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**THE JACOBITE
REBELLIONS**
**Songs of the Jacobite Wars
of 1715 and 1745**

Sung by EWAN MacCOLL
Guitar and Banjo
Accompaniments by Peggy Seeger

Topic

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SONGS OF THE JACOBITE WARS OF 1715 AND 1745

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The Field of Phorbas, September 11 1745. Allan Ramsay. 1746.

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After centuries of conflict, the kingdoms of England and Scotland had been brought together in 1603 when the Stuart King James VI of Scotland became James I of England. Although united in the person of their ruler the two states retained quite different governments and institutions. They remained separate until the Act of Union in 1707 established a single government for the 'United Kingdom'. By this time the Stuart dynasty had been deposed in the so-called 'Glorious Revolution' of 1688, when the Roman Catholic James II (VII of Scotland) was replaced by the Dutch ruler William of Orange, who had married James' elder daughter Mary. This had been a victory for the powerful land-owning and commercial classes which had been rapidly increasing in strength during the preceding century. They were strongly Protestant in religion and they were, moreover, determined to restrict the power of the monarchy permanently.

Scotland benefitted materially from the Union with England. Its trade and manufacturing industry increased enormously and, thanks to the superiority of Scottish education over anything existing south of the Border in the eighteenth century, Scottish businessmen, inventors and intellectual leaders figured amongst the giants of the Industrial Revolution. Adam Smith, the economist; James Watt, inventor of the improved steam engine; and Macadam and Telford, the famous road builders, were amongst

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the most outstanding.

The real increase in the prosperity of Scotland as a result of this important contribution to the processes of industrialisation was, however, unevenly spread. It was concentrated in the Lowlands and in particular in Glasgow, which was rapidly becoming a large commercial centre. The Highlands were scarcely affected by it. In this extensive mountainous area an ancient feudal system based on subsistence farming remained dominant. The clans which maintained it were cut off from both the material developments and currents of thought of the outside world.

Personal loyalty was highly valued; the old religion of Roman Catholicism was still strongly entrenched; and with it affection for the exiled 'King across the water' and a romantic attachment to the 'auld alliance' with France against England. In view of this dour resistance to all the forces of innovation which were beginning to transform England and the Lowlands in the eighteenth century, it was natural that the Stuarts should look to the Highlands as their main hope for a revival of their fortunes.

James II had gone into exile in France, where he died in 1701. His son James, the 'Old Pretender', inherited the claim to the thrones of England and Scotland, and it was in support of him that the Jacobite Risings occurred. The Act of Settlement of 1701 had ensured

that the crown would pass to the Protestant House of Hanover. This happened in 1714, and the first Rising was thus timed to take advantage of the unpopularity of George I. But as it was inadequately planned and badly led, the Rising of 1715 never presented a serious challenge to the new regime. Apart from an abortive expedition in 1719, thirty years passed before the Stuarts made their next and final bid to recover power.

On the 25th July 1745, the 25 year old Prince Charles Edward Stuart, the 'Young Pretender', set foot on the Scottish mainland. Less than a month later he raised the standard of his father at Glenfinnan, and the clansmen began to rally to him. By a daring march on Edinburgh the Jacobites captured the city and repulsed an effort to dislodge them at the Battle of Prestonpans. The Prince then led his army southwards towards London, hoping that support would come to him from the inhabitants of the northern English counties. He was disappointed. Although he reached the River Trent just south of Derby on 4th December, he received an extremely cool welcome from the towns and countryside through which he passed. And his clansmen became increasingly disgruntled the further they moved from their native glens.

Meanwhile, the government had been desperately

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raising an army, and although hampered by incredibly bad communications a force was now ready to take the field under the generalship of the Duke of Cumberland. The Prince was forced to retreat, and his forces fell back into Scotland and then into the Highlands, Cumberland pursued them towards the inevitable engagement. This took place on the morning of 16th April 1746, when the clansmen were mown down by the superior armaments of the government forces on Culloden Moor.

The Battle of Culloden marked the extinction of the last Jacobite hope of recovering the British crown, and Prince Charles spent many hunted weeks as a fugitive before he managed narrowly to escape to France. But it marked more than that – it was also the end of an ancient social order. The government determined that there should never be another rising in the Highlands, and Cumberland earned himself the nickname of ‘The Butcher’ by ruthlessly carrying out the policy of breaking the clan system. Estates of the leading Jacobites were confiscated, and the wearing of the tartan prohibited. Even more important, the feudal powers of the clan chieftains, with their own law courts and the right of claiming military service from their tenants, were abolished.

