

VII.—NOTES ON THE JACOBITE MOVEMENT IN UPPER COQUETDALE, 1715.

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[Read on the 24th February, 1892.]

FOR the first glimpse of what may be termed Jacobite sentiments we must cast our thoughts back to the great internecine struggle of the seventeenth century, when the blood of Cavalier and Roundhead darkened many a spot throughout this fair land of England. Then the struggle lay between Royalist and Parliamentarian, as in after years it lay between Jacobite and Whig. The Royalists in the days of Charles I. and the Jacobites of the last decade of the seventeenth century and the early part of the eighteenth century were, both of them, supporters of the Stuarts, while the Whigs during the same periods were, first, the supporters of the Parliamentarian party, next of William, prince of Orange, and then of George I.

The term Jacobite (from 'Jacobus,' the Latin form of James) was given to the party who still adhered to James II. after his deposition in 1688. The term Whig is said to have been given by the Royalists to the Parliamentarians during the days of Cromwell, from the initials of their motto, 'We hope in God'—WHIG. It is not for me, neither is it the time or place, in which to discuss the question of the hereditary right of kings, for on this point, even at the present day, there is a great diversity of opinion. Look, for example, what an intense interest the whole nation took in the Stuart Exhibition of 1889, when Jacobite relics of almost sacred associations were sent from all parts of the kingdom. There also exist societies such as 'The Jacobite League' and 'The Order of the White Rose,' whose object is, amongst others, to keep in perpetual remembrance the sorrows and the sufferings of the house of Stuart; to keep the solemn days of the order, notably the 30th of January and the 29th of May, in commemoration of the murder of Charles I. and the restoration of Charles II.; and 'To study the history of the house of Stuart and its adherents.' To have openly held these opinions—to have published such a code of rules—would

during the last century have been accounted high treason. But in this the nineteenth century the feeling in favour of the Stuarts is supposed to be more sympathetic and sentimental than real; yet the members of the orders I have just mentioned are expected to profess certain principles, which are expressed in their monthly publication,¹ where most able and interesting papers appear relating to Jacobite times and Jacobite measures, in which the writers evince a warm sympathy for the Stuarts and their unhappy cause. While, on the other hand, we can read, almost any day, in the columns of a portion of the English press views exactly the opposite. Therefore, it would seem that in this advanced age, as well as in '15 and '45, we have amongst us both Jacobites and Whigs.

If during the reading of this paper, my own sympathy for the old Jacobites comes out somewhat strongly, I can at least rejoice in the companionship of an eminent member of our society. The owner of one of the old manors of the Radcliffes,² who in 1883, prompted by a laudable spirit of admiration and regret at the untimely end of two of our brave Northumbrian noblemen, caused a roadside cross to be erected between Langley castle and Haydon Bridge, bearing the following inscription:—'In memory of James and Charles Viscounts Langley, Earls of Derwentwater, beheaded on Tower Hill, 24th February, 1716, and 8th December, 1746, for loyalty to their lawful sovereign.'

Although it was not until the coming of William, prince of Orange, in 1688, that the term Jacobite was first used, and the Jacobite movement really began, yet it may be of interest if I endeavour to show you that the political leanings of the inhabitants of Upper Coquetdale were mostly in favour of the Stuarts (or Royalists) during the troubles of that melancholy era in our nation's history, the great civil war of the seventeenth century. We have in our remote valley evidences of this sympathy for the Stuart cause, not only in the traditions handed down to us, and in the historical records of that period, but it is also found expressed in the pages of the old vestry books of our parish church of Rothbury. About the year 1653, Ambrose Jones, rector of Rothbury, was ejected from the living, and his place filled by Thomes Cotes, some time schoolmaster at Stanton.

¹ *The Royalist.*

² C. J. Bates.

Probably this person got the appointment through the influence of Edward Fenwick of Stanton, esq., who was high sheriff of Northumberland during the Commonwealth—1655—or thereabouts.³ The first intimation we get of opposition on the part of the parishioners of Rothbury to the minister appointed by the Parliament is in the evident disregard they paid to his repeated injunctions to attend the vestry meetings. We can gather from the minutes of meetings held in 1658 and 1659, that no business could be transacted owing to the non-attendance of churchwardens, vestrymen, and overseers of the poor. Complaints of this neglect are found entered time after time in the old record book during the Commonwealth. But at the Easter vestry meeting of April 14th, 1660, just on the eve of the restoration of Charles II.—mark the change that came over these men of Coquet!—the minutes of that meeting tell us that ‘The names were called, and all appeared.’ After recording the ordinary business of the meeting, the minutes end as follows: ‘Some other things of Triviall Concernment was done, and some, more weighty, were mensioned, but not done, after which they friendly and lovingly parted,’ and then as if to express their joy at the approaching event, they add, ‘VIVAT REX CAROLUS SECUNDUS FLOREAT ECCLESIA ANGLICANA. AMEN.’ As another piece of local evidence bearing on the subject I might add that on the original jamb of an old fireplace in the Black Bull inn at Rothbury (now the Newcastle house) there are cut in fine bold relief the letters ‘B.R., 1660.’ This has evidently been done by a person of some character, as if to record an event of more than ordinary interest. I should say the initials are those of Bernard Rumney, who at that time was the village poet and musician. His name often occurs in the

