

## THE FORTY FIVE IN ATHOLL

THE JACOBITES who marched to, died at, and fled from Culloden in 1746 did so in a very old cause whose roots went back at least to the early years of the previous century. For by the time of those early years, King James VI of Scotland, son of Mary Queen of Scots and direct descendant of five earlier kings of his name, was poised to seize his heart's desire: the English crown.

Elizabeth I of England (no Scottish queen had ever graced the name) was ageing fast. More importantly, and though her enemies called her otherwise, she was the Virgin Queen - without any direct successor. And with the death in 1603 of Elizabeth (whose great virtue had nevertheless failed to dissuade her from the judicial murder of James's mother), the Scottish king did indeed take her crown, as James I of England and James VI of Scotland.

In 1625, he was succeeded by his son Charles I. But in 1649 the English executed Charles at the bidding of what by then passed as the governing authority of their country. The Scots, of whom he had been king too, at once proclaimed his heir, also called Charles, as the new monarch - 'at Edinburgh crosse, the Lord Chancellor, Loudon, in black velvet goun, read the proclamacione'. Eleven years later the English found themselves in agreement with Chancellor Loudon and 'restored' Charles II to the throne.

In 1685 Charles II was succeeded by his brother James II, in a succession that triggered an orgy of political chicanery which might (or might not) shame any twenty-first century equivalent. The prevailing ideology of class and inter-national relations was religious in character. James was a Catholic, and that was an allegiance which might gravely threaten the strategic interests of the ruling-

classes of the united kingdoms. Nor did James's absolutist tastes endear him to those powerful interests in England and Scotland which increasingly answered to no-one but themselves.

The die was cast when, by a second wife, he fathered a son, and it became clear to his enemies that they faced a Catholic succession. Those enemies moved at once to dethrone God's anointed (as the monarchs of the day styled themselves). James already had two daughters by a first marriage: Mary, married to her cousin William of Orange, and Mary's sister Anne, married to George of Denmark. Both were Protestant in affiliation, and both happily loathed their father. Within months, therefore, William of Orange invaded England: and James fled. The English parliament claimed that he had forfeited his crown and declared William and Mary as joint sovereigns.

Two matters awaited resolution, however. The first was the question of who was going to succeed the childless William and Mary. And the second was that, though William was recognised as king by both Scots and English, each nation still had its own sovereign parliament - and there was no certainty that the Scottish parliament would accept a successor proposed, or imposed, by the English.

Events moved rapidly, however, and solutions were soon devised. William and Mary were declared king and queen in 1689, with the agreement that - should there be no heir - they would be succeeded by Mary's sister Anne. Five years later Mary died without issue. Six years after that, the last of the sixteen children that Anne had born died too. This was a crisis: but legislation was to be master of this crisis. It was swiftly enacted that the succession would now pass, after Anne, to Sophia of Hanover, a grand-

daughter of James I, and to Sophia's heirs. In the spring of 1702, William died - and, as agreed, Anne took his place.

The problem of the Scots was easily dealt with. In 1707 their parliament and that of England was massaged with bribery and corruption into a 'union' which ensured a permanent English majority in the new parliament: a union, as someone subsequently observed, insistently reminiscent of that union which unites a small boy with an apple.

Gout and age respectively claimed Anne and the 84 year old Electress Sophia in 1714, when the throne passed to Sophia's heir, George I. By now, James II was dead too. But in exile his son the Old Pretender - and in time his son, the Young Pretender - continued to plot the recovery of a throne which they saw, with some considerable justice, as theirs.

This plotting led to attempts at recovery a year after the death of Sophia, with another one four years later. But the big one - and the final one - came along in 1745, under the leadership of the Young Pretender, Prince Charles Edward Stuart, who raised his standard at Glenfinnan in the high summer of that year.

The men of Atholl were quick to rally to his cause. Given the long involvement of the earls of Atholl in Scottish national affairs, and their intimate connection with the old royalty of Scotland, this is not surprising. Indeed, the earls and their followers had played a role in Scottish affairs and in Anglo-Scottish relations for five centuries.

