

The Second Jacobite Rebellion of 1745:  
Triumph and Tragedy for Scotland

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The Second Jacobite Rebellion of 1745 was a turning point in Scottish history. The early triumphs of the Rebellion to secure the independence of Scotland from British rule gave the Jacobites great hope that they would finally recover the power they had lost in 1688. The tragedy of the Rebellion's ultimate failure permanently changed the Scottish lands, government, and culture, creating great hardships not only for the Jacobites, but for all of Scotland for centuries to come.

For many years before 1603, England and Scotland were ruled as separate kingdoms. When Elizabeth I died in 1603 after 44 years as Queen of England, the long reign of the Tudor dynasty ended. Elizabeth never married and did not leave any children to inherit the throne. Her successor was therefore her nearest relative – King James VI of Scotland, who then also became known as James I of England. This united the thrones of England and Scotland under a single monarch. These monarchs were known as the Stuarts.

In 1688, the last male Stuart ruler of Britain – James II of England, Wales, and Ireland and VII of Scotland – was driven from power by his son-in-law and nephew, William III of Orange. William came from another branch of the royal family known as the Hanovers. The Act of Settlement formally transferred English rule from the Stuarts to the Hanovers in 1701.

Scotland was ruled as part of England by the Hanover kings following the Act of Settlement. The Stuarts were seen as threats because many people wished for the return of the Stuarts to power. The Stuarts fled into exile in France for their safety, but they did not give up their fight to reclaim the throne. In 1715, the Stuart followers (known as the Jacobites<sup>1</sup>) launched what is now known as the First Jacobite Rebellion. The Rebellion failed, but the

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<sup>1</sup> 'Jacobite' comes from the Latin equivalent of the name 'James' - Jacobus.

Jacobites did not give up their ambitions. Thirty years later in 1745, Charles Edward Stuart, known as Bonnie Prince Charlie, launched what is now known as the Second Jacobite Rebellion as an attempt to regain the combined throne of England and Scotland for the Stuart family.

Charles Edward Louis John Casimir Silvester Severino Maria Stuart was born on December 31, 1720 in Rome, where his family was living under the protection of Pope Clement XI. His father was James Francis Edward Stuart - known as James III of England and James VIII of Scotland by his supporters. His mother was Maria Clementina Sobieska, a Polish princess. Charles grew up with all the hopes and expectations for the restoration of the Stuart family to the thrones of Scotland and England on his shoulders. By age six, Charles was fluent in three languages, English, French, and Latin, and rode and shot well. He was known as a handsome and charming young man. On a tour of Italy in 1737, "Charles was 'the fashionable idol at the moment,' the central attraction at dances and receptions, the object of attention wherever he went. Tall, fair, bright-eyed and smooth-skinned, he was enviably princely as he moved gracefully over the dance floor, enviably noble as he toured the sights of the cities and received the gifts, compliments and honors that were showered upon him. He wore his blue Garter ribbon and star, and may have worn - as he did in some portraits - tartan dress, which became his fair skin and light hair. His manner, as usual, captivated his public, especially when he spoke of his ambitions. 'Had I soldiers,' he reportedly said, 'I would not be here now but wherever I could serve my friends.' "<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Erickson, Carolly. *Bonnie Prince Charlie*. William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1989, p.61.

In 1743, Charles started to devise a plan to attack England and take control of Scotland. At this time, England was ruled by George II of the Hanover family. Within two years, by the time he was just 25, Charles was prepared to begin the Second Jacobite Rebellion and attempt to regain the throne for his family.

In 1745, Charles raised money from people in France who were against the Hanover regime. He set sail to Scotland, eluded the British warships, and first arrived in Eriskay, a small island off the west coast of Scotland in July of 1745. Travelling east to the mainland of Scotland, he then proceeded to create an army by convincing reluctant Scottish clan chiefs to follow him. The chiefs were skeptical that the result would be any different from the First Jacobite Rebellion. They thought it was risky and were hesitant to rise for a prince who had not brought any soldiers, and they worried about the hatred of many Scots who were not Jacobites. However, Charles used his charming personality and charisma to persuade them to join his Rebellion. He convinced the clan chiefs that the French were going to land an army in the south of England, meet Charles's army as they were coming from the north, and together, they would conquer all of England.

At this time, England and France were at war over the Austrian Succession, so the French were motivated to support the Stuarts with financial and logistical support. The Rebellion started out strong. In August, the Jacobites successfully ambushed a company of the British army at Highbridge and captured them as prisoners. They moved on to Edinburgh in September, where Charles made a formal declaration that his father was James VIII of Scotland and himself prince regent. Just a few days later, at a place called Prestonpans, the Jacobites succeeded in their first real battle. Following this, throughout the months of November and

early December, they crossed the border and invaded England, taking control of Carlisle, Manchester, Preston, and Derby, moving south without much resistance from the British. These triumphs should have given the Rebellion momentum to continue the invasion of England. Although Charles wanted to keep going and capture London, the council of clan chiefs decided against moving onward.

