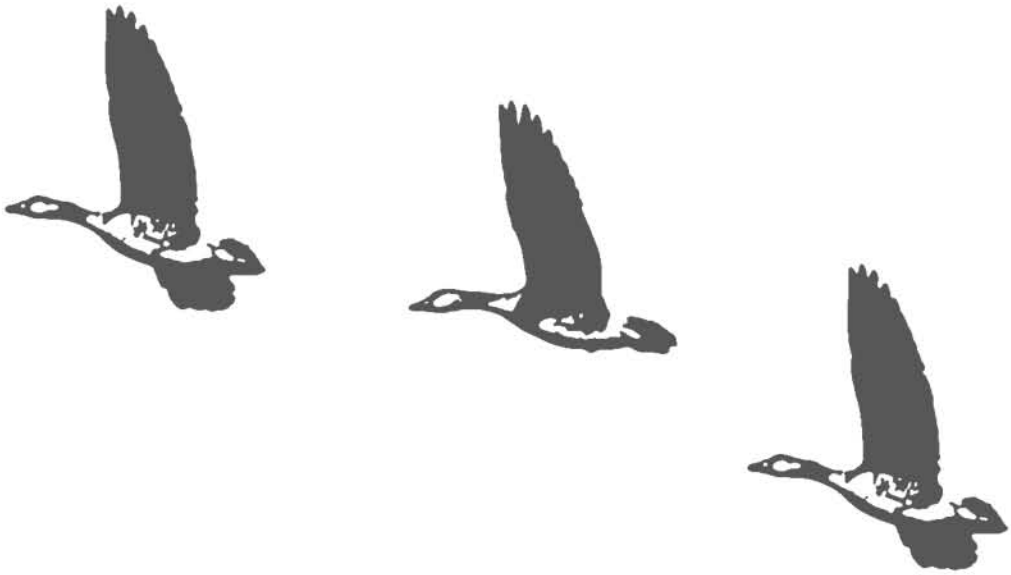

Remember Limerick!

The War of the Two Kings – Ireland 1689-1691

Historical Commentary

by Ian Weir

COGADH AN DÁ RÍ
THE WAR OF THE TWO KINGS
IRELAND, 1689-91

Governments fight for colonies or commercial rights; governments fight about harbors or high tariffs; governments fight for a gold mine or a pearl fishery. It seems sufficient to answer that governments do not fight at all. Why do the fighters fight? What is the psychology that sustains the terrible and wonderful thing called a war? ... What did men really feel about the policy? If it be said that they accepted the policy from the politician, what did they feel about the politician? If the vassals warred blindly for their prince, what did those blind men see in their prince?

There is something we all know which can only be rendered, in an appropriate language, as realpolitik. As a matter of fact, it is an almost insanely unreal politik. It is always stubbornly and stupidly repeating that men fight for material ends, without reflecting for a moment that the material ends are hardly ever material to the men who fight. In any case no man will die for practical politics, just as no man will die for pay. ...

Whatever starts wars, the thing that sustains wars is something in the soul; that is something akin to religion. It is what men feel about life and about death. A man near to death is dealing directly with an absolute; it is nonsense to say he is concerned only with relative and remote complications that death in any case will end. If he is sustained by certain loyalties, they must be loyalties as simple as death. They are generally two ideas, which are only two sides of one idea. The first is the love of something said to be threatened, if it be only vaguely known as home; the second is dislike and defiance of some strange thing that threatens it.

... Men fight hardest when they feel that the foe is at once an old enemy and an eternal stranger, that his atmosphere is alien and antagonistic; as the French feel about the Prussian or the Eastern Christians about the Turk. If we say it is a difference of religion, people will drift into dreary bickerings about sects and dogmas. We will pity them and say it is a difference about death and daylight; a difference that does really come like a dark shadow between our eyes and the day. Men can think of this difference even at the point of death; for it is a difference about the meaning of life.

Men are moved in these things by something far higher and, holier than policy; by hatred. ... There is a religious war when two worlds meet; that is, when two visions of the world meet; or in more modern language when two moral atmospheres meet. What is the one man's breath is the other man's poison; and it is vain to talk of giving a pestilence a place in the sun.

G.K. Chesterton, The Everlasting Man

On the 10th of June, 1688, a woman was delivered of a son. The baby would be christened James after his father, Francis after the mother's patron saint, Francis Xavier, and Edward after his father's idol, Edward the Confessor. James Francis Edward Stuart. His mother was an Italian princess. His father was James II, by Grace of God King of England, Scotland, and Ireland. And the child's birth, at that particular time and to such parents, completely upset the apple cart.

A few months later, his father was in flight, the domains his family had ruled for over a hundred years yielded to an usurper, and the mode of government that had enforced his rule irrevocably altered. Because of all this, a little later still a war came to Ireland that would fertilise the seeds of hatred and oppression for generations to come: the *Cogadh an Dá Rí*, the War of the Two Kings.

Sources

For good or ill, the Williamite War in Ireland (as it is most usually called) has been extensively documented. The problem is that most of the writing has been partisan in the extreme, and sometimes contradictory in fact as well as bias.

The earliest histories were written by the victors, and are generally not worth reading (this indictment excludes the eyewitness accounts). An early 20th century source is Boulger's "Battle of the Boyne", which was written as a much needed corrective to the Orangist-Whig propaganda of the 18th and 19th Centuries; it leans perhaps too much toward the Stuart cause. Of the modern authors, there have been several recent works.

John Childs book *The Williamite War in Ireland* is balanced; it also treats "*der kleine krieg*" in detail, and fits the war into the larger European context. However, it is quite dense.

McNally's books on the battles of the Boyne and Aughrim (Osprey series) give a simpler overview, though there are some discrepancies.

Better than McNally and not as detailed as Childs is J.G. Simms (c.1970s), who wrote numerous works on Irish history. His *Jacobite Ireland 1685-91* is comprehensive. Also used herein is his *War and Politics in Ireland*.

A very recent intermediate work is Pádraig Lenihan's insightful *1690*, which deals mainly with the Battle of the Boyne, but includes a clear overview of the war.

Period sources used in this commentary include portions of the Jacobite apology, *A light to the blind*, as well as John Stevens' *Journal*, and the correspondence of the Danish Brigade's officers.

The first of these is extremely partisan (the Williamites are "rebel dogs… heretical scum… unnatural perverts" and so forth) but presents the viewpoint of the "Old English" Society – that is, the Anglo-Irish – in Ireland. The Gaels are represented by the portrayal of Balldearg O'Donnell, a man who is so ungrateful as to want the restoration of his inheritance – usurped by the Old English.

Stevens was also a Jacobite, but an English volunteer, formerly a revenue officer under King James. Oddly, for an Englishman, he has more sympathy for the common Irish than their own "betters". His main advantage is that he was an eyewitness, though at the Boyne he was off on the left flank and saw no action other than being run down by his side's own cavalry, and his journal cuts off abruptly during the battle of Aughrim (yes, he survived).

The Danish correspondence includes after action reports on the battles as well as quartermaster minutiae. Some of it was written by the Danish contingent commander, the Duke of Württemburg. (The Danes fought on King William's side). It is interesting to note the differences in the eyewitness reports, even among the various Danish officers.

Dates and Distances

Unless noted otherwise, dates are given in the Old Style (OS) common to the British Isles, which at that time was 10 days behind the Continental New Style (NS) that we base our modern calendar on. However, although the English New Year's Day was March 25th, the modern date, January 1st, has been taken as the start of each new year. ("Sept"-ember used to be the "seventh" month).

It has not always been possible to determine which sort of miles were used: Irish miles were equal to 2 English miles (something the footsore Stevens groused about continually). Apparently, Connaught miles were even longer.

Jacobites vs. Irish

Someone of Irish descent is sure to complain about the use of the term Jacobite in the text after the departure of James from Ireland. It is usual to reserve "Jacobite" for the supporters of King James II and use "Irish" as a blanket term for the forces opposed to the Williamites – the supporters of King William. Hard-core republican Irish will only allow Billy the title of Prince of Orange. This author argues that there are other people in the worlds beside the Irish, who would not understand the difference without a lengthy explanation, and that the presence of James' Deputy, the Earl of Tyrconnel, right until the end of the war, justifies using the term Jacobite throughout. Not to mention the fact that plenty of people that the rest of the world considers Irish fought for the House of Orange.

ORIGINS

How far back does the reader wish to go? The establishment of the Protestant Plantation in Ulster at the start of the 17th Century? Henry VIII's "reconquest"? Henry II's establishment of the Pale? The Norman invasion? Anglo-Irish racial tensions go back a long way. But for practical purposes things can be said to begin with the English Civil War of the 1640s. The men who made policy during the *Cogadh an Dá Rí* of 1689-91 either grew up during those years, or were old enough to actively participate. Either way, it was the touchstone of their opinions.

Foreign overlordship of Ireland in historical times began with the arrival of the Normans in the 1100s. The Danes had raided and established settlements three hundred years before, but they were too few to do more than carve out petty kingdoms that warred and allied with the preexisting Irish petty kingdoms. After 1014 (the battle of Clontarf) they dwindled, until there was little left of the Danes but their townships.

The Normans came as the mercenaries of one of those petty Irish kings, who had been exiled and wanted revenge. Seeing the opportunity to establish a "new world", they invited their brothers, uncles, and cousins to the Nth degree to join them. The Normans took much but not all of the island. Far away from London, from the English king who claimed feudal supremacy, they wielded great power on their own account, and appeared ready, in alliance with the native Irish, to establish a new kingdom. Ultimately, therefore, the Norman lords were brought to heel. This was under Henry II, who turned the ex-Danish burg of Dublin into an English outpost, His successor, King John, became the first Lord of Ireland, placing the entire island under direct English rule.

In the 14th Century, there was a Gaelic revival. The Black Death wiped out many Anglo-Norman settlements, while the Gaels, predominantly a rural society, avoided mass extinction. The Wars of the Roses prevented the reestablishment of central control. English authority shrank to the region around Dublin, an area known as The Pale (*hence, "beyond the Pale"*), and by the 15th Century, it had virtually ceased to function anywhere else on the island.

It was at this time that Poynings' Law (1494) was passed. This law was crucial to Ireland's future political development. In short, it placed the Dublin government under the authority of Westminster. Of course, at that time, the Pale was just a tiny outpost of empire, and the rest of Ireland could have cared less. Ireland outside the Pale paid no heed to Dublin, let alone London. Unfortunately, the law remained in force until modern times, when English rule had again extended over the whole country. It was the root of the Irish Question.

That human dynamo, Henry VIII (1509-1547), set about to reconquer Ireland, primarily because the Fitzgeralds, who were the de facto rulers of Ireland in his day – exercising control through a network of familial alliances – began to show support for some of Henry's Yorkist rivals, and also invited foreign troops to Ireland. Henry used force of arms to establish his authority, but also called an Irish Parliament, at which he was proclaimed King (not merely Lord) of Ireland; the parliament was unique in that the Gaelic chiefs also attended and acknowledged Henry's lordship. That was the easy part. Full subjugation took another century and a half.

[There is irony in those foreign troops. They were Burgundians, and the House of Orange was Burgundian in origin.]

"The Sum of the Purgatory of the Men of Ireland"

Brother Teague, His Life and Times

By the 1680s, some 500 years had elapsed since Norman colonisation under Henry II. Those settlers had long since merged with the native population, now shared the same religion and culture, but had also married into English Society. The same can be said for the settlers of Tudor days. They are all generally known as the Old English, to contrast them with the Gaels. They were either Catholics or Anglicans in religion, depending on which "wave" their family belonged to.

Societally, the Old English mirrored the rest of the "civilised" British Isles, with an upper stratum of powerful landowning families ruling over a vast body of tenant farmers paying money rent (except when dips in the economy dictated they should pay in goods and services). Below this upper class was the typical gentry, owning some land, filling civil and military posts, and experimenting with trade and manufactures.

The primary difference between Ireland and England was that Irish society still had a very strong clan element. Perhaps the same could be said of the English Borders. The tenantry owed the rent, but they also owed allegiance. In time of war, the nobleman became a clan lord. He might regiment his men in the modern fashion, and equip them with musket and pike, but they were still a feudal host. If he fell in battle, his men would desert; if he decided the cause was lost, his men would follow him home.

Gaelic Society, which was uniformly Catholic, had been pushed to the fringes, and was still a true clan society, where the local chiefs, who were nevertheless closely tied by blood to the aristocracy in the rest of the country, had far more real power than the King. The Irish Gaels also had tight blood ties with the Highlanders of Scotland. The MacDonalds, Macdonnells, and O'Donnells are a prime example.

