THE GLORIOUS REVOLUTION

At the end of the last article we ended where the Duke of Monmouth's rebellion against his Uncle King James II had been defeated, the Duke of Monmouth had been beheaded and a large number of his followers in the West Country had been executed or transported to the islands of the Caribbean. At first glance it would seem that any hint of rebellion would be both foolish and extremely dangerous, however, within five years King James had been deposed and he went off to exile in Holland. This is called the Glorious Revolution. However, the title is open to question. I used to teach this topic and I used to pose the question to whom was this Revolution Glorious and by implication to whom is was not glorious? This I felt would get across to young people that that in any historical development there are usually winners and losers.

There is a wider question of what is meant by Revolution and why Revolutions occur. One of the books that we were recommended when studying History during my Bachelor's degree was the book "On Revolution"by Hannah Arendt. She was a brilliant historian and philosopher. She was, however, Jewish and left Nazi Germany when if became apparent that life for Jews could only get worse. Her book "On Revolution" looked at two Revolutions, namely the French Revolution and the rebellion of the British Colonies of North American that led to the American War of Independence. It is a statement of the obvious that people have, at the top end of society, a great deal more money, power and influence and are, therefore, more able to effect societal change and it will become obvious in the course of this article that these events were driven by such people.

The determining factors in Stuart England as in Tudor England were religious, political and economic. The struggle between Catholics and Protestants was far from over. Henry VIII had been a Catholic and when he died he had received the last rites of the Catholic Church. Edward VI who succeeded him was Protestant. The ruling elite when Edward VI died at the very young age of 16 tried to replace him with a Protestant ruler the so-called Nine Day Queen, Lady Jane Grey. The City of London, however, gave way to Mary I who was a devout Catholic. Lady Jane Grey was subsequently executed. Mary I is known to posterity as "Bloody Mary" it is worth pointing out, however, that most of the executions related to people who could not comply with her religious policies. When Elizabeth I succeeded the throne she tried to have a settlement and compromise that she believed would suit both her Catholic and Protestant subjects.

When Elizabeth died she had no heirs and the throne passed to the Stuarts. James I was a Protestant as was his son Charles I. Charles was executed at the end of the Civil War. This ushered in the Commonwealth or Protectorate that saw Oliver Cromwell rule England. He was a Puritan and that clearly strongly Protestant. When he died his son Richard briefly took over. The throne was then offered to Charles II who returned from exile in France. He was Protestant (although he was to die a Catholic) but when he died he had no legitimate heirs so the throne passed to his younger brother James II. Both Charles and James had spent much of their early lives in France where their Mother Henrietta Mara was in exile. She was a Catholic and France was predominantly a Catholic country.

James continuation as King of England was very much dependent, it would seem, if he continued to support the Church of England. . James, however, wanted to show toleration to both Catholics and Nonconformists (this means members of Protestant Denominations who were not Church of England) James took further actions that were to prove controversial. During 1686-1687 Tory Ministers were replaced by Catholics. Parliament was adjourned and then dismissed. This would have seemed very high handed to many and was a reminder of the actions of Charles I that, of course, led to the English Civil war. . Elite social groups have much to loose from these types of changes. James made other changes; towns with Charters were allowed to appoint Catholics as Town Councillors. Catholics were now allowed to be Army Officers thus ignoring the Tests Acts. The Vice Chancellor of Cambridge was removed from his position because he refused to grant a degree to a Catholic priest. Magdalene College in Oxford was forced to accept a Catholic President. These actions were very alarming for many people who did not a want a return to the conflicts of the past.

There was no doubt that James wanted to move his subjects back in a Catholic direction. On 27th.April 1688 he reissued his Declaration of Indulgence. On 4th. May he ordered that the Clergy of the Church of England would have to read the Declaration on two successive Sundays. Bishops were ordered to distribute the Declaration throughout their Dioceses. These actions did not, however, do James' position any good. Church of England clergy were very agitated by all these changes. Sancroft, the Archbishop of Canterbury, in the company of six bishops drafted a petition to the King explaining why the Clergy had decided to disobey his orders. They formulated their arguments on legal and political issues rather than religious ones.

James was very annoyed by all of this. The Bishops were ordered to appear in the Court of the King's Bench and in the meantime they were sent to the Tower. When they were acquitted on 29th. June 1688 there was widespread rejoicing in London.

On June 10th. 1688 Queen Mary gave birth to a boy. This happened before that due date and there was widespread doubt about the baby and rumours spread very rapidly. It was suggested that it had been smuggled into St. James' Palace in a warming pan! James was very angry that these stories were being spread and declared them to be false, and indeed modern historians specialising in this period of History do not take these allegations seriously. However, the birth of a child meant that James' religious policies would continue. A Roman Catholic Stuart Dynasty would seem to have been securely established at this time.