There were two main reasons for this critical decision. They realized by this time that the French were not going to land in the south of England due to a storm that threw them off course. The chiefs also felt that they had not picked up enough supporters in England for the Jacobite cause in spite of their victories. Without French support, they were worried that they would not be able to get any further and that they had been tricked into a very risky situation. The clan chiefs had lost faith in Charles because his promises of support from the French, and Jacobite supporters living in England, did not materialize. Against Charles's strong objection, the clans turned around and started travelling back north toward Scotland.

If the Jacobites had kept on going like Charles wanted to, they might have won, as London was weakly defended and did not have a good logistical or financial infrastructure. By heading back to Scotland, defeat was bound to happen. With the combination of bad weather, the British navy, and the French abandoning their plan to invade Southern England, the Rebellion was now in danger of failing.

Charles and the clans safely retreated to Scotland where they defeated the British in the Battles of Inverurie and Falkirk. Charles's army then attempted to seize the British-held Fort William, but the British held them off. The Battle of Falkirk was the Jacobites' last victory. The

British, led by King George II's son, William Duke of Cumberland, defeated them in the Battle of Littleferry.

The next day, April 16, 1746, the historic Battle of Culloden was fought. The British victory was complete with more than 2,000 Scots wiped out and only 50 British casualties in this single battle.<sup>3</sup> The Hanovers were joyful at the news of the total defeat of the Jacobites.

"I never saw anybody in such glee as the King was this day at the Levee which was much crowded; he complimented the Duke of Argyll upon the behavior of the Argyllshire men."

John Maule MP, 24 April 1746, on the response at (the Hanover) court to the battle of Culloden<sup>4</sup>

Even though his army was almost entirely destroyed, Charles was able to survive the battle and escape capture by the British. Charles evaded capture and fled into exile in 1746, leaving tragedy behind him.<sup>5</sup> He lived for another 42 years after the Battle of Culloden, but was never able to muster enough support for any other attempts to claim the throne before he died in 1788. He left his younger brother Henry, Cardinal York as the last male heir in the Stuart succession.

The aftermath of Culloden for Scotland was harsh. During the early months of the Rebellion, the British had been humiliated. They wanted to ensure that there would be no more uprisings in Scotland, so they imposed severe consequences on Scotland and its people.

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<sup>3</sup> "Scottish Fact of the Week: Battle of Culloden." *World*, The Scotsman, 6 May 2014, [www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/scottish-fact-of-the-week-battle-of-culloden-1-3400802](http://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/scottish-fact-of-the-week-battle-of-culloden-1-3400802).

<sup>4</sup> Black, Jeremy. *The Hanoverians: the History of a Dynasty*. Hambledon Continuum, 2006.

<sup>5</sup> Black, Jeremy. *Eighteenth-Century Britain, 1688-1783*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2008, p.242.

The Jacobites who remained suffered terribly from “Butcher Cumberland” and his reprisals. To further punish Scotland, the British Parliament issued imperious laws to destroy the clans, their identities, and economic structures.<sup>6</sup>

The Heritable Jurisdictions Act of 1746 meant that the clan chiefs lost all rights to govern and they were all subject to British rule; they also lost the right to call men to arms. The Act of Proscription of 1746 prohibited the clans from having weapons of war, and the kilt and tartan were prohibited as well. Because the kilt and tartan were important symbols of Scottish independence and clan pride, banning their wearing was demoralizing for the Scots. England and Scotland were now firmly united under King George’s rule.

The long term effects of Charles’s failed rebellion carry on to the present day. The Hanovers remained the rulers of England until 1837, and Scotland is still technically ruled by England today. There have been several votes for Scottish independence over the years, with another vote possible sometime this year.

With all of Bonnie Prince Charlie’s triumphs along the way, he could not achieve his ultimate goal which was to reclaim the crown for the Stuarts once and for all. The tragedy of his defeat was not just personal for him and his family, but left lasting tragic consequences for Scotland and its people.

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<sup>6</sup> “1746 – Highland Dress Proscription Act.” *ScotClans | Scottish Clans*, 2013, [www.scotclans.com/scotland/scottish-history/jacobite-scotland/1746-proscription/](http://www.scotclans.com/scotland/scottish-history/jacobite-scotland/1746-proscription/).

## Annotated Bibliography

### Primary Sources:

Drummond, John. "Jacobite Declaration of War." *The National Archives*, The National Archives, 2 Dec. 1745, [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/jacobite-1745/jacobite-declaration-war/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/jacobite-1745/jacobite-declaration-war/).

In 1745, Charles Edward Stuart was ready to launch the Second Jacobite Rebellion of 1745. John Drummond, who wrote this declaration, was an ally of Charles's in France and helped support him. This declaration helped me to understand better of what would happen after the war was declared and what people had to do.

"Jacobite Map." *The National Archives*, The National Archives, 1749, [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/jacobite-1745/jacobite-map/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/jacobite-1745/jacobite-map/).