In fact the situation in Ireland was very like that found in Scotland, with its division between "Saxon" Lowlanders and Gaelic Highlanders, both ruled by Anglo-Norman barons who own land in both England and Scotland. When an Englishman spoke of Scotland, he meant the Lowlands, where the people were Anglo-Saxon. The Highlanders were "Irish".

The old Gaelic society was based, like Highland society, on the ownership of cattle. They practised transhumance: living permanently in the valleys during winter, and migrating to temporary dwellings at higher pastures in summer. The Normans revolutionised Irish society when they introduced the well known "manorial system": manor, village, and church making up a parish. Several parishes joined together constituted a county. In Ireland, these were subordinated to the four ancient provinces of Ulster (north), Connaught (northwest), Leinster (east/central) and Munster (south). The parish/county system is still the foundation of rural Irish society.

The Tudors took things a step further. The dislocations of war and the expropriation of "rebel" lands led to a new economy of huge landed estates owned by a ridiculously small number of people. Most of the Irish were completely dispossessed and became a semi-migratory group of labourers, while a lucky few managed to keep tiny parcels of land, held on exorbitant leases from the Great Ones.

Although the proverbial poverty of rural Ireland is held to have begun after the introduction of the Penal Laws – as a consequence of the *Cogadh an Dá Rí* – John Stevens' *Journal* indicates the situation had begun earlier. He records the sight of mud cabins, without windows and rarely containing even a bed and chairs, the tenants sharing their dwellings with their meagre livestock. Stevens recorded that the Irish soldiers in the army did not know how to bake bread. Shoes were only worn on special occasions. Most people were illiterate and held the wildest superstitions. Another commentator stated the Irish peasant lived in greater poverty than the serfs of Poland and Russia.

Their social betters lived in some comfort, but also lived in a constant state of defence. Houses were mini-fortresses, towns were still laid out on Medieval lines and surrounded by walls. Tellingly, only gentlemen were allowed to bear arms, while the peasantry were supposed to be kept in ignorance of their use.

Because this policy developed in the 17th Century, of course it had a religious twist. The ruling classes were mainly Protestant (Anglicans initially, then also Presbyterians), therefore, only Protestants had the right to bear arms.

Religion

Under the Tudors and the early Stuarts, true power in Ireland rested with the Old English. The Tudors made the Anglican religion one of the pillars of their power; the Stuarts carved the pillar. The Catholic religion was not banned, but every means, both fair and foul, was attempted in order to coerce the general population to abandon their old ways.

In the South, which already had a well developed system of government, Henry VIII's Reformation was guaranteed by redrawing the boroughs so that Protestant (Anglican) majorities returned Protestant MPs. Thus, though 85% of the population was Catholic, only a few individuals could participate in the government of their country. At the same time, the Catholic Church was subordinated to the Anglican Church of Ireland.

It was not until the English Civil War did away with the king that the Protestant Dissenting sects gained a <shrill> voice and the Old English found themselves split between Establishment Anglican and "underclass" Catholic. Under pressure of war, the Old English and the Gaels found themselves in alliance.

By the time of the Restoration in 1660, Catholics in Ireland, except for the odd nobleman for whom a blind eye was turned, held no positions of authority in the State. Schoolteachers had to be Protestant-approved, and the Catholic clergy was obliged to pay tithes to the Church of Ireland (in theory, they were also required to attend Anglican services at least occasionally: thus, Occasional Conformity).

Nevertheless, by the time of the *Cogadh an Dá Rí* the [Anglican] Church of Ireland was heavily outnumbered by both Catholics and Presbyterians, and confined mainly to the towns. Catholics could not in good conscience admit to the supremacy of the King in matters spiritual, and neither could Dissenters (which is why they received that name). On the flip side, no Protestant could admit the temporal authority of the Pope, while no Anglican or Catholic could admit the right of every man to interpret the Bible as he saw fit.

The Plantation

Matters went a bit differently in the North. Ulster was still predominantly Gaelic in Tudor days, and frequently involved in armed conflict with Dublin. As Gaelic society dwindled and the Reformation gained momentum, racial strife morphed into sectarian conflict. The focal point was the Plantation.

Plantations were a new economic development, emerging in Henry VIII's day. The Dutch are said to have begun them. They were colonies established as corporate entities, with the goal of making money for the Crown and the promoters.

In Ireland there were two kinds of plantation. The first was benign: small, model colonies of industrious imported farmers who were to encourage the Irish to emulation. This form was later extended to the towns with the introduction of communities of specialist artisans, frequently Huguenot French – always Protestant, in any case. It used to be a common practice for a monarch to invite foreign communities, usually specialising in some kind of trade, such as weaving, to settle with a view to improving the economy. Some locations, such as Athlone and Limerick, had an Irish Town and an English Town side by side. Towns, especially new ones, were given charters that favoured Protestants.

The second form of plantation was malignant. Most European plantations were established in non-European (i.e. "empty" lands) such as Virginia and Java. The Empire established them on conquered Turkish land. Henry used the system to secure his authority in Ireland by expropriating his enemies' property and establishing plantations on it.

Not all the plantations succeeded. Essex's war, late in Elisabeth I's reign, was intended to secure a strategic plantation in eastern Ulster that had been instituted as a block to the flow of Scottish mercenaries into Ireland. The war devolved into a series of tit for tat massacres and Essex was recalled.

Then there were the Munster plantations, founded by the Undertakers – wealthy Englishmen who contracted (undertook) to supply tenants. This was supposed to be a "divide and rule" scheme but it merely led to the scattering of vulnerable Protestant communities across the breadth of the province. Over the years, most of these settlements were wiped out, rebuilt, and wiped out again.

It was left to James I to show what could really be accomplished in the plantation line. The last years of Elisabeth I's reign were consumed with war against the Gaelic chiefs of Ulster. The war ended, on generous terms for the Irish, in 1603, the year of James Stuart's accession to the English throne, but many of the chiefs decided to go to Spain, seeking aid for a new war, and this left the door open for the new King of England.

James inherited Elisabeth's policies and wars as well as her throne. Ireland was regarded as a conquered land, but one with great economic potential. Before his accession in England, James had had run-ins of his own with some of the Irish principals as King of Scotland. The Ulster Gaels were the allies of the turbulent MacDonalds and the enemies of those staunch supporters of central government, the Campbells.

As a measure designed to pacify and punish the Gaels, whose clan society did not admit of electioneering tactics, James I reestablished the Ulster Plantation, but on a grand scale. Most of the immigrants were Scots Presbyterians. This was the most drastic invasion in recent memory – Londonderry, established as a place of refuge for the settlers under the auspices of London "adventurer" companies, was only 70 years old in 1689.

Supposedly, this new Plantation created a uniformly Protestant realm, of perhaps 100,000 souls, in the North. In actuality, the local Irish lords forfeited their lands, but the common people remained. Many were hired as labourers by the new settlers, or retained as tenants (paying high rent). Others of the indigenous population took to the bogs, poaching, raiding farms, and even waylaying stray settlers.

[The Plantation had the secondary object of diverting the energies of the Presbyterians. Half a century later, they would be a troublesome factor in Irish politics, too.]

More settlement occurred in the South as the century progressed. The chief engine here was a law requiring landowners to forfeit up to a third of their land in order to acquire proper legal title to the rest. Many were willing to make this sacrifice, because very few of the Old English held their lands by deed; they had taken them by force some centuries before, and in this legalistic age, they were no longer secure. This law could not be altered in favour of the Catholics, because they were barred from becoming Members of Parliament – they could be Lords, but since bills emanated from the Lower House, you understand…

King James was also able to claim large estates, especially in Kings County, through personal inheritance; these lands were "planted" with Protestants. This introduced another factor, the New Interest Men.

[Ironically, some of the new settlers turned out to be Catholics fleeing persecution. Conditions in Ireland were actually better than in England or Scotland.]

The political and social entity that the policies of James I created with the intent of strengthening his régime, would ultimately bring his grandson and his House to ruin. And not his alone. Over the centuries it has brought down more than one British government. It was called the Protestant Ascendancy. Raised by James I, it was cemented in place by Oliver Cromwell.

Civil Wars

The House of Stuart had been Scotland's royal dynasty since the death of Robert the Bruce's son, David II, in 1371. The first Stuart to become King of England as well as Scotland was James VI & I (Sixth "of Scotland": First "of England"), who succeeded in 1603 upon the death of Elizabeth I. James VI was the grandson of James IV, who married Margaret Tudor, Henry VIII's sister. Then, as they used to teach in school: James I, Charles I, Charles II, James II. The "firsts" were father and son, but the "seconds" were brothers.

James I taught his son to rule under an already outworn theory, the Divine Right of Kings, which is the simplest explanation of why Charles I had his head forcibly removed by his more politically advanced subjects, after a bitter civil war.

Now, rule of England automatically brought with it rule of Ireland, theoretically a separate kingdom, but for all practical purposes an English satrapy since the days of Henry VIII. For this reason, that war also raged in Ireland. Because Scotland was involved as well, the English Civil War is sometimes called the War of the Three Kingdoms, but in each region the motivations were subtly different. And that is the deeper reason why Charles I failed; he could not achieve reconciliation with one kingdom without alienating another one.

As it turned out, the kingdom that remained most supportive of his family was the one Charles never visited – Ireland. This was unfortunate, because the Stuarts shared their English subjects' prejudices about the Irish.

Irish participation in the War of the Three Kingdoms began with Phelim (Felix) O'Neill's Rebellion in 1641. The political climate was bad, and it was compounded by a bad harvest. O'Neill was only interested in obtaining redress of grievance, but by resorting to force of arms he unleashed a bloodbath in which perhaps 20,000 Protestant settlers perished.

While Charles I fought for his throne in England, Ireland was nominally ruled by the Confederates, who, though they challenged the King on a number of issues, insisted they were loyal subjects and indeed sent troops to support the Royalists. Not all the Irish supported the Confederates, however, and there was both racial and sectarian violence in Ireland until 1649.

In that year, the victorious New Model Army arrived, with the avowed goal of revenging the massacre of 1641. This phase of the war lasted from 1649 to 1652 and ended in the complete defeat of the Confederates. Cromwell's solution was effective, and extreme, and the Irish have never forgotten. It was expressed in the phrase, "*to Hell or Connaught*".

Old Noll held rather simple views on the Irish situation: all Catholics, Confederates or not, were responsible for 1641 and would be punished accordingly. The scale of punishment ran from execution, through exile to Connaught or abroad, through total or partial forfeiture of land. His views dovetailed with Parliament's desire to expropriate yet more land, and with the need to pay off the army.

The upshot was the near elimination of the Catholic landowning class and the introduction of a new element, the Cromwellians. 12,000 Parliamentary soldiers were paid off with lands in Ireland, and though many sold their shares to existing Protestant landowners, over half remained on the land. Thousands more from the Scottish Army of the Covenant were also pensioned off, mainly in Ulster. These men retained their weapons and were required to act as a militia if needed.

Some 4,000 Catholics are estimated to have been relocated west of the Shannon River, in Connaught. 5,000 of the Gaelic gentry fled abroad. Those, mainly poor, Catholics who remained east of the Shannon became Helots on the plantations of the Protestant gentry, or serviced the rapidly burgeoning immigrant communities in the towns.

The Cromwellian conquest of Ireland not only put the Dissenters in the driver's seat, it crippled the Establishment Church, which had the King as its head. In consequence of this, and also as a natural consequence of the polarisation of the Civil Wars, most people drifted into one of the two fiercely opposed camps: Catholic or Cromwellian Dissenter.

King Charles II

Unhappy King Charles had two legitimate sons: Charles, the elder, and James, the younger. Both escaped into exile with their mother, a French princess, Henrietta Maria, who was a daughter of Henry IV, the Navarrese King of France.

The teenage brothers forged close ties with the French Court, fought along side French princes of the blood, and engaged in various plots for restoring their family fortunes.

They also learned firsthand what it means to be dependent on the bounty of others for one's existence.

After Cromwell died and his son had had an abortive try at ruling, responsible people began to realise that the only way to avoid anarchy was to restore the King. One of Cromwell's lieutenants, General Monk, undertook the strong-arm stuff to ensure a peaceful return for King Charles II in 1660. This action was to set a precedent.

[Monk was suitably rewarded, and his regiment became the Coldstream Guards.]

Both Charles and his brother learned many things in exile, but they seem to have drawn different conclusions. It may be remembered that before his father went out to the scaffold he warned young Charles against letting anyone set him up as king. Well, that was then. Now, Charles II *would* be King, but king so far as possible on his own terms. So would James, when his time came. But the difference between the brothers was this: that Charles understood the limits of his environment and James did not.

