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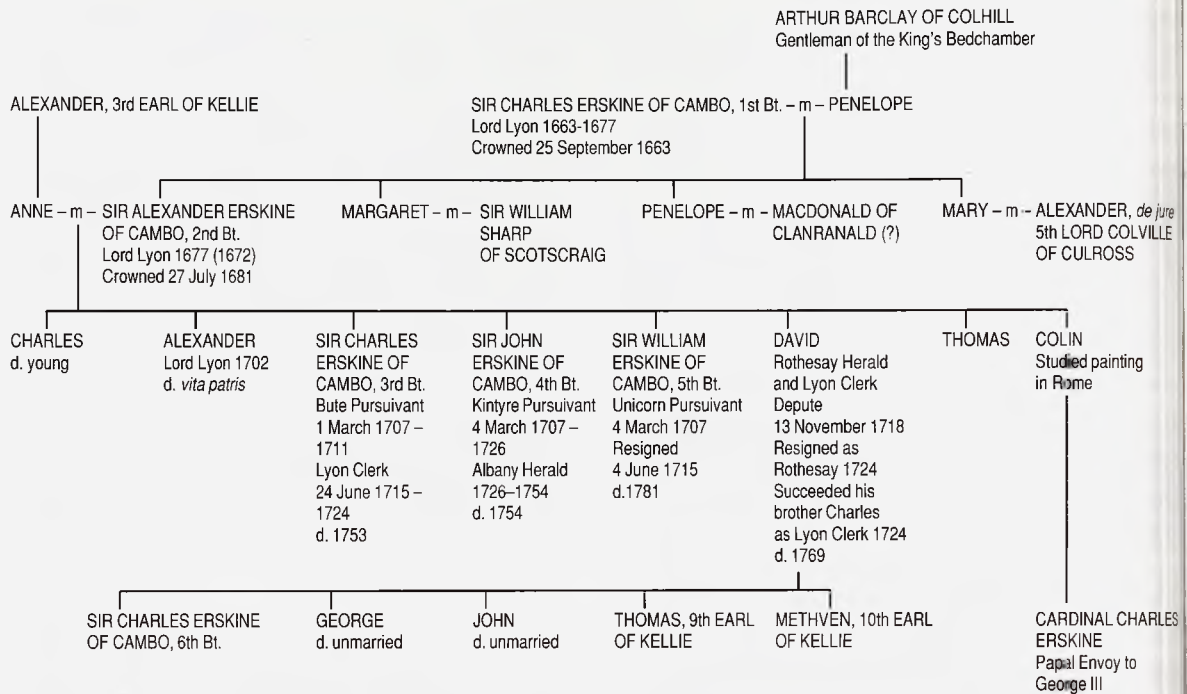
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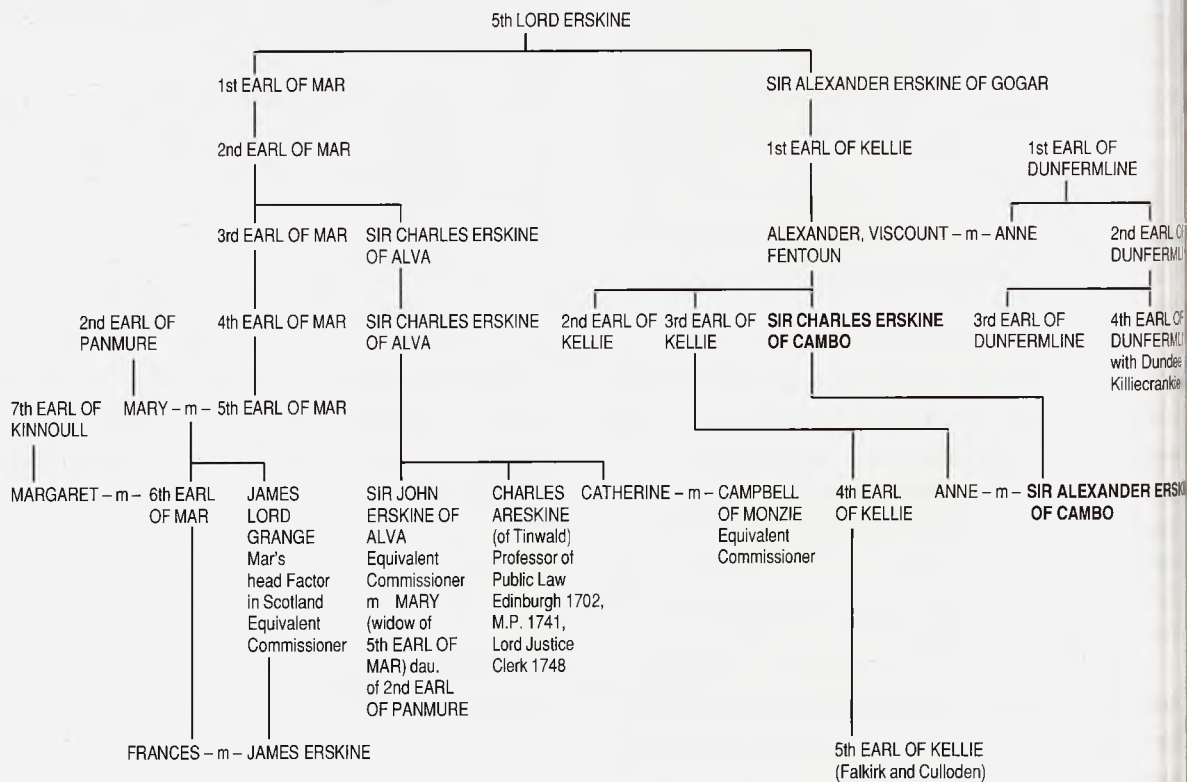
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**Table I. HERALDIC OFFICES HELD BY FIVE SONS OF LORD LYON SIR ALEXANDER ERSKINE OF CAMBO, 2nd BARONET**