These measures were effective. Law and order was imposed on the highlands. Roads, bridges and

harbours were built and improved. The introduction of English practices of land ownership led in time to the establishment of large estates as deer parks, and resulted in large-scale depopulation. By 1759 Pitt was able to remove the ban on tartan wearing and to recruit regiments of Highlanders to assist in the conquest of Canada. In 1784, the government felt able to restore most of the forfeited estates to their original owners. Meanwhile, the whole country had begun to show signs of the rapid acceleration in the processes of industrialisation which brought greater prosperity to the nation. Industrial and commercial success in the eighteenth century did more than Cumberland’s troops to cement the political foundations of Hanoverian Britain

With the pacification of the Highlands, the Stuart cause was dead. But like many lost causes, that of the Jacobites has retained its attraction and its power to move the spirit. More than most, the Jacobite cause, though lost, has been won in the persistent appeal of the songs which it evoked. These songs recall a social order which has long since passed away under the wheels of the locomotive, the arterial road, the factory, and the hydroelectric power station. They recall the bravery of men who died for a cause in which they believed. And above all, they recall the loyalty felt towards the young prince who, with grace and charm, came to lead the clansmen in his fathers’

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cause; and who, though doomed to failure, won the hearts and devotion of men and women in his own generation and in those which have followed.
ANGUS BUCHANAN.

Notes and Glossaries

YE JACOBITES BY NAME

The air of this song has always been popular in Scotland and is sung to many different songs on many different subjects, but, according to James Hogg, 'none of them are Jacobite save this.'

fauts, faults; *maun*, must.

SUCH A PARCEL OF ROGUES IN A NATION

This song embodies rather well the anti-Union feeling of Scotland during the eighteenth century. The charge of corruption which is made here against the majority of the Scottish Parliament who 'treasonably sold us for English gold' is repeated again and again in the Jacobite songs.

rins, runs.

WILL YE GO TO SHERIFFMUIR

The victory at the battle of Sheriffmuir, fought between the clans under the Earl of Mar and the Hanoverian forces under the Duke of Argyle on the 13th November 1715, has been claimed by both

sides. Winners or losers, the Jacobites celebrated the battle in a number of fine songs, of which this is probably the least well known. There is some doubt among clan historians as to the identity of Bauld John o'Innisture.

ri'en, torn; *hools*, clothing; *girnin gools*, weeping melancholics; *bauld*, bold; *gin*, if; *sic*, such.

WAE'S ME FOR PRINCE CHARLIE

In spite of the harsh repressive measures which followed the collapse of the Forty Five rebellion, Scots ballad makers continued to extoll the virtues of Prince Charles for almost another hundred years. This song is the work of William Glen, born Glasgow in 1789. It is set to the ballad tune Gypsy Davy.
dule, sadness; *ilka*, every; *row'd*, wrapped.

CHARLIE IS MY DARLING

In these days, when it has become the custom to debunk the popular figures of other days, we are presented with a picture of the Young Pretender that is by no means agreeable. The shabby, and not quite sober, medicant who haunted the back staircase of Versailles and who was not over scrupulous in his dealings with women, is not the Young Chevalier of the songs. For a great many Scots people, Charles Edward Stuart was not only a king and a leader but

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a living compendium of all the qualities which the Scots find commendable. The text given here is the original. Hogg wrote a modern and less forthright version of the song.

brawly weel he kend, very well he knew; *daurna gang*, dare not go.

THE HAUGHS OF CROMDALE

Poetic licence has been strained to breaking point in this vigorous ballad. The battle fought upon the plains of Cromdale in Strathspey did, in fact, result in the army of 1,500 Highlanders being defeated by Sir Thomas Livingstone's Hanoverians. Montrose, the hero of the song, was not present at the event. Some forty-five years before, however, he won a victory at the Battle of Auldearn against the Whig forces and it is probable that the two events have been dovetailed to provide us with a fine, optimistic, if somewhat chronologically inaccurate song. The tune is a great favourite with pipers.

haugh, level ground beside a stream; *spee'r'd*, asked.

THE BONNIE MOORHEN

Nearly all the Jacobite songs were proscribed. Consequently, songwriters and singers tended to codify their verses. Charles Stuart appears in the songs in a host of disguises: as a blackbird, as 'our guidman' and, in this song, as a moorhen. The colours

mentioned in the second verse allude to those found in the Clan Stuart tartan.

but, outside; *ben*, inside.