³ From the following entry found in the pages of the Rothbury Church records of that period, in the handwriting of Thomas Cotes, it would appear that Edward Fenwick had been the high sheriff of Northumberland somewhere about 1655 or 1656:—‘A collection was made for the Protestants of Piedmont and Savoy the summe pd. £4 11s. 06d. to Edward ffenwick of Stanton Esq. then High Sheriffe’—also in a conversation which followed the reading of this paper Mr. Richard Welford pointed out—‘that the date of the shrievalty of Edward Fenwick of Stanton was fixed by a deed quoted by him in a paper on Cuthbert Gray (see *Archaeologia Aeliana*, XI. 72), being the marriage settlement of William Fenwick of Stanton, eldest son of the high sheriff of Northumberland, and Elizabeth Ellison, daughter of Robert Ellison, high sheriff of the county of Durham, and niece of William Gray, author of the *Chorographia*. It appears, however, from a list of the high sheriffs of Northumberland, compiled by Mr. Hodgson Hinde, and published in vol. VI. of the *Archaeologia Aeliana*, pp. 98-104, that Edward Fenwick of Stanton held the office four times in succession, namely, from 1656 to the Restoration.’

Rothbury church records as churchwarden after the restoration of 1660, but *never* during the Commonwealth.

No doubt there were persons to be found in Upper Coquetdale who took the side of the Parliamentarians against the Royalists. Of this party a numerous and influential family named Potts, the owners of much property at Sharperton, Holystone and the Trehitts, during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and whose descendants are yet in Coquetdale, appear to have been the leaders. On the 24th of January, 1648, 'Michael Potts of Sharperton, co. Northumberland, vintner, was a witness against Charles I.'⁴ But the majority of the dalesmen and the country squires, the Selbys of Biddlestone, the Widdringtons of Cartington, and the Claverings of Callaly, with their tenants and their retainers, fought on the side of the king. Again, in the bloodless revolution of 1688, when William and Mary were placed on the throne, there were found in North Northumberland a few who kept their allegiance to James II. Of this change in the line of English monarchs there is no historical record having any special reference to Coquetdale; but, as a link in the chain of events that led up to the Jacobite rising of the next century, I may be permitted to give a passing notice of one of the bravest of Northumbria's sons, Sir John Fenwick of Wallington, 'the flower among them a,' who forfeited his life for the part he unfortunately took against William, prince of Orange. Sir John Fenwick was beheaded on Tower Hill on the 28th of January, 1697. I have in my possession a knife and fork of antique pattern, once the property of this unfortunate nobleman. Boyer, in his annals of the reign of Queen Anne, states that the horse 'Sorel,' from which William III. prince of Orange was thrown, thereby causing his death, was bred at Wallington, and had been part of Sir John Fenwick's confiscated property. Taking advantage of this strange fatality, the Jacobites, much to the chagrin of the Whig party, composed a poem in praise of 'Sorel,' beginning 'Illustris sonipes;' whilst, after that fatal occurrence, a frequent toast at the convivial meetings of those wicked Jacobites was:—'To the health of the little gentleman in the black velvet coat,' which meant the mole that made the hillock into which Sorel slipped his foot when he fell

⁴ Kennet's *Hist. of England*

with the king.⁵ It is curious to notice the traditional connection of flowers and animals with many of our great national movements, the Broom or *planta genista* of the Plantagenets, the White and Red Roses of York and Lancaster, the White Rose of the Jacobites, even our domestic pest, the common rat, does not escape this distinguished honour. One of our members, Dr. Embleton, tells us:—‘Of the two great parties of rats, contending for supremacy in England during the last century, the black was called the Jacobite, the brown the Hanoverian, in obvious historic allusion.’ In some of the old Jacobite ballads, George I. is often described as the ‘Muckle Hanoverian Rattan.’

I shall now speak of the rising of 1715, one of the most romantic periods in the history of our country. This feeling is no doubt looked upon by a number of stolid, matter-of-fact people nowadays as mere sentiment, to those I would say, we little understand how large a part sentiment plays in our lives. On the accession of George I. in 1714, that bitterness of political party feeling, which during the reign of queen Anne had run so high, rather increased than diminished. It was then that the Jacobites made a strenuous but futile attempt to place a Stuart once more on the English throne, in the person of James, the son of James II. This prince was James III. of the English Jacobites—the Chevalier de St George of the French, James VIII. of the Scotch—but by the Whig party in England he was called the ‘Pretender.’ The outbreak was no doubt hastened by the somewhat harsh measures adopted by the Elector King and his ministers against the Jacobites. Many persons of high rank were imprisoned on bare suspicion. Then riots took place in various parts. The oak leaf (the symbol of Charles II.), was openly worn at Oxford, and the effigy of William, prince of Orange, was burnt amidst an applauding mob. In this northern county of Northumberland, amongst the country squires and the yeomen of our rural districts the Jacobite cause found much favour, and not a few supporters. Whether it was the old border love of adventure, mingled with a real wish to have James to reign over them, or simply a sentimental feeling of sympathy for an exile, a romantic feeling said to have been largely prevalent amongst the fair sex of that period, that caused our Northumbrian

⁵ Hodgson's *Hist. of Northumberland*, part ii. vol. i. p. 257.

gentry to take part in the plot, one cannot tell; but whatever the motive, a number of the High Tory party, and nearly the whole of the Catholic gentry of Northumberland, true to their political traditions and steadfast adherence to their hereditary faith, took a prominent action in the movement, for which several of the heads of our leading families, the very cream of our Northumbrian gentry, forfeited not only their estates, but their lives.