They had gone to war against the English in 1296, as a result of which the earl was captured and kept in the Tower of London. Ten years later, they were again in arms against the English in the cause of King Robert, and this time the earl was captured and

hanged on a gallows which was higher (thanks to his royal descent) than that accorded commoner mortals.

In 1333, the earl of the time died fighting the English at Halidon Hill, and thirteen years later a successor earl (who in time became King Robert II) was in command of a Scots army at war with England. Atholl again took the field against the English at Solway Moss in the middle of the sixteenth century.

And thus, when they plotted and marched with the Jacobites, neither earl of Atholl or his followers was a stranger to intrigue, treachery, or the conduct of politics by the good old standby of open warfare.

During the coup d'état which displaced James II, the game was played-out with a finesse appropriate to its complexity (and very high stakes). Atholl himself went to Bath and was supposed to have no great opinion on the matter, while his eldest son declared for William and Mary. Two younger sons, however, were arrested as Jacobites.

And in 1706 (Atholl having been made a duke three years earlier) the duke - bitterly opposed to the projected parliamentary 'union' with England - raised 4,000 armed Atholl men at Perth, standing down this little army only when it became clear that there was not enough support for it elsewhere in Scotland.

In the Jacobite rising of 1715 too, Atholl men played a significant part, with 1,400 of them raised in four regiments under the first duke's brother (husband of the inveterate Jacobite Lady Nairne) and three sons. One of these sons, Lord Charles, died shortly afterwards; a second, Lord George, after some time in exile, settled into three decades of safe obscurity in Perthshire. And the third, William, Marquess of Tullibardine, was deprived of his ducal

inheritance by Act of the (so recently united) Parliament in London. He too would have thirty years to watch and wait (in French exile) before the chance came again.

And when it did, in 1745, neither William nor his brother George were found wanting, for once again both came out for the Jacobite cause - along with many of their immediate relations.

Indeed, old Lady Nairne - now 76 years of age, and as much of a Jacobite as ever - could claim with justice to have in the field not only these two nephews but two sons, four sons-in-law and six grandsons as well! Their support was surely a token of the enduring loyalty that the Jacobite cause commanded - for by now James II was long dead and it was 57 years since he had occupied a throne - and the early signs of the rising pointed without question to a coming disaster, sooner or later.

Still, it was the long-exiled William, Marquess of Tullibardine, elder brother of the Duke of Atholl, who came ashore with the Young Pretender that July, on the western shores of Lochaber. And it was Tullibardine who famously raised the Jacobite standard just one month later at nearby Glenfinnan, surrounded by the MacDonalds and Camerons who had already arrived.

Gathering support as they went, the Jacobite forces marched south, and as they approached Blair Atholl at the end of the month the pro-Hanoverian duke fled south to London. Lady Nairne's daughter Lady Lude, meanwhile, at once set about making the vacant castle ready for the Young Pretender. When he arrived, on the last day of August, she it was who first received him on bended knee, kissing his hand as she knelt: while the runaway duke's brother, Tullibardine, claimed the ducal title of which he had been deprived after the 1715 rising.

Home at last after long exile, Tullibardine was met by 'men, women and children, who came running from their houses kissing and caressing their master whom they had not seen for thirty years', and welcomed him with 'the strongest affection, which could not fail to move every generous mind with a mixture of grief and joy'.

Pausing for two days (and tasting his first-ever grouse), the 24 year-old Pretender moved to a rapturous welcome in Perth, and thence to Edinburgh in the middle of September. Behind him he left a frenzy of recruiting (though in the style of the time, it was not all voluntary) throughout Atholl; Lord George Murray had joined the cause; Tullibardine was raising his brothers' retainers; Stewarts and Robertsons were flocking to the standard; and all those whose names had once been MacGregor (for the name had been outlawed in 1617) were making ready to rise too.