**Table II. ERSKINE OF CAMBO - MAR CONNECTION**



# CEREMONIAL IN EDINBURGH: THE HERALDS AND THE JACOBITE RISINGS

SIR MALCOLM INNES OF EDINGIGHT

TWO GENEALOGICAL TABLES appear with this article. Table I demonstrates the connection of the family of Erskine of Cambo with the Lyon Office from the time when Sir Charles Erskine of Cambo, 1st Baronet, received his commission as Lord Lyon in 1663 until the death of his grandson David Erskine, Lyon Clerk, in 1769. There was thus an unbroken connection between the Erskines and the Lyon Office for 106 years. Sir Charles had a gift of the office for two lives, that is for himself and on his death for his son. He died in 1677 and was succeeded by his son Sir Alexander, 2nd Baronet, who was only 14 years of age at the time. On attaining the regal age of 18 he was invested with the insignia of Lyon at Holyrood by the Duke of Albany (later James VII) during which ceremony the Crown of Scotland was placed momentarily upon his head. Sir Alexander received a new commission of the office in 1702 for himself and for his son. Sir Alexander's son Alexander did not, however, succeed to the office as he died during the lifetime of his father. On seeing how many of the sons of Sir Alexander were appointed to Pursuivancies and other heraldic offices, it may be thought that it was a classic example of nepotism operating in the early eighteenth century. While that may, to some extent, have been the case it must be recalled that from correspondence it is evident that Sir Alexander was on many occasions in financial difficulties; I think these various appointments reflect an endeavour to place the sons in some form of lucrative employment as quickly as possible.

Table II shows how the Erskines of Cambo were descended from the 5th Lord Erskine and how the 6th Earl of Mar, the leader of the 1715 Rising, was also descended from the 5th Lord Erskine. It also shows the

various relations by cousinship and by marriage which indicate how easy it was for the Erskines of Cambo to be drawn into Jacobite intrigue on account of these relationships and connections. It is most important when studying Scottish history to be aware of family connections and relationships. If these are not known or understood the reasons why the holders of certain offices did what they did may not be fully understood.