It was early in the month of October, 1715, that the gathering discontent of the Northumbrian Jacobites, which for some time had been gradually gaining strength, suddenly burst forth into an open declaration against the rule of George of Hanover. The Highland clans, under the earl of Mar, had already (on the 9th September) raised the standard of the Chevalier, and proclaimed him as James VIII. of Scotland. Fortunately there exists an account of the rising of 1715, written by the Rev. Robert Patten, priest of Allendale, Northumberland, one of the chaplains in the Jacobite army. This person was taken prisoner with many others, at the defeat of the Jacobites at Preston, in Lancashire, but saved his life by turning king's evidence; and, says Burton in his history of Scotland, 'holds a distinguished place in the annals of infamy.' This volume, known as Patten's *History of the Rebellion of 1715*, is full of the most interesting information respecting the Jacobite movement, and although the information is most valuable, yet, as one reads its pages those minute records of the daily action and movements of the Jacobites by one of their own number, who having himself received the king's pardon, coolly turns round and calls his former comrades 'rebels.' It raises a feeling of disgust at the baseness of the man, who having saved his own life in so cowardly a manner, could thus write of those whom he had so recently urged on by precept and example.

It is rather singular that in the rising of 1745 the well-known John Murray of Broughton, secretary to Prince Charles Edward, the young Pretender, should have been guilty of the same ungenerous act. It would render this paper much too long and tedious, to follow all the movements, or to relate in full the various schemes and measures planned and concerted in London by the Jacobites during the years 1714 and 1715, in which deliberations two Northumbrian gentlemen

took an active part, captain John Shaftoe, one of the Bavington family, who was afterwards shot; and captain John Hunter of North Tyne. I shall therefore confine my notes as much as possible to the county of Northumberland, and more especially to the valley of the Coquet. Here I cannot do better than quote the words of the Rev. Robert Patten, who, when speaking of the Northumbrian Jacobites, says,⁶ 'the first step towards their appearing in Arms was when about the latter end of September the Lord *Derwentwater* had notice that there was a Warrant out from the Secretary of State to apprehend him, and that the Messengers were come to *Durham* that were to take him. Mr. *Forster* likewise having notice of the like Warrant against him. Upon this news they had a full Meeting of the parties concerned in Northumberland' (at which a resolution was passed). 'Pursuant to this Resolution, an Appointment was made, and notice of it sent to all their Friends, to meet the next morning, which was the 6th of *October*, at a place called *Green rig* (in the parish of Birtley, North Tyne) which was done accordingly, for Mr. *Forster*, with several Gentlemen, in Number at first about Twenty, met at the Rendezvous; but made no stay here, thinking the place inconvenient; but rode immediately to the top of a Hill called the *Waterfalls*, from whence they might discover any that came either to join them or to oppose them. They had not been long here but they discovered the Earl of *Derwentwater*, who came that Morning from his own Seat at *Dilstone*, with some Friends and all his Servants, mounted, some upon his Coach-Horses, and others upon very good useful Horses, and all very well arm'd. . . . They were now near 60 horse, most Gentlemen and their Attendants; when, calling a short Council, it was concluded to march towards the River *Coquett*, to a place called *Plainfield*.' There is a tradition to this effect, that the stone stoup or *Waterfalls* comb stands on the spot where *Derwentwater* mounted his horse to ride with the troop into Coquetdale). 'Here (says Patten) they were joined by others, who came straggling in, and having made some stay here, they resolved to go that night to *Rothbury*, a small market Town. Here they stayed all Night, and next Morning, being the 7th of *October*, their number still increasing, they marched to Warkworth.'

⁶ Patten's *Hist. of the Rebellion of 1715*, pp. 26, 27, 28.

The reason why the Jacobites fixed upon Plainfield as their place of rendezvous in Upper Coquetdale was probably owing to its central position, as well as being near that point where the troop coming out of Redewater would enter the valley of the Coquet. Plainfield Moor, where it is said they met, forms part of the Harbottle estate, and is situated midway between Harbottle and Rothbury, on the lower slopes of the Wreigh Hill Pike, and commands a full view of the Cheviot hills on the north, is only a very short distance from Biddlestone, the seat of the Selbys; Callaly, at that time the seat of the Claverings; and Cartington, then the seat of the Talbots; all of whom were staunch Catholics, and active partizans in the movement. Plainfield Moor still exists, and, with the exception of the fences by which it is surrounded⁷ and intersected, it probably presents much the same aspect to-day as it did on that October afternoon of 1715, when those loyal hearted Northumbrian Jacobites, led by the earl of Derwentwater, gathered round the standard of the exiled prince. Tradition points to a fine old ash tree, which forms a prominent feature in the landscape, on the moor between Sharperton Edge and Plainfield, as the spot where Derwentwater first unfurled the standard of the prince in Coquetdale. During the early part of the present century a farmer named Robert Wealleans, residing at the adjoining farm of Charity Hall, had in his possession, amongst other relics and curiosities, a gentleman's leather gauntlet glove, said to have been found on a thorn bush near to this ash tree, shortly after the departure of the Jacobites to their quarters at Rothbury.