Charles, styled the Merry Monarch, was, in American parlance, a "goodfella". His Court was just about the most debauched in Europe. Admittedly the English had two decades of Puritanism to flush out of their system, but a society takes its cue from its leaders. All the same, as the visiting *Comte de* Gramont recorded,

> *"The King was inferior to none, either in shape or air; his wit was pleasant; his disposition easy and affable; his soul, susceptible of opposite impressions, was compassionate to the unhappy, inflexible to the wicked, and tender even to excess; he showed great abilities in urgent affairs, but was incapable of application to any that were not so: his heart was often the dupe, but oftener the slave, of his engagements."*

[Memoirs of the Count de Gramont, p. 91. These memoirs were compiled by the count's friend, Anthony Hamilton, who fought in the Cogadh an Dá Rí*.]*

Charles returned to his father's kingdom resolved to "never wander again", and his reign was guided by that principle. In the political maelstrom of the 1660s and '70s, such a principle could only mean a policy of compromise, of robbing Peter to pay Paul, of promising all things to all men and making good on as little as possible.

Probably the most important consequence of this policy of vagueness, in so far as Ireland was concerned, lay in the speech King Charles II made to Parliament upon his restoration. In it, he most solemnly promised to reward Irish loyalty to his House by

doing what he could to revoke the land grabs made by Cromwell's supporters during the course of the Civil War.

> *"I hope I need not put you in mind of Ireland, and that they alone shall not be without the benefit of my mercy. They have shown much affection to me abroad, and you will have a care of my honour and what I have promised them."*

Yet, eel-like, Charles promised the Irish Catholics restitution and in the next breath promised the Cromwellians (to whom he owed his restoration, remember) the retention of what they had gained. His ever practical Viceroy in Ireland, the Duke of Ormonde, questioned where they would find this new Ireland.

The Act of Oblivion & the Land Question

In Ireland, religiously-based restrictions on property ownership, and the comparatively small amount of arable land, had led, down the generations, to a very volatile situation. Unfortunately, the 1660 Parliament in Ireland, as well as in England, was dominated by the men who had fought against King Charles II's father. They may have restored the Stuarts, but they were not about to give up the fruits of their rebellion. The storm they raised frightened the king, and his attempt at redress for the Gaels was half-hearted at best. Moreover, he left all the Catholics of Ireland, Gael and non-Gael alike, out of that general pardon that came with the Restoration, the Act of Oblivion.

Understand, the Act of Oblivion was a *general* pardon, but not a *blanket* pardon. It targeted specific groups. Issuing a pardon in this way meant that any group not mentioned could have suspicion laid on it, whether deservedly or not.

The Confederates – the majority of the Irish Catholics and the Old English – had been Royalists, worthy of pardon. At the same time, however, they were held to blame for the massacre of 1641. Charles II was in favour of pardoning them for 1641 and calling it even. Parliament, arguing that the Cromwellian régime still existed, though with a king as head of state, opposed any pardon for the Confederates.

To make sure of the Protestant Ascendancy at this critical time, the Irish Cromwellian MPs rounded up their Catholic Peers and imprisoned them "on suspicion" until after the Restoration had taken place. This muted their voices and cast aspersions upon them.

Charles II thus had a ready excuse to renege on his promises without showing he was doing so out of fear. To add insult to injury, the Act of Oblivion specifically *did* pardon not only the Cromwellian faction, but many of the Regicides!

Again Religion

The Catholic faith was still a bar to social and economic advancement throughout the King's realms. In practical terms, however, accommodation was reached during Charles II's reign in the usual manner, by the tolerance and compromise of individuals. But the delicate balance was destroyed by Titus Oates' Popish Plot (1678) – a McCarthy Trials for the 17th Century – and never recovered. Irish aliens in England (illegal or not) were especially singled out as "the thin edge of the wedge", and things were not much better in their homeland.

A two-way split would have been bad enough, but the hatred ran in three directions: Catholic versus Established Church and Dissenters, Dissenters versus Catholics and Established Church, Established Church versus Catholics and Dissenters. In the South, the groups were intermixed, though the bulk of the Catholics were rural. They were the most militant, the best organised.

The Dissenters were the most vitriolic, but lacked cohesion, except in Ulster, which continued throughout the century to receive fresh drafts of archetypical dour, grim, Old Testament-spouting Presbyterian Scots. Ironically, the continued suppression of the Catholics was matched by suppression of the more radical Ulster Dissenters. The mainstream Presbyterians were secure enough to forego rabid extremism. As is their tradition, the Anglicans sat on the fence – the most painful position of all.

The Régime of Ormonde & the Act of Settlement

Beside the Act of Oblivion, another item on Charles II's Restoration agenda was the Act of Settlement, intended to be the final solution to the thorny question of land claims throughout the King's realms. The Duke of Ormonde and the King himself were the two men most responsible for the Settlement in Ireland.

Ormonde, the first Viceroy for Ireland appointed by Charles, dominated the Restoration period. The chronicler, Bishop Burnet, says of him,

> *"He was a man every way fitted for a court; of a graceful appearance, a lively wit, and a cheerful temper; a man of great expense; decent even in his vices, for he always kept up the form of religion. He had gone through many transactions in Ireland with more fidelity than success… He was firm to the Protestant religion, and so far firm to the laws, that he always gave good advices; but when bad ones were followed, he was not for complaining too much of them."*
>
> *Gramont's Memoirs, Ed. note, p. 94*

Anglo-Irish himself, and a member of the Anglican ruling class, most of Ormonde's relations were Catholic; this enabled an uneasy peace to be maintained as he surreptitiously eased restrictions on the followers of Rome. At bottom, however, his religion was Royalism – loyalty to the Crown was the way to obtain preferment under his term of office. He opposed equally the loudmouth Cromwellians and the Gaelic diehards who had refused to reach an accommodation with him at the end of the Civil Wars.

Before the Civil Wars, Catholics owned about 60% of the land – most of Munster, Leinster, and Connaught. After the war they owned 9%. The Act of Settlement of 1662 gave them ownership of 20% more. That is, the Act required the Cromwellians to sacrifice a third of the lands they had taken, which would be pooled and used to compensate the Catholics. The Cromwellians who lost land were, by the Act, to be compensated elsewhere. Immediately, two problems arose.

First, the pool of lands "clawed back" was far too small to satisfy any but the richest and most loyal. Ormonde sponsored his own family (the Butlers) first, and put his old opponents, the Gaels of Connaught, last on the list.

Second, in despite of the Act's requirements, King Charles expropriated thousands of acres belonging to the regicides (he might have pardoned the brood officially, but on other fronts they were open to reprisal), and then, instead of distributing the real estate to the dispossessed, he awarded it to a variety of supporters, the most important of whom was his brother James, Duke of York.

Once the Inner Sanctum had got its choice pieces of flesh, in true Anglo-Saxon tradition the matter of land redistribution went to the courts. All that need be said on that score can be summed up in the fact that in 1665 an Act of Explanation had to be passed to explain what the King had really meant by the Act of Settlement.

The Catholics regarded the whole thing as a breach of faith. They despised the Cromwellians as lowborn "roughs" – in contrast with the Elizabethan "gentlemen" settlers, with whom the native Irish now identified. Many of the dispossessed "turned tory" – became highwaymen skulking in the "back-forty" of their own estates. The problem was so widespread that tory hunting supplanted fox hunting among the Protestant gentry.

The Cromwellian newcomers were also displeased. The Gaels were "savages", the "Old English" were no better than half-breeds. What right did such rebel scum have to any land at all? The most extreme of this party – again the republican sectaries of Ulster – actually wished for a new rebellion by the Catholics, so that Popery and those who adhered to it could be eradicated.

The State of the Nation

Still and all, despite their lack of political power, by the end of King Charles' reign in the 1680s, the Irish Catholics' position had improved dramatically. Although Galway was the only county in which they had a majority politically, they still fielded a strong presence everywhere except Ulster (in all of Ulster, the only Catholic magnate was the Earl of Antrim). They found a champion in one Richard Talbot, scion of an Irish-Norman family (his brother was the Catholic Archbishop of Dublin), who had obtained the patronage of the Duke of York, and gained fame (or notoriety) for his successes in suits on behalf of the dispossessed. Out of the confusion of the times, he and others like him were also able to acquire large estates on their own account.

Ireland under Charles II also saw a speedy recovery from the ravages of war. Immigrants continued to pour into the country. Trade increased. Cheap labour ensured cheap exports – much, under rigidly enforced regulations, to England – and fat profits for those (mainly Protestants) engaged in trade. Ireland was a source of meat and timber for the Royal Navy. Dublin, with an estimated population of 40,000, became the second largest city in the British Isles, despite its rotten harbour. 1 in 40 of all the homes in Ireland were in Dublin, as well as 1 in 26 of the population).

[Some trade items were specifically prohibited from export to England where such trade might threaten English interests – Irish cattle, for example could not be sold in English markets.]

Cork, Ireland's second city, and a hotbed of smuggling, was run by the Quakers. Galway Town was still controlled by the Catholics. Protestant Belfast was a johnny-come-lately, but would soon be the fourth largest city.

The chief economies under Charles II were the woollen trade, the linen trade, cattle, and fishing. Raising sheep was an innovation for Ireland, partly facilitated by the Cromwellian destruction of Ireland's forests (done for strategic reasons during the war, not out of ecological ignorance). Most of the product had to be shipped to England as raw wool, which led to a deal of smuggling. Ormonde sponsored the linen trade, which flourished in Ulster. In consequence of the rising economy and the paucity of land, rents rose steadily. But because money was cheap, loans could be had on easy terms. Landowners turned a profit.

However, another, and rather ominous consequence of the new prosperity was a financial deal between the King and the Irish Parliament. This, on paper, guaranteed the Crown sufficient revenue – barely – to dispense with Parliament for the next eighteen years. Unfortunately, tax collection was turned over to private contractors. Worse, the financial administration itself was contracted out to certain well-placed individuals.

[It was the Irish Parliament that was dispensed with in this manner. Charles was able to ignore the English Parliament because in the euphoria of the Restoration, Parliament had voted Charles, and later would vote James, an income for life. The massive French subsidies (bribes for remaining neutral) one hears about were just icing on the cake.]

There was a price. Apart from the fact that the payments to the Crown were often in arrears, and apart from the expected abuse (one secret recipient of pork bellies was Charles' mistress, the Duchess of Portland, who backed the scheme, another was Charles himself), the plan could not be put through without the removal of the Duke of Ormonde. In this effort, the lawyer Richard Talbot, companion to the Duke of York, was closely involved.

[The Duchess of Portland, by the by, was a French Catholic, and is generally assumed to have been a French spy as well. Charles' view was probably that if he was going to be spied on, he might as well enjoy it.]

Ormonde was duly removed, and replaced by nonentities. When the tax farm scheme failed, he would be reinstalled, only to be replaced again almost immediately. Talbot was still at work, and to his efforts were added those of the Duke of York, and Lord Sunderland, the Secretary of State. The matter had gone beyond money.

Sunderland was the most powerful of the three plotters. His choice for Ormonde's replacement was the Earl of Rochester. Sunderland and Rochester were not pals, they were rivals; Ireland was the traditional wasteland for English politicians. The least important member of the trio, Talbot, wanted someone whose back he could work behind in his efforts to improve the lot of Irish Catholics. York, that is, James Stuart, who hoped shortly to become king, intended to consolidate his position by replacing those who might obstruct his will, and Rochester was related to his first wife.

The political pendulum in Ireland began to swing. To the dismay of the Irish Protestants, it was soon reported that Talbot had been given an Irish regiment; at the same time, the equally powerful and equally Catholic Lord Mountcashel (Justin McCarty, later James II's Muster-Master-General of Artillery) also received a regiment. This did not bode well for the Protestant Ascendancy. King Charles' death, on February 6th, 1685, reinforced the dread of impending events. His brother James was an avowed Catholic. And, though Rochester was not appointed Viceroy after all, Ormonde's recall was not rescinded.

The Shakeup

Viceroy Clarendon

"I have the king's commands to declare on all occasions that, whatever… apprehensions any men may have, his majesty hath no intention of altering the acts of settlement"

Clarendon. Quoted in Simms' Jacobite Ireland, p.23

Catholic Ireland bubbled with excitement. The new king was of their faith. Hopes rose. But King James played for safety. He could not rule – yet – without the support of the Protestant majority in each of his kingdoms. Also, James regarded himself exclusively an Englishman. English opinion mattered. Moreover, as an Englishman he was not about to accord power to the Irish.