Although the Jacobite movement began following the Revolution Settlement of 1689, one must look to events before that date to understand why certain people or certain families almost inevitably became involved or associated with the movement in the years after 1689. In a sense Jacobites from 1689 onwards thought that the '1660', that is the Restoration of the Stewarts to the throne and the crown, might happen all over again – that history would repeat itself.

Certain events surrounding the Restoration were very carefully planned and managed. The Restoration regime was to use Montrose as a vehicle for the values it wished to disseminate and impress upon the country. Following the execution of Montrose in May 1650 the limbs were gruesomely displayed in Glasgow, Perth and Aberdeen, the head was set upon a spike on the west face of Edinburgh's Tolbooth, and the trunk was subjected to an ignominious burial on the Burghmuir. In January 1661 Parliament resolved that there should be an honourable reparation for that horrid and monstrous barbarity fixed on the great Marquess of Montrose, His Majesty's Captain General: 'That his body, head and other his divided and scattered members may be gathered together and interred with all honour imaginable.' The arrangements for gathering the body; the lying in state in the Abbey of the Holy Rood; and the public funeral in May 1661



were supervised and directed by Lord Lyon Sir Alexander Durham of Largo, and we learn from accounts of the ceremonies that the body was carried in a coffin under a red velvet canopy from the Burghmuir to the town of Edinburgh: 'The nobles, barones and gentrie on hors, the Toun of Edinburgh and many thowsandis besyde, convoyit these corpis all along, the cullouris fleying, drums towking, trumpettis sounding, musketis craking, and cannone from the Castell roring: all of thame walking on till thai come to the Tolbuith of Edinburgh, fra the quhilk his heid wes very honourable and with all dew respectis takin doun and put within the coffin under the cannope with great acclamation of joy.' We learn, however, from the account that this task was not only a melancholy one but one that appeared to give rise to a thirst, as we find: 'Item to the servants in Tollbouth ther drink money ... £13.6.8' and 'Item to ye 8 wreights for ther drink money y<sup>e</sup> maid the skaffold plett and staiges ... £12.0.0.' The remains of Montrose were given a spectacular public funeral on 5 May 1661 'at His Majestie's expence'. As to some extent Charles II was responsible for Montrose having being sent to his death, it would be naive to think that remorse rather than policy engendered such royal generosity.<sup>1</sup>

From these proceedings it may be seen that Lyon and the Scottish Heralds were intimately involved in the propaganda that surrounded the Restoration and the building up of the royalist interest at that time. There is little doubt that Charles Erskine (appointed Lyon in 1663) either took part in these ceremonies or was very familiar with what took place, and it would seem reasonable to conclude that his son, the young Alexander Erskine, before his father's death in 1677, absorbed something of the family's deep commitment to the royal house. It is not perhaps surprising that in later years Sir Alexander found it difficult to abandon the house of Stewart.

With regard to the activities of the various Officers of Arms at the time of the meeting of the Estates in

March 1689, they seem to have carried out their duties in a perfectly correct manner and it would not appear that any Jacobite sentiment was allowed to interfere with the performance of such duties. The Estates assembled at Edinburgh on 14 March and the Bishop of Edinburgh said prayers, in which he prayed God to have compassion on King James and restore him. The first thing that the Estates took into consideration was the security and safety of the meeting, for the town of Edinburgh was at the mercy of the cannon of the Castle which was in the hands of the Duke of Gordon, a Roman Catholic. There were several letters to and fro between the Estates and the Duke of Gordon, and it would appear that one of his later answers was so full of new and extravagant demands that the meeting of the Estates was satisfied that he was trifling with the Estates to gain time; the Heralds, therefore, were ordered, with the usual solemnities, to summon the Duke of Gordon to 'render it, under the Pain of Treason; and to proclaim him a Traytor in case he refuse to do it; and to forbid all People to have any Correspondence with him', which accordingly was done and orders were given to block up the Castle. The latter does not seem to have had much effect as on 9 April it was laconically reported that 'The Duke of Gourdon holds out, and has shot much this week with his Cannon and Small-shot, to hinder the casting up of Trenches; which are now so high and solid, that the Cannon is not able to prejudice them.'<sup>3</sup>

