

4-2012

"For the Advancement of So Good a Cause": Hugh MacKay, the Highland War and the Glorious Revolution in Scotland

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“FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SO GOOD A CAUSE”:
HUGH MACKAY, THE HIGHLAND WAR
AND THE GLORIOUS REVOLUTION IN SCOTLAND

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the
Requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Arts with Honors in History from
the College of William and Mary in Virginia,

by

Andrew Phillip Frantz

Accepted for _____
(Honors, High Honors, Highest Honors)

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Williamsburg, Virginia
April 30, 2012

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Acknowledgements

William of Orange would not have been able to succeed in his efforts to claim the British crowns if it were not for thousands of people across all three kingdoms, and beyond, who rallied to his cause. Whether joining the ranks of his army, serving in the political bodies that created the post-war settlements or simply showing support in the realms' urban areas, many Williamites did their part, as General MacKay put it, "for the advancement of so good a cause." Likewise, my efforts in this project would have been for naught had it not been for the support of many others.

I must begin by acknowledging my committee. Words cannot express my appreciation for Nicholas Popper and all the assistance he has given me. From one of my first visits to his office last year, where the idea of an honors project was concocted, through summer research, applications throughout the fall and all of the writing and editing this academic year, he has been an invaluable source of knowledge and expertise and someone I have been able to turn to when stressors outside of the project (of which there have been many) have pushed me down. I am also extremely grateful for Paul Mapp and Simon Stow, who agreed to help with the formal procedures that come with the end of the project. Also on an official level, I wish to thank the Roy R. Charles Center for providing me with an honors fellowship which funded the early stages of my research.

I owe a word of thanks to my friends conducting honors projects of their own, with whom the exchange of ideas proved to be a useful resource: Jacob Lassin, Diana Ohanian, Meredith Luze, Eric Ames, Sarah Salino, Ellie Walsh, Max Lazar. Also, I owe a great deal of thanks to two alums, Will Tatum and Michael Blaakman, whose insight into this process has been extraordinarily helpful.

I have been blessed to have a close network of family and friends who have assisted my efforts in so many ways. I thank my mother, father and sister as well as countless friends, both on and off campus, for keeping me focused and for often listening to ideas I had for the project. Gratitude must be expressed to the members of the Williamsburg Legati for providing me with a weekly break from the rigors of academic work. I thank my grandmother and my aunt for their emotional support and their proofreading services, along with Tyler Minnich, who never seemed to mind coming next door to help. I also would like to thank Travis Watson (who MacKay may have called the voice of the "Protestant interest") for keeping me on the straight and narrow over the past year and reminding me that even when things are tough or do not go as planned, God always has a plan B and that everything in life will always work out and make sense in the end.

Finally, I do not think I could have made it through this project or the rigors of my senior year without Lindsay Oakley. She has been a proofreader, copy editor, sounding board, cheerleader, teacher, student and, above all, my best friend. Her faith in this endeavor and in me has been unwavering and I do not think I can ever fully repay her for all that she has given. I dedicate this work to her.

Introduction

As the sun rose over the town of Dunkeld on the morning of August 21, 1689, soldiers arose from their billets and prepared for an impending fight. Forming up on the outskirts of town were several thousand Highland clansmen who had defeated a Williamite army less than a month earlier. Although their leader, John Graham of Claverhouse, 1st Viscount Dundee, had been killed in that battle at the pass of Killiecrankie, they hoped to claim another victory for the cause of their deposed monarch, King James VII and II. Armed with Lochaber axes, broadswords and a few matchlock muskets, the ferocious charges of Highland clansmen had always driven their Lowland foes from the field.¹ They expected the same results that day at Dunkeld.

Opposing the Highlanders were just under 800 men from a regiment recently raised by the teenaged Earl of Angus. Recruited from the southwest of Scotland, these men belonged to a Presbyterian sect known as the Society People or, more commonly, the Cameronians (a moniker adopted by the regiment as well). These fanatically pious men had broken off from the mainstream Presbyterian Church, or Kirk, in the years following the Restoration. While most followers of the National Covenant had supported the monarchy and wanted a church that existed alongside a strong pro-Presbyterian government, the Cameronians furiously resisted the un-covenanted Charles II, his government, and the bishops placed over them in the Restoration settlements of 1660. They wanted a church free from any attachment to the government, so they considered that which existed in the days of the apostles. They protested the aggrandizement of the

¹ Stuart Reid, *I Met the Devil & Dundee: The Battle of Killiecrankie 1689* (Newthorpe, Nottingham: Partizan Press, 2009), 58.

Episcopalian Church by conducting illegal outdoor worship services called conventicles.² As a result of this illicit activity, Charles II and James, then Duke of York and ruler of Scotland for his brother, unleashed the total might of their regular army and thousands of loyal Highlanders (the second, infamous “Highland Host”) on the zealots of the Western Lowlands.³ This result was an era remembered in Scotland as “the Killing Time,” a period unrestrained violence and executions against radical Dissenters by Episcopalians committed to the Stuart monarchy’s control of Scotland.⁴ Though the Cameronians resisted bravely, countless men, women and children were slain in those attacks, most notably the group’s leader, Richard Cameron, killed by English dragoons under the command of the Claverhouse himself. Even with their sect severely weakened, the Cameronians continued to worship and pray that a new settlement could be reached in Scotland that would conform to their religious ideas.

When the Glorious Revolution came to Scotland in 1689, the predominately Lowland and Presbyterian Convention of Estates voted to follow the instructions sent from William over those sent from James. This action resulted in the flight of the few Jacobites who had come to Edinburgh. Once the opposition had been purged from the assembly, the Convention went about preparing for its own defense from an inevitable Jacobite attack. Angus was authorized to raise a regiment of the radicals in the south-west of the kingdom, who were willing to face their old foes in battle once again, thus reviving the military struggle between Presbyterians and Episcopalians within the context of Scotland’s new war. The Cameronians’ commitment to defeating the Jacobites was so

² *Ibid.*, 8-9.

³ John L. Roberts, *Clan, King and Covenant: History of the Highland Clans from the Civil War to the Glencoe Massacre* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), 153.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 163

strong that General Hugh MacKay, King William's commander-in-chief in Scotland, wrote that they were, "of all the kingdom, the most zealous for their Majesties' government and the Protestant interest."⁵ MacKay's word choice is interesting, however, as the combatants on both sides, unlike those fighting for William and James in Ireland, viewed themselves as Protestant. The Highland War, as history has remembered the military element of Scotland's Revolution, was not a stand by Protestants against Catholic ambitions; it was a war to define just what Scottish Protestantism meant. Both denominations had held, and lost, control of Scotland's church throughout the seventeenth century. The new war saw the Kirk hang in the balance yet again, as both Jacobites and Williamites fought for the opportunity to shape the Church as they saw fit.

In Scotland, as well as other realms in the time period, more pious Christian oftentimes did not perceive military institutions as being separate from ecclesiastical ones. Trevor Royle notes that when formed, "the [Earl of Angus's] regiment was as much a congregation as a fighting formation."⁶ Each company was assigned an elder and the regiment as a whole had a senior chaplain. A council composed of these men was responsible for making, or at least influencing, the major decisions regarding the running of the regiment.⁷ It was a true church militant. The fear of religious persecution by the English and their fellow Scots was so great that the regiment was the only one in the army in which the men, whether on campaign or in garrison, received a standing order from their commander to carry their arms to church and post pickets during each service.⁸

⁵ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs of the war carried on in Scotland and Ireland*, ed. J.N. Hog et. al. (Edinburgh: Bannatyne Club, 1833), 11.

⁶ Trevor Royle, *The Cameronians: A Concise History* (Edinburgh, Mainstream Publishing, 2009), 16.

⁷ Thomas B. Macauley *The History of England from the Accession of James II, Vol. III* (New York, Harper & Brothers, 1870), 312.

⁸ Royle, *The Cameronians*, 16. This tradition was continued by the regiment until its disbandment in 1968.

Having only been recently raised, the Angus's Regiment had yet to see action since its formation, and the men were nervous. This feeling was only intensified by the fact that the regiment had been ordered to Dunkeld without any support.⁹ Many in the ranks believed that this plan was devised by the moderate Presbyterian government in Edinburgh to have them slaughtered.¹⁰ After all, their orders had come from the politicians, not MacKay or his subordinates.¹¹ The men were also beginning to grow fearful of their officers' intentions. A few days earlier, the regiment's second-in-command and field commander, Lieutenant Colonel William Cleland, had turned down surrender terms offered by the Jacobites.¹² Some reinforcements had arrived to bolster the Williamite ranks, but quickly received contradictory orders that sent them away again.¹³ This played harshly upon the soldiers' minds and added to their anxiety, fear and anger.

As the battle approached, a group of soldiers made it known that the men were afraid that the officers would simply mount their horses and ride off at the first sign of fighting. The men's fears upset Cleland, as many had served under him in the Covenanter War of 1679, in which they had been victorious over Claverhouse's men at Drumclog.¹⁴ He knew he needed to inspire their confidence in him yet again.

An anonymous account of the battle, published in Edinburgh just a few weeks after Dunkeld to commemorate the Williamite victory, tells us that faced with the

⁹ *The Exact Narration of the Conflict at Dunkeld, Betwixt the Earl of Angus's regiment and the Rebels, Collected from Several Officers of that Regiment, who were Actors in, or Eye-witnesses to, all that's here Narrated in reference to these Actions* (Edinburgh; Unknown Publisher, 1689), 1-2.

¹⁰ Reid, *I Met the Devil...*, 55.

¹¹ John MacKay, *The Life of Lieut. Gen. Hugh MacKay of Scoury*. (Edinburgh; London; Glasgow: Laing and Forbes; W. Pickering; Smith and Son, 1836), 66.

¹² Angus, aged 18, was deemed by his father, Marquess Douglas, too young to take command in the field; *Ibid.*, 14-15.

¹³ *The Exact Narration of the Conflict at Dunkeld...*, 2-3.

¹⁴ Andrew Murray Scott, *Bonnie Dundee* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1989), 22.

accusations of those in the ranks, Cleland “and the rest of the Gentlemen Officers amongst them, used all Arguments of Honour to persuade them to keep their Post.”¹⁵ Cleland offered to shoot the horses himself if it would put the troops at ease, but they assured him it wouldn’t be necessary. Their fears allayed, the men prepared to do battle, as John Fortescue described, “with the immoral and worse, with the unorthodox.”¹⁶

At seven o’clock, the Jacobite commander, Colonel Alexander Cannon, ordered the assault troops forward. The town consisted of a few rows of houses, a dilapidated cathedral and Dunkeld House, the vacant residence of the Marquess of Atholl.¹⁷ While most of the Cameronians were deployed in the church and the manor, a few were stationed in the houses on the fringes of the village and were the first to be hit by the Jacobite assault.

Armed with the latest government-issued flintlock muskets, these detachments, though greatly outnumbered, were able to hold off the Highlanders for some time before they were forced to retreat back to Dunkeld House.¹⁸ The Jacobites burst into the town, taking control of some ditches and buildings, which provided excellent cover for their musketeers. The fire on the Cameronian strongholds intensified as hand-to-hand fighting ensued in the streets. Amidst the carnage, Cleland was struck by two bullets, as an anonymous account described, “...one through the Head, and another through the Liver...,” and fell dead.¹⁹ Falling for a cause that he so zealously believed in, the colonel’s death would be mourned by both sides. When later describing the battle to James, Earl Balcarres, a leading Jacobite politician (then imprisoned in Edinburgh

¹⁵ *The Exact Narrative of the Conflict at Dunkeld...*, 3-4.

¹⁶ John W. Fortescue *A History of the British Army, Vol. I.* (London: MacMillan, 1910), 342.

¹⁷ Reid, *I Met the Devil...*, 57.

¹⁸ *The Exact Narrative of the Conflict at Dunkeld...*, 4.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

Castle), recounted Cleland's actions that day as, "extremely brave."²⁰ Other Cameronian officers fell in rapid succession as the men began to run low on ammunition. It appeared that the soldiers' worries of being wiped out might become a reality.

Amidst the chaos, some of the Cameronians set out from the cathedral with torches in the hopes of burning down the other buildings in town to deny the Jacobites cover. Only three houses were left standing, forcing the town's small civilian population to flee to the cathedral for safety.²¹ The Cameronians defending Dunkeld House ran out of ammunition and, as a result, were forced to break up the lead shingles from the roof and use the pieces as crude ammunition against their foe.²² Their improvisation proved to be effective. The battle continued to rage, the Highlanders realized that their preferred tactic of a frontal charge was useless in a town like Dunkeld. The many Highlanders without firearms became bogged down in the streets and were caught in the crossfire between friend and foe.²³ One contemporary observer reported, "Notwithstanding all the gallant resistance which these furious Rebels met with, they continued their Assaults until past eleven of the clock."²⁴ After four hours of indecisive, bloody fighting, the Highlanders withdrew.

Just weeks earlier, when the news of the Jacobite victory at Killiecrankie reached Edinburgh, all had seemed lost for the Williamite cause in the northern kingdom. Now after what John MacKay, a descendent and biographer of the Williamite general, described as, "one of the hardest fought, and most desperate recorded [battles] in the

²⁰ Colin Lindsay, Earl of Balcarres, *An account of the affairs of Scotland, relating to the revolution of 1688. As sent to the late King James II. When in France. By the Rt. Hon. The Earl Balcarres.* Editor Unknown. 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: W. Ruddiman jun. and Company, 1754), 74.

²¹ *The Exact Narrative of the Conflict at Dunkeld...*, 6.

²² Fortescue, 343.

²³ Reid, *I Met the Devil...*, 58.

²⁴ *The Exact Narrative of the Conflict at Dunkeld...*, 6.

annals of the seventeenth century,” the situation looked much less bleak for William and his followers.²⁵ Though Jacobite morale had been somewhat shaken by death of their beloved Dundee a few weeks prior, after this engagement, Balcarres reported to James that, the “Highlanders were much discouraged.”²⁶ To make matters worse for the Jacobite cause, as the harvest time approached, many of the Highlanders began to head home. The army was in no position to launch another offensive this year.

For the Cameronians, their fear of slaughter had not been realized. The regiment had suffered substantial losses, particularly amongst the officer corps, but they had stood up against their hated Episcopalian foes and won a victory for the Covenant. Their stand had also won them the praise and respect of their moderate Presbyterian brethren, with whom they had maintained rather tenuous relations. A pamphlet published a few weeks later boldly proclaimed that the officers were:

...to be Recorded as Men of Worth and Valor. And the whole Souldiers did everything with such undaunted Courage and so little concern in all the Dangers and Deaths, which surrounded them and stared them in their Faces, and they deserve to be recommended as Examples of Valour to this and after Ages, and to have some Marks of Honour fixt upon them.²⁷

Dunkeld put a halt to Jacobite hopes of victory that had remained in Scotland and was a serious detriment to James’s cause in all the kingdoms. In the ensuing months, most of William’s troops would be sent to Ireland, where the struggle for the British crowns would be decided. Only a few regiments would be left in Scotland to consolidate the Williamite victory. Unlike the success in England which had been victory for the Anglican Church, King William’s triumph in Scotland had largely been a Presbyterian

²⁵ John MacKay, 68.

²⁶ Balcarres, 75.

²⁷ *The Exact Narrative of the Conflict at Dunkeld...*, 8.

one. Though the moderate Presbyterians and the Cameronians disliked each other almost as much as they hated the Episcopalian Highlanders, the two factions put aside their differences, secured a victory for William's cause and set in motion a transformation of Scotland. The king's subjects had started the realm down an uncertain path. The Revolution would alter the structure of Scotland's government, church and the relationship between the crown and subjects. Although many would resist these changes, they would ultimately bring the realm (along with the other "united" kingdoms) to the status of a great imperial power.

The inter-Protestant fighting during the Highland War, as exemplified by the intense combat at Dunkeld, was another chapter in the ongoing struggle between Presbyterians and Episcopalians for control of Scotland's church. Religious tensions were just one of the causes of the intensity of the war which erupted in the north kingdom when the Glorious Revolution came to the kingdom. The common preconceptions of what happened during the Glorious Revolution and just what the event meant for the history of Britain have been largely shaped by the experiences of England and Ireland. In both cases, the narrative of the Revolution has been one of conflict between Catholic absolutism and Protestant constitutionalism. In Scotland's case, there were religious motivations, but not of the same sort. There were also divisions between regions, socioeconomic systems and even individual families that were all exploited by the conflict. In its early stages many Scots hoped to use the turmoil of the Revolution to settle old scores and continue the civil fighting that had plagued the realm for decades. Yet by the end the conflict and the kingdom itself had become rather different. By

examining this event in a uniquely Scottish context, however, we can begin to see the story of the Revolution in a different light.

The course of the next two centuries of Scottish history was largely influenced by the events of the Glorious Revolution. Through one, comparatively small, war and a series of political settlements, the Scots ended nearly a century's worth of civil conflict, secured their realm from arbitrary rule and began a process leading towards full religious toleration. It is surprising that all of this occurred in the British kingdom with the most divided subjects. In terms of allegiance during the Revolution, the people of England and Ireland had very clear-cut divisions usually based on religious lines, but in Scotland, the complex system of rivalries and factions made uniting people into the ranks of the Williamite cause a considerable challenge. The difficulty level was only increased by the fact that unlike in England and Ireland, William himself was never present to help his supporters achieve their goals. Instead, the Williamite cause was directed by men personally appointed to oversee their efforts. Lacking the commanding personality of the king himself and faced by a greatly divided population, these men were thrown into a virtual den of bitter religious sectarianism. At the forefront of these men was William's commander-in-chief in Scotland, Major General Hugh MacKay. The war that broke out in Scotland following James's flight from Britain had much more to do with the decades of tension in the country than the differing ideologies of the two claimants to throne. As the military leader in the kingdom, it was MacKay's task to convince the competing factions within the population that William's ideals were a worthier cause than their age-

old rivalries, raise an army to defeat the Jacobites and to bring the Glorious Revolution to Scotland.

In the first chapter, we will examine the pre-existing tensions within Scotland that caused its revolutionary experience to be far from “glorious” and different from those in the other kingdoms. In the second chapter, we will focus on actual narrative of the Revolution in the realm through the eyes of General MacKay. William’s trusted general was more directly involved with the events in Scotland as they occurred than anyone else and, through his communication with the politicians in Edinburgh and William’s court in England, was a primary link between the king’s Scottish subjects and the Revolution’s leaders.

While the deeds of great Jacobite leaders and some of the events (usually the defeats) of the Jacobite rebellions have been romanticized and etched into popular history and culture in Scotland, little attention has been paid to the Williamite general and the campaign he won against absolutism. Perhaps it is because many modern-day Scots, so culturally and historically separated from their seventeenth century ancestors, have chosen to embrace a “lost cause” ideology for the Jacobites, or that while the Jacobites were Scots themselves, MacKay, long absent from his ancestral home, and his Williamite troops have been remembered as foreigners who conducted one of countless invasions in the nation’s history. Nonetheless the man and the influence he had on the narrative of the Glorious Revolution repay further study. MacKay’s memoirs, military treatises and correspondence preserved both in the Melville-Leven Collection and the State Papers, which will be consulted in the next chapter, provide us with a complete and detailed account of the military campaign and political debates. These writings are filled with of

the ideals and themes of the Revolution, and his service for King William saw him in leading roles in the military operations in all of three British realms and, later, with British troops on the Continent. In his writings, his thoughts on duty to one's king and kingdom help to illustrate just how important those values were to the people involved in this struggle. Most importantly, his strong beliefs in the ideas of nation, loyalty and the greater Protestant Church, which are present in all of his writings, drove him (along with his Dutch master) into the crusade against Catholic absolutism that cost him his life. In Scotland, however, it was MacKay's task to rally the king's subjects around these ideals and unify the people of the kingdom. Finally, after following the course Revolution itself through the eyes of MacKay, we will conclude by considering the aftermath and legacy of Scotland's Revolution and how it can help us to better understand the event as a whole and the future political developments within early modern British history.