It is evident that the final step had been taken somewhat hastily by Derwentwater and Forster, the leaders of the Northumbrian Jacobites, because lord Widdrington⁸ only heard of the gathering on the evening of October 5th, when, with several members of his family, he hurried up the next day to join the earl of Derwentwater at Plainfield. There is not a complete list of those of our Coquetdale ancestors who, on the 6th of October, 1715, went to swell the ranks

⁷ In a map of Rothbury parish, made by Edward Smith in 1816, kindly lent me by Mr. James Brook of Hepple, the highway leading from Rothbury to Harbottle is shown as not enclosed, being at that time quite an open road through Plainfield Moor.

⁸ Hodgson's *Hist. of Northumberland*, part ii. vol. ii. p. 256 (note 41, Widdrington Miscellanea).

of the insurgents on Plainfield Moor; yet, along with the men out of Tynedale and Redesdale, we would have found there lord Widdrington and his two brothers Charles and Peregrine, John Talbot of Cartington, William Clavering of Callaly, and his kinsman George Collingwood of Eslington; Ephraim Selby of Biddlestone and his steward; John Hunter of Callaly, laird Ratcliffe of Thropton, and his neighbour James Robson, the stonemason, with probably a few family retainers and yeomen out of the valleys of the Coquet and the Aln. Towards the close of that stormy autumn afternoon, two horsemen might have been observed hastening across the moor, their heads bent down over their horses' necks as they struggled against the westerly gale which blows hard and strong on that high-lying portion of Upper Coquetdale. Suddenly they are surrounded by a band of Jacobite troopers, who order them to halt, and without much resistance lead them prisoners into the Jacobite camp. The two captives were Justice Hall, better known throughout the county as Mad Jack Hall of Otterburn, and his man servant. Judging from the remark of Patten, that at Plainfield 'they were joined by others who came straggling in,' it would seem that the movement was more among the squires and well-to-do yeomen, than amongst the middle and lower classes of the population, and that not many of the common people in Coquetdale joined in the rising. It is amusing to learn that whilst several of our Northumbrian gentry were induced to join in the Jacobite movement only after much persuasion on the part of their Jacobitish friends, we find it was exactly the reverse with others, whose friends did their utmost to restrain them from taking any part in the rising, and who, when force of argument failed, had recourse to extreme measures, as in the case of⁹ Joseph Forster of Old Buston, a hot-headed, warm-hearted Jacobite, known as 'the Old Justice.' This plucky old gentleman was actually put in prison by his own relatives until the commotion was past, and was only thus prevented from joining the Jacobite army at Warkworth.

The rector of Rothbury, Dr. John Thomlinson, appears to have been neutral in the matter, or rather, he may not have had his loyalty to the reigning power put to the test. The Jacobite party left Roth-

⁹ Extract from the Forster deeds, kindly given me by Major Thompson, Walworth hall, Darlington.

bury on the Friday, and spent the Sunday at Warkworth; therefore it was reserved for the poor vicar of Warkworth¹⁰ to stand the trial whether he would, or would not, read the prayers in the parish church, according to the dictation of the Jacobite general. One can easily imagine the alarm there would be amongst the inhabitants of Coquetdale, as the cavalcade of armed men marched down the valley on their way from Plainfield towards Rothbury, and the anxious excitement within the little market town itself, when the Jacobites entered the wide old-fashioned street, and halted in the market-place in front of the 'Three Half-moons' and the 'Old Black Bull,' and there, under the shadow of the venerable walls of the old parish church, proclaimed James the third, king of England. Amongst the Coquetdale Jacobites already mentioned, we know there were with them that night at Rothbury:—¹¹ Thomas Forster, jun., of Etherstone; the earl of Derwentwater and his brother Charles; Philip Hodgson of Sandhoe; Thomas Errington of Beaufront; John Clavering of Berrington; William Shaftoe of Bavington and his son John; old Edward Shaftoe and his son captain John Shaftoe; John Thornton of Netherwitton; Charleton of the Bower and his son William: the pick of Northumberland. How or where the men and horses were quartered we are not told; but, according to a well-known tradition, the earl of Derwentwater spent the night under the thatched roof of that ancient hostelry the 'Three Half-moons,' now in ruins, the apartment in which he slept being afterwards called the earl's chamber.

The troops of lords Derwentwater and Widdrington are said to have been well armed, but the greater part of those who joined in the rising was certainly not; neither were these trained to act in concert. The Jacobite army of 1715 has been described as a mob of brave men armed with swords, guns, and pistols, which they had not been drilled to use. Whether it was in the affair of '15 or '45 I am not sure, but it was said that when the Jacobites in one of their marches through the county were about to enter the town of Wooler, the commanding officer, wishing his men to present a soldier-like appearance before the good folks of Wooler, gave the word of command, 'Draw swords,' when, much to the amusement of the spectators, a wag amongst the

¹⁰ Patten's *Hist. of the Rebellion of 1715*, p. 28.

¹¹ Lady Cowper's diary, 1714 to 1720, p. 185 (Appendix).



