

# Jacobite Rebellions 1715 & 1745

The **Jacobites** were loyal supporters of the Catholic Stuarts who had been barred from the throne of England by the Declaration of Rights 1689 and the Act of Settlement in 1701. The name comes from Jacobus, the Latin for James. There were four main foreign back invasions to restore the Catholic Stuarts, 1708, 1715, 1719, and 1745, with the two best known being that of 1715 and 1745.

## Jacobite Rebellion 1715.

James Edward Stuart, the eldest son of James II, (Old Pretender) had been expelled from France by the Treaty of Utrecht (1713). In September 1715, at Braemar, he was proclaimed King by John Erskine, Earl of Mar. (called "Bobbing John" because he changed sides six times!) Unfortunately, Erskine's army of 15,000 was defeated at **Sheriffmuir**, by the Duke of Argyll and his smaller army of just 4,000 men, and James Edward Stuart who had just arrived in Scotland, had to return to France. The 1719 uprising back by Spain, failed owing to bad weather, and resulted in depleted Jacobite forces being defeated at Galashiels.

## Jacobite Rebellion 1745

By 1745, James Edward Stuart was old and the chance of reclaiming the English throne passed to his son Charles Edward Stuart - "**Bonnie Prince Charlie**" (Young Pretender). In 1744, Louis XV of France who was at war with England and was looking for an opportunity to stretch England's military resources persuaded Charles Stuart to try his luck. In July, 1745, Charles Stuart landed in the Hebrides and then marched to Edinburgh in September. Here, he proclaimed his father King. George II's Army was defeated at Prestonpans, and with this Charles Stuart crossed over into England and marched to Derby. Here, he and his army commanders could not agree what to do and so in December he decided to march back up to Scotland. On 16th April, 1746, he was defeated at the **Battle of Culloden**, and spent the next five months as a fugitive evading patrols of English soldiers looking for him. With the help of a woman called Flora MacDonald, he escaped back to France. The failure of the '45 Rebellion' realistically ended the hopes of the Catholic Stuart line. In 1750, he made a secret visit to London and changed religion to Anglicanism, no doubt trying to get around the Act of Settlement 1701. Another attempted rising in 1752/3 failed to get off the ground. With the death of Charles Edward Stuart in 1788, all hopes of Stuart revival vanished, although Charles' brother Henry did not give up.

# The Battle of Culloden 16th April, 1746

## Background

After his arrival in Scotland, Charles Edward Stuart had defeated English government troops at Prestonpans. He then marched south into England reaching Derby. He had not attracted the support that he has expected and news reached him that regiments of the regular British army were being rushed home from in Europe to fight him. After some discussion, Charles Edward Stuart, reluctantly decided to return to Scotland, where his army commanders felt they stood a better chance in battle. Charles thought that his army commanders were betraying him by leaving England.

The two armies met at Drumossie Moor, Culloden. The Jacobite army was in a poor state. It was under strength as 2,000 expected men had not arrived as yet; it was unpaid, and worse still it was unfed and starving. A single biscuit was issued to each man the day before the battle. When the time came to fight, almost a  $\frac{1}{2}$  of the Jacobite army was missing and to be found scavenging the countryside looking for food. The army was also exhausted, as the night before, Charles Stuart had led his army on a night march, intending to catch the government troops by surprise. It was reported that some were so tired that they slept throughout the battle, and were butchered as they slept after the battle had finished!

The disorganised, Jacobite army consisted of around 5,000 highlanders. Against them were 9,000 well-armed well trained, government troops, including three regiments of cavalry, a company of artillery, three battalions of Lowland Scots, a battalion of Highland Scots and a battalion raised from the Campbell Clan. In fact, more Scots were fighting against Charles Edward than for him. The Duke of Cumberland (2nd son of George II) commanded the government forces.

At 11.30am the battle began. The armies were drawn up in typical 18th Century pattern, in lines facing each other. It was a dark, misty, rainy day and the wind was blowing into the faces of the Jacobite army.

Cumberland's artillery opened fire, accompanied by his infantry advancing and firing. Cumberland's lines outflanked the Jacobites on both right and left. Jacobites fell as a "hail storm" of musket balls hit them.

Charles Stuart had been forced to retreat by the cannon fire and from his new, but safer position, he could not see what was happening. The Jacobites were given the order to charge. The centre and right of the Jacobites flung themselves forward. However, the MacDonald's on the left refused to move, annoyed because they had not be given the honour of fighting on the right flank. The charging Jacobites charged very bravely, but the sense of direction and organisation was poor, they tripped over each other and although they managed to break through the first line of government troops, they were mown down by the steady fire of the Royal Scots Fusiliers in the second line of government troops. Seeing this the Jacobite left flank, fled without firing their muskets Charles Edward, also fled the field, losing his hat and wig!

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Behind him the Jacobite highlanders fought on, but the Cumberland's cavalry charged them in a pincer movement. The hour long battle was over. Jacobite wounded were bayoneted to death, fugitives were hunted down and killed. Local houses were burnt and any body suspected of aiding Jacobites was imprisoned or killed. All leaders in the rising were executed. Cumberland was given the name "Butcher Cumberland"

Charles Edward, wandered through the Highlands and Scottish Isles with a £30,000 price tag on his head, and eventually escaped to France with the help of Flora MacDonald

The defeat ended any chance of a restoration of the Stuart kings. The Highland clans were disarmed, and banned from wearing tartans and kilts, or even playing the bagpipes that were thought to be an instrument of war.