Born around 1640 near the northern coast of the realm, MacKay, like many other Scots of the era, had spent most of his life abroad as a soldier.²⁸ With years of service in Scottish regiments fighting for the French and Dutch and a brief period with the Venetian army on Crete, he had built up an international reputation for being a fine warrior and leader. In the years preceding the Revolution, he found himself in command of the Scottish and English troops that formed the Anglo-Dutch Brigade of William's Dutch army. This put him in a rather precarious position when his own monarch, James, recalled him and his troops to prepare Britain for a Dutch invasion. MacKay began to question his allegiances. He had always been a loyal subject of James and planned to return to Britain to fight for his sovereign. Yet, he considered the allegiance he now owed to William, who was in essence, his military patron, and the threat James represented to

²⁸ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, xiii.

MacKay and his fellow Presbyterians. As a result, he decided to follow William in his campaign for the British crowns. He would ultimately serve his new king in all three realms during the Revolution and die fighting for him on the Continent, but it was in Scotland where he made his greatest contribution for the Williamite cause. The northern kingdom was far from inviting for a man who had been so long removed from his native realm that even he considered himself a foreigner.²⁹ Nonetheless, MacKay knew the importance of the mission he had been given by William.³⁰ After some initial doubt, he exclaimed in his memoirs that he was, “willing to contribute his utmost endeavors for the advancement of so good a cause,” and accepted the command.³¹ When he arrived in Edinburgh in the spring of 1689, MacKay began his campaign to unify the people of Scotland under one banner, an effort that would shape the history of the realm for years to come.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

³⁰ In the case of invasion from Ireland, the fear had become a reality during the civil wars, when Alexander MacColla had brought over Irish Confederates to fight with Montrose and his Royalists.

³¹ *Ibid.*

Chapter I:

The Origins of the Conflict

The Road to Revolution in Scotland

The Battle of Dunkeld was a pivotal moment in the brutal civil conflict remembered in Scotland as the Highland War. From 1689 to 1692, the Scots fought each other in the name of the two claimants to the kingdom's throne, James VII & II, and his son-in-law and nephew, Prince William of Orange, the recently crowned William III of England. This struggle was part of a larger conflict for control of the kingdoms of the British Isles, and, in a broader perspective, control of the balance of power in the wars against Louis XIV of France and his Catholic absolutism on the Continent.

Posterity has remembered this series of events as it occurred in England as "The Glorious Revolution." With little loss of life, England was transformed. Without the terror and violence that had plagued the kingdom during the three civil wars fifty years earlier or the political chaos of the Interregnum and Restoration, Parliamentary control over the crown was ensured, the Protestant succession was secured and the royal subjects immunized from arbitrary rule. But England was not the only kingdom for which James and William were fighting, and the experience there was far different than what unfolded in the other two.

The story of the Glorious Revolution in Ireland, an event remembered there as "the War of Two Kings," has taken a central place in popular history and culture. It was another chapter of the bitter confessional strife that had been plaguing the island since the first Protestants arrived. The war severely weakened the Catholic position there, at a cost

that was far from “glorious,” and would spark continual sectarian violence that lasted through the twentieth century, and in some aspects, to the present day. For the Protestants, their triumph is commemorated to this day, when many wear their finest shades of orange on July the twelfth and remember the Boyne.

The Highland War, the military campaign for control of the Scottish throne, was an entirely different matter. With all the bloodshed and suffering that came with the war and the economic hardships that followed, it too was far from the “glorious” event that occurred in England. But unlike in Ireland, the battle lines in the former were drawn strictly along religious lines. In the Scottish context, religion was only one of the factors that drew the Scots to their respective camps. Nonetheless, the Highland War and the greater Glorious Revolution in Scotland was an integral part in William’s campaign for the British throne and was where his claim came most disastrously close to defeat. What made the revolutionary experience in Scotland different from the simultaneous events in England and Ireland was the unique political, socioeconomic and religious situations within the realm. By better understanding the Scottish context we will be able to gain a better appreciation for not only the struggle for the northern kingdom, but William’s attempts for all the British crowns and the broader significance of the Glorious Revolution.

In his book, *The Jacobite Risings in Britain 1689-1746*, Bruce Lenman argues that:

Ultimately events in England were the determinants of what happened in Ireland and Scotland. The Glorious Revolution was made in England...In Scotland, there was indeed a distinct political upheaval comparable to the English one, but it only occurred because James lost control of England.¹

¹ Bruce Lenman, *The Jacobite Risings in Britain 1689-1746* (London: Eyre Methuen, 1980), 32.

In his assertion that James's flight from the throne in London set in motion the conflict in the northern kingdom, Lenman is certainly correct, but there was far from simply "political upheaval comparable to the English one." The Highland War and William's taking of the Scottish throne was yet another chapter in a narrative of continual conflict that had been plaguing Scotland for centuries. Throughout the seventeenth century, starting with the First Bishops' War of 1639, it seem as though each new struggle seemed to be more devastating than the last. The terrifying campaigns of the Covenanter-turned Royalist James Graham, 1st Marquess of Montrose in the 1640s were far from forgotten, as was the traumatic "pacification" of the kingdom by General George Monck during the years of the Interregnum.²

What made Scotland so volatile was a combination of rivalries and divisions unparalleled in the other kingdoms: denominational differences, regional rivalries and family feuds. The population was divided into multiple factions that oftentimes caused Scotsmen to have rather conflicted loyalties. These conflicted loyalties and the memories of the dominion's violent past were what drove the kings' subjects to choose their respective sides at the start of the conflict and created a distinctly Scottish experience of the Glorious Revolution that had all the bloodshed of the campaign in Ireland but, like the Revolutionary episode in England, was far more than another theater in the war between Catholics and Protestants.

² John L. Roberts, *Clan, King and Covenant: History of the Highland Clans from the Civil War to the Glencoe Massacre* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), 123.

The Protestant Church Divided

One of the greatest of these divisions, as clearly displayed in the preceding account of the battle at Dunkeld, was along the doctrinal lines as the Protestant denominations in the realm fought to define Scottish Protestantism. The northern kingdom, wrote General MacKay in his memoirs, had “a church divided into two more irreconcilable factions though both calling themselves Protestants.”³ At the center of the religious spectrum in Scotland were the moderate Presbyterians. These were followers of John Knox who believed that a properly reformed church could exist alongside a monarchy and secular government. Their National Covenant of 1638 joined the Parliament and the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in a pact with God, for which those who signed swore to defend. It was this faction that had opposed Charles and the Episcopalian Church the next two years and, in 1643, allied themselves with the English Parliamentarians in the signing of the Solemn League and Covenant of 1643, as they had effectively taken over the governance of Scotland. Though Charles had signed the Covenant and formed an alliance with the Presbyterians at the time of the Third Civil War, the sovereign chose to support the Episcopal Church, souring his relationship with the Kirk. In the years before the Restoration, however, some Presbyterians began to think that a reformed church could not exist within the constraints of a monarchy (especially when the monarch refused to accept the Covenant) and a secular governing body. These groups, like the Cameronians, were considered rather “fanatick ” by both the moderate

³ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs of the war carried on in Scotland and Ireland*, ed. J.N. Hog et. al. (Edinburgh: Bannatyne Club, 1833), 76.

Presbyterians and the Episcopalians and were thought to be a considerable threat to peace and stability.⁴

The Episcopalian's influence had been growing in the kingdom over the century leading up to the Revolution. Firmly committed to the Protestant cause, they appreciated the stability and security brought about by a hierarchical church structure and a strong monarch. The Episcopalians frequently looked to England and the realms' shared monarch for support, even when he exercised no real power in Scotland (as was the case of Charles I during the civil wars). At the Restoration, Charles II unleashed a wave against the dissenting Parliamentarians and the Episcopacy became the state church for Scotland. They quickly gained control of the government and began the violent persecutions described previously. This sectarian violence would vary in intensity through the years leading up to James's flight from the throne, only to be unleashed at full force with the start of the Highland War.

The rise in prominence and power of the Episcopal Church in Scotland firmly planted the support of those people in James's camp when the war began. Though he had lost the favor of his Anglican allies in England, for Scottish Episcopalians, James's Catholic tendencies offered a much more palatable religious structure for the kingdom than was offered by the Presbyterians. Even though the Episcopalians and more moderate Presbyterians could enter into political alliances on occasion, their ideas on Church governance (and a general contempt on the part of the latter) always separated the denominations when it came to their view on Catholicism. James made efforts, as he had in England, to appease Episcopalians, Catholics, and to a certain extent, moderate

⁴ Colin Lindsay, Earl of Balcarres, *An account of the affairs of Scotland, relating to the revolution of 1688. As sent to the late King James II. When in France. By the Rt. Hon. The Earl Balcarras.* Editor Unknown. 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: W. Ruddiman jun. and Company, 1754), 2.

Presbyterians (the radicals being exempted), while under Presbyterian rule before the Restoration, toleration was non-existent for anyone who did not agree with the ideals of the Covenant

The serious persecution of the radical Presbyterians occurred during the reign of Charles II, when his brother, then Duke of York, ruled in his absence. Though the ruthless killing for the extreme dissenters subsided when James ascended to the British thrones, the religious environment during his rule was far from static. With the Declaration of Indulgence in 1687, the king granted religious toleration to both Presbyterians and Catholics in his realms. In practice, however, the toleration was aimed more at Catholics than Presbyterians and did nothing for the more radical sects of the latter.⁵ After some of the leading government officials converted to the religion of their king, the Presbyterians began to question James's intentions. Fearful of James's future plans, the radical Presbyterian leaders, including many exiles who were yearning to regain control of the Church, began to reorganize, forcibly remove local Episcopalian ministers and make contingencies for the defense of the Lowlands.⁶ With the Episcopacy reeling from the flight of its monarch and protector, and James's troops overextended and lacking serious high command, the Revolution gave the radical Presbyterians, as well the growing number of disaffected moderates, the chance to strike back. The moderates had been willing to bend to the king's wishes at first, so as not to suffer from religious repression, but as James continued to increase his support of the Catholic and Episcopalian interests, in Scotland and the other kingdoms, the two Presbyterian camps grew closer together. So united was this resistance to James, that Balcarres, who felt his

⁵Roberts, *Clan, King, and Covenant*, 169-71.

⁶*Ibid.*, 171-2

deposed monarch need to be informed of the happenings in his kingdoms, remarked, that the “Presbyterians [declared] entirely against” him.⁷

It seems odd that with all the conflict along the confessional line on the Continent and in Ireland over the seventeenth century, that Protestants in Scotland were willing to fight each other so frequently. This situation was equally puzzling to some of the key players in the conflict. General MacKay, himself a moderate Presbyterian, wrote to the Secretary of State for Scotland, the Earl of Melville, that he saw, “no essential difference betwixt Presbiterianisme [*sic*] and Episcopacy.”⁸ What MacKay failed to recognize was that the fighting between Presbyterians and Episcopalians was not for the eradication of one denomination, like the religious fighting on the Continent and Ireland was, but over the control of the state church, and indirectly, the government of the kingdom and its relationship to the monarch. Both denominations wanted to mold the Church to better fit with its ideal. With the Church so closely tied to the state, despite the best efforts of the radicals, both groups sought to influence the king and Parliament for their support gain indirect control over the government. Both Protestant groups were willing to use violence, a common political tool of the time, to coerce the other to achieve their desired ends.

The religious divide and the struggle for control of Scotland’s state church was arguably the key point of contention that generated the realm’s bloody conflicts of the seventeenth century. The Protestant conflict was not an exclusive source of tension, however, as it frequently mapped itself onto other sources of division, like the kingdom’s great regional rivalry. In almost all aspects, the Highlands and Lowlands were markedly

⁷ Balcarres, 20.

⁸ “General Hugh MacKay to the Earl of Melville,” Edinburgh, 12 October 1689, in Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs of the war carried on in Scotland and Ireland*, 288.

different. This provided more reason for conflict, especially as each region was the stronghold of one of the competing Protestant denominations. In Ireland, the small Protestant minority was centered in the northeast of the island, but lived alongside a considerable population of Catholics. In England the members of the various religious denominations usually lived in rather heterogeneous populations. In Scotland, however, the denominational divide was clearly defined. The Highland Line, which divides the kingdom on a Northeast-Southwest axis, serves as a line of demarcation geographically, economically and religiously.⁹

The Highlands had been a hotbed of fervent Episcopalians since James VI and I first began reinstating the Episcopacy in 1587 in an effort to reassert his control over the Church and over the Highland Chieftains who had been living above royal authority.¹⁰ By reinforcing hierarchical control over the religion and politics of the North (where Presbyterianism was weak), James was able to quickly create a core of loyal supporters bound to the Church as he saw it.¹¹ The Lowlands, in contrast, served as the home for a predominately Presbyterian community, with the notable exceptions of the university centers of St. Andrews and Edinburgh. This concentration of coreligionists allowed for rapid spread of information within the various parishes and congregations. This could help secure the allegiances of subjects in a particular region and allowed to the population to be mobilized quickly in case of war. These denominational differences were only one of the many sources of confrontation that played into the narrative of Scotland's Glorious Revolution. In some cases, one set of factions helped intensify another, as was the case with religious and regional rivalries.

⁹ Neil Davidson, *Discovering the Scottish Revolution* (London; Sterling, Virginia: Pluto Press, 2003.), 58.

¹⁰ Roberts, *Clan, King, and Covenant*, 3.

¹¹ Pauline Croft, *King James* (Basingstoke, Hampshire; New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2003), 17

The Lowland-Highland Divide

As opposed to the wars in the other kingdoms, the clear geographic divide between the religious groups involved in the fighting created a virtual “no man’s land” between the two groups where much of the fighting occurred. In the case of the Glorious Revolution, while the military campaigns in Ireland occurred in nearly all the regions of the island, the fighting in Scotland in Scotland occurred almost exclusively in Perthshire (situated between the Lowlands and Highlands), which saved much of the rest of the realm from the hardships that came along with campaigning armies.

Denominational differences were not the only characteristics that separated the people of the Highlands from their fellow subjects in the Lowlands. As the names of their regions might suggest, the two areas differed geographically. The Lowlands contained areas of large pastures, rolling hills and heather heaths, burgeoning urban centers and, in general appearance, was quite similar to the north of England. The people, who were largely feudal farmers, shepherds or cattle herders, differed little from their cousins across the border. English, the official language of both the Scottish Reformation and government, was the language of the Lowlanders.¹² Their shared language was useful tool when they looked south for trading opportunities. Though the Englishmen with whom the Lowlanders conducted their business were usually Anglican, unlike their Scottish Episcopal brethren, these High Church Protestants presented no threat to the control and stability of Scotland’s government. Besides, with a similar language, way of life and economic pursuits, the Lowlanders had more in common with the English across the Border than they did with their fellow Scots in the Highlands. This is probably best

¹² Allan Massie, “Scottish, English and British Culture,” in *Scotland and the Union (Home Papers on Public Policy 2, no. 2)*, ed. Patrick S. Hedge (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1994), 112;

exemplified by the large number of Lowland Scots who enlisted in England's army in the years before the Revolution. With the enticements of better pay and more active service, at the time of the Revolution, more Scots served in the English army than that of their own kingdom.¹³ The rise in usage of English as the primary language in the northern kingdom and the impact it had on Scottish life, especially in the Lowlands, was slowly drawing the two realms together before 1688 and would help to make an easy transition when the Union came about in 1707.

Even with increasing economic opportunity and social interaction across the border, life in the Lowlands was hard. The region's position between the two kingdoms made it susceptible to incursions by large armies, both Scottish and English, whenever the two countries were at war throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. When the land was not being occupied and the crops pillaged by invading armies, Lowlanders lived in constant fear of cattle and horse raids. Up until the start of the seventeenth century, the greatest threat of these came from the infamous "Border Reivers," bandits who terrorized the people on both sides of the Tweed. In the decades leading up to Revolution, however, the threat primarily came from the Highlanders to the North. Whether forming part of a military expedition (like the "Highland Host" sent against the Cameronians during the Covenanter Wars) or conducting the expedition on their own, the Highlanders had a reputation for terrorizing and stealing from their fellow Scots that did nothing to ease the animosity between the peoples of the Lowlands and Highlands.

Compared to the Lowlands, the Highlands seemed like an entirely different country. MacKay noted that the "country was full of mountains, bogs, woods, and

¹³ Davidson, 120.

difficult passes with inaccessible retiring places.”¹⁴ Many who lived outside the Highlands shared MacKay’s view of the region as a wild, foreboding place. An anonymous, anti-Jacobite pamphlet on the Highlands and its people written after the Revolution, described the land as “Poor and Mountainous, Barren and Unhospitable.”¹⁵ Accounts of the war told of how unforgiving the geography of the North was to campaigning armies. Macaulay, in his surprisingly detailed account of the military operations during the Revolution in Scotland, added to this imagery when he wrote of the challenges facing MacKay and his Williamite forces:

It was difficult in such a country to track the enemy. It was impossible to drive him at bay. For an invading army was not to be found in the wilderness of heath and shingle; nor could supplies for many day be transported far over quaking bogs and up precipitous ascents.¹⁶

The crags and rocky slopes were places where, as MacKay put it, “no wagons or carts could possibly follow.”¹⁷ Compared to the rolling hills of the Lowlands or the lush, green glens in Ireland, the Highlands were unforgiving, to both soldier and civilian alike, and did not provide much economic opportunity for the people who lived there. Some farming did occur, but with rough ground and bad weather, it was difficult. Many kept herd of sheep and cattle, another challenging livelihood in such unforgiving topography, which led to the aforementioned livestock raids, both in the Lowlands and against other Highlanders. With its rugged terrain, harsh climate, scattered settlements and little economic opportunity the Highlands were, as historian Andrew Scott describes, “a harsh

¹⁴ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs of the war carried on in Scotland and Ireland*, 41.

¹⁵ *An historical account of the Highlanders describing their country, division into clans, manner of living and fighting, their habitat, arms, and government under their lairds, &c Set forth in a view of the Rebellion in Scotland, with some enquiries, What have we to fear from them? And. What is the properest Method to take with them?* (Dublin: Unknown Publisher, Reprinted 1715), 28.

¹⁶ Macaulay, 302.

¹⁷ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs of the war carried on in Scotland and Ireland*, 40.

and Spartan place.”¹⁸ The majority of the realm’s poverty existed in the Highlands, but it was not just the rugged terrain of that made this area different. Though the craggy mountains, cliffs and rocky heaths may have been alien to the Lowlanders and English, the people who inhabited the Highlands were more so. This combination of unforgiving geography and intimidating people would prove to be the greatest challenge facing the Williamites in their attempt to gain control of the kingdom.

The Highlanders and Their Way of Life

The Highlanders were, as a contemporary pamphlet noted, “strong, large, made hardy and rugged, rather desperate than bold, and rather ferocious than courageous.”¹⁹ That desperation and ferocity were probably to compensate for their obsolete equipment, as many, like their Caledonian and Pictish ancestors centuries before, wielded swords, axes, and leather-covered shields, called *targes*, into battle. Though they would be at a technological disadvantage against their Lowland and English foe, their backward fighting style and imposing physical appearance had certain tactical advantages. In battle the Highlanders’ weapons, as historian James Hill notes, “allowed [them] to make use of their quickness and agility against an enemy who was increasingly burdened by the weight of more modern and complex weapons and accoutrements... [Their strength] lay in their primitive offensive tactics.”²⁰ As we shall see, the Highlanders were able to use their old-fashioned tactics and weaponry to their advantage at Killiecrankie, but in the crowded streets of Dunkeld and later, and more famously, on Culloden Moor, the clansmen would be defeated by the power of modern military technology.

¹⁸ Andrew Murray Scott, *Bonnie Dundee* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1989), 2.