»THREE HALF MOONS« AND »BLACK BULL« INNS, ROTHBURY.

crowd shouted, 'And what are they to do who haven't swords?' An incident which shows the daring character of the men engaged in the movement, also the great lack of arms amongst them, occurred at Rothbury during the first week of the campaign.¹² On Friday, the 14th of October, Matthew Robson of Bellingham (a Redesdale yeoman), when returning from the Quarter Sessions held at Alnwick, proposed on arriving at Rothbury to bait his horse and have some refreshment himself. He had evidently been making his way to the 'Three Half-moons,' for on riding up the village, he came quite unexpectedly upon a company of Jacobites assembled in the Market Place. Immediately on his appearance, as he rode round the 'Black Bull' corner, two or three of the Jacobites, Robert Talbot, William Dod, and William Charleton of Reedsmouth (who no doubt knew very well that Matthew Robson was on the Hanoverian side), came forward and disarmed him, took possession of his horse, and placed the poor yeoman under arrest. After keeping him for three hours in mortal terror of his life, with threats to slay him or shoot him, he was released and sent off home to Bellingham on foot, a distance of twenty miles—his horse and harness, his buff belt, and his trusty broadsword being retained by his captors wherewith to arm a Jacobite trooper.

For several weeks, from the first day of the rising, Rothbury appears to have been the Jacobite head-quarters for the district, and was evidently visited and re-visited by roving parties of Jacobites. It is recorded that on the 2nd of November, 1715, the inhabitants¹³ 'att Rothbury were in great consternation by an alarme in the night that they would be attacqued, some gott one boot on, and some neither, but mounted in great disorder.' The rebel army, however, did not molest the town. No wonder, therefore, that the Government kept a watchful eye upon Rothbury, as the following item in the sheriff's accounts for the year 1715 will show:—'For the Sheriff's clerk and two Bailiffes expences, by order of the Earl of Scarborough, Lt. Lieutenant of the County, in going to Rothbury as spies, £06 08s. 00d.' On the 19th of October there was a general muster of the whole force of English and Lowland Scotch supporters of the cause held at Rothbury. No doubt from its central position and its easy distance

¹² *Records of the English Catholics of 1715*, by John Orlebar Payne, M.A., p. 114.

¹³ *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle*.

from Scotland, the little Border town was on that occasion considered by the Jacobite leaders to be the most convenient spot where they could effect a junction of their forces. As I have already stated, the Jacobites, on leaving Rothbury on the 7th of October, marched down the valley of the Coquet to Warkworth, where they stayed over the Sunday, thence to Morpeth, intending to go on to Newcastle; but not being received by the wary merchant burgesses of that important town with open arms, as they had been led to expect, the little army, somewhat discouraged, proceeded up the Tyne to Hexham, which they made their head-quarters. On Tuesday, October 18th, a messenger arrived at Hexham with the news that the Scottish Jacobites were crossing the Borders, and wished their Northumbrian friends to meet them at Rothbury. Having also been informed that general Carpenter, who had arrived at Newcastle, was preparing to attack them, the Northumbrian Jacobites at once decided to proceed northward; therefore the whole troop, under the command of the earl of Derwentwater, left Hexham early the next morning (being Wednesday, October 19th), and after halting some time at Kirkharle, marched across the fells, and entered Rothbury by the Hexham road late in the afternoon. Here they were met by the Jacobites of the Scottish Lowlands, with their leaders, lord Kenmure, the earl of Nithsdale, the earl of Wintoun, the earl of Carnwath, and lord Nairn, as brave an assembly of hardy Borderers as ever met on the banks of the Coquet. It is said that men and officers spent a convivial night in true border fashion, and we may be sure that many a Jacobite song and many a Jacobite toast would ring through the rafters of the 'Three Half-moons,' and the 'Old Black Bull,' on that eventful night. Very fond our Jacobite ancestors were of drinking toasts and singing ballads in which they expressed their sentiments. Many of the Jacobite toasts were so esoteric and seemingly contradictory in their verbiage, that except to the initiated it was most difficult to say which king, Jacobite or Whig, was really being toasted. Besides the well-known toast, 'To the king over the water,' the following were often used at mixed meetings with perfect safety:—

'Here's a health to the king, whom the crown doth belong to,
 Confusion to those who the right king would wrong so.
 I do not here mention either old king or new king,
 But here is a health, boys—a health to the true king.'

Or again—

‘God bless the king, I mean the faith’s defender,
 God bless—no harm in blessing—the Pretender;
 But who Pretender is, or who is king—
 God bless us all—that’s quite another thing.’

Thanks to Sir Walter Scott, to the Ettrick Shepherd, and to the compilers of our own Northumbrian minstrelsy, we have a goodly collection of Jacobite songs and ballads handed down to us. Many of these songs are yet great favourites amongst the rural population of Northumberland. I myself hear them frequently sung at our social gatherings in Coquetdale, and how expressive and heartstirring these old Jacobite verses are, such as, ‘There’ll never be peace till Jamie comes hame,’ ‘Charlie is my darling,’ ‘Jamie the rover,’ ‘Wha wadna fight for Charlie,’ ‘The auld Stuart’s back again,’ and others holding up to ridicule the house of Hanover. ‘Though Geordie reigns in Jamie’s stead,’ ‘Awa, Whigs, awa,’ ‘Oh, what’s the rhyme to porringer,’ ‘The wee, wee German Lairdie,’ ‘The sow’s tail to Geordie,’ and the like. On the morning of Thursday, the 20th of October, the combined forces marched from Rothbury to Wooler, where they rested for the night, and reached Kelso the next day. The subsequent movements of the Jacobite army are too much a matter of general history to be repeated in this paper. The leaders, after much discussion and many dissensions, decided upon entering England by way of Carlisle, which they did, and penetrating as far as Preston in Lancashire, they were totally defeated by the king’s forces. Of that miserable affair at Preston, when there were taken no less than seven lords and 1,490 followers, numbering amongst them the finest noblemen in the land, I need not relate to you in full. Among the Jacobite prisoners in that ignominious march from Preston to London, besides the noble earl of Derwentwater, lord Widdrington and his two brothers, William Shaftoe of Bavington, his son John and other two of the family, there were the Ordes, Forsters, Riddells, Thorntons, Claverings, and Scotts, the flower of Northumberland chivalry.