The birth of the baby did not, however, make James reign more secure in the way that he hoped it would. The losing of the case against Sancroft and the Bishops was the first time that a monarch in England had lost such an important case. James took all of this very seriously, like has Grandfather James I believed very strongly in the Divine Right of Kings. Londoners lit bonfires to celebrate the victory of the Bishops.

Events now moved very quickly; leading Tories and Whigs met together and issued an invitation to William of Orange. He was James' son-in-law, he was married to James' daughter Mary. The Tories and Whigs wanted him to come to England to restore what they termed "England's true liberties". There were considerable difficulties for William but on 1st. November 1688 he

arrived from Holland with an army of 15000 English and Dutch troops. He landed in England on November 5th. 1688. He had initially wanted to land on November 4th. his Birthday but his advisers suggested November 5th the dates of the failed Gunpowder Plot. Later Whig writers much of the symbolism of this date.

Royal troops were on the verge of mutiny and when John Churchill James' best general decided to support William James knew that his cause was now hopeless. James initially fled towards the coast but he was captured by some fisherman at Faversham in Kent. James was then returned to London and he was given orders to leave his court and he had to accept Dutch guards!

James II was, it seems, afraid that he might suffer the same fate as his Father Charles I who had been executed in 1648.He commented that "if I do not (comply with the instructions he had been given) I shall certainly be sent to the Tower and no King ever went out of that place but to his grave". James escaped again and he arrived in France just before Christmas 1688. On his arrival in France he was greeted by the French King Louis. He was given the use of the Palace of St. Gemain-en-Laye, near Paris. He was given a good pension too.

On 13th. February 1689 the Kingdom of England was offered jointly to William and Mary. The Bill of Rights was altered so that any future Monarch could not be a member of the Roman Catholic Church. James having fled to France was still head of two countries, namely Scotland and Ireland. Scotland soon fell into the hand of William. The power in Ireland was Tryrconnel who now invited James to join him in Ireland and to use it as a base to regain control of England and Scotland. There was a popular song in Ireland at this time, entitled Lilliburlero, it was sung by the enemies of James II in 1688-89, the song had originally been composed to make fun of the Earl of Tyrconnel James' representative in Ireland. I would suggest many people of my generation know the tune to this but I would suggest many of the younger generation do not.

On 30th. June 1690 James and William's armies met at the River Boyne just north of Dublin. James was defeated eventually returning to France on 3rd. July 1690. This famous victory is still commemorated by Protestants in Northern Ireland in the so-called marching season.

Moving forward, James suffered a further blow to any hopes that he might have had in relation to getting his Kingdoms back. In 1697 the Treaty of Ryswick was signed where King Louis had to recognise that William was now King of England and he agreed, therefore, to take no further action to help James' restoration to the throne.

James died on 3rd. September 1701. He had asked to be buried in Westminster Abbey but that was clearly not possible. His funeral would follow the customs of what was done to French Monarchs. His body was embalmed; his heart, brain and other organs were removed for separate burial. His corpse was placed in the English Benedictine College in Paris. It was kept here in a bier ready, if the chance occurred, to be returned to Westminster Abbey whenever the Stuart Dynasty was restored. . His heart was sent to the Visitandine Convent in Paris where it lay alongside the heart of his Mother. The rest of him was buried in the Church of St. Germain-en-Laye. All these buildings, however, were subsequently destroyed in the French Revolution.

His brain was placed in the Chapel of the Scots College in Paris in the Rue du Cardinal Lemoine; here, still in existence, is a marble monument to James II, the last Roman Catholic King of England.

Yet this would not be the end of the matter. A movement had grown up in Britain and Ireland with the intent of restoring the Catholic King James VII of Scotland and King James II of England and Ireland. This movement took it name from the Latin name for James, Jacobus. There had been Jacobite plots during the 1690's when James had been in exile in France.

In the wider context they wanted the return of the Stuart line. There was support in parts of the Scottish Highlands and the North East of Scotland and parts of Northern Ireland. Support also existed in Northumberland and Lancashire There was also support in Wales and the South West of England.

The emblem of the Jacobites was the White Cockade. White Rose Day is celebrated on 10th. June the anniversary of the birth of the Old Pretender in 1688 and significantly the year of the Glorious Revolution. (A Cockade is a knot or ribbons or circular or oval-shaped symbol of different colours.) The Stuart colour was white, the Hanoverian dynasty was black).

These events would in turn lead to Jacobite rebellions that were very significant in the political and social history of the eighteenth century.