From Blair Atholl, Tullibardine sent 450 recruits to Edinburgh under the command of one of Lady Nairne's sons, and when the decision was made to invade England, an Atholl brigade of three battalions was formed. Those soldiers, along with Cluny MacPherson's men, commanded by Tullibardine, were the last reinforcements to join the Jacobite army before it marched for London on the first day of November.

Just two months later, with the entourage of the Hanoverian George preparing for flight, the Jacobite army - still just 5,000 strong - turned back at Derby on 6 December, reached Glasgow on Boxing Day, and marched on Stirling in the middle of the following month. Enemy forces were now closing in, and it was decided to retreat to the Highlands, with wheeled transport going by Blair Atholl (where the Pretender collected an additional 200 men) and the infantry by the rough country to the west.

As the Jacobite forces retreated so the army of the government in England followed. Early in February it took Perth, and within a fortnight had taken Blair Castle itself. By now, the Jacobite forces had re-assembled at Inverness: and the stage was set for the most brilliant guerilla strike of the entire campaign.

Hearing of Hanoverian deprivations in Atholl and district, Tullibardine's brother Lord George marched with his Atholl men in extreme secrecy and at great speed for home. On the way there, he was joined by Cluny MacPherson and his men. Together, this 700-strong force surprised thirty armed government posts, among them important ones at Blair Inn and Bridge of Tilt.

Not one Jacobite life was lost and every Hanoverian was taken prisoner. And while Lord George had sent round Atholl the old Fiery Cross (a burning cross held aloft by a running man - the ancient Highland way of summoning support) his men laid siege to Blair Castle. With the garrison near to starvation, the castle might well have fallen - but Lord George was recalled to Inverness, to which he marched via the grim pass of Drumochter with 500 of his Atholl followers.

On 16 April the Jacobite army was decisively defeated at Culloden. It has been calculated that every second man of the Perthshire regiments died on the field of battle or during the slaughter that followed. According to a twentieth-century duke of Atholl, there were ten officers wounded and twenty-four killed from Atholl properties alone. Others died on Hanoverian scaffolds, at Penrith, York and Kennington: while at Carlisle the Hanoverians hanged one John MacNaughton on a charge of which he was patently not guilty.

No bribe, of life or money, could tempt him to betray known Jacobites, and he died with the observation that as the Hanoverian forces had seen fit to class him with gentlemen, he hoped that they would leave him to die as one too. Others were murdered elsewhere - not least old Lord Lovat, 'Simon the Fox', who traded barbs with the scum of the London gutter even as he was trundled the length of the Strand to his place of execution.

Meanwhile, the remains of the Jacobite army scattered - west by Kirkhill and the shores of the firth up into the braes above Beaully, or south by the Great Glen to the barren glens and mountain-tops of the MacDonald country of Moidart and Morar. The outlawed MacGregors marched with banners flying to their burned homes in Balquidder and dispersed to the hills. Gaelic-speaking Lord George took what was left of his men to Badenoch and, on the order of the Pretender, sent them off to survive as they might.

In Perthshire, as in the counties to the north, fugitives teemed in glens scavenged by troops intend on pillage and rape: while on the western coast the same fate was visited by marines hungry for blood and the Pretender's person.

But during five months on the run he escaped betrayal or capture, and by early autumn he was back at Borrodale in Arisaig, a mile or so from the spot at which he had landed on the Scottish mainland the previous year. From Borrodale beach, a French ship soon took him away to final exile.

The Hanoverian regime moved quickly to consolidate its victory. Some of the great Jacobite estates were seized; titles stripped; ancestral jurisdictions abolished; the bagpipes banned; even the wearing of the kilt forbidden.

It was the end of an old order in the Highlands. A new order, to the merry tune of Redcoat fife and drum, was on the way, and with it the age of emptied glens. Twenty years after the disaster of Culloden, the Old Pretender died. The Young Pretender himself died in 1788, without legitimate issue: and his brother died - as Highland soldiers fought the French in England's cause - in 1807.

In the words of the Scottish chancellor Seafield on the 'union' of parliaments a century earlier, it was indeed 'the end of ane auld sang'.

For: Gamekeeper - A Year in the Glen.