It may be of some interest if I give a short account of some of those brave but misguided gentlemen who were taken prisoners, and the fate which befel them. Of the execution (or, as the Jacobite calendar puts it) ‘the murder of James Ratcliffe,’ earl of Derwentwater, and of William Gordon, viscount Kenmure, Kenmure as commanding the

Scotch, and Derwentwater as commanding the English Jacobites at the first rising, who were beheaded on Tower Hill, February 24th, 1716, I shall only remark that, by a strange coincidence, the reading of this paper has fallen on the anniversary of the sad death of these two unfortunate noblemen; whilst, to show how tradition lingers amongst our rural population in remote districts, it was only the other day a person in Upper Coquetdale told me that from their earliest recollections they had heard the 'Aurora Borealis' called 'Derwentwater's Lights.' Patten furnishes us with the names of the prisoners, from whose list I shall give the names of a few who were connected with the rising in Coquetdale:—'William Widdrington, lord Widdrington, Charles Widdrington, Esq., brother to the lord Widdrington of Northumberland, Papist, pleaded guilty; Peregrine Widdrington, Esq., third brother to this lord, and aide-de-camp to General Forster, Papist; John Hunter, a farmer at Callylee, in Northumberland, reputed very rich, he made his escape; John Clavering, a Papist, of Northumberland; John Clavering, brother to William Clavering, both Papists in Northumberland.'

In his defence, lord Widdrington pleaded that¹⁴ 'he went with his kinsmen to the assembly at Plainfield in October, 1715, without any definite knowledge as to what was intended,'¹⁵ 'for although he had met with publick rumours and reports of intended invasions from abroad, and insurrections at home, yet he never knew, or any other way heard of, any formed design against the government, till he was told the night before of a meeting intended at Plainfield in Northumberland on the sixth of October last; and being soon after informed that almost all his neighbours and acquaintance had there met in arms, he took a hasty and inconsiderate resolution of joining them, nor was he in any sort prepared for such an undertaking, having only some of his own family with him, no arms, but his common fowling pieces, and wearing swords.'¹⁶ Notwithstanding this evidence, it was well known that lord Widdrington and his two brothers, Charles and Peregrine, with about twenty men, joined the Jacobite army at Warkworth on Saturday, October 8th. Lord Widdrington was sentenced to death, but

¹⁴ Doran's *London in Jacobite Times*, vol. i. p. 135.

¹⁵ Hodgson's *Hist. of Northumberland*, part ii. vol. ii. p. 256 (note 41 Widdrington Miscellanea).

¹⁶ Lady Cowper's diary, p. 186 (Appendix).

afterwards pardoned. William Clavering of Callaly, the chief of his house, was over seventy years of age when he joined in the rising. It has been a puzzle to many how the Widdringtons, the Selbys, and the Claverings, managed to save their lives and their estates after the active part they took in the affair of 1715 ; but a perusal of lady Cowper's diary makes this matter somewhat clear. Most interesting details relating to the trials in London of the Jacobite prisoners of 1715 are given in the 'Diary of Mary Countess Cowper, Lady of the Bedchamber to the Princess of Wales, 1714 to 1720.'¹⁷ Her maiden name was Mary Clavering, and she was the Daughter of John Clavering, Esq., of Chopwell, in the county of Durham, who was himself of a younger Branch of the Ancient Northumbrian Family of Clavering of Callalee and Axwell, a Race entertaining the Jacobite predilections which were then so prevalent in the north of England and Scotland.' She was married in 1706 to William lord Cowper, who was then Lord Keeper of the Great Seal, afterwards Lord Chancellor, and at the trial of the Jacobite prisoners he was appointed High Steward of England. Lady Cowper was possessed of considerable personal attractions, and although the object of much admiration at the court of George I. she preserved an unsullied reputation. Lady Mary appears to have sided with the political opinions of her husband in support of the Hanoverian succession, rather than with those of her Jacobite kinsmen. Speaking of the arrival of the prisoners in London, lady Cowper gives the following melancholy picture :—¹⁸ 'This week the prisoners were brought to town from Preston. They came in with their arms tied, and their horses (whose bridles were taken off) led each by a soldier. The mob insulted them terribly. The chief of my father's house (Wm. Clavering of Callalee) was amongst them. He was about seventy years old. A desperate fortune had drove him from home in hopes to have repaired it.' It was no doubt due to the benign influence of lady Cowper, the beautiful Mary Clavering of Chopwell, that so many of our north country squires and their followers were acquitted or quietly allowed to escape from prison, who would eventually return to their Northumbrian homes, sadder and wiser men. It fared very differently indeed with the gentle George Colling-

¹⁷ Lady Cowper's diary, p. vii. (Preface). ¹⁸ Lady Cowper's diary, p. 62.