Immediately after the Duke of Ormonde's departure, Ireland was governed by a purely Protestant council. The position of Viceroy had become a political football in England. As mentioned above, most men of power saw the appointment as a form of exile, but there were some who angled for it, chiefly Richard Talbot. But, before him, the post went to Henry Hyde, 2nd Earl of Clarendon, who hoped, by milking the Irish Treasury, to mend his family fortune. Clarendon, King James' brother-in-law by the latter's first wife, was at the same time a zealous Protestant who believed Ireland should be under the thumb of England. The Catholic Talbot was made Earl Tyrconnel partly as a consolation prize for not making Viceroy.

[The use of public funds for private gain was not necessarily illegal in those days. It was a perquisite for some offices of state, in lieu of a decent salary. The evil of the practice lay, according to the financial gurus of the time, in its inefficiency, rather than its immorality.]

Clarendon found the situation in Ireland beyond him. He was the son of the man who had come up with the original Act of Settlement. He was the brother of the despised Rochester. On his accession, James' had blatantly confirmed the Protestant Ascendancy, which irritated the Catholics further. For their part, the Protestants now dreaded an armed rising. Plots, real and imagined, abounded. The temper of the nation was strained sufficiently for some of the affairs to end in trials and executions. Making a political statement, Tyrconnel chose rather to leave the kingdom than serve under Clarendon.

Most frightening of all, King James chose this time to issue a decree requiring all Protestants to surrender their arms, which would be stored handily in various armouries and only issued when the militia was called out for training or war. Tyrconnel, who promoted this program, justified it because of the rising civil unrest, which might at any time break out in bloodshed. Initially he ordered the arms kept at the the militia and army captains'

homes, but since so many junior officers were hot-heads, it was decided to use civic buildings instead.

Of course, this move raised major concerns. The right to bear arms, which the Catholics did not possess (they were not even permitted to train with weapons), was seen by the Protestants as the only real guarantee of peace. Every male Protestant possessed a sword, and most owned firearms. Putting their shooting irons in a lockup meant they were available to whomever had the keys.

After meeting with the King (presumably in yet another unsuccessful attempt to get appointed Viceroy), Tyrconnel was made Lieutenant General over the Army in Ireland (seconded by Lord Mountcashel as Major General). Returning to Ireland with autonomy in matters military, he initiated widespread investigations against Cromwellian officers and asked that the regulation service oath be administered in a manner "not objectionable to Catholics".

The word of the day was still "moderation". The oath was not altered, yet. But, in the shaky summer of 1685, James had decided the Army was the best place to begin moulding the State in his own image. Not the best decision, but that was James all over. At least he began slowly, putting loyalty to the régime and "Englishness" over matters of faith. Not so Tyrconnel.

Opinionated and violent of speech, Tyrconnel grated on many, Catholics not excluded. His actions made the rash King's moves look like the acts of a Solomon. But the King was also at fault. James saw the political tensions in Ireland as lying between English and Irish. Unfortunately, they lay, as they have always done, between Protestants and Catholics.

Tyrconnel now demanded authority in civil and ecclesiastical matters – because such things affected the "humours" of the Army. Forthwith he began a purge of the officer corps, dismissing Protestants wholesale, without compensation (and remember, in those days, a regimental posting was not just a salary, it was an investment) and replacing them with Catholic "hicks" from the countryside. Many of the Catholic officers boasted there would not be a Protestant left in the Army "by Christmas". It took a little longer than that, but by 1686 most of the rank and file – 5,043 out of an authorised strength of 7,485 – were Catholic, and 166 officers out of 406. By 1688 nearly all would be Catholic.

[Yes, the Army was tiny, but the population of Ireland was only around the million mark, and the Army was backed by a large militia force.]

The Duke of Clarendon, still Viceroy, came out in support of the dismissed officers, more for the fact that loyal men were being badly treated than for religious reasons. He was not able to accomplish much. Even before his appointment as Lieutenant General, Tyrconnel began tinkering with the Judiciary behind Clarendon's back. Catholics were appointed without taking the Oath of Supremacy that recognised the King as the head of the Church. The Privy Council received eleven Catholics. Tyrconnel questioned every county appointment in which a Cromwellian family was involved. Agitation also led to the opening of hitherto forbidden corporate offices (aldermen and the like) to Catholics.

Curiously, the recovery of the Catholic priestly hierarchy took longer. Not until 1686 were bishops permitted to walk about the streets in their official dress. In the same year, the Capuchin monks – notorious for Romish evangelising – were invited back to Dublin (where they required police protection). But this very slowness was unsettling. Many of the lesser clergy incited their flocks not to pay the required tithe to the Church of Ireland. Their superiors (Tyrconnel's brother, for example) wrote to the King, implying that Clarendon was a "trimmer" and asking for the "honest and loyal" Tyrconnel to be appointed Viceroy in his stead.

There was nothing to put up against this wave of propaganda. The Anglican Church of Ireland was in a state of disrepair, with many absentee clerics and absentee congregations. King James, Catholic head of an Anglican Church, chose to let the edifice fall into decay, meanwhile pocketing the revenues of vacant sees. Dublin, a government town, was the one exception.

On top of everything, James was contemplating calling a Parliament in Ireland. With so many new Catholic MPs, there was a real danger that the Protestant Ascendancy was entering its last days. The citadel of Protestant rule in Ireland was the Act of Settlement. The new King had guaranteed it, but privately was open to suggestions. The Catholics took his guarantees amiss and were demanding reform. The Protestants feared a repeal of the Act would undo all. Even reform, with all the upheaval that would entail, would be bad. It might cripple the economy that maintained them.

Clarendon proposed a commission to discuss the Act. "Not good enough" said Tyrconnel, who, though supporting the King's Word as a royal official, very loudly denounced the Settlement as a private person. In any case, James did not want a commission. A parliament could be used to generate far more revenue than a commission. James, focused on his revenue stream, was blind to the fact that a war was brewing.

Determined to have his way, Tyrconnel left Ireland for St. James Court. It require little effort to obtain Clarendon's recall as a Cromwellian fellow-traveller. He was portrayed as a man who in the last analysis might lead a Protestant rebellion. Really, such a notion never occurred to Clarendon; he resigned in order to avoid any unpleasantness.

Secretary of State Sunderland's connivance was needed to obtain Tyrconnel's name on the new ticket. To hide the taste of the pill the Protestants would have to swallow when Tyrconnel took power, it was proposed that James should publicly reconfirm the Act of Settlement. This led to a famous epistle called the Coventry Letter.

The letter was from one Richard Nagle, at Coventry, to Tyrconnel, then in London. Nagle was a barrister who had come over from Ireland with the earl. In the letter he argued persuasively that public confirmation of the Act would serve no good purpose: Protestant traders owned no land, while there had been no panic selling by landowners – *ergo*, no assurance was needed for them. It would dishearten the Catholics and weaken their position still further – what if James were to die suddenly? His heir was his Protestant daughter, Mary. Catholics could expect further persecution unless the balance was redressed now. In conclusion, Nagle suggested King James order the formulation of a new act, "because the old one had not been enforced correctly".

There is a strong probability that this letter was arranged beforehand by Tyrconnel. If not, it at least expressed his own views to the King, presented by a third person.

Deputy Tyrconnel

> *"his departure for Ireland could only herald a marked change and stormy times"*
>
> *The commentator Evelyn, quoted in Boulger p. 72*

Tyrconnel's appointment – though as Deputy, not Viceroy – sparked a minor exodus of English Protestants from Ireland. Although he had had suspicions, Clarendon's removal was unexpectedly curt. The letter announcing his replacement arrived in January 1687, and Tyrconnel appeared before the month was out.

The new Deputy had strengths and weaknesses. On the plus side, he had a plan, and knew the Irish social climate. He was also an experienced and courageous soldier. But he was now 57 years old, plagued by illness, and inexperienced in statecraft.

Jubilant Catholic crowds welcomed the new Deputy, but there were rumours of an assassination plot; in the streets, Protestants risked prosecution singing the latest gutter song, *Lillibulero*.

Tyrconnel stepped up his adjustment of the machinery of state. Propaganda war was waged in the pulpits, a tactic which had been forbidden by a Protestant order in council. Now, Catholic majorities were formed in the three primary courts. Nagle was made Attorney General, a post that carried with it the duty of Speaker if a parliament should be called. Church and Army were likewise packed.

Richard Talbot, 1st Earl of Tyrconnel (1630 – 1691)

Drogheda in 1649 was a town of some 4,000 souls. Cromwell put it to the sack as an exercise in terror. There were exactly twelve survivors. One of them was Richard Talbot.

The youngest of 16 children, Talbot's family was of Norman origin, settled Leinster since the 12th Century. Most Old English families were Roman Catholic, and adopted Irish customs; the Talbots were no exception.

"Mad Dick" or "Lying Dick" Talbot served as a cornet of horse in the Leinster (Confederate) Army during the Irish Rebellion of 1641. He was taken prisoner at Dungans Hill in 1647, but ransomed, and in 1649 survived the sack of Drogheda after being left for dead for three days. Revived, he escaped dressed as a woman – despite the great height that later led Charles II's Court to dub him "Goliath". With the Royalist defeat, he fled to France.

He met Charles II and his brother James at their exile court, in Breda, in 1653, serving under them as both soldier and spy. He earned notoriety in 1655 when he was discovered in London as part of a plot to kill Cromwell. Arrested and examined by the Lord Protector personally, he escaped, reputedly bribed to act as a double agent. (One of his brothers was certainly in touch with the Lord Protector). It appears, however, that he simply invited his captors to a wine shop, got them drunk, and walked away.

In 1656 Talbot was made Colonel of the Duke of York's Regiment, an Irish unit based in Brussels. Talbot was then implicated in a plot to ruin character of James' first wife, Anne Hyde, prior to the marriage. Despite this, he remained in James' employ (because the duke was trying to wriggle out of the marriage) throughout the Restoration period.

Talbot saw action at sea against the Dutch: Lowestoft, where the duke commanded, and likewise Sole Bay seven years later. He was taken prisoner on the latter occasion. Between these actions he married one Mary Boynton "without knowing exactly why". She died in 1678. That same year Talbot was in Ireland, where he and his brother, the Archbishop of Dublin, were implicated in the Popish Plot and imprisoned in Dublin Castle. His wife died while he was in prison.

After the Plot was exposed as a fraud, Talbot escaped to Flanders, where the Duke of York was cooling his heels. There he met and married his first love, though she was now penniless and burdened with six daughters. This was Fanny Jennings, sister to John Churchill's wife, Sarah, and former wife to the now deceased George Hamilton, one of Churchill's old commanders. James and Talbot returned to England in 1679, and the latter accompanied the duke as he was shuttled from place to place, becoming his favourite companion. It was at this time that Talbot began to angle for a job in Ireland, and began to suggest that James deal harshly with the Cromwellian element there.

Throughout the 1660s and 1670s Talbot acted as an agent for dispossessed Irish Catholics and acquired a fortune doing so. Simultaneously he served the Duke of York as a Gentleman of the Bedchamber, with a salary of £300 per year. He and Ormonde nearly duelled after saying that if he made money of the people he helped, it was better than Ormonde, who simply took their property. This earned him a short visit to the Tower.

After the accession of James II, Talbot was created Baron of Talbotstown, Viscount Baltinglass, and Earl of Tyrconnel (despite there being a former owner of that title). He was also made commander in chief of the Army in Ireland. In 1687 James created him Lord Deputy of Ireland under a nominal viceroy. In this role he set about transforming Ireland into a Catholic-run state. After the Glorious Revolution, he placed the forces of the Irish State at the disposal of King James.

During the Irish War, Talbot was created Duke and Marquess of Tyrconnel. Getting on in years, he suffered repeated bouts of illness and mood swings. At times he was for giving up the struggle, and at others for fighting on. He remained a leader of the Irish resistance to Williamite rule after James' departure from Ireland, and the only commander in chief sanctioned by the latter. Abrasive and shifty in council, he made many enemies. He locked horns withe James' Secretary of State, Melfort, and with a clique of officers led by Patrick Sarsfield. He and the French "military advisor" *le Comte de* Lauzun worked well together, but the latter's replacement, *Maréchal* St. Ruth, ignored him.

He died of apoplexy shortly before the end of the war. There were rumours of poison. His partisans claimed his death killed the Rising; his enemies claimed he was the sole obstacle to peace. This, although earlier they had claimed he was trying to end the war to his advantage.

