

THE BATTLE OF PRESTONPANS

9. King Charles III Crowned at Holyrood

The day after the Battle of Prestonpans, Charles Edward was privately crowned King Charles III by an Episcopalian minister at the Palace of Holyroodhouse. Great Britain was no more. Scotland had regained its sovereignty within Europe and the same thus applied to England and Ireland. The mood of the day was that a wrong had been righted.

Charles Edward's mind, however, was in a sober mood. He forbade any celebration of the Jacobite victory because so many of his father's subject had died that day. He asked that the ministers of the Presbyterian churches performed their Sunday worship as usual (some did, but most refused). Cope's wounded were treated as soon as the battle was over, water and doctors being provided to both armies and each of Cope's soldiers being asked never again to take arms against their rightful king. In fact, many of the survivors joined the Jacobite ranks. Among Cope's private baggage, the Highlanders found numerous boxes of chocolate, a luxury in those days, which Charles' highland men believed to be a healing salve. Colonel Gardiner's wounded body fell near a thorn tree and his man servant carried him to the Presbyterian manse at Tranent, where he died that evening in the arms of the minister's niece. Gardiner had fought valiantly and he would be recognised in 1853 by a monument funded by public subscription, which was erected facing Bankton House, once his property. The monument proclaims his valour as a man and a soldier and he certainly deserved it, unlike Cope, who deserted his post and fled over the border. Cope was tried for cowardice but was acquitted, which is surprising since he truly had deserted his troops and reached the safety of Berwick even before anyone had informed the authorities that the day had been lost.

For some six weeks Charles remained in Edinburgh, entertaining the city fathers and their families. Every morning he would have a levee of his officers and other sympathisers, then meet his councillors for several hours to listen to their very different opinions, and then would dine in public with his officers. Following dinner he would ride out with his guards, usually to Duddingston, where his army lay. In the evening, he would return to the Palace of Holyroodhouse and receive the ladies who came to his drawing room: he then supped in public. Generally there was music at supper and a ball

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afterwards. Most of the time, though, Charles was hard at work recruiting more men, sending for more troops from the Highlands, trying to persuade – in vain – MacLeod of MacLeod and Sir Alexander Macdonald, chief of the clan, to join him as soon as possible. This was counteracted by the arrival of the lords Kilmarnock, Balmerino and Pitsligo, Macpherson of Cluny and Gordon of Glenbucket with fresh Highland troops. Four French ships had also arrived with provisions, ammunition and money, but few men. Charles needed men if he was to overthrow the Hanoverians in England. It was the one thing which he and Lord George Murray agreed upon but even then the strain in their relationship was showing. Charles did not trust him – with good reason. Murray had been active in the Jacobite plots to restore the Stewarts in 1715 and 1718. He had been exiled by George I but had been pardoned in 1725 when he came back to Scotland. For twenty years he lived in Atholl, but was not particularly happy playing gentleman farmer. He was first and foremost a military man and loved both the power and glory of command. When Cope had reached Dalwhinnie in search of Charles Edward and his Highland army, Murray had offered his services, but Cope declined. Having been fobbed off Murray, out of spite, joined the Jacobite ranks. The Duke of Liria, Charles' cousin and rightful Duke of Berwick, describes Murray, whom he knew personally, as 'a man with plenty intelligence and bravery but ... false to the last degree, and has a very good opinion of himself'. He did, however, bring Charles' army the much-needed military know-how and organisation. But Charles and Murray would soon be at loggerheads, particularly at Derby.

10. The Campaign into England

Charles' letters had the overall effect of giving him the army he needed to continue with the campaign. The Battle of Prestonpans had also provided Charles' army with Cope's field pieces and several more Swedish guns were sent by the French. His army after Prestonpans was much more balanced and more like a modern fighting machine of the 18th century. Overall the Jacobite army totalled about 14,000 men (most of them kept in the Highlands) in all, but Charles planned to take only a little under six thousand men with him into England to eject George II from London and dispatch him back to his small electorate in Germany. It was thought that English Jacobites would swell

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Kinlochiel Aug. 22^o 1745

You cannot be ignorant of my being arrived in this Country
of my having set up the Royal Standard, & of my firm
resolution to stand by those who will stand by me I refer
you to my printed Declaration for the rest. On such an
occasion I cannot but expect the Concurrence of all who
have the true interest of their Country at heart. And
I have heard such a Character of you as makes me hope to
be you among the most forward. By answering these expec-
tations you will entitle y^r self to that favour & friendship
which I shall be ever ready to give you & yours

Charles P. R.

Letter from Prince Charles Edward to Sir James Grant asking him to join him – ‘You cannot be ignorant of my being arrived in this Country and of my having set up the Royal Standard, and of my firm resolution to stand by those who will stand by me’. Kinlochiel, 22 August 1745. Signed ‘Charles P[rince] R[egent]’.

the ranks of the Scottish troops, though Charles soon found that this would not be as easy as he thought.

He first marched to Carlisle and took it. Carlisle was quite a big city, bigger than Edinburgh and would be difficult to hold. Moreover, he could not afford to leave too many troops to hold it in his name and so he left less than three hundred men in charge of Carlisle Castle. They marched further south in two divisions, Murray commanding the first, while the second followed a day behind commanded by Charles himself. The

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route they took was that of Penrith, Shap, Kendal and Lancaster, and reaching Preston within a week. Calling a council Charles introduced a few English and Welsh Jacobite sympathisers, who confirmed there would be more though it would take time. Undeterred, Charles encouraged the chiefs, who were always reluctant to fight away from Scotland, to march on Manchester, where a small regiment was raised for Charles under the command of Francis Townley. By December 1st, the Jacobite army had reached Macclesfield, two hundred miles from Scotland's capital city and one hundred and fifty miles from the English capital. It was, to say the least, a swift march through England and London was decidedly threatened. George II had to recall troops from Flanders, including the defeated troops under the command of his son, the Duke of Cumberland and required the Dutch government to give him six thousand men, as agreed in a treaty signed between George and Holland.

It is true that very few English people joined Charles' army, but it is equally true that Charles faced no resistance from anyone. When he appeared he was charming and his charisma attracted people. Nobody confronted him and town after town welcomed him as a deliverer. The truth was that, away from London, the Hanoverians were not particularly well-liked. They did not speak English, they did not like England, nor did they trust the English who had beheaded Charles I. None were born in Britain and they mostly lived in Germany. Moreover, they lacked Charles' personal magnetism and were expensive in their tastes. Charles, as far as the people were concerned, was the son of an Englishman and a prince of the true blood. Even better, there was nothing excessive in Charles' religious principles. He attended Episocpalian, Presbyterian, Anglican and Catholic ceremonies to make the point that, under the rule of his father, all would have equal rights. In other words, Charles appealed to the masses. He was every inch a Prince: courteous, approachable, an excellent horseman, and he listened to what the people had to say.

London too was starting to behave as though they were about to be delivered from unwanted Hanoverian rule. George had to witness hundreds of people wearing the white cockade, the Stewart symbol of restoration, and was so much in fear of his life that he had a barge standing ready on the Thames to take him aboard a ship that would take both him and the English crown jewels to Germany. A new hymn was written, *Onward Christian Soldiers*, that commemorated Charles