It would appear that some time later in March 1689 Heralds were sent to command the Viscount of Dundee to lay down arms, and in a letter to the Convention dated at Dudhope 27 March 1689 Dundee complains: 'May it please your Grace, The coming of an Herauld and Trumpeter to summon a Man to lay down Arms, that is living in peace at home, seems to me a very extraordinary thing, and I suppose will come so to all that hear of it.'<sup>4</sup>

Matters were to turn much more serious for Dundee, and on 18 July a proclamation was published

against Lord Dundee and other rebels 'now in Arms'. As well as being made in Edinburgh the proclamation was made by the Heralds at the 'Merkat Cross of Forfar, Head-Burgh of the Sherifdom, wherein the Viscount dwells' as a rebel against the Estates of Scotland.<sup>5</sup> When Dundee raised the Standard of King James on Dundee Law in 1689 he started the first Jacobite rising. That rising quickly failed following the killing of Dundee at the Battle of Killiecrankie.

Lyon and the Heralds had regular duties to perform in relation to Parliament, and the Heralds together with the Macers were in regular attendance on Parliament. Proclamations were continually being issued and these required to be proclaimed both in and outside Edinburgh, and it would appear that throughout 1689 the Heralds carried out their duties in the usual manner.

In 1697, in terms of the Treaty of Ryswick, Louis XIV had been compelled, much against his will, to acknowledge William's right to the throne of England and that of Anne as his successor. James VII, however, had for nearly 13 years lived at Saint Germain-en-Laye, a small town 12 miles to the west of Paris and within easy reach of Versailles. On 16 September 1701 he collapsed at Mass in the castle chapel; immediately on learning of James' death Louis XIV had James' son proclaimed King of England, Scotland and Ireland (but not, it is interesting to note, of France) by French heralds at the gates of Saint Germain-en-Laye.<sup>6</sup> The heralds, perhaps to make sure that the whole of Europe would understand the import of the message, proclaimed it in Latin, French and English. It would seem that an attempt was made by some Jacobite mock-pursuivants in London to proclaim the Stewart Prince and when they did so an incensed populace pelted them with rotten eggs. It appears that no such Jacobite proclamation was attempted in Edinburgh or any other part of Scotland.

Queen Anne died on 1 August 1714. The coronation of George I took place on 20 October 1714 and it is interesting to note that on 19 October, the day

before the ceremony, the right of Sir Alexander Erskine of Cambo, Lord Lyon King of Arms, to be present was admitted by the Committee for His Majesty's Coronation.

Sir Alexander having travelled to London to take part in the coronation of George I in 1714, it might appear strange that eleven months later he was considered to have Jacobite sympathies and to be a risk to the security of the Kingdom. Various reasons for the Jacobite sympathies of the Erskines of Cambo have been mentioned and there is one further significant consideration that should be examined – that he was a Fife laird. The county of Fife was unlike almost any other part of Scotland. In the majority of the other parts, the burghs and gentry tended to be in agreement and to work together. In Fife, however, the burghs and sea ports were radical and were suspected of being capable of making common cause with any forces that might land in Fife. The gentry, however, consisted to a large extent of disgruntled lairds with Episcopal and Jacobite leanings and there were to be found in their ranks men typical of the entrenched conservative nobility of Restoration Scotland.<sup>7</sup>

Mar embarked at Gravesend on a collier bound for Newcastle in August 1715. From there he hoped to sail to St Andrews but was forced by bad weather to land at Elie on the south shore of Fife. Mar went to the house of Thomas, 7th Earl of Kinnoull, the father of his first wife (see Table II), and Kinnoull's third son (Mar's brother-in-law), Colonel John Hay of Cromlix, joined Mar's rebellion. There is reason to believe that amongst the Fife lairds who consulted with Mar on the very eve of his rising was Sir Alexander Erskine of Cambo. Alexander Erskine and Sir Patrick Murray of Ochertyre were the only two of the many summoned by proclamation to surrender themselves to the Hanoverian government. Others, including the Earl of Kinnoull, had to be seized before being placed under preventive arrest. Erskine was summoned on 7 September 1715 and confined in Edinburgh Castle.