> *"Thus this great man fell, who in his fall pulled down a mighty edifice, videlicet a considerable Catholic nation, for there was no other subject left able to support the national cause."*
>
> *"a man of very good sense, very obliging, but immoderately vain and full of cunning. He had not military genius, but he possessed much courage. From the time of the battle of the Boyne he sank prodigiously, becoming as irresolute in mind as unwieldy in his person."*

Light to the Blind, & quote by Duke of Berwick (Stevens' Journal, p. 133),

A poet of the time crowed,

> *"'you popish rogue' they won't dare to say to us,*
> *but 'Cromwellian dog' is the watchword we have for him".*

The heaviest blow came with a mass revocation of town charters – again, to allow the return of suitable members to Parliament. Previously, only Protestants were eligible to stand. Tyrconnel requested that corporate offices be opened to Catholics, but was rebuffed. So, he simply revoked them all. The corporations interpreted this as the first step toward arbitrary government.

[Tyrconnel's actions were deemed legal by the courts, who declared that resisting the recall of old charters was a challenge to the royal prerogative.]

Meeting King James at Chester, in 1687, Tyrconnel made several proposals. The meeting generated ugly rumours that a repeal of the Act of Settlement was under debate, which had the ultimate object, according to some, of an Irish secession. In actual fact, it was more of a brainstorming session, resulting in a couple of ideas regarding the land question, both compromises involving close case by case examination of property rights. As for a repeal of the Act of Settlement in favour of the Catholics? "Let's not go there". "Let's see what a parliament will accomplish".

The land proposals were made official choices in February of 1688. In August, Tyrconnel sent two judges to London with the proposals, and with a request for a new Irish parliament to be called in the near future. The London mob, in reference to their own fears, marched through the streets with potatoes on sticks, crying, "*make way for the Irish ambassadors*". The King agreed to a parliament, to be held soon, but he did not specify a date. Unfortunately, James' days were already numbered.

All of Tyrconnel's measures – the purging of the Army, the rebalancing of the Judiciary and Privy Council, the close scrutiny of sheriff appointments, and the opening of corporate offices to Catholics – were directed toward ensuring a packed Parliament. Curiously, therefore, revenue collection remained in Protestant hands, even during the war. This was because the officials concerned in such matters were banned from sitting in Parliament (at least without undergoing reelection as MPs).

Motives

The degree of collusion between Tyrconnel and King James is still not clear. Reams of propaganda obscure the truth, much of it dating from before the war. And, so long as the two men continue to play a spiritual role in Irish partisan politics, the truth will

never be precisely known. The question is whether, and if so, to what degree, they were attempting to establish an "Absolutist Popish State".

The Protestants are sure of a deep, diabolical Plot. Tyrconnel's enemies on the Jacobite side have him playing a lone hand, stretching his mandate as far as he dared, ignoring rebukes handed out by Sunderland. Critics of James point to his continued support of the Earl, even encouragement, declaring himself satisfied with his conduct.

It would appear that though James openly approved Tyrconnel's measures, he did so only with a view to holding a speedy and amenable parliament. Irish rule for the Irish people was not on *his* agenda. It may have been on Tyrconnel's, despite his undoubted loyalty to James.

James is almost universally portrayed as a bigoted, mule-headed man bent on establishing a Catholic realm at any cost. And there is some truth in this. Even as a boy he had been obstinate, slow to see the consequences of a course of action, and unwilling to back down when it was staring him in the face. On matters of principle, if one were talking about *his* principles, then he was right, his opponents were wrong, and he therefore saw no need to accommodate them. But if a man's opinions did not conflict with his, he could be quite broadminded.

As a convert to Catholicism, guided by fanatical Jesuits, James did yearn to return England to the "true body of the Church". Paradoxically, it was his Catholic-born wife, with family ties to the Papacy, universally hated by the mob as an evil influence, who held him back. And yet… among his friends he boasted men of many conditions and faiths, including Quakers and Huguenots; he had seen first hand the sufferings of the latter in France. If he had reestablished England as a Catholic nation, it is likely he would have tried to ensure the Protestants had freedom of worship, though perhaps not political power. Here, Tyrconnel differed from him.

[Part of the tension between King and Country lay in the fact that James was something of an internationalist and his people were xenophobes, though – another paradox – he shared their dislike of the Irish. Tyrconnel was his friend, but that is usually the way of it. Nation X are a pack of dirty foreigners, but Mr. Blank from Nation X is a jolly good fellow, having been met out of context.]

[The Pope, by the by, disliked the Jesuits intensely.]

The two main events in Ireland that can be examined as clues are the overhaul of the Army and the changes to the Administration. In England, James also monkeyed with the Anglican Church, but in Ireland that Church was a hollow shell and it is the shifting Catholic-Protestant balance in the other two organs of power that is key.

One point of view is, again, that James was mainly concerned to return a favourable parliament which could then be used to promote his rather radical views on liberty of conscience, generate lots of money, and settle all the thorny land questions neatly, without a lot of messy compromises. James did not believe in compromise. In packing parliament, Tyrconnel was merely obeying instructions, and incidentally promoting "liberty of conscience" by opening up the playing field to all denominations.

Alternatively, it is argued that what James really wanted was only a fast overhaul of the Army in Ireland. The other political "adjustments", nominally made to aid "the humours of the Army", were done on the Earl's own initiative. To bolster this argument, it is noted that Tyrconnel ordered the establishment of a summer camp on the Curragh plain (in Co. Kildare; there is still an army base on the site), and personally involved himself in training. Obviously strenuous efforts were being made to develop a powerful standing army – though it might also be said that the new Catholic force simply needed training.

Then there is the argument that James was using Ireland to experiment with domestic policy – trying on the dog in a theatre that did not matter much. The aggressive Tyrconnel now becomes someone capable of carrying out drastic reform without pausing to count the cost. Whatever opprobrium is generated will be laid at the obnoxious Deputy's door. Ultimately, the King will have a Catholic régime in Ireland to counterbalance the Protestant one in England; but one based to a greater extent on arbitrary power. No need of complicated laws, the King himself will protect the Irish Protestants from Catholic excesses.

Against this are rumours dating from that 1687 meeting at Chester, that the Deputy was, in the event of James' death, to bring Ireland under French protection and at all costs keep it out of the hands of his son-in-law, William of Orange. But the hard evidence suggests James was cool to the idea, if indeed it was proposed; it was perhaps a pet project of the Earl's. The rumours at least suggest that Tyrconnel was getting ahead of his master, perhaps driving policy.

In the last analysis, any deviousness should probably be laid at Tyrconnel's door, not the King's. If one were talking of Charles II's reign, well, who's to say, but James' primary character flaw, as a king, was not deviousness, but an obstinate and open honesty. Principle was everything to him. The failure of his reign was almost solely due to an inability to compromise and an inability to dissemble the fact that he would not compromise. On the other hand, even his friends called Tyrconnel, "Lying Dick".

But if Tyrconnel was overstepping his bounds, why did James publicly support him? Perhaps because the Earl's acts were filtered through the courtiers surrounding the king – men like Sunderland, who backed Tyrconnel's call for a parliament and then denied he had done so when the rival William of Orange came to the throne. Maybe, too, James remembered the fate of another Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, one whom the English Parliament of the day forced his father to execute. Like Strafford, Tyrconnel was the friend of the King. And James was emotionally incapable of betraying even a false friend.

The Glorious Revolution

Tourist: "Who is that man I see on all the billboards?"
Guide: "That is our Glorious Leader.*"*
Tourist: "Oh?"
Guide: He took power in a bloodless coup."
Tourist: "Bloodless?"
Guide: "All smothering."

The general educational system teaches (when it has sufficient funding for a history program) that Great Britain has suffered no invasion for a thousand years. This is a lie.

It also teaches (where programming allows credits in English history) that the Glorious Revolution was far superior to the French Revolution because it executed the transition to the Modern State without bloodshed. This also is a lie.

The event can still be called a Revolution, in the sense that the mode of government was significantly altered. Indeed, the Revolution is the basis of modern parliamentary democracy, and of the American Constitution. But compared to the French Revolution the affair was little more than a *coup d'etat*.

A New Broom

King James II is blamed as the author of his own defeat, but in truth, the kettle was already boiling over by the end of his brother's reign. There was a concerted effort to keep the lid on, perhaps because everyone liked Charles so much – or perhaps because they could still remember Cromwell's Protectorate.

The *Comte de* Gramont gives this portrait of James in the 1660s:

"The character of the Duke of York was entirely different [from Charles]: he had the reputation of undaunted courage, an inviolable attachment for his word, great economy in his affairs, hauteur, application, arrogance, each in their turn. A scrupulous

observer of the rules of duty and the laws of justice, he was accounted an faithful friend, and an implacable enemy."

And the chronicler Bishop Burnet says,

"He was very brave in his youth; and so much magnified by Monsieur Turenne [whom he served under in exile], that till his marriage lessened him, he really clouded the King [Louis XIV], and passed for superior genius. He was naturally candid and sincere, and a firm friend, till affairs and religion wore out all his first principles and inclinations… The Duke of Buckingham gave me once a short but severe character of the two brothers. It was the more severe, because it was true; the King [Charles] (he said) could see things if he would: and the Duke [James] would see things if he could. He had no true judgement, and was soon determined by those whom he trusted: but he was obstinate against all other advices. He was bred with high notions of kingly authority, and laid it down for a maxim, that all who opposed the King were rebels in their hearts. He was perpetually in one amour or other, without being very nice in his choice: upon which the King once said, he believed his brother had his mistress given him by his priests for penance. He was naturally eager and revengeful: and was against the taking off any that set up in an opposition to the measures of the Court, and who by that means grew popular in the House of Commons. He was for rougher methods. He continued many years dissembling his religion, and seemed zealous for the Church of England, but it was chiefly on design to hinder all propositions that tended to unite us among ourselves. He was a frugal prince, and brought his Court into method and magnificence, for he had £100,000 a year allowed him. He was made High Admiral, and he came to understand all the concerns of the sea very particularly."

Gramont's Memoirs, pp. 91 & 92, text and Ed. note.

Family Matters

Though deeply disturbed by the events of the 1680s, indeed, of the 1670s as well, the Protestants of the Three Kingdoms essentially remained inert. The finger in the dike was the nature of the royal succession. First, although James was openly Catholic, he was the legitimate heir. Anglicans as well as Catholics could not argue with that. (And no one cared what the republican Dissenters thought). Second, his own heir was his Protestant daughter, Mary.

There are two Marys in this tale: Mary Stuart, and Mary d'Este of Modena. One was Protestant and the other Catholic. Mary Stuart was a daughter of James by his first wife, the commoner Anne Hyde. "Commoner" in this case means she was not of royal blood. She was, in fact, the sister of the Earl of Clarendon, which made the Irish Viceroy not only the King's brother-in-law, but Mary Stuart's maternal uncle.

Anne Hyde had been maid of honour to Charles I's daughter – yet another Mary (yawn). This Mary, the Princess Royal of her day, married a Prince of Orange; their son was that William of Orange who was destined to marry Anne Hyde's own daughter Mary. In this way, William III was both son-in-law and nephew of James II. If his wife's own claim to the throne somehow failed, William was third in line anyway, after his wife's sister, Anne.

Now James, as a young Duke of York, was rather profligate, to put it mildly. Despite his strong religious beliefs, he never succeeded in curbing his appetite for women. Among many *amours*, proper or otherwise, during his exile, he had had an affair with Anne Hyde. Unfortunately for him, she cried pregnancy and then produced papers stating James was prepared to marry her. Something for the tabloids, but not an unusual hazard for drone princes.

[It was just like James to have committed the error of signing such a document].

Eventually, the Duke of York was forced to marry the woman, with whom, admittedly, he was still in love. Mary and her younger sister Anne were James' only surviving children by Anne Hyde. Young Anne was married off to George of Denmark, and Mary, very early in life, was bagged, as has been duly noted, by the much older William (III) of Orange, the Staadtholder of the seven United Provinces. It remains only to be said that though it was much against her own will, to the surprise of everyone, including herself, her own shotgun wedding evolved into a love match.

Meanwhile, James found himself in line for the Succession, and a commoner wife would not do. Pressure was brought to bear, but the couple remained married until Anne Hyde's death in 1671. Two years later, a new bride was procured for the duke. This was the fifteen-year-old Maria Beatrice d'Este, of Modena. James had no objections. She was just about the most beautiful woman in Europe. They were married by proxy.

Though Queen Mary, when she finally arrived in England, at first hated her situation – *so much damp! Such inedible food! And married to an old man!* (James was in his forties when they were wed) as the years passed the couple became devoted to each other. James had continued to play the field when Anne was around, but curbed his proclivities <somewhat> under the new management.