¹⁹ *An historical account of the Highlanders...*, 21.

²⁰ James Michael Hill, *Celtic Warfare, 1595-1763* (Edinburgh, John Donald Publishers, 1986), 65-66.

While the Highlands practiced an archaic form of warfare, they also lived within an age-old social system as well. During this time period, many in the Lowlands and even in England lived in feudal communities. In the Highlands, the communities were organized in a structure that even predated one's connection to a lord: the clan. As historian Neil Davidson explains:

During the seventeenth century Scotland was widely considered to be one of the few remaining areas in Europe where groups descended from a common ancestor, distinguished by a common name, and united with a common territory under the patriarchal authority of the chief could still be found.²¹

Amidst the uninviting mountains and moors of the Highlands, the central government exercised no control over the people. As one anti-Jacobite pamphleteer described the Highlanders as a sort of natural absolutists, writing that they, “rude and barbarous... [and that] the Common people have no Laws of Government but the absolute Will of their Chief.”²² Where local lords and magistrates might have a say in community affairs in England and the Lowlands, the clan chieftain ruled on his own accord in what was a virtual mini-kingdom. This system of social organization was a far cry from the semi-republican religious and political order of the Presbyterian Lowlanders.

Scotland had a Parliament, but it was a Lowland phenomenon. The ruling government in Edinburgh had little power over the clans of the North. In their domains, the word of the chieftain was law. He controlled economic production, trade, local politics and even marriages. Some of the higher-status members of the clan could hold their own, as the pamphlet calls them, “tenants and vassals,” in the end, everyone within the clan answered to the chieftain, whether they be his closest relatives and his most

²¹ Davidson, 53.

²² *An historical account of the Highlanders...*, 12.

trusted counselors, or distant, peasant relatives, who worked tirelessly in the boggy fields. When the monarch needed to influence affairs in his northern realm, he would look to the chieftains, not his parliament, to see that his wishes were carried out. Even when clans grew too large and broke off into smaller sects, homage and obedience were often given to the senior chieftain of the group, even if it meant a clan putting itself in jeopardy. In 1689, the members of Clan MacKay found themselves surrounded by rival, Jacobite clans along the northern coast of Scotland and, thus, decided to stay out of the fighting in order to protect their families and land. However, as soon as news came that the General MacKay, the eldest surviving (and long absent) son of the clan chieftain, had been chosen to act as William's commander-in-chief in the realm, the clan decided to fully support William and sent a party of Highlanders to join the army of their kinsman.²³

The members of a clan were expected to follow the wishes and orders of the chieftain, even if it meant their death. In return, the clansmen expected the chieftain and the other upper-class members of the clan, whom Stuart Reid refers to as, "warrior aristocracy," to provide order and protection for the community and to lead the clan's men boldly into the thick of battle.²⁴ As Hill explains, nothing mattered more to the Highlanders and their military culture than "pride and honour."²⁵ Above all, the honor of the clan was reflected upon all of its members, but most importantly, its leader. All were mindful to not commit any acts that would taint the family name. This unfailing sense of allegiance to chieftain and kin was a key pillar in Highland ideology and would be one of the toughest challenges the faced MacKay and other Williamite leaders as they tried to

²³ Trevor Royle, *The King's Own Scottish Borderers: A Concise History* (Edinburgh, Mainstream Publishing, 2008), 15 ; Roberts, *Clan, King, and Covenant*, 183.

²⁴ Reid, *I Met the Devil...*, 30.

²⁵ Hill, 66.

mould the views of the people of Scotland into their own ideas. Their task was made even more difficult when the clans' actions and allegiances were affected by the long-standing rivalries that plagued the Highlands.

Family Feuds

One can imagine that in a region with few resources, little economic opportunity and a society where honor and pride were essential values, conflict was difficult to avoid. Throughout sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, little wars between individual clans were almost constant throughout the region and greatly influenced outsiders' views of the Highlanders as violent and uncivilized people. As the post-war, anti-Jacobite pamphlet explained, the inhabitants of the region "decide their personal Breaches very often by the Sword, in which sometimes, from the Differences between 2 mean Persons, the whole Families are engaged, and they often come to pitch'd battles...".²⁶ Personal grudges between chieftains quickly became the concern of the clan as a whole, would often cause an increase in hostilities with the rival clan that could include pitched battles, murders, kidnappings or raids. These family feuds only intensified with each eye-for-an-eye stroke and had plagued the Highlands for centuries. Though the 1603 Statutes of Iona had tried to make the chieftains toe the line set by James VI, the fragile peace was only temporary. As the British kingdoms devolved into chaos in the middle part of the seventeenth century, the old rivalries were renewed and blood was once again spilled in the Highlands. Once unleashed, this type of hatred was hard to contain, and the feuding continued well into the Revolution and beyond. In John MacKay's biography of his Williamite ancestor, he described how quickly the situation deteriorated when the

²⁶ *An historical account of the Highlanders...*, 18.

Revolution came to, “the lawless state of the Highlands, in which bloody family feuds, and even private wars among the clans, were not yet extinguished.”²⁷ As the political leaders played the religious divisions in the realm to their advantage at the start of the Revolution, so too did they seek to manipulate the clan rivalries in the Highlands. Clans that had benefitted from the previous Stuart monarchs were eager to support James again, while the Williamites sought to gain the support of their rival clans, especially those who had long supported the Covenant.

This was not a new political tactic, as it had been used by the kingdom’s political leaders at the time of the civil wars, but was a useful way to gain support from a highly fractious population. Though the Highland clans share the same religion and same identity, some of the great chieftains of the North occasionally broke the trend and formed alliances with the Lowland Presbyterians. The most notable of these men were the chieftains of Clan Campbell, the hereditary Earls, and later Marquesses and Dukes, of Argyll. These chieftains, though Episcopalians and the leaders of arguably the most prominent family in the Highlands, staunchly supported the Covenanter government in the decades of the civil wars and the Williamite government during the Revolution. This political maneuvering was often aimed to claim an advantage in numbers in Highland feuding and putting the chieftain’s clan on the side of the government in power which, at least during the civil wars and the Revolution, was controlled by the Covenanters.²⁸

By standing in line with the predominantly Presbyterian and Lowland government, a chieftain could hope to be rewarded for his service with power, money or, most importantly, land, all of which were often granted at the expense of his clan’s rivals.

²⁷ John MacKay, 7.

²⁸ Roberts, *Clan, King, and Covenant*, x.

In the confusing political world of early modern Scotland, however, this shifting of allegiance could put the chieftain and his clansmen in a precarious position if their side were to lose power, which frequently occurred. This dynamic system of control was largely due to the Scottish kings' absentee status in the realm following the Union of the Crowns in 1603. Generally, those whom they chose to oversee the realm lacked the political strength (James's governance during Charles II's reign excepted) to rule efficiently, and sometimes, as was the case in the late 1630s, lost complete control of the government. The clans that had sided with Covenanters certainly came out ahead of their rivals when their Lowland allies took control of the kingdom in 1638. When royalist resurgences occurred, with the restoration of Charles II in 1660 and James's change in policy following the ill-fated rebellion of 1685, the chieftains who had turned to the South for support became the first target for the vengeful kings. The same situations held true in reverse to the clans who stood by Charles I and James II when the authority of the monarch was threatened. No matter who they supported, choosing to throw their clan into the volatile political game of seventeenth century Scotland was a serious gamble for the Highland chieftains. Some were able to gain power, land and influence, but more often than not, it brought great loss to the leader and his people. In the case of the Campbells of Argyll, who had supported the Covenanters in the middle of the century and later allied with the Duke of Monmouth, it meant executions and forfeitures of both land and titles.

Expecting that type of retribution to be visited upon the losers of the civil conflicts, many clans chose to remain loyal to their monarch, even when he had lost control of the kingdom, in the hopes of profiting from Parliament and the Presbyterian's misfortunes. Thus, both before and throughout the conflicts of the seventeenth century,

the various sects of Clan MacDonald and their staunch allies in Clan Cameron found themselves joining whomever the Campbells were fighting in the hopes of regaining some of their ancestral lands and political clout. Clan allegiances during wars were not always clear-cut however, as historian Robert Barnes writes, that sometimes clans would split their allegiance between the competing factions so that the, “family estates would be secure and personal safety assured.”²⁹ Though we will see instances of the latter during the course of the Revolution, the vast majority of the Highland clans used the various conflicts fought within Scotland to gain political advantages and get ahead of their local rivals. Though family rivalries existed in the other British kingdoms, they were not nearly prevalent as they had once been. The inter-clan warfare in Ireland, much of which had been instigated by Scottish relatives, had petered out by this point in time as the majority of the fighting there was now almost strictly religious-based. The level to which rivalries existed between the Highland clans and the politicking the clan chieftains were used by Scotland’s political leaders in this era was uniquely Scottish. It was another dimension of division within the realm, yet one that was not ideological like those in England and Ireland which tore the realms apart when William threatened James’s claim to the throne.

The Revolution in Scotland

Throughout the seventeenth century, the three British kingdoms endured a series of brutal conflicts, the last being the Glorious Revolution. Though each of these struggles started for the same reasons and occurred simultaneously in all three realms, the ways in which they unfolded were dramatically different in each kingdom due to the unique

²⁹ Robert Paul Barnes, “Scotland and the Glorious Revolution of 1688,” *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 3, No. 3 (1971), 120.

social, religious and economic structures in each. The situation in England led to a relatively peaceful transition of power, the circumstances in Ireland led to a bloody war with repercussions that continued well into the present day. As we have examined, when the Revolution came to Scotland, pre-existing tensions were again torn open in military conflict. Though William achieved his goal of taking the crown of the British kingdoms and bringing them into his struggle against the absolutism of Louis XIV's France, the Revolution in Scotland did not bring all the peace and stability it had to England nor did it reinforce sectarian division that would cause more bloodshed for the next three centuries, as it had in Ireland. In Scotland's case, the Revolution's settlements helped to ease much of the tension that had troubled the kingdom and its inhabitants, but gave the realm a new set of problems. The terror of the war combined with the economic hardships caused by Scotland's forced commitment to the fighting on the continent set in motion series of events that would result in union with England and a dramatically different future.

We will now examine just how Scotland's revolutionary experience unfolded, how those events created the new set of issues for the realm and how the revolution's narrative in Scotland is unique amongst the three kingdoms. Scotland's pivotal role in the story of the Glorious Revolution has been long overlooked, brushed aside by the preconceptions from the English and Irish experiences. By looking at the events in the northern kingdom from a Scottish context, we can increase our understanding of the event itself and the impact it had on British, and more broadly, global history.

To better understand the events of the Highland War and Scotland's experience within the Glorious Revolution as a whole, we will now examine the narrative from the

perspective of King William's commander in the realm, General MacKay. More than anyone else in the realm, he maintained constant contact with the various factions in the conflict: the Convention of Estates, William's court in England, the Cameronians and even the Jacobites. In his memoirs, letters and treatises, we can see that he truly believed in the Williamite ideals of honor, duty and had a strong belief of the Protestant cause. Through his service in the military operations of the Revolution in all three kingdoms and, later on the continent with William, MacKay was able to observe and gain insight on the entire event from outside the realm of the political maneuvering. No other player in the narrative had the same opportunity. Though a Scot by birth, he felt far removed from his homeland. In fact, when word first came of his master's intentions to send him to his homeland, he wrote that he "was then very indisposed for such an expedition." Additionally, he feared that "the disposition of that kingdom [was] tending to a civil war."³⁰ The situation that faced the general upon his arrival in Edinburgh was far from welcoming, but MacKay understood the importance of securing the northern kingdom for William. Spurred on by the success in England and his faith in the ideals of the Williamite Revolution, he "embraced the command."³¹

³⁰ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 7.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 3.

Chapter II:

Hugh MacKay and the Glorious Revolution

The Calm before the Storm

The battle fought by the Cameronians at Dunkeld was the great turning point of the Highland War. Before that engagement, the Williamite efforts in Scotland had not been going well. In fact, it was in this kingdom that William's forces suffered their only serious battlefield defeat. It came at a battle that was larger and far bloodier than the one that took place within the confined streets of Dunkeld and one that would be immortalized in the narrative of the Jacobite history of Scotland: Killiecrankie.

On the afternoon of July 27, 1689, Major General Hugh MacKay marched his small army of 3,500 men through the pass of Killiecrankie in Perthshire. Throughout the spring and early summer, the general and his Williamite forces had been playing, what Andrew Scott has called, "an elaborate chess game" across the Highlands with Viscount Dundee and his Jacobite clansmen.¹ When the Williamites would advance in one direction, Dundee would counter with greater numbers, but if the Jacobites tried to press their advantage, they often found their movements checked by effective use of Williamite cavalry or, as one contemporary account described, "faint Marches and Counter-Marches. [sic]"² The topography of the Highlands was far from welcoming for an invading army and made supplying the Williamite troops difficult. Additionally, Dundee's Highland warriors, like of those who fought during the civil wars with his kinsman, Montrose,

¹ Andrew Murray Scott, *Bonnie Dundee* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1989), 117.

² Stuart Reid, *I Met the Devil & Dundee: The Battle of Killiecrankie 1689* (Newthorpe, Nottingham: Partizan Press, 2009), 15; *A True and Faithful Account of the intire Deadeat of the Rebbel Dundee by Major General Maccay, with the Number of the Slain* (Edinburgh: John Willis, 1689).

proved to be a frustrating opponent for MacKay's predominantly Lowland and English regulars through their use of irregular tactics and rapid maneuvering over the rugged terrain of the Highlands. Negotiating the politics and rivalries of the region added yet another level of complexity to the Williamite endeavors. Despite the hardships, MacKay had kept his army together and was finally bringing Dundee to battle in advantageous circumstances.

Just two weeks earlier, the Williamites, thinking they had adequately contained the Highlanders for the time being, had marched back to the kingdom's capital to refit and resupply. It was, however, a short stay. By July 21 MacKay's small army was once again on the move, headed towards Inverlochy and another Williamite force led by the Earl of Argyll.³ Their march took them through Atholl, where the Jacobite stronghold of Blair Castle was under siege. MacKay advanced towards the manor but became rather vigilant when he received word that Dundee's army was approaching with the intent of relieving the castle's garrison. MacKay's men reached the pass around noon on the July 27 and cautiously navigated its narrow track for the next four hours.⁴ Once through the obstacle, the advance guard spotted the first of the Jacobites. In response, the general formed his men upon what he called, "ground fair enough to receive the enemy, but not to attack them."⁵ He knew that his regulars had a significant advantage in firepower over Dundee's Highlanders and thus thought it best to take a defensive stance. Dundee obliged and deployed his men with, as MacKay described, "his back to a very high hill, which is the ordinary maxim of Highlanders, who never fight against regular forces upon any

³ Reid, *I Met the Devil...*, 16.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 18.

⁵ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs of the war carried on in Scotland and Ireland*, ed. J.N. Hog et al. (Edinburgh: Bannatyne Club, 1823), 51.

thing of equal terms.”⁶ MacKay expected Dundee’s men to charge downhill, using the high ground to gain momentum as they charged and hit with an immense of force. MacKay’s troops would only have a limited opportunity to shoot at the Highlanders before the enemy would be upon them and their volleys would not be fired across a flat, open field unlike those aimed at a later generation of Jacobites at Culloden. The Highlanders had used this strategy in countless engagement since the Civil War and it was a key factor in their battlefield successes. Just the thought of battle with the clansmen must have been intimidating to the Williamites.

Once arrayed, the armies waited for the battle to begin. Faced with such an imposing and unorthodox foe, anxiety grew within the Williamite ranks. As James Hill describes, “the mere spectacle of a Highland horde looming menacingly on a hillside was often enough to frighten battle-harden veterans.”⁷ MacKay himself noted that, “all our officers and soldiers were strangers to the Highlanders way of fighting and embattling, which mainly occasioned the consternation many of them were in.”⁸ The general busied himself making final preparations along his battle line. With a serious engagement looming, MacKay thought it best to give some encouraging words to his troops. Turning to his nearest battalions, he, as described in his memoirs:

made a short speech...representing the unquestionable justice of the cause, regarding not only the Protestant interest in Britain, but in all the world, whose loss humanly seemed mainly to depend on the success of his Majesties enterprise, for the defence thereof, as well the temporal happiness temporal happiness of their country, consisting in the maintainance of their lawes, which

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ James Michael Hill, *Celtic Warfare 1595-1763*, (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1986), 70.

⁸ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 52.

confirmed it to them besides the obligation of honour and conscience, which lay upon them not to betray by a criminal faintheartedness their masters service but whom they were entertained, and last of all their own safety, assuring them that if they kept firm and close they would quickly see their enemy's take to the hills for their refuge...To avoid, then, certain ruines, the only visible mean was to stand to it, like men fighting for their religion and liberty against invaders of both, which was the true ground of his Majesties enterprise, and not the desire of a crown as it was of all good men and true Protestant subjects in conjunction with and assistance to him therein, and not the prospect of advantage by the change .”⁹

In just a few sentences, MacKay reminded the men of the ideals of the Williamite cause. Surprisingly, his message did not include any reminders of the divisions that plagued Scotland. There was no mention of Presbyterians and Episcopalians, Lowlands and Highlands or clans. Instead the general spoke of the broader ideas of subjecthood, country and the Protestant faith. Although the kingdom's internal divisions had driven many to fight in the war, MacKay had good reason not to mention those sources of tension. First was the fact that the general, though born in the kingdom, was for all intents and purposes, an outsider and freely admitted it. Though he was aware of the instability within the realm, his long-time absence from Scotland had caused him to be somewhat disconnected from most of these rivalries and seldom indicates any ill will tied to those grudges. Even when it came to religious views, of which his own were strongly Calvinist, MacKay took care to refer to “the Protestant interest” and not a particular denomination, a habit he continued throughout his writings. Ever since leaving the service of the French army, MacKay seems to have tried to emulate his commander, William, the great Protestant champion of Europe. Although the Revolution's Scottish campaign was not centered along traditional confessional lines, the Williamites hoped to secure Scotland as

⁹ *Ibid.*, 53-4.

a strong, Protestant kingdom through MacKay's military efforts. In William's service he had always used his Protestant beliefs as a source of motivation and a goal for his endeavors. Though the nature of the war was different from those in which he was previously engaged, the old general still turned to the same inspirations he always had as he prepared for battle and hoped his men would do the same.

MacKay also likely chose not to mention Scotland's internal struggles because of the heterogeneous nature of his army. There were both Lowland and Highland soldiers in the Williamite ranks, making the argument of regional rivalries unimportant. For the many Lowland Scots, the idea of clan rivalries would not have been as important as it was to their Highland comrades. It had been those very rivals that led many of the latter to William's banner in the first place. These men represented a very small portion of the MacKay's army and may not have even been near the general when he spoke. For the Lowlanders and Englishmen in the ranks, the clan system was foreign and archaic, and though a trigger of the conflict, had little impact on their lives. MacKay's oration was not meant to discuss the problems that plagued the kingdom. He was trying to remind his men that they were fighting for something greater than the petty rivalries which had caused so much bloodshed

The most important idea that MacKay hoped to instill in his men was that it even if the kingdom's civil rivalries had inspired Scots to fight, they were not the main objective of the Williamite cause. While the realm had existed in a fractured state for the better part of a century and those in both camps hoped it would continue to be so (with their particular interest group in power), William wanted not only a united Scotland, but three kingdoms of subjects who would stand together with him in his efforts against

international Catholicism, embodied in the form of the absolutist ambitions of Louis XIV. In the other realms, Protestants of various denominations fought together against common enemies, regional rivalries were practically non-existent, and family feuds seldom sparked full-scale wars.