It appears, however, that he was soon afterwards released; his defection seems to have been leniently regarded as he continued to hold the office of Lyon until his death in 1727, although he would almost certainly have been regarded with some suspicion as one of known Jacobite sympathies.

It might be thought that the arresting and placing in custody of such a great officer as Lyon would not only have been the end of the man's career, but would have placed the office of Lyon under a very considerable cloud. This was not necessarily the case, as this was happening in relation to several other offices both in Scotland and in England. If the position of Lyon appeared parlous the position of the head of the heraldic executive in England appeared equally so. Garter St George died on 12 August 1715 at the age of 90 and thereafter the struggle for the office of Garter King of Arms was renewed; on 30 September 1715, 23 days after Lyon had been placed in Edinburgh Castle, Garter Anstis was taken into custody in London as a suspected Jacobite. As with Erskine he was in due course released. Alexander Erskine appears to have kept out of public affairs after his release in 1715 and acted discreetly as Lyon until his death in 1727, when he was succeeded by Alexander Brodie of Brodie.

Brodie was a stern supporter of the House of Hanover and no approval would have been given by him to Scottish Heralds performing any duties at the command of Prince Charles in 1745. However, several Officers of Arms did perform duties at Prince Charles' command and did participate on that last occasion when a member of the Royal House of Stewart held court in Scotland's capital. On 17 September 1745 at the Mercat Cross of Edinburgh, with all the proper pomp and ceremony, Roderick Chalmers of Portlethan, Ross Herald, proclaimed James VIII as King of Great Britain, and Prince Charles Edward Stewart as Duke of Rothesay and Prince Regent. Beside him on the Mercat Cross stood Islay and Snowdown Heralds with Dingwall and Kintyre



Engraved portrait of Roderick Chalmers by his son George Chalmers (who notes at the foot that he undertakes 'Engraving Coats of Arms &c'. upon all kinds of Metall at his Father's house, back of the City Guard'). (*Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland.*)

Pursuivants. Beside the Cross, on horseback, was the beautiful Mrs Murray of Broughton, a drawn sword in her hand, distributing white cockades to those who rallied to the cause. Amidst such scenes, 'What indeed, 'wadna fecht for Charlie'? Roderick Chalmers of Portlethan was Ross Herald and Herald Painter. He it was who prepared the original drawings for the series of plates of the Riding of the Parliament of 23 April 1685, engraved for Thomas Summers, although Chalmers belonged to a generation subsequent to the actual Riding and we do not know from what series of sketches he elaborated his folios. He was the eldest son of Captain Charles Chalmers of Portlethan, who served in the Scots Guards, was a Writer to the Signet and was also an ardent Jacobite; he was killed at the

battle of Sheriffmuir in 1715. Chalmers was appointed Ross Herald by Alexander Erskine of Cambo on 4 February 1724. A portrait of Ross Herald dressed in his tabard showing the Royal Arms quartered after the Scottish form was engraved by his son George Chalmers who was a notable Scottish portrait painter of the eighteenth century.

The other Officers who took part in the proclamation were: Alexander Martin, Islay Herald, Secretary to Sir Charles Erskine of Cambo; James Fordyce, Snowdon Herald, appointed by Lord Lyon Brodie of Brodie on 12 January 1728, a Writer to the Signet and the only Herald of Brodie's appointment to show his allegiance to the House of Stewart; William Gray, Dingwall Pursuivant; and James Clarkson, Fintyre Pursuivant.

Following this proclamation the vengeance of the government was swift. Eight days later, on 25 September, by order of the Barons of Exchequer, the names of Roderick Chalmers, Alexander Martin, James Fordyce, Heralds, and William Gray and James Clarkson, Pursuivants, were taken out of the list of Officers of Arms, and were not to be paid and not to be included in any future lists. A Herald's person was sacred, so it may be that in view of that convention the Officers of Arms with Jacobite sympathies did not suffer the penalties of treason, and most of them in due course secured reinstatement. For Roderick Chalmers, Ross Herald, who actually made the proclamation and who was the representative of a staunch Jacobite family, there was no mitigation. He was never received into government favour again and would probably not have stooped to make the humiliating admissions that were made the price of restitution. His companions were not so scrupulous and four years later, through the good offices of Lord Lyon Brodie (who seems to have taken a lenient view of their misdemeanour) representations were made to the government which resulted in their reinstatement and payment of salaries.