Despite the d'Estes' close ties to the Papacy, Mary of Modena was at first acceptable to much of the Court. She fitted in. Also, King Charles made her *persona grata*. Besides, the only princesses of sufficient stature to marry a king were Catholic. Admittedly, Sophia of Hanover had been on offer, but James spurned her. An act of which the future King George I was the beneficiary.

Queen Mary, however, was not acceptable to the people, who were daily witnesses to the increasingly Popish trappings of James' household. Neither did they cotton to her retinue – "Dagoes" one and all. And she was not, as they became older, acceptable to the two daughters of Anne Hyde – though at first, being nearly the same age, their relationship was a close one. Fortunately (to Protestant minds), none of her children survived long; indeed, by 1687 she had not had a child for some years.

A Question of Faith

"I A. B. *do declare that it is not lawful upon any pretence whatsoever to take arms against the king, and that I do abhor that traitorous position of taking arms by his authority against his person or against those that are commissionated [sic] by him."*

Oath of Passive Obedience

James has been heavily faulted for his "religious bigotry" – conveniently forgetting that his opponents were also bigoted, and that the age itself honoured bigots, of the right sort. Oddly enough, James seems to have been an advocate of religious liberty, after a fashion, though his opinions still appear extremely reactionary to the present generation. Usually this situation arises because the prince in question is a secret devotee of the Atheist Enlightenment cult. But in James' case it may have been because he himself belonged to a minority denomination.

To begin with, young James, as an exile in France, had, naturally, to seek religion where he could find it, and in France, the religion of the Court was not Protestant, it was Catholic. It has also been said that in his younger days, the Duke of York was a bit of a rake. The Catholic faith is probably the one best fitted to deal with such men. His formal adoption of Catholicism, around 1668-9, was in part a reaction against his former life of sin. James' religious faith became the cornerstone of his entire character and must be taken into account when analysing all his actions.

James' conversion of course remained secret for some years for political reasons. But it is important to note that his first wife also became a Catholic. Though he was afflicted with the usual "fervour of the convert", the Duke of York continued to attend Anglican services, even after his true faith became known. Until 1676, in fact. It may be said in passing that Anglicanism covers a broad spectrum of opinion and ritual, ranging from the pseudo-Catholicism of the "High Church" to "Low Church" semi-Calvinism.

In 1673, the year of James' second marriage, Parliament passed a Test Act, requiring all government officials to publicly renounce certain Catholic doctrines (notably Transubstantiation), on oath, and to receive the Eucharist in Anglican form. James refused, losing his post as Lord High Admiral in consequence. King Charles II opposed his brother's stand while respecting his principles, and gave specific orders that his two surviving

daughters be educated as Protestants. James was sent to Scotland, where it was possible for him to hold a military command without being assassinated by some sectarian freak.

[Both Anglicans and Catholics celebrate the Eucharist, the taking of bread and wine as instituted by the Lord Jesus in the Last Supper. Anglican doctrine holds this (perhaps the phrase "allows this" is better) to be a symbolic ceremony of remembrance, joining the believers with Christ "in spirit" as they partake of His "body" and "blood". Catholic doctrine holds the bread and wine to be actually transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ, making it a "physical" spiritual union (such a thing is one of the Church's spiritual mysteries). Transubstantiation is a major sticking point whenever anyone discusses the reunification of the Christian Church.]

In his new role, the Duke of York displayed the limits of his tolerance. There had been a revolt by the wilder religious sectaries of Southwest Scotland that had culminated, in 1679, in the Battle of Bothwell Brig. The Cavalier, James Graham of Claverhouse, otherwise Bloody Clavers, had bathed that field in the blood of the Saints. James had to put Humpty Dumpty together again. He did it by coming as champion of the Episcopalian Church, wagging his finger and shaking a large stick, and generally making enemies among The Elect. But the issue here was not religion, but politics. The Dissenters had challenged the State religion – that is, not the Kirk which the mass of the people belonged to, but the Episcopalian offshoot of the Church of England.

James was Catholic, but that was his affair. He may have disagreed with mainstream Protestant doctrine, but Anglicanism was still the State religion, and must be upheld. His brother was head of the Anglican Church. James had many friends who were C of E, including the future Duke of Marlborough. As for the Calvinists and the Kirk, well, they were irritating, *and* longwinded, but they upheld the State, more or less. What James could never abide was any group that refused to acknowledge the authority of the civil power.

This attitude was common to the times. The doctrine of Passive Obedience was widely held. To quote John Stevens (*Journal*, p. 13):

> *"The principle wherein the Romish Church, the Jesuits, and we [Anglicans] agree is this; that none may resist the higher powers; that obedience, at least passive or submissive from the outward man of our bodies, lives, and estates is due to the higher powers." (Bishop Jackson)*

Even the Presbyterians said (*ibid*):

> *"Under the name of the Saints are contained all the rest of the Church, which do not exercise any public office or function therein, whose duty as in all others sometimes is only this, to suffer themselves to be ruled and governed by those whom God hath set over them." (Cartwright)*

To some, James' handling of affairs north of the Border made him appear a Catholic firebrand, bent on returning England, and Scotland, to Rome, to some, he was, as he saw himself, a Champion of the Establishment, while to others he appeared as one merely seeking equal rights for his coreligionists – who were being persecuted in a thousand petty ways – and toleration of other men's opinions. Provided, that is, that those opinions approved the natural right of his family to run the show.

Crisis of State

Of these the false Achitophel was first:
A Name to all succeeding Ages Curst…
In Friendship False, Implacable in Hate:
Resolv'd to Ruine or to Rule the State…
Then, seiz'd with Fear, yet still affecting Fame,
Usurp'd a Patriott's All-attoning Name.
So easie still it proves in Factious Times,
With publick Zeal to cancel private Crimes.
How safe is Treason, and how sacred ill,
Where none can sin against the Peoples Will:
Where Crouds can wink; and no offence be known,
Since in anothers guilt they find their own.

John Dryden, Absalom and Achitophel
[Achitophel figures for the Earl of Shaftesbury.]

James' opponents remained convinced that his coming to the throne would turn England into a Papal satrapy. All very well to talk of religious tolerance, but as goes the Court, so goes the nation. If Catholicism should ever become popular… Then all those monastic orders would want their lands back.

These fears coalesced in the Exclusion Crisis of the late 1670s and early 1680s. As the name suggests, this was an attempt, by Parliament, to exclude James from the Succession. The movement's champion was Anthony Ashley Cooper, 1st Earl of Shaftesbury, who also happened to be Chancellor of the Exchequer. Several bills were proposed over the years, and shot down one by one. So close did they come to success, however, that King Charles was forced to prorogue Parliament three years in a row (1679, 1680, 1681), and then gave up on it entirely.

[Not that Parliament sat regularly by law, but the King needed money.]

[The Government of the 1660s was known as the Cabal. It was composed of five privy councillors, and was seen by many as both dangerous to the King's authority and to civil liberties. They were the first organised "bloc" ("party" is too strong) of modern times. The name arose because the men were implicated in the fall of a previous King's minister and because they conducted their affairs with unusual secrecy. The name stuck because of their own names, which spelled CABAL: Baron CLIFFORD, Earl of ARLINGTON, Duke of BUCKINGHAM (son of the man in Dumas' Three Musketeers), Baron ASHLEY, Duke of LAUDERDALE. In reality, these men held the whole spectrum of political opinion between them and were often deeply divided. Ashley (Shaftesbury) was a champion of Parliament. The Cabal broke up in the 1670s and Shaftesbury went on to found the Whig Party.]

The advocates even resorted to manipulation of mass opinion by finding a defrocked Anglican priest who was prepared to swear to a plot to kill the King and install James in his place. This was the Popish Plot that did so much harm to the Catholic cause. ("*Are you now, or have you ever been, a member of the Catholic Church?"*) Charles had no legitimate children, which added to the fear. Some even proposed admitting one of his illegitimate offspring, James Scott, Duke of Monmouth, to the Succession.

In the end, the crisis did not alter the Succession, but it had a number of very important effects. Long term, it can be seen as the chief catalyst in the formation of the modern party system and of parliamentary democracy in general. Known by derogatory names turned badges of honour, the advocates of Exclusion and champions of Parliament were the Whigs, and their opponents were the Tories. The crisis also set another precedent along side that of restoration-by-armed-force-married-to-the-will-of-the-people-as-expressed-by-its-élites. Altering the Succession was now a conceivable legal option. For James personally, the effects of the crisis were bad.

It was during the crisis that James was sent to Scotland. Indeed, he was originally sent to Brussels, well out of the way. His role as a policymaker was curtailed. He also lost many friends, perhaps because he regarded their politics in a personal light. A solid

block of opposition developed against him. But the worst effect of all came not from the crisis itself, but from its outcome. James succeeded. He succeeded in beating the opposition, and he Succeeded to the throne. To one of his deep spiritual convictions, such an unlikely victory must have a Divine origin. He was a man of destiny, and that destiny was to restore England to Christendom.

A Peaceful and Orderly Succession

King Charles died in 1685, making a deathbed conversion to Catholicism that was a nine days wonder. James reappeared before the end. This was not the "opportunism of a carrion bird" that it is sometimes made out to be. In his cold way, James loved his brother.

The Duke had regained some popularity as a result of the Rye House Plot (1683), in which he and his brother were to have been assassinated. A number of prominent Whigs were implicated and the party found itself under a cloud. Charles had readmitted him to the Privy Council in 1684. So, while a few glowered and muttered in their beards, no one actually shrieked and rent their garments.

The Whigs were down but not out. Shortly after James' accession, his nephew, Monmouth, who had been a front man in the Rye House Plot, returned from exile at the head of a small army. Monmouth's Rebellion was a decided fizzle. It was still the honeymoon period for James. No one of consequence joined the rebellion except the half-mad Lord Grey. The rebel army found itself bottled up in Devon and was crushed by Lord Feversham and John Churchill at the Battle of Sedgemoor.

[Though it will come as a shock to modern minds, the Stuart Army was commanded by a Frenchman. Lord Feversham was otherwise Louis de Duras, an Huguenot. (Imagine the Pentagon being run by Taiwanese generals). Of course, under William of Orange, such an unnatural policy would not be tolerated for an instant. His *commander-in-chief was a… naturalised Frenchman: Marshal Schomberg.]*

Initial reactions to James' accession were positive. Parliament, known as the Loyal Parliament, and predominantly Tory in outlook, was favourably inclined. Enough so to vote him an income for life. That was the last time they would do such a thing.

[Technically, the parliament was less Tory than"Court Party Anglican". Whigs and Tories were only just beginning to emerge as voting blocks. The name Whig comes from the Whiggamore Raid of 1648, where a band of Covenanters called the Kirk Party marched on Edinburgh to fight another party of Covenanters called the Engagers. The Engagers had done a deal with Charles I, but the Kirk Party, consisting of radicals under the Marquess of Argyle, opposed the idea. The Earl of Shaftesbury, who hazily identified with the latter's politics, adopted the name for his party.

The Tories, for their part, were named after those dispossessed Irish gentlemen who took to cattle raiding – the implication being they were a pack of Catholic rebel dogs (even though most Tories were Anglicans).

The Whig political spectrum was "leftist", leaning as far as republicanism, and mainly represented the towns and moneyed interests; the Tories ranged from right of center to extreme "White reactionism", and represented the Administration, landed gentry, and the high aristocracy.]

It was sufficient for some that the transition of power had been smooth. Many, seeing that the next heir – Mary of Orange – would be a Protestant, saw no need for violent action. James was now advanced in years and his wife had not born a child, even a stillborn, for a long time.

James tried hard to be a good king, involving himself in governance to a far greater extent than his brother. But he succeeded only in alienating his supporters, bloc by bloc. First, he tried relaxing the English Penal Laws.

These were essentially the same as those later introduced into Ireland. Out of a long list, there were five key laws that had been passed only in the 1660s. Known as Clarendon's Laws (*though that earl opposed them and had consequently been toppled by the Cabal*), they dealt with religious-loyalty issues: the Corporation Act that excluded Nonconformists from office because all office holders had to follow the Church of England Communion rite; the Act of Uniformity that made the Anglican Book of Common Prayer (that is the Anglican Service) obligatory for all religious services; the Conventicle Act that forbade groups (like the Nonconformist Whigs) meeting for worship in places other than those authorised for worship; and the Five Mile Act, which forbade Nonconformist ministers from approaching within five miles of either incorporated towns or their former livings, and which forbade them from teaching in schools.