MacKay and the other Williamite leaders hoped that Scotland would assimilate into the large Williamite interest. In a way, MacKay's speech shows us that he was thinking of the larger context and replacing these considerations with greater goals. He was a professional soldier who had returned to his homeland to conduct a campaign and did not remain past its conclusion. How the war's results would shape Scotland's internal rivalries would have no effect on MacKay once he left the kingdom. As an officer in two of the British armies and a loyal subject of William, however, MacKay's future would be immediately affected by William's success or failure in Britain and on the Continent. His stake in the larger Williamite effort far outweighed his concern for Scotland's deep-seeded internal issues.

The Highland War and the Scottish involvement of the Glorious Revolution had begun as another link in a chain of civil conflict, but by the time of Killiecrankie had been mapped onto something much larger than the Presbyterian-Episcopalian divide or family feuds. The Williamites in all the kingdoms were beginning to look at themselves as members of more collective groups and at their individual realms as strong nations (and for some, as part of a united kingdom). MacKay served as a link between the two ideas: a product of the factional old Scotland and a servant of the new ideas about Britain. As the sun began to set at Killiecrankie, and Dundee ordered his Highlanders forward, many must have wondered how this war would change their homeland.

A Martial Tradition

The exact date of MacKay's birth is unknown, but historians agree it was probably in 1640. The son of the clan chieftain, he was born into a family that was one of the most prominent in the Highlands and had a respected martial reputation. His father, also Hugh, was a colonel who served both Parliament and the Crown during the course of the civil wars, an exploit shared by many of his fellow Scots.¹⁰ The elder Hugh's brother, William, commanded a regiment of Scots in the Swedish army of Gustavas Adolphus and was killed, along with the famed Protestant monarch, at the Battle of Lützen during the Thirty Years' War in 1632.¹¹ For the future general, there were certainly high expectations for his military skill. What he could not know was that though he began his career as a simple, junior officer, he would one day help dramatically shape the history of his homeland and Britain as a whole. His experience and the events of the larger context of the era would shape him into an ideological warrior.

Having a military hero in one's family was a sure way to gain prestige and honor for one's clan.¹² The Scots and Irish in particular were renowned across the Continent for their martial prowess. Warfare was almost constant throughout seventeenth century Europe and since the leaders of the great powers needed as many men as they could find to fill the ranks of their large armies, the recruitment of mercenaries and auxiliaries became extremely common. As John Childs describes, "On the outbreak of war, it was often cheaper and more expedient to rent trained regiments from abroad than to rely

¹⁰ John MacKay, *Life of Lieut. General Hugh MacKay of Scoury* (Edinburgh: Laing & Forbes, 1836), 3.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 2.

¹² Roger B. Manning, *Swordsmen: The Martial Ethos in the Three Kingdoms* (Oxford; New York; Oxford University Press, 2003), 15.

wholly upon whipping new recruits into possible soldiers.”¹³ With little hope for employment in their homeland and dreams of gaining honor for themselves and families on the battlefield, many Scots answered the calls for recruits from the foreign kings and princes. European armies, both Catholic and Protestant, contained Scottish regiments, allowing many Scots to gain notoriety in the many battles of the era. Both MacKay and his future adversary, Dundee, went to the Continent in their youth hoping to do the same and at Killiecrankie, nearly half of MacKay’s army was made up of such men.

In 1660, the young MacKay took a commission in Dumbarton’s Regiment, or as it was more commonly known, the Royal Scots.¹⁴ This regiment was formed in Scotland 1633 with authorization from Charles I to serve as auxiliaries (essentially on loan) in the French army, a common practice in early modern Europe. Though MacKay was born a Protestant, the Catholic army of Louis XIV was the most sophisticated in Europe at the time and many Scots were willing to lay aside religious scruples for the chance to learn the art of war from the experts.

MacKay’s first years in Louis’ army were rather uneventful, but in 1669 he was offered his first chance for battlefield glory. That year, the Sun King sent a large contingent of volunteer officers, including MacKay, to aid the Venetians in their attempt to drive the Turks from the island of Candia (Crete).¹⁵ The Scotsman served with such distinction throughout the campaign, that he was awarded a gold medal by the Venetian Republic.¹⁶

¹³ John Childs, *The Army, James II, and the Glorious Revolution*, (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1980), 120.

¹⁴ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, xiii.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 6.



Figure 1. *Hugh MacKay, from the frontpiece of The Life of Lieutenant General Hugh MacKay by John MacKay, 1836. (Public Domain)*

A few months later, he returned to France and his old regiment. Over the next few years, the diplomatic situation on the Continent deteriorated and in 1672, England and France went to war with the Dutch. Dumbarton's Regiment began actively campaigning in the Netherlands and it was while stationed in a small town there that MacKay

befriended, and later married, the daughter of one of the region's noble families. The year was not all joyous for MacKay and marked a period of change in MacKay's ideals and sense of duty. The brutal campaign waged by the French against the Protestants seemed to have finally shocked the young Scots Presbyterian and gave him an aversion for Louis and his Catholic absolutism. In response, MacKay decided to resign his royal commission with the Royal Scots and join his fellow Scots in the service of the Protestant army of William of Orange.

The Anglo-Dutch Brigade

When he joined the Dutch army, the young Scotsman was given a commission as a captain in the Anglo-Dutch Brigade, a formation of three English and three Scots regiments that had been in Dutch service since 1593. Unlike Dumbarton's Regiment, which was officially a Scottish regiment in the English army loaned to the French by Charles II (by definition, *auxiliaries*), the Anglo-Dutch brigade was formed entirely from permanent regiments within the Dutch army.

To our modern understanding, the ability to switch allegiances in the middle of a war without any sort of penalty seems like an odd arrangement, but in a world where the presence of foreign auxiliaries and mercenaries in an army was, as John Childs describes, "unexceptional."¹⁷ Like modern footballers on loan, these young officers were serving abroad in order to gain experience, but could transfer their commissions between English and Scottish regiments, both auxiliary and mercenary, in the various armies of the Continent or those in the British Isles if they so wished. To take up his new post in the

¹⁷ Childs, *The Army, James II...*, 120.

Anglo-Dutch Brigade of William's army, MacKay first had to resign his commission in the English army, but there is no evidence of any opposition to that action.

Charles II, and could usually spare the surplus military men the British kingdoms had at his disposal and the officers and men of the Anglo-Dutch brigade were still viewed as subjects of the king of England and Scotland. Though these men were in the pay of the Dutch Republic, the Stuart monarchs would often give William advice on how to run the affairs of the brigade (which was usually ignored) and, as Childs explains, "Could summon the brigade into [Britain] to assist him in a military emergency."¹⁸ Since they were still concerned subjects of the British realms, all were expected to respond to the call of their sovereign monarch when it came without question, but at times of peace, this form of overseas service was generally not a conflict of England's interest.

Unlike today's footballers who must sit out when their loan team plays their home club, this system meant that British officers could sometimes find themselves in a precarious position if the army which they now served fought the English Army and the king in London called the soldiers home. This had been the case at the start of the Anglo-Dutch War of 1665, when the English regiments of the brigade were recalled by Charles and all obliged, only to return in 1674.¹⁹ A decade later, when James recalled the brigade in preparation for William's invasion, the question of loyalty within the brigade would become a serious issue for the first time.

MacKay added to his reputation in the service of the Dutch and even gained the attention of William himself at the Battle of Seneffe in 1674, resulting in the prince's

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 123; *Ibid.*, 119.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

orders to promote MacKay to the rank of major.²⁰ Ironically, another Scot also gained William's interest and favor at the battle: John Graham of Claverhouse, the future Viscount Dundee. Like MacKay, Dundee (who himself came from a distinguished military family) had taken a commission abroad looking to gain experience, pay, adventure and fame. Dumbarton's Regiment aside, there were more opportunities for aspiring Scots in William's army, so Claverhouse, like many other officers who would later serve James or William, decided to throw his lot in with the Dutch. He, like MacKay, quickly made a name for himself as a cornet in William's Life Guard and even saved William's life at Seneffe. As a reward for the deed, the prince promised the Scottish cavalier a future promotion.²¹

Shortly after the campaign ended, a position as lieutenant colonel of one of the Scottish regiments in the Anglo-Dutch brigade became available. William chose MacKay over Claverhouse for this appointment, an action that the latter took as a personal insult and greatly influenced his decision to leave the Dutch for a commission in the cavalry of Scotland's own army.²² This snub along with his later patronage from James and a family legacy of fighting for the Stuart kings (he was a close relative of *the* Royalist commander in Scotland during the civil wars), would all help to push Claverhouse into the Jacobite camp when revolution came in 1688, an example of the personal motivations for allegiance, rather than ideological ones, that brought many of the Scots into the conflict.

The Third Anglo-Dutch War came to an end in 1678 and two years later, as the army was reorganized in peacetime, MacKay found himself with the rank of colonel,

²⁰ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, xiv.

²¹ Scott, 9.

²² Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs*, xiv. It would be with this command that Claverhouse would go on to gain great fame, or rather infamy, in his brutal suppression of the Covenanters.

command of all six regiments of the Anglo-Dutch Brigade and the trust and respect of his army's commander, Prince William.²³ The Scottish officer had served in three armies on the Continent over the course of the previous two decades, but had yet to fight for his just natural king (the wishes of Louis and William had always affected his service). In his most recent war, he and the men of the Anglo-Dutch brigade had even fought against the allies of their sovereign king. The Dutch not only provided MacKay and his fellow Britons with money, but had a system of government and religious ideals that were more appealing to some than the Pro-Catholic absolutism of Charles II and James II. Some, like Claverhouse, viewed service in William's army as a means of employment and still felt a strong sense of allegiance to their sovereign king. For MacKay and others like him, preference towards William and his cause would soon create a serious conflict of interest.

Conflicted Loyalties

The accession of James II to the British thrones brought a great deal of unrest to MacKay's homeland. When threatened by the invasions of the Dukes of Monmouth and Argyll, the king quickly called upon his subjects, both auxiliaries and mercenaries, serving in armies abroad to return to fight the rebels, though both threats were defeated before the Anglo-Dutch brigade saw any action.²⁴ Nonetheless, the king seemed pleased enough, as John MacKay described, with the Anglo-Dutch Brigade's "prompt obedience to his call, and with their soldierly appearance" and wanted to strengthen the Scotsman's

²³ *Ibid.*

²⁴ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, xv.

bond of loyalty that he promoted MacKay to the rank of major general in English service.²⁵

MacKay and his troops remained in Britain for several months after the rebellions were extinguished before returning to Holland. During that time, the general visited his estates in Scotland that he had inherited after the murder of his two brothers in 1668. This act was another episode in a longstanding feud between the MacKays and the neighboring Sinclairs, who battled for supremacy in the north of Scotland. Even before the Glorious Revolution, the harsh realities of Highland life had a personal impact on the MacKay's life even though they were so far removed while he served on the Continent.

The aftermath of Argyll's rebellion marked the first time MacKay set foot in Scotland since he left for the army in 1660.²⁶ MacKay spent his remaining weeks in London, where he wrote a letter to William. This was probably at the request of James, who having just put down a rebellion led by a blood-relation and claimant to the throne, probably wanted to use MacKay to ensure relations were amicable between London and The Hague. MacKay began the correspondence by thanking William for his cooperation during the rebellion, explaining that the king "was well persuaded of your Highness' good inclination to his person and interest."²⁷ After going into detail regarding James's opinion of the Anglo-Dutch brigade, the general concluded the letter to his commander on the Continent,

²⁵ John MacKay, 12; Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, xv.

²⁶ John MacKay, 6; Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, xv.

²⁷ "General Hugh MacKay to the Prince of Orange," in *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the reign of James II, 1685-1689, preserved in the State Paper Department of Her Majesty's Public Record Office 1893, Vol. 2: Jan 1686-May 1687*, ed. E. K. Timings, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1964), 135.

with my earnest prayer to God for such an inseparable union and harmony between his Majesty and his nearest relations to the maintenance of the royal dignity, that all contrivances of such as labour to interrupt the course of so anciently established a monarchy in Britain may never be able to reverse or undo it in whose divine direction and protection I heartily recommend your Highness' person and concerns as being unfeignedly [*sic*].²⁸

In the letter, MacKay's allegiances do not appear to be in question. At this point, the general viewed James as his rightful monarch, while William, who he more closely paralleled on an ideological level, was his superior officer and employer. Few in the British kingdoms had a quarrel with James in the early stages of his reign, a fact proven by the support for the king during the Monmouth and Argyll rebellions. Unfortunately for MacKay, events were quickly initiated that would break "inseparable union and harmony," as William began forming "contrivances" of his own. This looming conflict would set the Scotsman's two commanders-in-chief against each other in battle and would test the allegiances of the general who served them both.

With stability restored to Britain, the general returned to the Netherlands, but his stay was rather short. Throughout 1687 and 1688, the king's pro-Catholic and absolutist actions provoked unhappy public responses throughout his realms. In Scotland, as in England, James issued the Declaration of Indulgence, which nominally gave rights to those who worshiped outside of the state church. In practice this meant enhanced rights for James's fellow Catholics, though the privileges were eventually expanded to include moderate Presbyterians. The kingdom's more radical Calvinists were still considered a threat by the monarchy and were not included in the indulgence. In fact, James followed his brother's example in the brutal repression of this group, oftentimes using the power of

²⁸ *Ibid.*

the standing armies he illegally kept in his kingdoms. While the moderates conformed quietly to the king's policies in the hopes of regaining some of their rights and power, they were well aware of the vicious treatment of their fellow Presbyterians and grew increasingly frustrated with the Crown. In theory, James hoped that his actions would draw the moderates into his camp, but in practice, his policies pushed them away. As a result, moderate Presbyterians grew closer to the radical members of their denomination, with whom they had previously refused to co-operate since the Restoration settlement. Scotland was not the only place where resentment towards the king was growing and his pool of supporters was rapidly losing strength and size.

With the Protestant demonstrations came rumors of a Dutch invasion. This caused James to seriously consider how he might react militarily to an intervention by William. Not wanting his own subjects used against him, the king recalled all the officers and men of the Anglo-Dutch brigade from their foreign service with intent to disband the auxiliary formation once and for all.²⁹ At first the Dutch ignored the monarch's plea, choosing to neither follow nor oppose it, unsure of how to deal with the awkward and tense situation that faced them. In the summer of 1688 after William had received his invitation to invade William the enlisted men of the brigade were forbidden from returning home.³⁰ The officers, by contrast, were allowed to choose which army they wished to serve. A few dozen (mainly Catholic) of the two-hundred and forty officers under MacKay left Holland to support their king. Among them was the commander of one of the English regiments, Colonel Alexander Cannon, who would lead the Scottish Jacobites as a

²⁹ John MacKay, 12; Childs, *The Army, James II...*, 65.

³⁰ Childs, 65.

general at Dunkeld.³¹ The men who chose to leave would form the nucleus of three regiments James raised to prepare for invasion.³²

MacKay was unsure of what to do when faced with the impending conflict. Feeling duty bound towards his sovereign, he thought for some time about returning to Britain for the potential war.³³ The general went to William's headquarters at The Hague with every intention of resigning his commission, but upon hearing that plans were underway for the actual invasion, he reconsidered.³⁴ Though James was MacKay's nominal monarch and commander, the king's pro-Catholic and Francophile policies were increasingly threatening the general's fellow Calvinists both in Britain and on the Continent. Since the Restoration, the Stuart kings had been supportive of the French campaigns against Protestants in the Netherlands and the Rhineland. William, the rival of Louis XIV, the man who had been MacKay's actual chief for over fifteen years, was now planning to remove that threat and secure Protestantism within Britain. MacKay, like nearly all of his co-religionists, let his religious ideals shape his political ones and declared his allegiance (and that of his troops) to the Prince of Orange just in time for the invasion of England. MacKay had supported been willing to support James in the early years of his reign, but as the Stuart king increasingly supported the Catholic interest and practiced more arbitrary rule, the general problem felt that James had become something like Louis and the French monarchy, whose service he had left nearly two decades before. MacKay was not alone in his feelings or his shifting of allegiance to William. As

³¹ *Ibid.*; *An historical account of the British regiments employed since the reign of Queen Elizabeth and King James I, in the formation and defense of the Dutch Republica, particularly of the Scotch Brigade* (London; Edinburgh: B. Millan; T and J Egerton; W. Geech, 1795), 65.

³² Childs, *The Army, James II, and the Glorious Revolution*, 133.

³³ *An historical account of the British regiments...*, 63.

³⁴ *Ibid.*

military, political and religious leaders (many of the latter two groups living in exile in the Netherlands) flocked to William's banner, they hoped that they could appeal to similar thoughts held by James's subjects at home when the prince invaded Britain.

The Campaign for the English Crown

William's invasion force consisted of roughly 15,000 of some of the best soldiers in Europe. The Jacobites viewed William and his men as foreign invaders, but even to the prince himself, the troops were of foreign origin. While there were a few Dutch regiments, the army invading England was comprised of Danes, German Protestants, French Huguenots and the Anglo-Dutch Brigade.³⁵ Although the soldiers and their officers did not share the same language or monarch, they, like MacKay, were staunch Protestants and opponents of absolutist rule. William hoped their presence in the British kingdoms would inspire like-minded Britons to join their cause and help him take the throne.

William's army landed at Torbay in Devon on November 5, 1688 (a date already famous for the triumph of English Protestantism over Catholic machinations). Though the Jacobite army outnumbered the invasion forces, the king was not confident of success and seemed to have something of a nervous breakdown.³⁶ As Mark Kishlansky described, "Suffering from insomnia and severe nosebleeds, [James] mistakenly concluded that his army was too unreliable to be sent into battle."³⁷ Even though the Scotsmen of Dumbarton's Regiment (MacKay's first regiment), who had been recalled to

³⁵ John MacKay, 13.

³⁶ Tim Harris, *Revolution: The Great Crisis of the British Monarchy, 1685-1720* (London; New York, Penguin, 2007), 274.

³⁷ Mark Kishlansky, *A Monarchy Transformed: Britain 1603-1714* (London; New York: Penguin, 1997), 281.

England by James, offered to take on the prince's army alone, the army was ordered to fallback.³⁸ The beleaguered king returned to London on November 26, where his situation further deteriorated. Towns throughout the realm continued to rise up in favor of the prince, more lieutenants defected and even his daughter, Anne, fled to the Williamites. Faced with increasingly unfavorable odds, James sent negotiators to William's camp.

The representatives' offers to call a free parliament and to pardon William and his followers were largely brushed aside by the prince and his entourage. Instead, the prince countered by offering to keep his army from London if James surrendered the city and called for a parliament in his name.³⁹ Refusing to negotiate, James sent his queen and newborn son to France on December 10. He followed them early the next morning, though not before disbanding, but not *disarming* his armies, an act that would cause a serious security issue for William in the future.⁴⁰

The king headed to Kent for a boat to the Continent, but was captured shortly after his departure and brought back to London. Hoping to avoid an awkward situation, William halted his army's advance towards the capital, sent guards to Whitehall and gave James a message telling him to leave. The king headed towards Rochester, where he soon realized he was allowed to escape. He left England again on December 23 and would never return.⁴¹

MacKay's religious and political convictions, as well as his strong faith in William had put him on the victorious side of the invasion. In a matter of weeks, the

³⁸ *An historical account of the British regiments...*,65.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁰ Harris, 298.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 305.

Prince of Orange took the English crown for himself, but the campaign for control of the British thrones was far from over. After all, James was the ruler of three kingdoms and Ireland and Scotland both possessed large populations of Jacobite supporters that would certainly fight for their refugee king. In Ireland, Derry had already been claimed for the Williamites and was being held by a small and vastly outnumbered garrison. In January, the Earl of Tyrconnel, James's Lord Lieutenant, began expanding the size of the Jacobite army in preparation for James's arrival.⁴² The mounting tension across the Irish Sea became the top priority for William, who, along with his wife, would be crowned monarch of England on April 11. Although most of William's attention and resources were poured into the Irish campaign, he could not ignore Scotland.