The Officers of Arms took one other part in the events of 1745-46 and this was the opportunity for a display of loyalty by those Officers of Arms whose sympathies lay with the government; it was an occasion which, it has been observed, 'displayed, in no brilliant characters, the magnanimity nor modesty of the victor'.<sup>8</sup> Fourteen of Prince Charles Edward's standards were brought to Edinburgh and by the Duke of Cumberland's command these banners were burnt with every mark of contempt. 'The heralds, trumpeters, &c. escorted the common executioner, who carried the Pretender's colours, and thirteen chimney-sweepers who carried the rest of the colours, from the castle to the cross. There they were burnt, one by one, an herald always proclaiming the names of the commanders to whom the respective colours belonged.'<sup>9</sup> Perhaps it is just as well that the name of the Herald who presided over these shameful proceedings is lost in well deserved oblivion.

On account of his political interests Lord Lyon Brodie was not able to attend to the affairs of the Lyon Office and did not behave in a manner that might be expected of an independent judge. This is dramatically emphasised in a letter he wrote on 27 December 1746 to the Duke of Newcastle from Brodie House:

I beg leave to acquaint Your Grace that Sir William Gordon of Park who made his Escape cross the Murray Firth from Murray to Sutherland some months ago Is still Lurking by the name of Mr. Grant in the County of Sutherland or Caithness, and That when he went Into Sutherland He had the Earl of Sutherlands Permission so to do and assurance of Protection.

All This I know to be True, But If it is known even by my Friend the Earl of Sutherland That I am Your Grace's Informer. It will prove of fatal Consequences to me.<sup>10</sup>

Here we have the holder of a judicial office acting in the manner of a mean informer and no doubt hoping to benefit politically from such behaviour. It is not edifying but it must not be thought that this was in any way unusual. It was typical of the behaviour of most in power at that time and anyone writing such a letter



could never be suspected of having Jacobite sympathies.

From what has been discussed it will be seen how, with the absence of the legitimate sovereign from Scotland, the Officers of Arms were placed in a considerable dilemma with the arrival of the Pretender. It has been shown that family relationships and connections influenced the behaviour of various Officers of Arms. In the light of the difficulties experienced by those holders of the offices it can be

appreciated how important it was that Scottish ceremony was so effectively and enthusiastically revived following the royal visit of George IV in 1822, a visit so ably masterminded by Sir Walter Scott. In the light of the difficulties of the eighteenth century we can perhaps appreciate how important are the almost annual royal visits by the Queen to Scotland each summer nowadays, when appropriate, dignified and authentic ceremony may be effected, giving pleasure and satisfaction to Scots in all parts of Scotland.

## NOTES AND REFERENCES

This article is based on an address given by Sir Malcolm Innes of Edingight, Lord Lyon King of Arms, at the Annual General Meeting of the Old Edinburgh Club, 20 March 1985.

- 1 J.C. Robbie, 'The Embalming of Montrose', *Book of the Old Edinburgh Club*, 1 (1908), pp. 36-37.
- 2 E.W.M. Balfour Melville, *An Account of the Proceedings of the Estates in Scotland, 1689-90*, Scottish History Society, Vol. 1 (Edinburgh 1954), p. 4.
- 3 *Ibid.*, pp. 32-33.
- 4 *Ibid.*, p. 33.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 29.

6 Bruce Lenman, *The Jacobite Risings in Britain, 1689-1746* (London 1980), pp. 77-78.

7 *Ibid.*, p. 127.

8 Hugo Amot, *The History of Edinburgh* (Edinburgh 1779), p. 223.

9 *Ibid.*, pp. 223-224n.

10 Duncan Warrand, *More Culloden Papers*, 5 vols (Inverness 1930), V, p. 142.