During the Rebellion, the Jacobites travelled to numerous places back and forth throughout Scotland and England. This map has helped me to know and understand better where they had their battles, names of the towns/cities they were in, along with their route and what direction they were going.

"Laws to Control Scotland." *The Cabinet Papers*, The National Archives, Kew, Surrey TW9 4DU,28 June 1746, [nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/jacobite-1745/laws-control-scotland/](http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/jacobite-1745/laws-control-scotland/).

After the Rebellion failed, the British had to make sure Scotland never rose up again, so they made many harsh laws. The laws changed life for people living there. Kilts and Tartans were banned, along with government rules being changed, and more. These various laws from that time which controlled Scotland helped me with knowing what the laws exactly were and why people were upset about it, and how it affected people living there.

Keith, George. "Assistance from France." *The National Archives*, The National Archives, 12 June 2014, [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/jacobite-1745/assistance-france/](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/jacobite-1745/assistance-france/).

When the Rebellion was getting ready to start, France and England were at war over the Austrian Succession, so the French were happy to help and provide assistance and support so the Jacobites could conquer England. This letter was made to ask the French Courts to get agreement so they could help the Jacobites and send French Troops to England and help them. This source helped me because it showed that the French really wanted to help and that they were very good allies at the time.



Wentworth, Thomas. "Letter from General Thomas Wentworth, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, to Henry Pelham; 10 Nov. 1745." *nec1720 Image 1 - Conflict - The University of Nottingham, 1745*, mssweb.nottingham.ac.uk/elearning/view-image.asp?resource=Conflict&ref=nec1677&theme=2&view=image&page=1.

In the midst of the Rebellion, the Jacobites travelled south and conquered cities one by one. One of the first ones they conquered was Carlisle. This letter is from a British General's point of view and explains that the Jacobites are getting closer to Carlisle. This letter helped me because I know when it was written, and how the British point of view felt.

#### Secondary Sources:

Plank, Geoffrey. "Rebellion and Savagery: The Jacobite Rising of 1745 and the British Empire." *List of Books and Articles about Euthanasia | Online Research Library: Questia*, National Association of Social Workers, 2006, [www.questia.com/library/120087685/rebellion-and-savagery-the-jacobite-rising-of-1745](http://www.questia.com/library/120087685/rebellion-and-savagery-the-jacobite-rising-of-1745).

This source really helped me learn and understand different details of the topic itself.

Morrill, John S. "Jacobite." *Encyclopædia Britannica*, Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc., 30 Dec. 2018, [www.britannica.com/topic/Jacobite-British-history](http://www.britannica.com/topic/Jacobite-British-history).

This source not only talked about The Jacobite Uprising of 1745, but it talked about the other Jacobite war as well. This has helped because I have learned about my topic and other similar things and it's interesting to compare the two and see their similarities and differences.

"THE JACOBITE REBELLION OF 1745." *British Heritage*, British Heritage, [britishheritage.com/jacobite-rebellion-1745](http://britishheritage.com/jacobite-rebellion-1745).

This source was extremely helpful as it went into great detail so I could really understand it and answered some of the most important questions about the topic.

Black, Jeremy. *The Hanoverians: the History of a Dynasty*. Hambledon Continuum, 2006.

This book gave me a lot of background information about the Hanovers and them taking over England and Scotland along with their side of the battles.

Szechi, D. *The Jacobites, Britain and Europe, 1688-1788*. Manchester University Press, 2008.

This helped me with background about the Jacobite cause and both rebellions.

Black, Jeremy. *Eighteenth-Century Britain, 1688-1783*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2008

This book helped me find good quotes for my footnotes.

"The Jacobite Rising of 1745 in Scotland." *YouTube*, YouTube, 3 Feb. 2015, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=so257w9iC7c](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=so257w9iC7c).

This video provided a great, quick overview of the entire rebellion from start to finish, and highlighted the major events in the rebellion to help focus my research. The map in the video was particularly helpful in understanding where and when the events took place.

Erickson, Carolly. *Bonnie Prince Charlie*. William Morrow and Company, Inc., 1989.

This is a biography of Charles which had many interesting details about his life.

"Scottish Fact of the Week: Battle of Culloden." *World*, The Scotsman, 6 May 2014, [www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/scottish-fact-of-the-week-battle-of-culloden-1-3400802](http://www.scotsman.com/lifestyle/scottish-fact-of-the-week-battle-of-culloden-1-3400802).

This newspaper article provided details about the Battle of Culloden.

"1746 – Highland Dress Proscription Act." *ScotClans | Scottish Clans*, 2013, [www.scotclans.com/scotland/scottish-history/jacobite-scotland/1746-proscription/](http://www.scotclans.com/scotland/scottish-history/jacobite-scotland/1746-proscription/).

This website provided interesting information about my own Scottish heritage and what my clan's involvement and the story of one of my distant ancestors hiding Bonnie Prince Charlie in a cow shed when he was trying to escape the British.

