary:

> There is an useful set of people here called Câddy's, like Lacquey's de Place, hire two shillings a day, very intelligent, though some Rogues; Do all yr Business of all nature.

Some indication of how a cadie might be employed is given in Sir Walter Scott's novel *Guy Mannering*.

> 'Here you, sir' (to the waiter), 'go to Luckie Findlayson's in the Cowgate for Miles Macfin the cadie – he'll be there about this time, - and tell him I wish to speak to him.'
> The person wanted soon arrived. 'I will commit your friend to this man's charge', said Pleydell, 'he'll attend him, or conduct him wherever he chooses to go, with a happy indifference as to kirk or market, meeting or court of justice, or - any place whatever, and bring him safe home at whatever hour he appoint; so that Mr Barnes there may be left to the freedom of his own will'. This was easily arranged and the Colonel committed the Dominie to the charge of this man while they should remain in Edinburgh.[49]

The 1739 Town Council Act gave instructions with regard to a cadie who entered such private service, stipulating that he had to deposit his badge in a box in the Council Chamber. Badges were made of pewter, but two badges in the collections of City of Edinburgh Museums are of silver. One was donated to the City in 1933 and carries the city arms and the inscription *The Honourable Andrew Ramsay No 44 Running Stationer.* Charles Boog Watson, in an article written at the time of the donation, suggested that when caddy No 44 was employed by the Honourable Andrew Ramsay, son of the 8th Earl of Dalhousie, he deposited his pewter badge in

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[45] *Caledonian Mercury*, 9 October 1788.
[46] Henry Mackenzie, *Anecdotes and Egotisms*, ed. Harold William Thompson (London, 1925), p. 61.
[47] Topham, p. 87; Smollett, *Humphry Clinker*, p. 66.
[48] William Creech, *Fugitive Pieces* (Edinburgh, 1791), p. 72.
[49] Sir Walter Scott, *Guy Mannering*, vol. III (Edinburgh, 1823), p. 149.

the box and received from his employer, a silver badge. On the termination of his employment, he returned that silver badge which remained among family papers until 1933. To substantiate his theory, Boog Watson pointed out that:

> there are two other badges of the Running Stationers known to be in existence and are privately owned. One of these is silver…bearing the name *Lieutenant Alston*, *Royal Edinburgh Volunteers*. The other is pewter, bears the same stamp number as the silver one and has stamped on it *Wm. Alston*. This suggests that when the cadie's own badge was deposited in the box, the name of his employer was stamped upon it, and that a new pewter badge was supplied to him on his return to public service.[50]

The second silver badge came into the collection in 1964 and carries the name '*George Douglas esq. Of Clivers No. 32'*. There is no written evidence to substantiate Boog Watson's theory, and it might be questioned if an employer would go to the trouble of having a silver badge made for a temporary employee, although having a personal cadie would be a status symbol, a pale imitation of liveried servants. If it were not for the pewter badge, an alternative interpretation could be that Ramsay, Alston and Douglas had at some time been made honorary members of the Society of Running Stationers. Henry Mackenzie in one of his *Anecdotes and Egotisms* recounted that Lord Dunmore was admitted a member of the Society, and being confined by indisposition, received a weekly sickness benefit from the Society's treasurer. But perhaps that anecdote serves more as an example of the cadies' humour.

Tobias Smollett certainly attributed humour and resourcefulness to the cadies in his 1771 epistolary novel *The Expedition of Humphry Clinker.* The character Jery Melford provided an account of an entertainment given by them to various noblemen and gentlemen after Leith Races.