JOHNNIE COPE

This song, still very popular with singers, fiddlers and pipers, refers to the Battle of Prestonpans. There the Jacobite army, commanded by Prince Charles in person, routed a numerically superior English force led by General John Cope. The event took place on September 21, 1745, but Scots singers still derive singular pleasure from recalling the outcome of the battle.

waukin, waking; *C'wa*, come away; *hale*, whole; *blate*, bashful; *flegs*, blows; *claymores and filabegs*, Highland swords and kilts.

CAME YE O'ER FRAE FRANCE

When George the First imported his seraglio of impoverished gentlewomen from Germany he provided the Jacobite songwriters with material for some of their most ribald verses. Madam Kilmansegge, Countess of Platen, is referred to exclusively as 'The Sow' in the songs while his favourite mistress, the lean and haggard Madame Schulemberg, later Duchess of Kendal, was given the name of 'The Goose.' She is the goosie in the song. The 'blade' mentioned in the second verse is the

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Count Koningsmark. 'Bobbing John' is a reference to John, Earl of Mar, who, at the time this song was made was recruiting Highlanders for the Hanoverian cause. 'Geordie Whelps' is, of course, George the First. *kittle house*, a house for dancing, a brothel; *linkin*, tripping along; *niffer*, haggle, exchange; *tint*, lost; *ha's and maillins*, houses and farmlands; *belyve*, quickly; *hurdie*, buttock; *brawly*, well.

THERE'S THREE BRAVE, LOYAL FELLOWS

James Hogg suggests that this is a Highland song made on the eve of the Battle of Killiecrankie in 1689. Certainly the air is more characteristic of Gaelic Scotland than of the Lowlands. The Lindsay mentioned in the song is probably Colin, Earl of Balcarras, and the 'true MacLean' is surely the young Chief of Skye who played such a valiant part at Killiecrankie. 'Macrabrach' is possibly a mis-spelling of M'Abrach, the Laird of Coll. The unnamed gallant who succeeds Lindsay in the song could be Alaster MacDonald of Glengary, who carried King James' standard at the battle of Killiecrankie.

THIS IS NO MY AIN HOUSE

This beautiful song, written in the form of an allegory, is a perfect example of the skill shown by the Jacobite songwriters. The 'house' referred to is, of course, Scotland; 'my daddy' is the exiled Stuart king; and the

'cringing foreign goose' is the Hanoverian usurper: *carle*, worthless fellow; *ain*, own; *biggin*, building; *unco*, illformed; *downa*, cannot; *triggin*, decoration; *wi' routh o' kin and routh o' reek*, with such a large family and so much bustle; *door cheek*, door step; *claucht*, seize.

THE PIPER O' DUNDEE

The identify of The Piper is unknown though Sir Walter Scott suggests that the notable Carnegie of Phinhaven would be a likely candidate. All those mentioned in the song were leading men of the Jacobite faction. Amulrie, where the meeting takes place, is a remote village in Central Perthshire. *spring*, dance; *fain*, willing; *muckle*, great; *queer*, choir; *gat*, have; *mad their lane*, on their own.

DONALD MACGILLAVRY

James Hogg, in his Jacobite Relics, places this song as belonging to one of the risings, either 1715 or 1745. MacGillavry of Drumglass is one of the chiefs mentioned in the Chevalier's Muster Roll of 1715; and in the Forty-Five rebellion the powerful clan of M'Intosh was lead by a Colonel MacGillavry. On the other hand, the name might have been used as a convenient designation for loyal Highlanders. *gouk's nest*, cuckoo's nest; *weigh bauk*, scales; *wud*, mad; *elwand*, measuring rod; *rief*, banditry; *callan*,

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fine fellow; *lingel*, shoemakers thread; *mumpit wi' mirds*, lulled with flattery; *blads*, large portions; *flyting*, scolding.

MACLEAN'S WELCOME

This song of greeting sets forth in flowery terms the Highland delights prepared for Prince Charles Edward Stuart's coming by a clan chieftain.

In spite of the dubious part played by a Maclean prior to the rising of 1715, the Clan Maclean regiment fought bravely in the front line at the disastrous Battle of Culloden and sustained grievous losses.

WILL YE NO COME BACK AGAIN?

This is by far the most popular Jacobite song sung in Scotland today. It is used as a parting song for all occasions.

merl, nightingale; *lav'rock*, lark.

Recording by Bill Leader

Notes by Ewan MacColl

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Ewan MacColl



Peggy Seeger

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