wood of Eslington, of whom even the renegade Patten thus speaks: 'George Collingwood of Northumberland, a Papist of a valuable estate. He was ordered for London, but he was seiz'd with the gout at Wigan, and from thence he was carried to Liverpool, and there found guilty, and afterwards executed there the 25th of February, 1716. He was a very pious gentleman, and well beloved in his country.' Traditions of George Collingwood were still current amongst the old inhabitants of Whittingham Vale some forty or fifty years ago. It was said that Collingwood, like his friend Derwentwater, was strongly urged by his wife (a daughter of lord Montague) to take part in the rising; and that when on his way to join the Jacobite army, he turned round at Thrunton Crag End, a range of hills south of the village of Whittingham, and fondly gazed over his fair domain with a sorrowful heart and a secret foreboding that he was looking upon it for the last time, and that never again would he sleep under the ancient roof-tree of the Collingwoods of Eslington. Lady Cowper tells us how, before his execution, there were 'sad pleadings.' Poor 'Mrs. Collingwood wrote to a friend in town to try to get her husband's life granted to her. The friend's answer was as follows:—'I think you are mad when you talk of saving your husband's life. Don't you know you will have five hundred pounds a year jointure if he's hanged, and that you won't have a groat if he's saved? Consider, and let me have your answer, for I shall do nothing in it till then.' The answer did not come time enough, and so he was hanged.

Amid the corrupt court of George I. it was only with some difficulty, and after much bribery, that any petition in favour of a Jacobite prisoner found its way to the king. Lord Nairn, one of the Scotch Jacobites, after lying many months in prison, and spending a large sum of money, was at last set at liberty. The following entry from his lordship's diary—which is brief, blunt, but expressive—tells its own tale:—¹⁹ 'Gave to lawyers and bitches during that time, £1,500.' In Patten's list of prisoners a gentlemen, who for a short time resided at Cartington, is described thus:—'John Talbot of Cartington, in Northumberland, a brave young gentleman (his father made himself famous for his courage at the siege of Buda, but was killed). This gentleman made his escape from Chester.' The Talbots

¹⁹ Doran's *London in Jacobite Times*, vol. i. p. 281.

appear to have succeeded the Widdringtons at Cartington. Of this family I have only come across one entry in the Rothbury Parish Register, and that is of a burial :—‘ November 18th, 1679. Edward, fil Mr. John Talbot, Cartington.’ This was the last of the Talbots at Cartington, for in the register of burials (two years after the '15) is found December 25th, 1717. ‘ John, fil Mr. John Fenwick, Cartington.’ In the July of 1716, twenty-four Jacobites were condemned to death, but through the intercession of the duchess of Shrewsbury, twenty-two of them were reprieved. The two unfortunate exceptions were Parson Paul, a Church of England clergyman, and Justice Hall of Otterburn. Doran²⁰ relates the following incident which took place at the execution of these two unfortunate men :—‘ As Justice Hall was standing meekly at Paul’s side, a cowardly Whig ruffian in the crowd threw at the doomed man a stone which reached its aim. The poor gentleman bowed his head in acknowledgment of the civility, turned to the hangman, and died without fuss or protest.’ Patten relates a conversation, which he remarks ‘ has something diverting in it,’ which took place between William Shaftoe of Bavington and John Hall of Otterburn, whilst prisoners in Newgate :—‘ Couzin Jack (said Shaftoe) I am thinking upon what is told us that God will visit the sins of the fathers unto the third and fourth generations. I am of opinion that it is so with us ; for your grandfather and my grandfather got most of their estates as sequestrators ; and now we must lose them again for being rebels.’ The explanation Justice Hall gave of how he got entangled in the Jacobite rising is a little curious, and often enters my mind whilst crossing Plainfield Moor :—²¹ ‘ Two witnesses deposed that they had seen him in the company of the rebels ; but he alleged that, on a tempestuous day, as he was returning home from a magistrates’ meeting on Plainfield, while he was leaning forward to screen himself from the weather, he was suddenly surrounded by rebels, who forced him and his servants away with them, though he was unarmed, and had only seven shillings and sixpence in his pockets.’

To the list of noblemen and gentlemen who were taken prisoners at Preston, Patten adds the names of their servants and followers. Two of these, I think, I have been able to identify as Coquetdale

²⁰ Doran’s *London in Jacobite Times*, vol. i. p. 260.

²¹ Hodgson’s *Hist. of Northumberland*, part ii. vol. i. p. 113.

men, viz., William Ratcliff and James Robson. Other names rather uncommon also occur in the list, such as Rowland and Tasker, which are frequently met with in the Rothbury parish register. William Ratcliff is (I should say) that laird Ratcliff of Thropton, whose death is recorded in the register of December 16th, 1720. Whilst of James Robson we find a note to a song in 'Bell's Rhymes of Northern Bards' (1812), page 250, which says: 'This song is imperfectly compiled from part of a "Satyr upon Women," wrote in Preston prison in 1715 by Mr. James Robson, a freeholder in Thropton, near Rothbury, Northumberland, at that time a musician in the rebel army. He sung the satyr aloud, at an iron-barred window looking into a garden, where a lady and her maid were walking. After the song was finished, the former says: "That young man seems very severe upon our sex; but perhaps he is singing more from oppression than pleasure; go give him that half-crown piece," which the girl gave him through the grating, at a period when he was at the point of starving.' It would appear that this Jacobite bandsman had at length been set at liberty, for on looking through that portion of the Rothbury parish register then specially set apart for Papists and Dissenters, I find there were Robsons (Papists) residing in Thropton 200 years ago. Between 1705 and 1714 there are frequent baptismal entries of the children of James Robson of Thropton. In 1714 these entries cease; but in 1723 we find amongst the burials, 'Mary, wife of James Robson, Thropton,' and then on May 6th, 1757, the burial of our hero himself is recorded thus:—'James Robson of Thropton.' In searching through our parish register for the several items just quoted, I could not help observing what I thought to be one of the symptoms of the unsettled state of society during that period of which I have been speaking, the palpable decrease there is in wedding entries. It is said of our own day that marriages are more numerous in prosperous times than in times of commercial depression. So we find in the Rothbury register there were in 1713, twenty weddings; in 1714, fifteen weddings; in 1716, there were fifteen weddings; while in 1715 there were only seven. Burials and christenings went on as usual; in fact, on the very day that the Jacobites marched from Plainfield to Rothbury there was a christening from Flotterton:—'Oct. 6, 1715, Margt., fil Michael Potts of Flotterton.'