It may seem odd that Scotland does not play a major role in the narrative of the Revolution until after the English throne had been secured, but for both sides, the delay of the Scottish campaign was out of necessity. For the Williamites, England needed to be secured first so as to eliminate the largest military asset James had at his disposal. To defeat James's English army (reinforced by men from his Scottish and Irish armies), William would need to concentrate all of the forces he had available, rather than scatter them throughout the British kingdoms. Also, once the Williamites controlled England, they could use it as a base from which they could more effectively conduct their operations in the northern realm. Likewise, the Jacobites made little effort to prepare Scotland for invasion since most of their military and political leaders had been called to England by James to help counter the invasion. Once Westminster was in full support of its joint monarchs, however, both sides turned their attention to the North. A group of

⁴² Michael McNally, *Battle of the Boyne 1690: The Irish campaign for the English crown* (Oxford; New York: Osprey Publishing, 2005), 38.

Scottish Presbyterian nobles and gentry who had come to London to show their support for William called for a convention parliament in the Edinburgh.⁴³ The Convention of Estates, which had only been called four times since the Restoration (most recently for just six weeks in 1686), would have to decide the current state of the throne and officially declare it for one of the monarchs.⁴⁴

While the members of the Convention debated Scotland's political future in Edinburgh, the security of the realm needed to be stabilized. The King's Scottish army had gone to England in response to the invasion and, like all the Jacobite forces, was disbanded on Salisbury Plain. Without a military force to police the kingdom, civil unrest was intensifying.⁴⁵ As Earl Balcarres, the appointed Jacobite political leader in Scotland, wrote to the now deposed king, "For, so soon as the Army was past the Border, Edinburgh was filled with the numbers of [Presbyterians] of all Degrees, from all places in the Kingdom, who then though it safe to take off their masks."⁴⁶ Balcarres may have had fears for the stability and maintenance of order in the realm, but tended to over exaggerate some of his claims. Many radical Presbyterians did take to arms in the early stages of the Revolution, but many Scots remained loyal to James or attempted to stay neutral for as long as possible.

For the radicals, the Episcopalian presence in Edinburgh (the largest in the Lowlands) had always been viewed as a threat. Many, however, were unsure how the moderates would act. Both factions of the Presbyterians had very different ideas for the

⁴³ James Browne, *A History of the Highland Clans* (Glasgow: A. Fullerton & Co., 1840), 119.

⁴⁴ Clare Jackson, *Restoration Scotland, 1660-1690: Royalist Politics, Religion and Ideas* (Woodbridge, Suffolk; Rochester, NY: Boydell Press, 2003), 21.

⁴⁵ Robert Paul Barnes, "Scotland and the Glorious Revolution in 1688" in *Albion: A Quarterly Journal Concerned with British Studies* 3, No. 3, Autumn, 1971, 121.

⁴⁶ Colin Lindsay, Earl of Balcarres, *An account of the affairs of Scotland, relating to the revolution of 1688. As sent to the late King James II. When in France. By the Rt. Hon. The Earl Balcarras.* Editor Unknown. 2nd ed. (Edinburgh: W. Ruddiman jun. and Company, 1754), 17-18.

future of the kingdom and since many moderates had tried to appease James through his reign (they had, after all, benefitted somewhat from the indulgences), the radicals were still somewhat wary of the intentions of their fellow Presbyterians. The radicals quickly formed gangs, many of which were armed, and began disrupting the mail and targeting suspected Jacobites.⁴⁷ Rival groups followed suit. If the peace was to be maintained, William would have to send loyal troops and raise new regiments locally. These men would need a leader, but William was planning on leading the effort in Ireland, so he would have to find someone else to lead his Scottish campaign. He turned to MacKay who he thought, as a native Highlander and devout Calvinist, would be better suited to win the hearts and minds of all of the Scottish subjects than William's other, foreign-born subordinates.

As was the case with many of the soldiers in William's army, a rough voyage across the Channel had caused MacKay's health to deteriorate and he was slow to recover. His health was certainly not helped by his knowledge of the divisiveness of Scottish society. Though somewhat removed from Scottish affairs, MacKay knew that the flight of James from Britain had opened up a power vacuum, which allowed Scotland's numerous sets of adversaries to, once again, take their differences to the battlefield. In the general's case, the religious issue was of greatest importance. His time on the Continent had made him aware of how international Protestantism could be used as a unifying force, not a source of bloody conflict. When the general discovered the details of the situation facing his fellow Calvinists, he noted that he was, "willing to contribute his utmost endeavours for the advancement of so good a cause."⁴⁸

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 18-19.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 3.

Unlike the Williamite army in England the small force MacKay brought with him was made up almost entirely of Scots, with a handful of Englishmen.⁴⁹ These men were some of the finest in William's service, but were predominantly Lowlanders, and thus unfamiliar with the Highlands and the tactics employed by its inhabitants. Thankfully for the general, the Convention in Edinburgh was authorized to raise more regiments, even some of Williamite Highlanders, which would come under the general's command once he arrived in the kingdom on March 23.⁵⁰ His appearance came not a moment too soon, as the Jacobite rebellion was about to begin.

Conflicts Looms in Scotland

The greatest step towards war in Scotland was made on March 14 when Convention of Estates met in Edinburgh to determine which of the two kings would be their realm's legitimate monarch. Though the idea for calling the legislature came from Williamite nobles, it was a fair assembly. The members were elected in their burghs after the Test Act, barring Presbyterians from voting, was removed.⁵¹ As a result, its ranks consisted of Presbyterians and Episcopalians, Jacobites and Williamites, moderates and radicals.⁵² After some initial debate, the assembly voted to support William and began to consider the measures to be taken for the security of the kingdom, including the establishment of a new army and the confirmation of MacKay as the commander-in-chief for the realm.

⁴⁹ Reid, *I Met the Devil...*, 98; *Ibid.*, 108.

⁵⁰ Hugh MacKay, 7; Reid, *I Met the Devil...*, 12.

⁵¹ Harris, 387.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 380.

As the delegates met, the situation in the capital grew out of hand. Rumors circulated of assassination plots against Viscount Dundee and George MacKenzie, a staunch Jacobite and the Lord Advocate of the realm, as did reports of Jacobite plans to attack the Convention as a whole.⁵³ Additionally, the Catholic Duke of Gordon, the governor of Edinburgh Castle, ordered the gate locked and the castle's defenses prepared for a siege.⁵⁴ It became apparent that Scotland could not be secured through political action alone.

Fearing for his safety and being pressured by orders from James to form a Jacobite parliament, Dundee left the capital with fifty troopers of his old regiment who pledged their loyalty to James.⁵⁵ They rode out of town, though not before stopping at the castle to discuss the necessity of holding the fortress with Gordon.⁵⁶ He then spurred his escort onto Stirling, which unbeknownst to him, was already in Williamite hands.⁵⁷

The following morning brought no relief to the situation in the capital and in response, the Convention ordered the Earl of Leven to immediately raise a regiment for the assembly's protection. The rumors of threats to the Convention and heightened sense of fear and tension were taken so seriously by the city's predominantly Presbyterian inhabitants, that the young nobleman was able to raise eight-hundred recruits in the span of two hours.⁵⁸ With a security force sufficient to keep the armed crowds of both factions at bay, the Convention's president, the Duke of Hamilton, ordered the doors opened and the Convention's members dismissed for the day, at which point many of the Jacobites

⁵³ Scott, 98; Harris, 389.

⁵⁴ Balcarres, 41-42.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 43.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁵⁷ Reid, *I Met the Devil...*, 11.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 12.

fled the city.⁵⁹ Just a week later, the almost exclusively-Williamite Convention declared Dundee a rebel.⁶⁰

This was the situation MacKay faced when he arrived in the capital city. Armed gangs roamed the streets, the members of the Convention were busy debating the legal status of the Scottish throne and who, if any, possessed it and the Jacobite leaders had fled to the Highlands. In early April, news came that Dundee had taken an example from his kinsman, James Graham, 1st Marquis of Montrose, and raised the royal standard on Dundee Law, thus calling the Highland clans loyal to the deposed king “to draw speedily to arms” and gather under his leadership.⁶¹ MacKay knew that if he gave Dundee and the Highlanders too much time to mobilize, his small army of Lowlanders and Englishmen would not be able to subdue them. He had to act quickly.

The Campaign Begins

MacKay’s manpower shortages were alleviated to an extent by the units raised by the Convention, like Leven’s Edinburgh regiment. They were joined by radical Cameronians from the southwest of Scotland, under the command of the Earl of Angus, who as MacKay wrote, “sheud themselves of all the kingdom the most zealous for their Majesties’ government and the Protestant interest.”⁶² The radical Presbyterians believed that the long-hated Episcopalians had finally been swayed over to the Catholic interest and that if they did not take to arms ever harsher repression awaited them if the Jacobites were successful in Scotland.

⁵⁹ Harris, 390.

⁶⁰ Mark Napier, *Memoirs and Letters Illustrative of the Life and Times of John Graham of Calverhouse, Viscount Dundee* (Edinburgh; London: Thomas G. Stevenson; Hamilton, Adams, & Co, 1860), 528.

⁶¹ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 5.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 11.

Although relations between the moderates and radicals were still somewhat tepid, largely because the exact goals of the latter were largely unknown, MacKay was willing to welcome the Cameronians into his ranks. These men not only came with their own arms and equipment, but after years of repression were more than eager to fight against the Highlanders and James's other supporters. They seemed to be the exception rather than the rule, as MacKay noted in his memoirs that most of the regiments raised at the onset of the campaign had not been well supplied by the Convention and that the officers had been selected by the assembly's members, "...according as they had a kindness for their persons or as they judged them to be popular, to get a number of men together, to the disorder of those troops, helping not a little..."⁶³

Between the regiments hastily raised by the convention and the irregular warriors of the Highland clans that opposed them, the armies in the Scottish theater of the Revolution were composed of a much smaller percentage of professional soldiers than those involved in the campaigns in England and Ireland. This inexperience and unpreparedness would somewhat handicap MacKay's already difficult efforts, though the volunteer soldiers under his command would prove themselves to be of stouter heart than their professional counterparts. Nonetheless, the condition of MacKay's army was far from ideal but the troops on hand were all that were available to meet the immediate Jacobite threat.

While the Williamites in Edinburgh were worrying about how they would train and equip themselves to confront the rebels, a noble from a family that traditionally supported the Stuart kings against the Covenanters proposed an idea that he hoped would prevent bloodshed. George MacKenzie, Viscount Tarbat, was described by MacKay as a

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 7

man who was “not a friend, if not an enemy to the government.”⁶⁴ This was not a surprising statement as the MacKenzies were traditional rivals of the MacKays. Tarbat, had been a staunch supporter of James before the Revolution and had acted as the king’s chief minister in Scotland. Looking to keep his political power (especially after William appointed Tarbat’s cousin, the Earl of Melville, Secretary of State), Tarbat pledged his allegiance to the Williamites and would offer political advice throughout the Revolution. Though he maintained some connections in the Jacobite camp, Tarbat was willing to advocate whatever plans could be executed that would add to his prestige prevent others from gaining additional favor.⁶⁵

He was well aware that the major grievance of many of the northern clans was the crown’s aggrandizement of the Campbells of Argyll. Tarbat hoped that if could force the Highland leaders to focus on their personal rivalries, they might ignore the larger conflict in the kingdom, and as a result, choose not to declare for James. If the Jacobite army was smaller, it would be easier to defeat and if it were through his diplomatic efforts that the victory was made possible, William would be in the viscount’s debt.

To further ensure, as MacKay said, “they should not trouble their Majesties government,” Tarbat proposed that each chieftain be given five thousand pounds sterling.⁶⁶ Throughout the previous half century, the Lowland political leaders never understood how to properly govern their Highland cousins. The people of the North had always been difficult to govern and were remarkably successful in the military endeavors against the southern Covenanters. Few in the Convention or William’s inner-circle

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 25

⁶⁵ Colin Kidd, “Mackenzie, George, first earl of Cromarty (1630–1714),” in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2006, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17580> (accessed April 12, 2012).

⁶⁶ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 19.

understood the Highlanders and their way of life, and so bribery seemed the easiest way to appease them and remove any alliances the chieftains might form with James.

Additionally, Tarbat argued that if William tried to appease the Highland clans instead of subjugating them, they would be easier to rule once the war came to an end.⁶⁷

Unfortunately for the Williamites, the Highland leaders were not as content with the offer. A combination of the honor of the chieftains and the fact that the Laird of Cawdor (“a Campbell to his name,” as MacKay described him) was sent to negotiate instead of Tarbat, erased any hopes the government had of success. Sir Ewan Cameron of Lochiel flatly ignored the representatives and Ranald MacDonnell of Glengarry refused the party, suggesting to Cawdor that instead of bribing the clans, he “imitate” General Monck and restore the proper king to the throne.⁶⁸

With the failure of the bribes, Dundee’s forces grew. MacKay understood that to achieve success, he would have to advance into the Highlands. The Convention’s recruits needed more time to train, so they were left in Edinburgh to be joined by the predominately English forces under Sir John Lanier, sent from England by William to take Edinburgh Castle. MacKay then took the veterans of his army and headed north to “chase Dundee.”⁶⁹ John Prebble claimed that the general’s best course of action “was to invade the Highlands in force, establishing strong garrison and let the clans see the strength of the King’s power. The sooner this was done, the better...”⁷⁰

However, the officers and men in this little force were different from the armies sent to fight the Jacobites in the other kingdoms: they were all Britons. In the English

⁶⁷ Kidd.

⁶⁸ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 19.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 11.

⁷⁰ John Prebble, *Glencoe: The Story of the Massacre* (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1966), 96.

campaign, William's predominantly foreign soldiers never fought against James's Englishmen and Scots. In Ireland, the armies of both kings and the generals that led them were predominantly foreign-born. With the exception of a handful of Irish Jacobites and MacKay's English regulars, those involved in the Highland War were Scotsmen. Certainly there were veterans of the Anglo-Dutch brigade, the men in the regiments raised by the Convention and the warriors of the Jacobite clans had been personally affected by the actions of Charles and James and the turbulent events that shook the realm in the years leading up to the war.

Whether they were radical Presbyterians who had repeatedly fought against the repression of their beliefs or poor Highlanders suffering from the economic hardships of the kingdom, the men MacKay and Dundee led had much more personal connections to the war in which they were engaged. The outcome of the Scottish campaign would directly impact the lives of the soldiers and their families. This created a level of emotional investment in the course of events not shared by the Continental mercenaries and auxiliaries deployed in the Revolution's other theaters.

On the first day of his march, MacKay rode to the town of Dundee which was just less than forty miles from Edinburgh and marshaled his forces. Deciding that the city's surroundings, and all of the localities in Angus for that matter, were still "very disaffected," he left the bulk of his forces in the vicinity of the town to keep the peace.⁷¹ He led the rest northward, in pursuit of the Jacobites towards Aberdeen. The majority of these troops he brought with him were cavalry, which Balcarres claimed was, "the only thing that terrifies the Highlanders."⁷² Unlike the regulars MacKay's men faced in the

⁷¹ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 12.

⁷² Balcarres, 61.

other campaigns, the otherwise imposing Highlanders were not accustomed to cavalry, a difference between the two armies that MacKay would fully exploit during the course of the campaign.

As the Williamites pursued, they crossed into the lands of the Gordons, a clan with a history of supporting the monarchs against the Covenanters and being among the few in the realm who still practiced Catholicism and thus had an even stronger tie to James.⁷³ Dundee wanted time to recruit the locals for his army and began conducting a series of feint marches, causing MacKay to order several countermarches and become increasingly frustrated. Within the first week of his endeavor, the general was learning the difficulties of conducting operations against a Highland foe.

MacKay also learned that not all of the Highlanders were eager to support the Jacobites. In the northeast of Scotland, a number of clans had suffered under the political and economic strength of the Gordons, including Clan Forbes. Men from these families were more than willing to join the Williamite army and fight their rivals for control of the region. During the march, MacKay was approached by the Master of Forbes and roughly 600 of his clansmen. Though the government forces could have used the reinforcements, the general noted the men "...were so ill armed, and appeared so little like the work that [I], thanking the Master for his appearance for their Majesties service, ordered him to dismiss those countrymen..."⁷⁴ MacKay appreciated the offer, but as his army was already of a lower quality than what he was accustomed to, he preferred to let the untried levies return home. Though the Forbeses were fully prepared to engage in MacKay's

⁷³ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 13.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 14.

military maneuvers, their willingness to serve shows just how local conflicts were mapped onto the larger, kingdom-wide war.

The Forbeses were not the first, nor the last, to become engaged in the military campaigns of the Highland War. While many clans had traditionally supported the Stuart kings and rallied around Dundee in 1689, there were some clans that chose to offer their support to MacKay and the greater Williamite cause. The warriors from the likes of Clans Grant, Ross, and, not surprisingly, MacKay were more prepared and suited for military endeavors that the Forbeses and their arrival in MacKay's camp helped even the odds. While William's forces in the other theaters were familiar with the conventional style of warfare, those fighting in Scotland were at a great disadvantage against the unique fighting style of the Highlanders. Having some men of that region in the ranks of his army gave General MacKay insight into the tactics and life style of his own people. Also, the joining of Lowlanders and Highlanders in the Williamite ranks brought the two regions closer together in ways they had not often experienced previously.

While they helped the Williamites, long-standing quarrels also assisted Dundee in his efforts as they sometimes drove clans which MacKay described as "partly disaffected, and partly irresolute and indifferent" to his cause.⁷⁵ For families like the Frasers and the MacKenzies, which were neutral at the war's start, it was, quoting MacKay, "neither the love of King James, nor hatred of King William" that determined their allegiances.⁷⁶ MacKay and his representatives tried to woo the leadership of both clans in the earlier stages of the campaign, but it was to no avail. As Paul Hopkins observes, "almost the

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 17

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 18

only sign of MacKay's highland origin was his clan hatred of the MacKenzies."⁷⁷ Along with the Sinclairs, the MacKenzies had long competed with the general's kinsmen for political and economic control of the northern reaches of the Highlands. The hatred of MacKay and his family and the declaration of other northern clans finally pushed the Frasers and MacKenzies to oppose the Williamites. As the war drew to a close, it was this aversion that made the MacKenzies's chieftain, the Earl of Seaforth, reluctant to surrender to MacKay, even when he and his men were offered an indemnity from William.⁷⁸ These serious regional struggles, absent in the other Williamite campaigns, did nothing but necessitate a complex level of diplomatic maneuvering on top of MacKay's already frustrating mission and skew the general's personal perspective of the campaign.⁷⁹

More confusion was added when a chieftain's tenants opposed his allegiance or when families were split between the opposing sides of the war.⁸⁰ Though the latter was a tactic used by several clans during the civil wars of the mid-century as a way to ensure the family would not lose all its power and wealth as a result of the war, it was not a widespread phenomenon in the Highland War. The principle exception was Clan Murray. The political divisions within the ruling family of the clan and between its leadership and lower clansmen demonstrated that the factional divides in the realm were sometimes blurred. The differing allegiances amongst the Murrays and their tenants would prove frustrating to MacKay and help bring about the pivotal battle of the campaign. Whether fully committed against one clan or suffering from mixed allegiances, clan rivalries

⁷⁷ Paul Hopkins, *Glencoe and the End of the Highland War* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers), 137.

⁷⁸ John Roberts, *Clan, King and Covenant: History of the Highland Clans from the Civil War to the Glencoe Massacre*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2000), 210.

⁷⁹ Scott, 143.

⁸⁰ Hopkins, 23.

greatly shaped the motivations for joining the conflict of Highlanders on both sides. For MacKay to succeed, however, he knew he would have to convince the people of the Highlands to put aside their enmity and embrace the idea of a unified region within a greater, united realm.