> I received a card on this occasion, and went thither with half a dozen of my acquaintance. – In a large hall the cloth was laid on a long range of tables joined together, and here the company seated themselves, to the number of about fourscore, lords and lairds, and other gentlemen, courtezans and cawdies mingled together.... The toastmaster, who sat at the upper end, was one cawdie Fraser, a veteran pimp, distinguished for his humour and sagacity, well-known and much respected in his profession by all the guests, male and female, that were assembled. – He had bespoke the dinner and the wine: he had taken care that all his brethren should appear in decent apparel and clean linen; and he himself wore a periwig with three tails, in honour of the festival....After the desert, Mr Fraser proposed the following toasts, which I don't pretend to explain……..All these toasts being received with loud bursts of applause, Mr Fraser called for pint glasses, and filled his own to the brim: then standing up, and all his brethren following his example, 'Ma lords and gentlemen(cried he), here is a cup of thanks for the great and undeserved honour you have done your poor errand-boys this day'. – So saying, he and they drank off their glasses in a trice, and, quitting their seats, took their station each behind one of the other guests; – exclaiming 'Noo we're your honours cawdies again'.[51]

One of the noblemen present had therefore to pay the bill.

Edmund Burt attributed uncommon acuteness to the cadies and recounted a story which he had been told by several people that 'one of the Judges formally abandoned two of his sons for a Time to the caddies' way of life, believing it would

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[50] Edinburgh City Libraries, qYHE9755[D35238], C. B. Boog Watson, *Silver Badge of the Running Stationers or Cadies of Edinburgh*.
[51] Smollett, pp.68-9.

create in them a sharpness which might be useful in later life!'[52] Certainly the Society of Running Stationers had an eye to the main chance as an episode reported in a magazine in 1738 illustrates. A mad dog belonging to a butcher having run amok in the Fleshmarket, the Town Council issued a proclamation ordering all dogs belonging to the Fleshers' Incorporation to be put to death; and other dogs to be removed from the City. The City Guard and Town Officers were empowered to kill all dogs seen on the streets after noon the following day, with a reward of one shilling to be paid for every dog killed. However:

> The street cadies went very early in obedience to this edict, for the drum had scarce gone round to intimate the same, when they fell a knocking o' the head all suspicious or ill affected curs, some of which they hanged on sign posts etc. and with difficulty could they be restrained from killing the dogs that lead the blind about the streets, or attacking the ladies with their lap dogs.[53]

A similar measure about mad dogs had to be enacted in 1762 when the Council authorised the Town Officers, City Guard, Cadies, Chairmen, Porters and Suttymen to put to death all dogs found strolling on the streets for a period of 20 days. No unseemly behaviour was reported on this occasion.[54]

In September 1792 a broadside was cried on the streets of Edinburgh telling of a 'Barbarous, Cruel, and Inhuman MURDER Committed on the Body of William Brown, Cadie in Edinburgh by his own wife Isobell Smith on the night of 3d Sept 1792'.[55] In attempting to account for such wickedness, the writer suggested that perhaps she had though she was better off without him 'now that he was old and not able to work for her and that the allowance he had from the Cadies Box was not sufficient to support him'.[56] As early as 1699 the cadies had been making provision for sickness and their poor and if an entry in Mr Charles Gordon's accounts for 1785 to 1788 is not unique, the cadies had been supplementing their benefit funds by soliciting donations. On 6 August Mr Gordon recorded the receipt of one guinea as the Duke of Gordon's 'contribution to the Cadies Box'.[57] By the end of the eighteenth century such donations must have been welcome as the need for the Society of Running Stationers diminished with the growth of the New Town and its regulated streets. In 1825, Henry Mackenzie wrote of the caddies:

> They are now almost obsolete, except that at the beginning of each winter session one may see their boxkeeper standing at the door of the Parliament House with the box of the Society in his hands for a New Year's gift to be added to the funds of the Society.[58]

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[52] Burt, p. 25.
[53] *Gentleman's Magazine*, April 1738.
[54] *Caledonian Mercury*, 29 September, 2, 4, October 1762.
[55] NLS, 6.365(090), 1792.
[56] Ibid.
[57] NRS, GD44/51/408/8, *Mr Charles Gordon's accounts 1785-1788*.
[58] Mackenzie, p. 61.

The box that Henry Mackenzie was referring to was obviously a portable collection box akin to a modern charity box. Within the collections of City of Edinburgh Museums is such a box, dated 1825, complete with three locks, a handle, and a slit in the top for donations. With its painted decoration of roses and thistles, and its inscription ‘For the use of their sick and Burying their Dead Anno Domini 1825’, it stands as a reminder of those colourful eighteenth-century Edinburgh people – the Cadies.