The following extracts from the session records of Northumberland show that both before and after the Jacobite rising of 1715 the government, through the reports of the High Constables to the Quarter Sessions, obtained a complete register of the names and places of abode of all the Roman Catholics in the county:—

(EASTER SESSIONS, 1714.)

A List of the Papist Houses in ye West Division of Koket-dale Ward.

Mr. John Talbot	} in Cartington.	John Vint in hepple.
William Dod		Mr. James Selby in Allenton.
Mr. Thomas Story	} in Sniter.	Mr. Robert King
Edward Givens		John Reed
Peter Robson		Mr. Fenwick Robson in healey.
James Robson	} in Rothbury.	Thomas Hunter
George Robson		George Hunter

(Signed) WILLIAM READHEAD (High Constable).

A List of ye Papistts names of Rothbury parish August ye 16th daye 1715.

Mr. John Talbot	George Robson
William dood	Thomas Hunter
Mr. Thomas Story	George Hunter
Mr. George Story	John Hunter
peeter Robson	Mr. Fenwick Robson
George Robson	William Hunter
Edward Jineings	John Hunter
George Besford	John Denntt
Mr. Francis Huntredge	Hendry Johnstone
James Robson	John Reiveley
Christtefer Davison	

At Hedgeley August ye 19th 1715 this return made by George Chaitter high Constable for ye West Division of Coquetdale Ward.

A List of ye papists names of Allington parish and Halleystone August ye 19th 1715.

Mr. Robert King	Franke Scott
George Rutherford	Alexander Rutherford
John Reed	Thomas Potts
Thomas Rutter	Mr. James Selby
John Grey	John Jameson
John Sprote	Marke Scotte
William Walles	John Robson
Alexander Luke	George Stavert
John Brown	John Gardner
Thomas Davisen	

At Hedgeley August 19 1715 this return was made by George Chaitter high Constable for ye West Division of Coquetdale Ward.

Papists in ye North Division in Coquetdale Ward August 19 1715.

Calleley ...	John Clavering esq. — Moodey. — Moodey.	John Blagdon. John Perey. Christopher Perey.
Yeatlington ...	Luke Blakelock. W ^m . Avery. James Gardiner.	W ^m . Robson. John How.
High Houses ...	Mr. John Hunter.	Whittingham... Mountain of ye Clay ...
Eslington ...	Geo. Collingwood esq. Cuthbert Blakelock. John Wilson. John Ferry. W ^m . Cowley. Mich. Brown.	Mr. George Morrison. John Heslipp. Alexander Himer. Fawdon ... Tho ^s . Snawdon. W ^m . Snawdon. — Snawdon, a Brother of ye same.

At Hedgeley, August ye 19th, 1715, this return made by fergus Storey, high Constable of the North Division of Coquetdale Ward.

In 1718, this system of espionage, if we might so call it, still continued in force, for an entry in the Session Records reads thus:—

I John Hopper High Constable for the North Division of Coquetdale ward do hereby certifie that I have made Diligent Search and Enquiry for such persons as were concerned in the late Rebellion but have found none only the following persons hereunder named who formerly were residing within my Division and about the time of the Rebellion withdrew themselves and went abroad and are suspected to have been concerned therein but are not now to be mett with in my Division. As witness my hand the 14th day of January 1718.

(Signed) JOHN. HOPPER.

John Hunter of Calliley high-houses.	George How of the same.
Tho ^s . Selbye of Calliley.	Henry Brown of Eslington Miln-house.
Jno. How of Whittingham.	George Downey of Thrunton.

In a letter from Thos. Burrell, esq., of Broom Park, to Thomas Ord, esq., Clerk of the Peace, dated Jan. 12, 1718-19, he says:—

The bearer John Hopper High Constable for this Division haith to my knowledge made deligent search for ye Rebels in these partes but they are so wise as to get out of ye way and tho' he hath often made it his business to finde them yet to no purpose as I believe he will be reddy to make oath thereof.

About the same time, Robert Readhead, High Constable for the West Division of Coquetdale Ward, gives the following report:—

John Vint of heple, Edward Greings of Snitter, John Talbot of Cartington, John Henderson of Cartington, Thomas Davidson of Bittlestone, Roleand Robson of healey weare psons formerly Resideing within my Division and about the time of the Rebellion withdrew themselves and went abrode and are suspected to have beene concerned in the Late Rebellion but are not now to be found in my division. George Story of Cartington I have taken and caryed him before Thomas Collingwood Esq. As wites my hand this 14th Jan. yr 1718.

(Signed) ROBERT READHEAD.