Figure 2. The Kingdom of Scotland (Public Domain)

The Road to Killiecrankie

MacKay and the Williamite troops continued their pursuit of Dundee and Jacobites in the northern region of the Highlands. After securing Inverness as a supply base, a vital necessity for any force operating in the barren Highlands, the general realized that the quickest way to end the rebellion would be to catch Dundee off-guard and destroy his army in the field. This became an increasingly difficult task as Dundee's army increased significantly in strength following a gathering of the Highland clans on May 18.⁸¹ The various sects of the MacDonalds came, as did the MacLeans, the Frasers (who had been unwilling to support MacKay at Inverness) and the Stewarts of Appin. In all, more than 1,500 warriors assembled.⁸² They would soon be joined by the men of Clan MacPherson, who would bring the total strength of the rebel army to roughly 3,000.⁸³ Now fully reinforced, Dundee headed back down the River Strathspey to Atholl, where he would position his army between MacKay's army and a small column of reinforcements marching from Edinburgh to join the main Williamite army.

MacKay's force followed the enemy south on a forced march, one stretch of which was, as the general claimed, "a continued march of 24 hours" over rough terrain.⁸⁴ The men's exhaustion was becoming problematic, but was far from the general's only concern. He was anticipating the arrival of Williamite Highlanders from the Lairds of Grant and Forbes, of a better quality than what the former had previously offered, but the men had yet to materialize.⁸⁵ More significantly, the army was beginning to experience the supply problems that would plague them for the remainder of the campaign. Even as

⁸¹ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 20.

⁸² Roberts, *Clan, King, and Covenant*, 178.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 180; Hugh MacKay *Memoirs...*, 22.

⁸⁴ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 24.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 26.

posts were established at places like Inverness, it was often difficult to deliver the necessary provisions and equipment. The unforgiving terrain, oftentimes in unfriendly hands, did not provide sustenance or a useful transportation network for his men and quartermasters, a situation that was strikingly different than that of the Williamite commanders in the other kingdoms. MacKay admitted that he “saw no way to secure himself of provisions in those rough and boggy countries.”⁸⁶ The food shortages along with “extraordinarily cold weather” proved to be even more troublesome for the army’s animals.⁸⁷ Lacking proper fodder, MacKay observed, “the English horses quickly lose their bellies and become useless many of them, and that several of them died in camp...”⁸⁸ Though the loss of animal transport slowed his army down, MacKay’s small army continued in their pursuit of Dundee.

Conducting military operations in the Highlands, however, quickly became the least of the general’s worries. During the campaign, a plot was uncovered amongst some of the officers of the Royal Scots Dragoons, or the “Scots Greys”.⁸⁹ Before the war, the regiment had been under the command of the Earl of Dunmore, a Jacobite sympathizer from Clan Murray. While Dunmore and a handful of stalwart Jacobite officers left the regiment rather than fight against his king, some chose to stay. In the Williamites’ haste to make the regiment fully-operational, the vacancies in the officer corps, including the post of commander, were filled with Scots from the Anglo-Dutch Brigade.⁹⁰ Not surprisingly, this mix of allegiances would prove to be problematic. MacKay discovered

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 40

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 26.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ Reid, *I Met the Devil...*, 13-5.

⁹⁰ H. M. Chichester, “Livingstone, Thomas, Viscount Teviot (c.1651–1711),” rev. Timothy Harrison Place, in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2006, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/16810> (accessed March 26, 2012)

that a number of the regiment's senior officers had been in communication with Dundee and planned to turn the entire regiment over to the Jacobites. As if allegiances amongst these men were not already confused enough, a few of the conspirators decided not to turn on their regiment and reported the plot to MacKay. The general ordered that the suspected men be sent "to the Laird of Grants house of Bala Castle (where garrison was kept) to be kept in civil imprisonment...till he should have occasion to discover the truth of the matter."⁹¹ The allegiances of the Scots were proving to be tenuous, and MacKay knew he could not afford to have traitors in his ranks, but the active demands of the campaign would need to take priority over conducting a formal trial for the conspirators. With the removal of the Jacobite officers, MacKay's dragoons were composed entirely of staunch Williamites and could be trusted with future operations. The regiment and its commander, Thomas Livingston, would quickly prove to be an invaluable resource.

The discovery of the plot coincided with the arrival of roughly 1,000 reinforcements from Edinburgh, both infantry and cavalry had successfully evaded the Jacobites and were able to join MacKay's little army. With the general now controlling a numerical advantage, he forced Dundee to begin withdrawing northward once more.

The Williamite advance guard caught up with their foe on June 7 and a sharp skirmish ensued. Livingston's initial charge broke the Highlanders who, as MacKay described, "escaped him with the loss only of 80 or 100 men."⁹² A determined counterattack by the Jacobites, however, prevented the troopers from following up on their initial success and caused Livingston to break contact.⁹³ It was the first serious field engagement of the war and both sides used their supposed "victory" to boost morale. For

⁹¹ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 28.

⁹² *Ibid.*, 38.

⁹³ Roberts, *Clan, King, and Covenant*, 181.

the Williamites, the skirmish was of great importance as it marked a rare occasion in decades of conflict that Highland warriors had been (nearly) bested on the field by their fellow Scotsmen. When news of the encounter reached Edinburgh, a broadside was published and posted throughout the city proclaiming, “the intire Defeat of the Rebbel Dundee by Major General Maccay.”⁹⁴ Though the author falsely claimed that, “within the space of Three Quarters of an Hour, the Viscount with all his People was intirely defeated,” for the first time, the Williamite supporters in the capital and elsewhere were able to hear that MacKay was, “surmounting all the difficulties which the Viscount endeavoured to bring upon him.”⁹⁵ This engagement, along with the capitulation of Edinburgh Castle, “brought a succession of Glad-Tydings” for the Williamites.⁹⁶ Their efforts in England had succeeded without any setbacks and the tide of events in Ireland was beginning to turn in their favor. Until this engagement, the Williamites had yet to achieve any success in Scotland, so the leaders in Edinburgh chose to exploit the propaganda opportunity the skirmish presented them in an effort to raise morale and secure the allegiance of their supporters.

The events in the field coincided with the transition of the Convention into the new Parliament, when its members officially swore allegiance to the joint monarchs. The pamphleteer expressed his hope that the string of Williamite successes, “[would] no doubt contribute to the Re-establishing the Repose of [the] Country.”⁹⁷ William’s supporters now held the military and political momentum and support was beginning to swell (as exemplified by the arrival of Williamite Highlanders into MacKay’s camp) but

⁹⁴ *A True and Faithful Account of the intire Defeat of the Rebbel Dundee by Major General Maccay, with the Number of the Slain* (Edinburgh: John Wallis in White-Driars, 1689), 1.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*

many knew that Dundee and his army were still on the march and that the campaign would continue.

Forging Unity

MacKay, however, was certainly pleased with the way events were unfolding and took care in memoirs written immediately after the war “to attribute the design, as well as the favorable successes therefore to God.”⁹⁸ Even during the struggles of the early stages of the operation and in the much darker days to come, the general never lost faith and continued to believe that, “it pleaseth God to bless the service in our hands.”⁹⁹ Although he and his soldiers would freely acknowledge that the Almighty “givest not always the Battel to the Strong...” they had no doubt that in the end, the Lord would “stir up” their strength and bring them victory in the war.¹⁰⁰

MacKay’s religious expression was common for military officers of the time period, but was different in the fact that it seldom promoted one particular denomination. Though his resignation from the French army and strong support of William indicate a distaste for Catholic absolutism, to this veteran of large-scale military campaigns along the confessional divide (as well as between Christians and Muslims), brutal fighting between two reformed denominations seemed irrational. In a letter to the Earl of Melville, the Secretary of State for Scotland, MacKay explained that he “...never thought to benefit [himself] therein to the prejudice of another ..” and that none in the realm

⁹⁸ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 36.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

should.¹⁰¹ As he expressed in his speech before Killiecrankie, MacKay believed that peace could exist in the kingdom if the people of Scotland rallied together and supported “...their Majesties service, and the Protestant religion, for I make no essential difference betwixt Presbiterianisme and Episcopacy, so there being no offending supperstition, neither seek I any establishment or advantage in the kingdom [*sic*].”¹⁰² The general did not seem to how denominational divide had grown greatly out of proportion, but understand it had to be resolved for order to be restored in Scotland. The Episcopalians felt that their beliefs had more in common with James’s Catholicism than the Calvinism of the Covenanters. Like the Stuart kings themselves, prominent members of the Church of Scotland also believe that the Presbyterians’ ideas of church governance were a threat to the monarchy itself. The denominational divide was one of many problems plaguing the kingdom, but MacKay believed if that difference could be put aside, the realm’s other conflicts could be more easily resolved.

William was the champion of Protestantism in its fight against Catholic absolutism. MacKay felt that the Scots needed to band together as Protestant countrymen to not only support William and his allies on the Continent, but bring stability to the kingdom and protect their realm from arbitrary rule. As he told his troops before the battle, the best hope for Scotland’s future was for its population to join ranks and view their homeland as a unified kingdom. He hoped to persuade the Scots into believing that toleration and cooperation would breed unity and strength. Protestant cooperation on the Continent had brought great benefits for the realms of Northern Europe. If the Scots could look at themselves as a Protestant, rather than their particular denomination, they

¹⁰¹ “General Hugh MacKay to the Earl of Melville,” Edinburgh, 12 October 1689, in Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 288.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*

would create one common bond upon which other sources of unity could be built. As a strong, stable realm, the greater Protestant community on the Continent would be much more accessible and Scotland could reap the benefits of new political and economic associations.

The Highland War and the Glorious Revolution would finally bring about a lasting religious settlement and a cessation of the regional and clan conflicts in Scotland, but Dundee's army had to be defeated first.

The Pursuit Continues

MacKay, believing that the Almighty was truly beginning to smile on his army, regrouped his forces after their encounter with their Highlanders and continued his pursuit of Dundee all the way to Inverness. Prior to reaching that northern city once again, spies reported that the Jacobite clansmen, laden with cattle, other loot and wanting to take care of their farms, had implored Dundee to temporarily discharge the army. Thus, as the general acknowledged, "the Highlanders were dispersed every one to his own house."¹⁰³

MacKay took the much-needed interlude between hostilities to rest and refit his exhausted troops and supply convoy.¹⁰⁴ MacKay knew that Dundee's army would be reforming soon and, with reports coming in of the arrival of a few hundred Jacobite Irishmen, it would be of greater strength than he had previously faced.¹⁰⁵ The Williamite troops arrived back in Edinburgh on July 12 and began to refit, while the general and his subordinates preparing prepared their next move.

¹⁰³ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 40.

¹⁰⁴ Roberts, *Clan, King, and Covenant*, 184.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 182.

Back in the capital, MacKay realized that to restore peace in the realm, his army would have to establish a series of garrisons throughout the Highlands, as General Monck had done in a half century earlier. This was especially true at Inverlochy, in Lochaber in the Western Highlands, the homeland of the staunchly Jacobite MacDonalds and Camerons.¹⁰⁶ However, the construction and maintenance of these posts would require yet more troops. The troops that had been besieging Edinburgh Castle were free to join MacKay's army, as were the levies raised by the Convention throughout the spring. These reinforcements would finally give the general a decisive numerical advantage that could not be outdone by Dundee. To make the situation even more advantageous for the Williamite cause, the Earl of Argyll, the personal enemy of many of the Jacobite clans, was planning to "join a considerable number of his vassals...to form a diversion" to the north.¹⁰⁷ Once MacKay had secured Inverlochy and the other posts with his main field army, he planned to join forces with Argyll and crush the rebels once and for all.

The Williamite position was further strengthened on July 18 when the Privy Council officially declared any "...that shall joyn with..." Dundee, who had already been declared a rebel, and a handful of listed Jacobites, "...ought to be Pursued as declared Traitors to His Majesty, and his Authority and Government."¹⁰⁸ Although William's supporters had control over Scotland's political affairs, as long as Jacobite troops were still in arms, the joint monarchs' sovereignty over the realm could not be secured. The new proclamation gave MacKay's forces the justification to do whatever was necessary to bring an end to the Jacobite insurrection. With this approval, the necessary provisions

¹⁰⁶ Roberts, *Clan, King, and Covenant*, 187.

¹⁰⁷ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 46.

¹⁰⁸ Privy Council of Scotland, *A proclamation against the Viscount of Dundee, and other rebels now in arms. At Edinburgh, the eighteenth day of July, one thousand six hundred eighty nine* (Edinburgh: Heir of Andrew Anderson, 1689).

and the much-needed reinforcements, MacKay led his army towards the Highlands once more.

Their march took them through Atholl, in the direction of Blair Castle, the ancestral home of the Marquis of Atholl and the divided Clan Murray. The Marquis, who had been trying to gain favor with both sides of the conflict, was away in England treating illness at Bath.¹⁰⁹ He left his estates under the supervision of his son, John, Lord Murray, a devoted Williamite.¹¹⁰ The lower members of the clan, however, sided with the chieftain. When MacKay's army had previously marched through Atholl, the soldiers tried to gather intelligence from the locals, who "magnified extremely Dundee's Highland forces, which they affirmed, though falsely, were betwixt him and the General."¹¹¹ Lord Murray was not fazed by the dissension within his clan and even dismissed representative sent by Dundee to bring him over to the Jacobite cause. The young noble's lack of concern proved to be problematic for William's cause, as he was soon deceived by his father's baillie, Patrick Stewart of Ballechin, who took control of the castle and converted it into a Jacobite fortress.¹¹² As a result, in a true display of allegiance towards William, Murray was forced to lay siege to his own manor with as many his clansmen (whose true loyalty was in question) as he could find. Upon hearing of the nobleman's predicament, MacKay cautiously advanced towards the siege, unsure of the true intentions of the Athollmen and skeptical of Lord Murray's intentions. At first, Murray sent word to the general that his own men and tenants could take the back the castle, but on July 26, he

¹⁰⁹ David Stevenson, "Murray, John, first marquess of Atholl (1631–1703)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: OUP, 2004, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy.wm.edu/view/article/19626> (accessed January 1, 2012).

¹¹⁰ John R. Young, "Murray, John, first duke of Atholl (1660–1724)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, Oxford: OUP, 2004, <http://www.oxforddnb.com.proxy.wm.edu/view/article/19627> (accessed January 2, 2012).

¹¹¹ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 22

¹¹² Young.

informed MacKay that he was forced to raise the siege at the approach of Dundee's army.¹¹³

Surprised at this news, MacKay told Murray that he would bring up his troops the next day. His column reached the Pass of Killiecrankie around noon and spent most of the afternoon navigating its narrow track. At the sight of an imposing foe on the other side, the column formed its line of battle. The waiting was nerve-wracking for the men on both sides. While MacKay spoke to encourage his men, Dundee took time to do the same for his Jacobites. An anonymous broadside, published in an effort to restore Jacobite morale after the battle, recounted what the Jacobite viscount said, much of which mirrored the sentiments expressed in MacKay's address. Dundee reminded his Highlanders that they were about to engage in "the Battle of your King, of your Religion [A protestant church ruled by Episcopalians], and of your Countrey against the Foulest Usurpations and Rebellions; Having so good a Cause in your hands, I doubt not but it will Inspire you with an equal Courage to maintain it."¹¹⁴ He implored the men to, "Behave yourselves therefore like true Scotch-Men" and assured them, that if they were to fall, they "shall have the Comfort of Dying in our Duty...the Reward of a Gracious King and the Praise of all Good Men."¹¹⁵

The speeches given by the rival commanders illuminate the fact both sides of the conflict believed they were fighting for the same institutions: the crown, the country and religion. Just what these pillars of Scottish society meant to the opposing sides was what separated them. Though Dundee, like MacKay, spoke to his men about fighting for their

¹¹³ Reid, *I Met the Devil...*, 17.

¹¹⁴ *The Lord of Dundee's Speech to his Soldiers before the late Battle in Scotland, and his Letter to the King James after the Victory*, (Scotland: Unknown Publisher, 1689).

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*

king, he was referring to a king (and his predecessors) who had repeatedly antagonized the divisions that had brought the realm to war. James had made his subjects toe the same line, but many had done so at the point of a sword. Both sides fought for their vision of the kingdom and it was to that vision that the commanders spoke before the battle. Though the combatants on both sides had been drawn into the war largely by the rivalries that were intertwined within the three institutions, the goals of the two sides had changed. Dundee and the men to whom he appealed were fighting to restore James and secure the ‘old’ Scotland. Their adversaries in the Williamite ranks had once viewed themselves simply as the rivals of the Highlanders that faced them at Killiecrankie. Thanks to their general, however, they were starting to be persuaded of the idea that their army did not simply stand for the opposite version of the old regime, but like their comrades in England and Ireland, were fighting for a new, modern realm where those divisions would be trumped by a greater sense of unity, or at least new ideas of allegiances. How the kingdom’s future would be defined hung on the outcome of the campaign.

Defeat and Victory

The battle of Killiecrankie was over almost before it started. Macaulay estimated that, “In two minutes, the battle was lost.”¹¹⁶ This was certainly not the case, but portrays well just how bad things were for the Williamites. Around eight o’clock, Dundee ordered his men forward with their classic “Highland Charge.” The clansmen armed with muskets let loose a volley just within their maximum range, in an effort to draw the fire of the Williamite line, which they successfully achieved. Once the enemy cleared their muskets,

¹¹⁶ Thomas B. Macaulay, *The History of England from the Accession of James II, Vol. II* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1870), 327

the Highlanders descended upon the now helpless foe, before most had time to reload. MacKay's line quickly began to buckle under the impact of the imposing foe.¹¹⁷

Fearing his infantry would soon break from the melee in which they were engaged, MacKay ordered his cavalry forward to chase the Highlanders off the field. However, the troopers, for once, were fearful of the enemy warriors and "began to pass...and presently turned about..." from the fray.¹¹⁸ Seeing the cavalry run, the one wing of the army usually trusted to keep the clansmen in check, the Williamite infantry began to panic and began to flee themselves. Shaken by the chaos around him, MacKay thought it best to find his way to safety and attempt to rally his men. Followed by a servant, he "spurr'd his horse through the enemy" in order to find a spot of ground from which he could "see how matters stood" and make sense of the rapidly deteriorating situation.¹¹⁹ Some small pockets of resistance formed, but they did little to stop the flood of panic-stricken men from leaving the field. MacKay would later assert that it was only the Highlanders' compulsive need to loot the Williamite baggage train that "gave time to many of [the] runaways to get off."¹²⁰

In the brief encounter, nearly a third of MacKay's men were killed and an equal number fell in the panicked retreat from the field. The casualties were especially high amongst the officer corps and included the commanders of two of the Anglo-Dutch regiments, one of whom was MacKay's brother.¹²¹ Not only was the Williamite army now very weak, it was now scattered throughout Atholl. It would take serious effort on MacKay's part to reunite the troops in the face of what he believed to be an unfazed

¹¹⁷ Reid, *I Met the Devil...*, 40; Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 55.

¹¹⁸ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 56.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*; *Ibid.*, 57.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 58.

¹²¹ Roberts, *Clan, King, and Covenant*, 193.

enemy. It would be an even more daunting task to regain the confidence of the politicians and the civilian Williamite supporters.

Unbeknownst to the general, the Jacobite army had suffered significantly in the battle as well. They too had lost about a third of their number, but being a considerably smaller force, these casualties had a greater impact. The Highlanders had also lost a large proportion of their leadership, including Dundee himself. Burnet wrote that near the end of the fighting, “a random shot put an end to his life and to the whole design.”¹²² The Highland army would stay together and others would take the commanding role, but the cause, like the viscount, had received a mortal wound. Much like his kinsman, Montrose, Dundee’s charisma and reputation was what had held the clans together and inspired them to fight for their deposed king and his cause. The Jacobites knew very well what this blow meant to their efforts, as Earl Balcarres wrote to James after receiving the news that, “there was none in the army who could make Use of the Victory.”¹²³ The battle at Killiecrankie was the only time when William’s troops were bested in the field by those of James. It would prove to be a pyrrhic victory, but for the time being, the war continued and for the moment, the Williamites were severely shaken.