[Nonconformists and Dissenters are not identical. A Nonconformist is anyone who does not profess the Anglican religion, including Jews, Moslems, and Atheists, and also including Dissenters holding extreme separatist views. Baptists, Quakers, and Methodists are Nonconformists. Dissenter is a much narrower term initially referring to certain qualifiers within the Anglican Church, and later expanded to mean a Puritan (ex-Anglican) or Presbyterian who refuses to acknowledge the King as Head of the Church and who refuses to recognise the authority of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, i.e. bishops. The Cromwellians were Dissenters; the Rabid Sectaries that even Cromwell feared were Nonconformists. Interestingly, the modern Anglican Church has hatched a new batch of Dissenters. It is an occupational hazard of formalised religion.]

By relaxing these laws, James alienated the Crown's traditional supporters, the Anglican Tories. He was forced to find a new power base, and tried to build a coalition of Dissenters, Catholics, and Nonconformists by issuing a Declaration of Indulgence – basically a statement of religious tolerance. The Penal Laws were suspended with regards matters ecclesiastical, people were permitted to worship as they chose in chapels or private houses, and the Test Act that required a religious oath before taking office was abolished.

[This all worked to his own advantage, too. Now people could not whine about his private chapel and tame Jesuits.]

Unfortunately, no guarantee was made that Anglicanism would remain the official religion of the country. The move also, though it appeared to favour all sects, mainly strengthened the position of Catholics.

The Declaration was promulgated in April of 1687. The year before, James ordered the Court of the King's Bench (the nation's "Supreme Court") to lift the civil restrictions of the Test Acts. He then removed the anti-Catholic Bishop of London from office, followed by the Protestant fellows of Oxford's influential Magdalen College. But, so far, James appeared to be merely getting his own back.

As in Ireland, the Army was restructured to first include Catholics, and then to be dominated by them. It was also expanded, to some 34,000 men, and it was the spectre of a Standing Army, more than anything else, that led Parliament to put its foot down. An angry King James prorogued Parliament without its consent. Shades of 1628 and the decade long crisis that led to 1642. The Army was brought into camp at Hounslow, close to the Capital.

Finally, in 1688 came the affair of the Seven Bishops. James had reissued his Indulgence, ordering it to be read in every church. The Archbishop of Canterbury and six other bishops wrote to the King, asking him to "reconsider his policies". Rather than heed their warning, James took this as an act of rebellion and had them arrested and placed on trial. All were acquitted, amidst popular acclamation.

The Spark

And meanwhile, on June 10th, 1688, Mary of Modena gave birth to a son.

Frantic attempts were made to discredit the birth. During the pregnancy, it was said to be spurious – she was wearing a pillow. After the birth, prior Catholic confidence that the issue would be a boy was used to justify rumours of a "changeling", supposedly smuggled into the bed in a warming pan. This rumour was widely believed even by those who ought to have known better, having been present at the birth. Being asked to step back from the bed so the Queen could have some air was sufficient excuse for a Protestant minister or lady-in-waiting to aver he or she had not been present. The evidence of the <Protestant> midwife, however, is incontrovertible: it was a boy.

Dublin went wild with excitement. Whig Londoners drooped visibly. James, of course, was ecstatic. He was a devoted family man. But his son-in-law, William of Orange, was not in a congratulatory mood. Relations between Holland and England cooled sufficiently enough for Tyrconnel to recall some regiments that had been promised to William, just when France appeared to be girding for war. The Earl's enemies latched onto this as proof he was planning a Catholic rising.

What actually happened was that William released the officers but only reluctantly allowed some of the men to go. The Protestants transferred to his service while the Catholics returned to England, where they formed the cadre of three new regiments, all paid for by Louis XIV. The vacancies in Holland were filled by Protestants dismissed from James' service, who now agitated for action by William.

[The concept of the King of France paying for English regiments, though it boggles the modern mind, was not an unusual one for the age: it was exactly what William and the Dutch had been doing. Kings were happy to loan their soldiers out. That way they could keep a standing army without it being on the books. France was not even "The Enemy". Yet.]

A further source of tension stemmed from this affair. To fill out the new regiments, James requested recruits from Ireland. Such a step had not been popular in the 1640s, and it was not popular now. Irish "mercenaries" – notwithstanding that plenty of "English" regiments contained Irishmen – were seen as a step toward despotic rule. Indeed, the King did have a secondary motive: to overawe the malcontents.

The Plot to Depose the King

There was always a strong element of opposition to King James. As previously mentioned, there had been Monmouth's Rebellion in 1685, right at the time of his accession. In 1686 a new plot was hatched at Charborough House. The conspirators, mainly Whigs, were hosted by Thomas Erle, MP for Wareham and Deputy Lieutenant of Dorset, later to be a Lieutenant General under King William, and Governor of Portsmouth. Their goal was to supplant James with his daughter Mary, whose husband could be installed as Regent. On the birth of the Heir, the plotters reconvened and widened the conspiracy.

William of Orange was involved from an early date. It is still unclear whether he drove events or merely took advantage of them. Although he and his wife had been the expected heirs for some years, King James had always indicated that this would only be on condition they officially accept his practising of the Catholic religion. This William refrained from doing because he feared it would only enhance French influence in England.

With a Continental war looming, William could really use those fat English revenues. As a good Calvinist, he deplored the direction England was taking, and feared she might wind up deeper in the French pocket. Those who welcomed him shared his views, while as good Whigs, they looked forward to the lucrative armaments and clothing contracts that would be forthcoming. Too bad William planned to give the bread contract to the Jews of Amsterdam.

So, the Prince of Orange had been busily at work grinding out propaganda in his favour, including an open letter, published in London in November of 1687, in which he came out against James' religious policies. William was played up as a "true Stuart" but one not tainted by "cryptocatholicism" or Absolutist deviancies.

In December, King James was warned that William had secretly approached the leaders of both the Whig and Tory blocs, offering himself as king should circumstances require it; in exchange, as a known "anti-Absolutist" he promised to place himself under any restrictions Parliament might impose.

But it was not due to the birth of an heir the following June that *William* decided his time had come. It was the signing, in April 1688, of a naval treaty between France and England. France was to pay for an English naval squadron in The Channel. What that meant, in his mind, was an immanent fourth Anglo-Dutch war.

Fomentation

There is a tragic quality to the story of James II, like that of his father. But where Charles I's story is *Julius Caesar*, James' is the story of *King Lear*.

The next step for William was to obtain a lawful invitation to bring an army into England. Through his wife, Mary, and her sister Anne, a variety of powerful people were approached, including the original Whig conspirators, but adding to them many Tories, such as Anne's friend John Churchill, second in command of the Army. Anne herself, from doting daughter, had by now come to abhor her father and stepmother.

Primarily, this was from religious conviction – Anne was utterly devoted to the Anglican Church thanks to the influence of her early tutors – and partly from her association with people of Whig persuasion, but partly, and perhaps subconsciously, due to jealousy. Especially, during the Queen's pregnancy, she absented herself from Court, though the child could just as well have been a girl. Later, she refused to credit the birth.

[Anne had many pregnancies, but none of her children lived.]

After the Revolution, she quickly fell out with Mary and her husband, acidly naming William "Caliban". She, like most of the plotters, had believed William's assurances that he would come with only a token force and that the Revolution would truly be homegrown. Instead, he brought 10,000 men, predominantly Dutch, who lorded it over the English.

Anne had also believed William would merely act as Regent. His claim to the throne was weaker than hers. Though his wife would be Queen, if William had remained Regent, Anne would have succeeded to the throne. Or, if James had been allowed to remain on the throne as a figurehead – another option – William and Mary might have gone back to the Netherlands once the dust had settled, and left Anne in charge. Instead, William and Mary ruled jointly, Mary died before William, and Anne did not come to the throne until after the turn of the century.

Mary, on the other hand, acted mainly from devotion to her husband. Her views on her father were filtered through Anne's warped looking glass and coloured by her husband's opinions. In after years, James forgave Mary for her part in his overthrow, but he never forgave Anne.

William had also to secure his rear. In May, 1688, he obtained assurances from the Duke of Hanover and the Elector of Saxony that they would remain neutral. The Emperor was assuaged by William's word that he did not intend to persecute the Catholics, and promised to make a speedy peace with the Turks so as to bring an army to bear on France, the common enemy of all.

William's chief struggle was to be with his own States General. The House of Orange provided the hereditary *Staadtholders*, or executive officials, of the Dutch Republic. The Staadtholders did not rule Holland (though in time of war they assumed wider powers). Actual rule was invested in the States General, or Dutch Estates, representatives of each of the seven jealously independent provinces. After Freedom (and sometimes before it), Money was their god. The cost of this "folly" of William's amounted to 7 million guilders. The States General would have to be persuaded the money was well spent.

The Jews of Amsterdam forked over a substantial portion – 2 million was paid out by a single financier, and on no security other than victory, which was nice of him (though it gives an indication of the odds being offered). The city also contracted to provide 400 transports. The Pope contributed a little something, too, under the table. Innocent XI hated the Bourbons.

13,616 mercenaries were hired from Brandenburg, Celle, Württemburg, and Hesse-Cassel, so that better Dutch regiments could be released from garrison and take part in the expedition. The Navy was expanded by 9,000 men, ostensibly to fight the Dunkirk pirates.

[At this time, Dunkirk was a sort of "free state" where privateers, mainly French-backed, had set up shop.]

In August of 1688, Tyrconnel got wind of the plotting taking place in Holland and tried to warn James. He was seconded by the French ambassador. In response, 3 regiments of Foot and 1 of

Dragoons were sent from Ireland; new regiments were raised in Ireland to replace them. Some of the reinforcements were well behaved, but others were not. In particular, a regiment sent to Portsmouth – MacElligott's, which was newly raised – terrorised the town, leading to a riot.

The governor of Portsmouth, James Fitzjames, Duke of Berwick (the King's natural son by Churchill's sister, later to be an outstanding general) tried to ease the pressure by spreading the Irishmen among several regiments, but many of the officers of those regiments refused to have them. The officers were cashiered for disobedience. William's propaganda machine portrayed this as yet another attempt to "Catholicize" the Army.

The French Put Their Foot In

Despite Stuart *faux pas* such as these, William was having such difficulties with the Estates that by September, he was ready to call the whole thing off. If France should attack Flanders while the fortresses were held by second line troops, it might be disastrous.

And then the French solved all his problems. First, two letters were handed to the States General by the French ambassador. The first warned the Dutch to leave King James alone. The second warned them to keep their fingers out of the German pie. James compounded this act by hysterically claiming he had no hand in the matter, thus making the Estates extremely suspicious that an Anglo-French alliance was in the works (and there had been that naval treaty, too). The letter regarding Germany was also important, because it suggested the French intended to march into the Rhineland, not Flanders; this proved to be the case.

[The French ambassador was the same Comte *d'Avaux who later appeared in Ireland.]*

That same month, the French, who had been fighting a tariff war with Holland for the last year, suddenly decided to impound all Dutch ships currently in French ports. This was intended merely as a stern warning, but it was interpreted as a virtual declaration of war.

At the end of the month, the French marched into Germany, making war on the Emperor while he was still tied down by the Ottomans. King Louis had no desire to attack the Dutch. William began to strip troops from the eastern border. Amsterdam, meanwhile, voted in favour of the invasion, and the rest of the Estates followed suit on September 29th (NS). It would be a preemptive strike.

Invasion!

A fleet of 53 warships was assembled. Though actually commanded by Lieutenant-Admiral Evertsen and Vice-Admiral van Almonde, for propaganda purposes, Rear-Admiral Arthur Herbert was in charge. Herbert had arrived at the Hague on June 30th (OS), disguised as a common seaman. He was the man who brought the formal invitation, signed by the Immortal Seven (six nobles and a bishop), for William to "come and save them". Seven signatories were all the plotters could count on.

William, though also the Dutch Admiral-General, pointedly removed himself from operational matters, sailing aboard a private yacht. Lieutenant-Admiral Schepers, a shipping magnate from Rotterdam, commanded the transports. The troops were under command of Marshal Schomberg, a famous Huguenot commander, late of the French Army, now serving on loan from Brandenburg.

The invasion was not a secret. Apart from statements emanating from The Hague inciting all loyal Englishmen to cast off the Catholic yoke, various individuals wrote to or spoke with James. One Jacobite supporter published a broadsheet stating "*an absolute conquest is intended under the specious and ordinary pretences of religion, liberty, property and a free Parliament"*. Thoroughly alarmed, the Sun King issued another Stern Warning to the Dutch Estates, threatening to declare war. Of course, he had no troops to spare.

Though secrecy was impossible, the Dutch moved with lightning speed. Embarkation began on September 22nd (NS), even before the expedition had been approved. The transports were fully loaded by the 8th of October, and the same day the Estates gave open approval. In England, King James warned his subjects to be ready to repel any invasion.