The English Williamites had succeeded in their endeavors without any setbacks, while their Irish counterparts had defeated the initial Jacobite onslaught and were poised to launch their own offensive. The Scottish Williamites controlled so many of the other aspects of the campaign, but the battle was a serious impediment to the efforts. Though many were fearful of the immediate results, the Highland War and the Revolution in Scotland were far from over. MacKay and his army would soon be on the march again.

¹²² Burnet, 48.

¹²³ Balcarres, 73.

The News of Defeat

Word of the battle reached Edinburgh the next day and rumors quickly spread around the city. The Williamite politicians began to fear for their safety and their cause. The Duke of Hamilton, now the commissioner of the Parliament that had been formed from the Convention, reported to William's Secretary of State, the Earl of Melville, from Holyrood that "the Major General was quite defeat[ed]" and that MacKay himself was "killed or taken by all the account we have yett got."¹²⁴ The next day, he would write again expressing the need for William to send his "best troops" to Scotland as quickly as possible since, they had "no notice of Dundies motion since the action...for if he carries Stirling he has all Scotland... [*sic*]"¹²⁵ Other leading Williamites sent a flurry of correspondence from the capital to England and elsewhere.¹²⁶ All were trying to make sense of the news, justify the defeat and guess just what the Jacobites would do next. The Williamites had yet to experience a setback of this magnitude in any of the kingdoms and they were unsure just how detrimental the defeat would be to their efforts. Many were fearful of their personal safety if the Jacobites were to march on Edinburgh, which was expected. The Williamite leadership and support base was confused, uncertain and fearful as their situation was looking bleak.

While many were fearful of the Jacobite army's intentions, still more were wary of the threat of subversion within the Williamite ranks. MacKay's army had left the city just a few days before and had been quite confident of their chances of success. Many, like Sir Patrick Hume of Polwarth, an influential Member of Parliament, could only

¹²⁴ "The Duke of Hamilton to the Earl of Melville – July 28, 1689" in Hugh Mackay, *Memoirs...*, 248-49.

¹²⁵ "The Duke of Hamilton to the Earl of Melville – July 29, 1689" in Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 251-52.

¹²⁶ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 253-55; *Ibid.*, 258.

believe that “the falsehood of pretended friends led honest MacKay in the snare to his ruin.”¹²⁷ Lord Murray, whose family and levies had proved so unfaithful to the cause, was “exclaimed against and suspected by most...”¹²⁸ Soon others would fall under scrutiny. As much as William’s followers were incorporating ideas of unity within their cause, they were extremely cautious of each other. It seemed as though some believed that the old rivalries had found a way to remain and flourish into the core of William’s support to sabotage their efforts. For the rest of the campaign in Scotland, the Williamite leadership would be skeptical of many and threaten severe punishments for those who would be willing to offer their services to the foe.

Some calm was restored to the capital on July 30, when MacKay’s official report to Hamilton, written the previous day in Stirling, arrived. In it the general described the battle, claiming that God had “let us see the vanity of human confidence” and harshly proclaimed, “that there was no regiment or troop with me, but behaved like the vilest cowards in nature except Hastings and my Lord Levens, whom I most praise at such a degree, as I cannot but blame other, of whom I expected more.”¹²⁹ Though he had lost some of the confidence he had for his army, the general failed to name any particular scapegoats, probably due to the fact that he felt like most of the army had let him down. He also assumed, like any good commander, that the faster he could get his army turned back on campaign, the less chance the politicians in Edinburgh would have of questioning his judgment and reputation. Most importantly, MacKay believed that he could not allow factionalism to get the better of the Williamites. Additionally, the veteran

¹²⁷ “Sir Patrick Hume of Polwarth to the Earl of Melville – July 29, 1689” in Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 254.

¹²⁸ “Lord Cardross to the Earl of Melville – July 30, 1689” in Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 258.

¹²⁹ “General Hugh MacKay to the Duke of Hamilton – July 29, 1689” in Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 255.

general knew that to have any hope of salvaging the situation and regaining the momentum, he would have to get his army back in the field and fighting again as soon as possible. The Williamite high command could not afford to waste its time debating who was to blame for the debacle. The enemy army (which to their knowledge at the time was still led by Dundee) was now in a position to threaten much of the kingdom and the progress the Williamite politicians had made. MacKay's army needed return to the field quickly.

The general reported that most of the remnants of his army had found their way to Stirling, where they were joined by the troops General Lanier brought up from the capital. MacKay seemed surprisingly confident after his reverse and was anxious for a chance to “chasse those highland barbarians again to their hilly confidence and refuge.”¹³⁰ MacKay assured Hamilton that there would be no need to dissolve Parliament for its safety and asked only that the duke himself send word to the king, as the general was busy planning his renewed offensive. As long as the army was in the field, the politicians needed to remain doing their work in Edinburgh. If the government did not panic, it was hoped that the civilians would not either. Additionally, though he had been bested in the most recent battle, MacKay did not want displaced politicians interfering with his renewed military effort.

The next day word reached the city that Dundee had been killed, news that was quickly dispatched to London along with MacKay's report.¹³¹ Hamilton seems to have thought it best to let William read about the battle through MacKay's own words than through his own analysis of the situation, the standard procedure, allowing the most

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*

¹³¹ “The Duke of Hamilton to the Earl of Melville – July 30, 1689” in Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 257.

accurate narrative to be received. Hamilton understood that accusations and misinformation would only weaken their cause and would have to do what he was able to prevent dissension in the ranks. MacKay, as a military man, knew that he could not allow the enemy to exploit their success. If his army could win the next battle, the Williamites could regain the momentum. But he knew he would have to continue reinforcing his battered army with the Williamite contingents elsewhere in the country for his army to be ready for another battle.¹³²

In just a few days, the Williamite cause had received something of new life. Killiecrankie was, without any doubt, a crushing blow, but William's supporters had made too many gains since the spring to let twenty minutes of combat end their efforts. The Jacobites, after all, had suffered considerable loss of life, and without Dundee, the movement lack an inspirational leader who could keep the Highlanders together. MacKay knew this weakness and understood that, for the time being, he held a significant advantage in strength of numbers. Though the Jacobites had been victorious, they were in no position to exploit their success. If MacKay acted quickly, he could take momentum from Jacobites and give them a setback from which they would not be able to recover. Just moments before Dundee's death at Killiecrankie, all seemed to be going perfectly for the Jacobite cause in Scotland, but now they would be forced to pull back under the weight of a new Williamite assault.

The War Continues

As news of the Jacobite victory spread, more Highlanders proclaimed for James, including the bulk of Murray's clansmen. General Cannon, who had come with the Irish

¹³² "General Hugh MacKay to the Earl of Melville – August 17, 1689" in Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 268.

troops sent by James, took command following Dundee's death and decided to lead his army north, from what MacKay surmised, "either toward Inverness or Aberdeen."¹³³ This seemed like a sound strategy as the Northeast of Scotland was an Episcopalian (and therefore Jacobite) stronghold that had yet to provide all of its available manpower for the cause.¹³⁴ The plan did not meet much success, as a result of concern over the abilities of the new Jacobite commanders, and only a few recruits turned out.¹³⁵

MacKay sent his cavalry in pursuit of the Highlanders and secured Inverness and Aberdeen before those cities could be threatened.¹³⁶ The infantry had been left throughout the South to keep the peace, especially amongst the troublesome Murrays in Atholl and Perthshire. MacKay's operations would soon face a serious challenge, however, as William and his counselors at Hampton Court began to place more emphasis on the campaign in Ireland at the expense of MacKay's offensive.¹³⁷ With a much larger Jacobite army marching about virtually unchecked and personally led by James and the constant threat of reinforcement for their fellow Catholics in France Ireland was certainly the greater threat and, in terms of William's broader European project, the greater prize. Just before he set sail to take command of the Williamite troops there, the Duke of Schomberg wrote to the King requesting that he consider "...sending troops from Scotland into Ireland, as by strengthening the force in the latter country, the war will be sooner concluded."¹³⁸ The King's Privy Council in Edinburgh obliged and started

¹³³ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 65.

¹³⁴ Roberts, *Clan, King, and Covenant*, 197.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 198.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷ McNally, *The Battle of the Boyne 1690...*, 38.

¹³⁸ "The Duke of Schomberg to the King – August 9, 1689," in *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the reign of William and Mary, 1689-1702, preserved in the State Paper Department of Her Majesty's Public Record Office, Vol. 1: Feb 1689-April 1690*, ed. W. J. Hardy, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1895), 215.

shuffling troops and officers around the various towns and garrisons in preparation for the departure of some from the realm.¹³⁹ Amongst their decisions were the fateful orders for the Earl of Angus's Cameronians to occupy the exposed town of Dunkeld.¹⁴⁰ With the Highland rebels marking time in the North waiting for reinforcements, this did not seem like a dangerous maneuver, but the Jacobites would soon choose to retake the offensive.

Faced with the reality of their failed recruitment efforts and Cannon's lack of ambition, the Highland chieftains insisted their commander call a council of war. While the Williamites were attempting (with success) to unite the various interests within their cause and even those who were impartial, the Jacobites were beginning to divide. Cannon and his fellow Irish officers were resistant to taking any sort of action, a far cry from Dundee's aggressive nature, and many of the Highland leaders became outraged. Cannon's Irishmen and the great chieftains came from very different social backgrounds and were experienced in two dissimilar styles of warfare and could not come to terms with each other. In protest, Cameron of Lochiel and Sir Donald MacDonald of Sleat, two of the more influential Highlanders, headed home, leaving their men to others. All of the MacDonalds of Keppoch left the army's camp and would soon take up the indemnity offered by the Privy Council to those willing to lay down their arms.¹⁴¹

With threats of mutiny and desertion coming to fruition, Cannon's position required action. On August 17, he led his troops towards Dunkeld. The ensuing battle between the radical Presbyterians and Episcopalians has been described in detail above,

¹³⁹ Roberts, *Clan, King, and Covenant*, 198.

¹⁴⁰ Hugh Mackay, *Memoirs...*, 68.

¹⁴¹ Roberts, *Clan, King, and Covenant*, 198; "King to the Privy Council – August 8, 1689" in *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic Series, of the reign of William and Mary, 1689-1702, preserved in the State Paper Department of Her Majesty's Public Record Office, Vol. 1: Feb 1689-April 1690*, ed. W. J. Hardy, (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1895), 213.

but it cannot be overstated just how devastating the defeat was to the Jacobite cause. Any semblance of Jacobite momentum had vanished and the Cameronians had earned the respect and praise of the moderate Presbyterians, with whom they had long been at odds.

Realizing that some of his army would soon be sent to Ireland, MacKay consolidated his forces and to advance again on Atholl with hope of finally subduing Lord Murray's kinsmen. He hoped to make Blair Atholl a base of operations and swore "to leave not a house standing in Athole, and to burn and destroy all [the rebels'] corn if the House of Blair...should be burned by the enemy."¹⁴² He claimed that the Athollmen "were the principle occasion of all the troubles and disappointments he had met with during the whole summer," but still offered them "the terms of his Majestie's gracious indemnity [*sic*]."¹⁴³ Though they had been willing to cast their lot with James just a few weeks prior, the lesser members of Clan Murray recognized that the recent turn of events had made the Jacobite position untenable. As a result, MacKay reported that they "submitted themselves and delivered up their arms."¹⁴⁴ From the general's point of view, this was a great step forward in achieving the objectives of the campaign. A large group of hostile clansmen had submitted and a large region (strategically located between Edinburgh and the Highlands) had been subdued. He only needed to repeat this success through all the Jacobite-held areas of the realm.

The Jacobite army had disbanded temporarily to allow the Highlanders to return home to tend to the meager harvests their lands provided. MacKay took this brief reprieve to consider a new strategy. Instead of risking another engagement open battle in which the intimidating tactics of the Highlanders might defeat his troops, the general

¹⁴² Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 71.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 72.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

decided that the most effective way to end the war would be to lead his army into one region at a time, forcing the Jacobites (both military and civilian) into submission and establishing garrisons throughout the kingdom to keep the peace. The prospect appeared long and tedious, causing the general to doubt his own abilities. On August 30, he wrote the Earl of Melville exclaiming the he was, “extremely weary of this sort of war” and that his post may be “more fit for a man of fewer years and more accustomed with the manner of this countrey, than for mee...”¹⁴⁵ MacKay described that his belief in God and William’s cause were what kept him going an increasingly difficult task in the face of many “inconveniencies and difficultys, particularly to get the forces to subsist,...[the] irregular methods of the government in those things to which they have been so little accustomed,..[and] the skearcity of money.”¹⁴⁶ The shortage of money and supply had plagued the Williamite efforts since the campaign’s beginning, but the political difficulties limiting MacKay’s operations were a more recent development. As military operations in Ireland intensified, the military resources and political attention of the Williamites were being increasingly focused across the Irish Sea. MacKay would be left to continue his campaign with what was already available to his army, though soon some of the few troops and supplies he had at his disposal would be transferred to support the operations in Ireland

Even with political priorities and the king’s treasury being set elsewhere, MacKay was still committed to his role, as he felt obligated to protect the people of the kingdom from the “disorder and violence” perpetrated by the rebels.¹⁴⁷ He hoped that he would be able to secure the hostile regions of the realm to such an extent that they would no longer

¹⁴⁵ “Hugh MacKay to the Earl of Melville – August 30, 1689” in Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 372.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁴⁷ “Hugh MacKay to the Earl of Melville – August 30, 1689” in Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 372.

require the presence of troops to remain pacified or at least could be policed by the locals themselves (as was now the case in Atholl and Perthshire), thereby lessening the demands already put on his overstretched and overwhelmed force.

Any doubts the general may have had about the future of the campaign, however, would only be compounded in the ensuing weeks. A number of his regiments were finally called for service in Ireland, thus reducing the size of his army by a third.¹⁴⁸ With the funds for the campaign running low, William informed MacKay that he “resolved to break some of the regiments paid with Scots money” and in January, three of the Scottish regiments under MacKay were reduced to one.¹⁴⁹ His frustrations with the politicians were worsened by the fact that in protest of William’s lack of approval for their proposed religious settlement which would return the Presbyterian Kirk to the status of national church, the Scottish Parliament refused to approve the subsidies meant to fund the Williamite troops in the kingdom. By the winter, the coffers were empty.¹⁵⁰ So aggravated was MacKay at this politicking in a time of need, he wrote to Melville saying, “...there is nothing but devisions and factions in Parlement, in Counsel, in the Church, and in the Country,” a situation that differed significantly from the greater plan MacKay had for the kingdom.¹⁵¹ As much as men like MacKay were pushing for unity, divisions were still very much alive within the ranks of the Williamite politicians. Many remembered the zealous republic that had existed in the kingdom in the years following the signing of the National Covenant, while debating how they could maintain the monarchy within limits set by Parliament. Early in their proceedings, there had even been

¹⁴⁸ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 72.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 74; *Ibid.*, 82.

¹⁵⁰ Roberts, *Clan, King, and Covenant*, 201.

¹⁵¹ “General Hugh MacKay to the Earl of Melville – December 12, 1689” in Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 312.

a brief discussion of the possibility of union with England, though the idea was quickly dropped.¹⁵² There seemed to be no doubt that the Williamites wanted the Revolution to create a new Scotland, but just what that meant was yet to be determined. This debate amongst William's supporters would grow throughout his reign into the years preceding and immediately following the Union of 1707.¹⁵³ For the time being, most Williamites understood that before any serious discussion of union with England could occur, they must defeat the Jacobites and consolidate their claim on the kingdom.

As the Highland rebels reassembled in the North, this disunion between the army, Edinburgh and England began to trouble MacKay who believed that, "the divisions in Parliament began already to raise the lost hopes of the rebels..."¹⁵⁴ With the Williamite politicians more concerned with outmaneuvering each other than the enemy, the Jacobite army had been given a reprieve from its pursuit and had time to refit and regroup. As a result of his new constraints from Edinburgh and Hampton Court, and the renewed strength of his foe, MacKay was forced to alter his plan. Instead of placing isolated garrisons throughout the Highlands, which might be eliminated piecemeal, Williamite strongholds would be erected along the 250-mile line that divided the Highlands from the Lowlands. Though his forces would not be able to secure hostile areas in the Highlands, he hoped that it would allow his now limited army "to secure the low counties from the enemy's attempts" and hopefully remove any lingering hostility between the radical and moderate Presbyterians.¹⁵⁵ A far cry from the aggressive strategies MacKay had employed earlier, the new plan was meant to buy time while more recruits could be

¹⁵² Christopher A. Whatley and Derek Patrick, *Scots and the Union*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2006), 5.

¹⁵³ P.W.J. Riley, *King William and the Scottish Politicians* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1979), 23.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 74.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*

found, or more importantly, more Williamite successes occurred in Ireland, which he hoped would break the will of the Scottish Jacobites.

For the most part, this plan failed. Throughout the winter, the Highlanders conducted a number of raids in an effort to acquire provisions and to overstretch the Williamites while creating chaos within their camps.¹⁵⁶ Though the Williamite regiments and their allies attempted to retaliate, they were often forced to abandon their offensive operations in order to protect their own territory, as was the case with a large counter-raid sent out from the garrison left at Inverness.¹⁵⁷ The situation in the North had become as frustrating as ever for General MacKay, but as the new year began, things were not as splendid as they may have seemed in the Jacobite camp.

The Beginning of the End

Even after General Cannon had arrived with his Irish soldiers prior to Killiecrankie, James had been promising his Highland supporters more reinforcements, including experienced leaders like his illegitimate son, the Duke of Berwick. In January, only Major General Thomas Buchan and a small cadre of officers had arrived from Ireland. The Jacobites felt betrayed by their king and when the Highland chieftains gathered to plan the next campaign, some lobbied to submit to the Williamites in Edinburgh.¹⁵⁸ Though many of the Highlanders had been willing to fight for their deposed monarch, by this point in the campaign they began to realize that as for the

¹⁵⁶ Roberts, *Clan, King, and Covenant*, 201; One of these raids was on the lands of Robert Campbell of Glenlyon and was conducted mainly by the MacDonald's of Glencoe. Just over a year later, Glenlyon would be an officer in the Marquis of Argyll's regiment when he would receive orders to pacify the clan that had ravaged his lands.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 203.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*

Williamite camp, Scotland was a low priority for the greater Jacobite efforts. The cost of Williamite occupation of their lands and the suppression of rebellion began to outweigh the willingness to wait for James's promises to finally come into fruition. Considering the options, the Williamite leaders turned yet again to Tarbat and his more peaceful suggestions for subduing the clans.

An indemnity was offered by the Crown to clans that submitted to William protected them from any repercussions of their resistance and charges of treason, all for the price of laying down their arms and swearing an oath to William and Mary. Many chieftains thought it was fair and became rather enticed by the offer. Much like the politicians in Edinburgh, the chieftains certainly began to consider the role they could play in post-war Scotland. Some like Cameron of Lochiel, who by this time had made amends with Cannon, were unwilling to give up and argued that the army had been too successful in the previous months and that the Williamite forces were growing too weak to warrant surrender, indemnity or not.¹⁵⁹ In some ways, this was a sound suggestion. Though the army had been shaken by its reverse at Dunkeld, it still survived.¹⁶⁰ The Cameronians' victory had been largely due to the urban setting of the battle, which was foreign to the Highland warriors and had prevented them from using their unique tactics properly. MacKay had yet to best the Highlanders in a major engagement and between his battle losses and cutbacks in strength, the Williamite army was not the imposing enemy it had once been. For many, like the sexagenarian Lochiel, their motivation was the honor of the clans.¹⁶¹ All knew of the great martial deeds of their families (some, like Lochiel, could personally remember them) and understood that the Highland clans had

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁰ Balcarres, 75.

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 80.

overcome greater odds before and never simply submitted to the Crown. Inspired by their memory, honor and their fiery comrades, the chieftains agreed to bring the army together again in March.

As the Jacobites planned their resurgence, MacKay was busy making his own plans for the upcoming campaigning season. He decided that a diversion should be made in the Western Highlands and Isles, the ancestral stronghold of the MacDonalds and the MacLeans. The general wrote that if the Williamites created “such a diversion and jealousy upon [the Jacobites’] coasts, that they should not much trouble the low country, nor be able to come out formidable enough to give us much trouble till [the Williamite army] could be ready to put to put to the field.”¹⁶² The general hoped that by attacking the homes and lands of some of the Jacobite clans, he could create a rift within their camp. The enemy troops would be forced to decide whether they should use their resources to protect the property of some of their own or continue with the operation suggested by others in the camp and bring the war to a new region. Though many claimed to be fighting for the high-minded ideal of serving their monarch, the defense of their families and property would be something that many of the Highlanders would not be willing to ignore. Knowing that the Scottish treasury was in no way able to fund such an endeavor, the general insisted that the government “write to the King, giving his Majesty an account of the general’s propositions,” in the hopes that William could provide funding from England for the efforts.¹⁶³ As with any governmental procedures, a great deal of time would be required before results could be achieved. Until then, MacKay and the army would have to wait.

¹⁶² Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 85.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 84-85.

In the mean time, the general decided that a change of strategy was required in the few remaining outposts he held in the Highlands. Following the failure of Glenlyon's counter-raid in the North, MacKay ordered Colonel Livingston to take his troopers to Inverness and take command of the garrison in the city. Since commanders on both sides had commented on the effectiveness of cavalry against the Highlanders, MacKay realized his best chance of defeating the irregular tactics of the rebels lay in the use of the mounted wing of his army. Instead of relying on slow-moving columns of infantry led by rather inept officers, the general would ride the rebels down using his best troopers.

As spring dawned, Buchan and his Jacobites grew optimistic. Their series of incursions into Williamite territory had brought them enough food to provide for the army for some time and took much needed supplies away from MacKay. Since the Williamite position in the realm seemed rather tenuous as more and more troops were sent to other campaigns and their offensive stall, recruitment amongst the Jacobite-leaning clans, had increased significantly.¹⁶⁴ Though still feeling the effects of Dunkeld, some Jacobites were beginning to think that their army still had a chance for success. Once the weather became conducive for offensive operations, the rebel commander began to march his army into the North-east of Scotland. Upon learning that the Jacobites were on the move, MacKay ordered Livingston and a small detachment "to observe them, and labour...to get a catch of them, or at least to hinder the growth of their number..."¹⁶⁵ After MacKay wrote that on April 27, the Williamites advanced "eight miles from

¹⁶⁴ Roberts, *Clan, King, and Covenant*, 203.

¹⁶⁵ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 94.

Inverness, upon the way towards the place where he had advertisement the enemy lay, to wait for further intelligence...”¹⁶⁶

Livingston and his men found themselves in the lands of the pro-Williamite Laird of Grant, whose locally-raised regiment had a small detachment in the Williamite column.¹⁶⁷ These clansmen, who Buchan thought could be swayed to the Jacobite cause, were more than willing to navigate Livingston through the passes and tracks leading towards the river and the enemy. After a night-time forced march, the Williamites found themselves within two miles of the enemy camp on the Haughs of Cromdale.¹⁶⁸ In the early hours of May 1, Livingston met with his officers and planned the attack. At three o'clock, after being allowed “an half an hour to refresh both men and horse,” the Williamite troops were ordered forward.¹⁶⁹

A troop of Livingston's cavalry was dispatched to distract a party of Jacobites who were guarding a ford on the river while the rest of the troopers crossed at another point and rode into the camp which Buchan had scarcely tried to protect. The Jacobites quickly broke under the weight of the attack. Though some groups tried to mount resistance once they had cleared the immediate chaos of the camp, they were no match for the infantry reserve Livingston had brought up once contact had been made. The battle, with results that were quite the reverse than those of Killiecrankie, was over in minutes. The main Jacobite army had suffered four hundred casualties, roughly half of the Highlanders present in the camp, at the cost of no Williamites.¹⁷⁰ The Jacobites who

¹⁶⁶ Reid, *I Met the Devil...*, 62; Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 94.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 95.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁹ Thomas Livingston, *A true and real account of the defeat of General Buchan and Brigadier Cannon, their High-land army, at the battle of Crombdell; upon the 1st of May, 1690* (Edinburgh: Heir of Andrew Anderson, 1690), 1; Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 95.

¹⁷⁰ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 96.

were able to make it out of the ambush were totally scattered into the hills (making pursuit by cavalry difficult) and unable to rally themselves into any semblance of order. In the report he wrote to MacKay describing the battle, Livingston proclaimed, “I pray God the beginning of this Years Campaign may Prognosticat a blessing upon Their Majesties Forces, so that an end may be made of this troublesome War this Summer [sic].”¹⁷¹ Upon receiving the report, MacKay wrote that, “the news whereof did very much good to the King’s affairs both in Scotland and England.”¹⁷² Though the battle was significant, by this time the attention of the Williamites was focused on the army William was preparing to take to Ireland and face James’s large army in that kingdom. The campaign in Scotland would drag on past the summer, but it was mainly confined to mopping up operations.

The Jacobites had several motivations for fighting the war but now lacked the means to achieve their objectives. The sovereign whose claim they sought to defend would be soundly defeated a few weeks later on the banks of the Boyne and forced to leave his kingdoms for good. The religious settlement was now solely in the hands of William and his politicians and seemed to be leaning ever-more closely to power of the majority moderate Presbyterians. In terms of the Lowland-Highland divide, both regions had been physically and economically damaged by the war (and it would be only Union with England that would restore any hope of prosperity). More importantly, the mystique of the Highland clans, their way of life and their art of war had been severely damaged. Following Dunkeld and Cromdale, the Highlanders were no longer viewed as a mysterious, invincible foe. The Highland warriors had been beaten and largely scattered

¹⁷¹ Livingston, 2.

¹⁷² Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 96.

and though it would not be until they fell in the hundreds in the volley's of Cumberland's men at Culloden over a half century later, that they would finally be subdued.

Finishing Moves

Shortly after the battle MacKay brought the rest of the army north and began forcing the enemy Highlanders to submit. Along the way, they encountered some resistance from Jacobites led by Kenneth MacKenzie, the Earl of Seaforth, who had just arrived from Ireland. The minor ambushes were beaten back without much difficulty and MacKay led his command into Inverlochy, where he intended to post a garrison on July 3.¹⁷³ Two days later, they began the construction of an outpost at the site: the aptly-named, Fort William.¹⁷⁴ Meanwhile, the long- anticipated coastal expedition met great success, forcing MacDonald of Sleat to submit to William's authority and establish a post on the estate of Cameron of Lochiel.¹⁷⁵

Yet MacKay was unable to oversee the fort's construction for long, as new threats to the Williamite cause began emerging. Not only was fear growing of a French landing in England, but reports came that General Cannon had led a small portion of the reformed Jacobite army, along with some new recruits, into the Western Lowlands to seize provisions and livestock. The latter threat was forced to retreat by the mobilization of upwards of 14,000 Cameronians militia who were not about to have their farms ravaged by their Episcopalian foes as had occurred during the Covenanter rebellions.¹⁷⁶ Cannon was forced to make an ignominious retreat and rejoined Buchan near Aberdeen.

¹⁷³ Roberts, *Clan, King, and Covenant*, 208-9.

¹⁷⁴ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 98-99.

¹⁷⁵ Roberts, *Clan, King, and Covenant*, 206-207.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 209; *Ibid.*, 205.

Sensing the time had come to break the Jacobites once and for all, MacKay followed in pursuit, calling on the various Williamite detachments throughout the Highlands to join him. Buchan and Cannon withdrew under the pressure, cutting Seaforth and his men off from any support.¹⁷⁷ The Earl, who did not share MacKay's ideals, sent representatives to negotiate surrender, but at the last moment (driven by his hatred of the MacKays), broke his word. As a result, MacKay ordered two hundred soldiers and nine hundred loyal Highlanders "to burn [the MacKenzies's] houses and take their goods."¹⁷⁸ Unwilling to capitulate to the Williamites, Seaforth disbanded his command on September 2. Many made their way towards the remnants of the Jacobite army, while the earl surrendered himself to his rival.¹⁷⁹

Though Buchan and Cannon had obtained a few recruits from the staunchest of Jacobite clans, their army was running dangerously low on supplies. The generals disbanded the infantry on September 12 and gradually released their cavalymen from service throughout the month. By October, serious resistance from the Jacobite army in Scotland had ended as they had run out of provisions and had lost the support of all but the fanatically loyal supporters.¹⁸⁰ MacKay's troops began policing the region forcing the Jacobite leaders to submit to William's authority. By and large, the Jacobites submitted without much resistance, as many could plainly see that their attempt to restore James to the throne had failed. For those who were reluctant to give in, an ultimatum would be issued: either the clan chieftain would take the oath by January 1, 1692 or their clans would no longer be eligible for a pardon. The staunchest of Jacobites gradually took the

¹⁷⁷ Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs...*, 101.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 102.

¹⁷⁹ Roberts, *Clan, King, and Covenant*, 210.

¹⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 211.

king up on his offer, all save the MacDonalds of Glencoe, whose disputed missing of the deadline ended with tragic results.

However, the future challenges that faced Scotland would be passed on to other officers, as MacKay received orders in the fall of 1690 to return to the Netherlands for the winter in preparation for his next deployment.¹⁸¹ William's war in Scotland may have been over, but his claim to the British crowns was not yet completely secured. Although he had been victorious at the Battle of the Boyne in July of that year, the war in Ireland was still underway, and it was to the Emerald Isle that the King would send his favorite Scottish general.

Final Campaigns

Following the defeat at the Boyne and James's second, and final, flight to France, the Jacobite army in Ireland retreated to the southern part of the island, fortified positions along the River Shannon and waited for the arrival of reinforcements promised by Louis. Since the loss of Dublin, their main stronghold became the city of Limerick, which they had successfully defended from an attack by the Earl of Marlborough in August of the previous year.¹⁸² While William's army had been weakened by the departure of the king himself and some of his best units to Flanders, the Jacobites had made significant reforms since the disaster the previous July. Better trained units, as well as regiments and officers from France, made the revitalized Jacobite army an intimidating foe.¹⁸³ Nonetheless, General Godert Ginkel, one of William's most trusted Dutch generals, was tasked with

¹⁸¹ Piers Wauchope, "Mackay, Hugh (*d.* 1692)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2006, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17557> (accessed February 7, 2012).

¹⁸² Michael McNally, *The Battle of Aughrim, 1691* (Stroud, Gloucestershire: The History Press, 2008), 33.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 103; *Ibid.*, 61.

ending the war and planned to drive straight into Jacobite territory.¹⁸⁴ One of Ginkel's division commanders in the upcoming campaign would be the recently-promoted Lieutenant General Hugh MacKay.

The first challenge for the Williamites was to force a crossing of the Shannon at the enemy-held town of Athlone. MacKay was chosen to lead the assault. With one powerful charge and the loss of only twelve men, MacKay broke through the Jacobite defenses and the enemy fled from the city.¹⁸⁵ Just a few days later the armies would meet again at Aughrim. Again, Ginkel ordered his troops forward to make a frontal attack against a well defended position. It did not take long for the Williamites to begin to waver under the intense fire of the Jacobites. The battle hung in the balance until MacKay noticed a causeway that ran across the north side of the field that had been left undefended. The general ordered cavalry to follow the path and attack the enemy's flank. The Williamite troopers began to roll up the Jacobite line and with the death of the enemy commander, the French Marquis de St. Ruth, the Williamite victory was secured at that pivotal moment. Following the battle, Ginkel advanced to Limerick, which was conquered after a brief siege. The treaty signed at the surrender, formally ended the Irish campaign of the Glorious Revolution, or "the War of Two Kings." William had finally secured all three British kingdoms, but now required MacKay's services elsewhere. The Dutch ruler had been fighting Louis on the Continent for years and now hoped to bring the military might of his new British subjects to bear.

¹⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 39.

¹⁸⁵ Thomas B. Macaulay, *The History of England from the Accession of James II*, Vol. III, 79.

Following another return home for the winter, MacKay joined William's main army in the spring.¹⁸⁶ He would see battle once again at Steenkirk on August 3. MacKay would fight his last battle leading English, Lowland Scots and Highland Scots against Louis, the dream William had sought to make a reality by deposing James. As at Augrhim, his division was ordered by his superiors to make a frontal assault against a superior position. This time, amidst the smoke of the gunfire, the general fell leading his troops. His death was mourned throughout the army and Britain.

MacKay has largely been remembered for the rout at Killiecrankie while the rest of his long career has been forgotten. He may have lost that twenty-minute battle, yet he faced the numerous challenges and divisions that surrounded the Highland War and the inhabitants of Scotland and found a way to achieve his goal of securing the kingdom for William and Mary. Though a Scot by birth (and a Highlander at that), Scotland was a foreign land to him and he refused to allow himself to get caught in the infighting that had torn the Scots apart for decades. While rival clans, competing denominations and contending regions molded their long-standing struggles into the context of the Glorious Revolution, MacKay was able to create a possibility for unity within the kingdom that had not existed before. In order for the Scots to fully support William and take a proper place in his vision of the future Europe, they would have to abandon their old rivalries and mould their conflict onto the objectives of the greater Williamite Revolution. What P.W.J. Riley calls Scotland's "catalogue of bloody calamities" was transformed into a series of developments have a lasting impact on Britain and the world.¹⁸⁷ In the aftermath

¹⁸⁶ Piers Wauchope, "Mackay, Hugh (*d.* 1692)," in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison (Oxford: OUP, 2004); online ed., ed. Lawrence Goldman, May 2006, <http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/17557> (accessed February 7, 2012).

¹⁸⁷ Riley, 1.

of the conflict, many in Scotland began to embrace those ideas and that of a new kingdom, abandoning their old allegiances to region, denomination and clan. Scotland would endure more conflict, military, economic and social, before its modern form would emerge, but as a result of MacKay's actions during the course of the Highland War and the Glorious Revolution, the processes that would bring about these changes were set in motion.

Conclusion

By the time William's orders against the MacDonalds of Glencoe were carried out in early 1692, the Williamite claims in the other British kingdoms had already been secured. The Scots had been the last to take up arms in the fight between James and William and were the last to once again find peace. The Scots had been, as Tim Harris describes, "reluctant revolutionaries."¹ In many ways, the Scots viewed the campaign for the crown as means to resume their armed conflicts from earlier in the century. Clan supremacy, regional rivalries and the denominational struggle were of much greater significance to the common subject than the greater Williamite ideals of allegiance to the king, country and a united Protestant interest. As the conflict progressed, however, their opinions and motivations began to change and the Highland War became, on an ideological level, a principle component of the Glorious Revolution.

At the center of the transformation of the conflict was MacKay. While he was not alone in leading the greater Williamite efforts in Scotland, his professional situation made his approach to the conflict and ideas about Scotland were markedly different than those held by the other Williamite superiors. Men like Melville and Hamilton had long been players in the political game in Scotland. After being appointed to high positions within William's Scottish government, both men looked to use political maneuverings during the war to retain status for themselves and their families after the war. MacKay had no such ambitions. His arrival in Edinburgh at the head of the Williamite army marked only the second time in three decades that had returned to his homeland. Though he was made a member of the Privy Council, he considered himself a foreigner to the realm and

¹ Tim Harris, *Revolution: The Great Crisis of the British Monarchy, 1685-1720* (London; New York, Penguin, 2007), 13.

returned to his family in the Netherlands when his service was completed. He had no aspirations for power or position within the realm once victory was secured and therefore, unlike men like Melville and Hamilton, did not allow personal political dreams impact his decisions during the Revolution itself. His ideological commitments to the Revolution's ideals, rather than the attractions or aversion caused by old feuds, were his approach to soft power. While other leaders tried to push the agenda of their particular interest group, MacKay urged his men and the political leaders to think of themselves as not Lowlanders and Highlanders, but inhabitants of a unified "country".² Not as Presbyterians and Episcopalians, but as Protestants. Not as members of a particular clan or family, but as loyal subjects of the same king. It was certainly a daunting task, but as the campaign progressed, the general was able to rally Scots from various factions to one banner, a trend that would continue over time. By the time the Jacobite army in Scotland was disbanded and MacKay returned to the Netherlands, the regional rivalries had begun to be eclipsed by the growing sense of national unity.

The tradition of political and social divisiveness in the realm would reappear in the Scottish Parliament as the political and religious settlements were debated in the aftermath of the Revolution. Over the next two decades the different political opinions within the kingdom would also be expressed as the politicians began to consider union with England. Yet, even these points of contention had changed. After the Revolution, rivals began to face each other in the chambers of Parliament, not the battlefield. In the fifty years from the signing of the National Covenant to James's flight from Britain, Scotland found itself engaged in two Bishops' Wars against England, three brutal civil

² Hugh MacKay, *Memoirs of the war carried on in Scotland and Ireland*, ed. J.N. Hog et al., (Edinburgh: Bannatyne Club, 1823), 53.

wars, Glencairn's rebellion against Cromwell, two Covenanter rebellions, Argyll's failed invasion and the Highland War itself. Over the next decades, two major (in 1715 and 1745-6) and one minor (1719) Jacobite uprisings would threaten the peace of the kingdom like England would never see again. But after the failure of Bonnie Prince Charlie, the dream of a second Stuart Restoration was over. Armed civil conflict in Scotland, unlike that across the Irish Sea, would not continue to the present day. The musketry of Cumberland's redcoats at Culloden would end the threat of civil war in the realm. For those families who had long stood in support of the Jacobites (and even some who opposed them), the Highland Clearances followed which forced many to leave their homes for the Lowlands, Northern England, Nova Scotia and the American South. The staunch Jacobite families that had supported James and his heirs in multiple rebellions were never able to align themselves with the other subjects of a new, united kingdom and as a result, were forced to create new homes within entirely different circles of unity and allegiances.

The end of civil conflict in Scotland was not the only benefit of the Revolution. In many ways, MacKay's campaign and the related political maneuverings marked a major turning point in the history of the kingdom and Britain as a whole. Economically weakened by the Revolution and its resulting commitment to William's European campaigns (and a failed attempt at colonization), Scotland was forced to join with its southern neighbor to form a new empire. Though initially met with opposition, the Union quickly proved to be beneficial. Scottish merchants were able to grow rich as they became major participants in the trans-Atlantic trade. Many Scottish men found employment (as well as the honor and adventure) in the numerous Scottish regiments,

both Lowland and Highland, which were formed within the new, permanent British Army. As Britain's empire grew, Scottish military men, politicians and adventures began taking leadership roles in global empire. This growth shaped the development of the ideals of the people of the kingdom and their views of the new communities to which they belonged.

Scotland's experience in the Glorious Revolution differs from the experience of that event in the other British kingdoms in how the realm was swept into the conflict, how the military operations occurred and the impact it had on the future of the its people. Yet in the common narrative of that moment, the Scottish perspective is often overlooked. It lacks the "Glorious"-ness of the bloodless transition of power in England yet does not carry with it a long dark shadow like that which loomed over Ireland. The Scottish narrative is somewhere in between but yet is equally important. Scotland was changed forever by the events of 1688 to 1692. The kingdom and its people went into the Revolution as a violent, antiquated realm and emerged a modern nation soon to be part of a great empire. In a way, a transformation such as this was to be expected in an event we remember as a "revolution." Yet, the Scots were not able to make this change on their own. Instead MacKay, a Scot by birth, but a product of the transformation occurring at the time on the Continent, took command and led Scotland from its old state to the new. Through his strong devotion to his faith, his leader (later, king) and the idea of a united nation, MacKay was able to inspire the king's Scottish subject to begin to see the world in a broader context than their localized rivalries and the potential a modern Scotland. Those ideals were the "good cause" for which he fought and that which would forever change Scotland.

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