Two days later, William published his Declaration of The Hague. 60,000 copies were to be translated and issued upon landing. The document claimed that William's intent was threefold: to maintain the Protestant Religion, to uphold a Free Parliament, and to discover whether the new Prince of Wales was really legitimate or not. King James would be respected, both in his person, and in his position. (*Remember, mein Führer, always the Big Lie*). This was in accordance with the wishes of the men inviting him.

[These declarations were actually written by William's spin master, one Fagel.]

In October of 1688, there was a riot in London, with Irish troops being attacked by the mob. William, in response to allegations from King James that he intended to overthrow the Monarchy, denied any such thing. That was on the 14th.

On Guy Fawkes Day, William landed at Torbay in the West Country and began the overthrow of James' régime. The swiftness of his actions amazed Europe. King Louis, who had counted on the season being too advanced for the Dutch to actually do anything, was horrified. James, though he ought to have been prepared, was likewise shocked. And the shocks kept piling up.

Most years, the last window of opportunity came in mid-October, but this year the Equinoctial gales were early, delaying the start of the invasion by three weeks. France had breathed easy. Then came the accursed Protestant Wind. The fleet sailed on October 28th. Normally, the battle fleet would have swept The Channel first, but due to the small window of opportunity, they travelled in convoy with the transports. Soon the winds veered again, and they were forced to return to port.

William resolved to try one more time, and the winds held. The fleet sortied on November 1st (OS), headed for Harwich, where William's emissary and friend, Willem Bentinck, was waiting for them. The winds changed again, and forced the convoy south, into The Channel. The only good bit of news was that the Royal Navy was confined by the same winds to the Thames estuary. Two days later the convoy passed through the Straits of Dover.

The Royal Navy, which had watched them sail north to Harwich, then south again, without being able to do anything, was quite happy to have missed them. This was a *real* Armada, *four times* the size of the Spanish one, a column 25 ships deep, carrying 5,000 cavalry and 50,000 men (though less than half were soldiers).

Torbay was Bentinck's Plan B. He had managed to scrape together some "popular support" to welcome the Prince of Orange. William even garnered a few recruits. Landing on Guy Fawke's Day was a deliberate move. The banner flapping above William's yacht proclaimed, "For Liberty and the Protestant Religion", vaguely reminiscent of Monmouth's banner from 1685.

There was no naval opposition. The Royal Navy, 33 ships under George Legge, Baron Dartmouth, pursued the convoy, but what with contrary winds, and orders from James to "disturb" the landing only if practicable, no engagement ensued. The French Fleet was not even in the same theatre, having been sent to threaten the Papal States. Besides, they were not at war with the Dutch. *That* declaration did not come until later; Louis hoped William would be tied down in a protracted civil war.

[This may have been one reason James was so opposed to fighting. He was not such friends with France as to bleed his realm for them.]

William's forces comprised 15-18,000 infantry and 3,660 cavalry. The "Dutch" (as usual, a lot of them were mercenaries, including many English, Scots, and Irish) numbered 14,352. There were also 5,000 Anglo volunteers, many Huguenots, and even an honour guard of 200 Africans from Surinam. A high proportion of the men were Catholics.

Willem Bentinck, 1st Earl of Portland (1649-1709)

Descended from the nobility of Guelders and Overijssel. Appointed page of honour and chamberlain to William of Orange. In 1675 he nursed the prince through a bout of smallpox and became his devoted friend.

In 1677 he was entrusted with the mission of securing Mary Stuart for William, and made many connections in England. In 1683 and 1685 he returned to England to promote William's interests. He negotiated with the German princes prior to William's invasion of England, and with the plotters who had invited the prince. He also made all the preparations and ran the invasion.

In 1688/89 he received several appointments and titles: Groom of the Stole, First Gentleman of the Bedchamber, Privy Councillor, Baron Cirencester, Viscount Woodstock, and Earl of Portland.

Fought at the Boyne with Meinhard Schomberg, and at Landen and the siege of Namur, between diplomatic missions – to The Hague in 1690 when Amsterdam was at odds with William, and to Ryswick in 1697, where he arranged the Peace. He also prevented a Jacobite plot against William in 1696. In 1698 he was Ambassador to Paris, and began negotiations that led to Spanish partition treaties between William and Louis.

He resigned all his Household offices in 1699, out of jealousy toward a new favourite, but remained in William's employ, settling in England, though he was not popular with that people; he was impeached in 1701 over the Spanish treaties, which had contributed to the War of the Spanish Succession, but the case did not proceed. Queen Anne continued to employ him on occasion.

The English Campaign

William's invasion was not bloodless. But, having paid his men in advance for three months, he was content to take things easy. Though James' Army technically outnumbered the invaders, and though the King might be able to raise even more forces, there were few experienced troops. William intended to sit pat and let his presence on English soil convince the waverers they should join him. His troops were held strictly in check, not even permitted to forage. That, and the incessant rain, were additional reasons for a slow advance.

Exeter fell to William on November 9th without even a show of resistance. James' magistrates simply fled. It appeared that the bulk of the population would neither welcome the prince, nor fight for James, but simply wait and see. The general mood was sour. Most declarations of support came from the North, but even these were depressingly few. This situation lasted for some weeks.

Meanwhile, James was taking action. Refusing French aid (*let's not have any more foreigners, thank you*), he tried to rally Tory support by granting concessions, but dug his heels in over the Test Act and failed. On the 19th of November he joined an army of 19,000 men on Salisbury Plain. As in 1685, they were positioned to prevent the invading army from leaving the West Country. Even the commanders were the same: Lord Feversham as commander in chief, and John Churchill as his second. But this time they were not facing 7,000 poorly armed yokels. And Churchill was no longer loyal.

It is entirely possible that the Army as a whole could have remained loyal. In the event, the majority of the rank and file *did* remain loyal. Unfortunately there were a couple of outstanding sore points among the officer corps. First, there was resentment at the drafting in of Irish troops. Second, and much worse, as a sign of disfavour at William's bad attitude, in January, King James had forbidden his subjects to enlist in the Dutch Army, and had demanded the return of those soldiers in Dutch pay.

As has already been recounted, some few (less than 200) did return, but to these James showed great favour, alienating the established cadres. Men like Churchill did not switch loyalties on high principle, though he had written to William, "*I owe it to God and my country to put my honour into the hands of Your Highness*". They did so because their patron was patronising someone else. In that society, it was understood that one looked out for one's own interests. Churchill had "turned" as early as August 14th.

Surprisingly, James knew all about the matter, but for an unexplained reason, refused to cashier any of the disloyal officers. Perhaps he believed their oath of loyalty would hold them at the last. And it might have, if he had stood firm.

The first skirmish occurred at Wincanton, in Somerset. James' men beat off a reconnaissance party and withdrew. About 15 men were killed.

James was at Salisbury. Here he learned that a number of officers had deserted, most notable Lord Cornbury. Cornbury was Edward Hyde, later 3rd Earl Clarendon, a relation by marriage. Suffering from stress, James endured a nosebleed, which he interpreted as an evil omen. Perhaps they should retreat. Feversham urged him to do so on the 23rd. Churchill abandoned the Army the next day, after failing to win over some of the regiments for William.

[Like J. Edgar Hoover, Cornbury was famous as "a cross-dresser".]

Two days later, Princess Anne left for William's camp on the advice of her friend, Sarah Churchill. That decided James. It did more than decide him. It broke him. He suffered a clinical nervous breakdown and left for London. Anne probably bears more responsibility than anyone else for James' feeble flailings in the next few years.

[Anne's reward? She fell out permanently with her sister, ate her heart out for 14 years before coming to the Throne, enjoyed a 14 year reign of perpetual war that turned her against her friends, left no heir, and saw her realms given to a German provincial. They yanked the ring off her finger while the hand was still warm.]

Meanwhile, William had continued his slow advance. Plymouth surrendered on the 18th. On the 24th his forces were at Salisbury, on the 27th at Hungerford, and on the 28th the King's Commissioners met with him to talk matters over.

From a demoralised James came offers of free elections and amnesty for "rebels". William at first refused to treat. James' Army was still in being. James himself had secretly decided to flee the country. Better that than being handed over to his enemies for execution. He ordered the Army to disband, but before it did so it suffered a defeat at the Battle of Reading on December 10th.

Two days before, William agreed to meet with the King's representatives. The country was falling into chaos. Anti-Catholic mobbings were taking place in all the major centres. At Dover, the mob even stormed the castle. William accepted James' offer, but also stipulated the dismissal of all Catholics from state offices and demanded England pay his expenses. No reply came from James.

"Lauzun has Gone to England in Search of Some Amusement"

In the last days of James' rule, Versailles sent the *Comte de* Lauzun to London. His job was to persuade the Stuarts to come to France, and to expedite the matter. The count was a courtier poster-boy, perfect for this role, which he performed with gusto. A jailbird who had served ten years for the crime of having displeased his monarch – how dare he ask for the hand of the King's natural daughter in marriage! – and still subject to a restraining order that kept him at least two leagues from Court, Lauzun saw this vital mission as a means of regaining his King's favour. As the commentator St. Simon wrote, "*the English Revolution broke out expressly in Lauzun's interests*."

Lauzun, the Queen of England, and the baby, left England first, on December 6th (some sources say the 9th), 1688; James 15 days later. Actually, the King left the day after his wife, but he ran into a spot of trouble.

[Sometime in the dim past, a Stuart must have offended one of the Fates; not a family to put money on.]

After dropping the Great Seal into the Thames (without which Parliament could not be summoned lawfully), he proceeded downriver, but was unlucky enough to be recognised by a fisherman as he attempted to book a passage at Sheerness. Captured, he spent a "Romantic" night at a local hostelry, complete with Rude Insulting Whigs being chucked out by Reverencing Loyal Subjects – who nonetheless sent him up to London as a prisoner. In the morning came a request from a provisional government of 27 Lords. Things were getting out of hand.

The provisional government had already formally requested William to step in and restore order, but now asked James to come and talk. That night became known as Irish Night. After a day of riotous Catholic-bashing, including attacks on several foreign embassies, London panicked at the rumour of a descent by Irish troops. 100,000 volunteers stood to arms and roamed the streets in bands, hunting for nonexistent Irish soldiers.

But the demonstrations in favour of King James as he was returned to London on the 16th of December unnerved William: "*such bonfires, ringing of bells and all imaginable marks of love and esteem as made it look more like a day of triumph than humiliation*." (*Boulger, p. 27*). James began to hope. He presided over the Privy Council, and sent Feversham to ask for a meeting with William.

This forced the Prince of Orange's hand. He could not meet James. He hardly wanted to meet Feversham. If he did so, he might be required to keep the King in power. Many of those who had invited him expected no less. On the other hand, there was still a possibility he might be required to hand him over to the Whig hotheads. This seemed less likely now, but for his wife' sake, he decided to let James escape. She was already upset at the thought that her father might be arrested, or interned in Holland.

James was escorted to Rochester, but not under arrest. It was intimated to him that William could not guarantee his safety if he remained in England. The Dutch soldiers were for his protection. A house was placed at James' disposal, securely guarded in front and completely unwatched at back. Everything would be simplified if he merely took the hint. By fleeing, he would in essence abdicate. The alternatives were either a show trial, in which the Stuart charm would work to the prisoner's advantage, or more questionable means of disposal. Both would turn him into a martyr. Worse, the Army, shorn of its turncoat generals, might rally to him.

The day James left London, December 18th, William entered in triumph. Cheering crowds (very likely paid, except for the Whig-dominated guilds) greeted him with oranges. His troops had secured the Capital the day before. No English troops were permitted to remain within 20 miles of London (this order remained in force until the spring of 1690).

As a mark of the uncertainty of William's position, not only was James allowed to escape, but most of the disbanded Irish soldiery as well. Some were interned (about 1,800 in the Isle of Wight), and some Transported (two shiploads for Imperial service against the Turks), but many escaped. Many more took the regular packets from Liverpool and Chester over to Ireland. Especially, officers were allowed to go. Hardliners faulted William for this, saying as many as possible should have been held hostage to guarantee the safety of Irish Protestants.

William obtain the throne in the following manner. On the 28th he was appointed head of the provisional government. This was permissible in cases where the King was "incapacitated". He then summoned an *Assembly* of the MPs of Charles II's reign. This cut out the members of the Loyal Parliament. Convoked in early January, 1689, the Assembly, called a Convention because James was still technically King, took over the functions of Parliament.

There were wearisome debates over what should be done. The radial Whigs wanted to elect William King. The moderates argued for a joint monarchy of William and Mary, while the true blue Tories insisted William remain as Regent only, or acclaim Mary as Queen in her own right. The Whig-biased Commons stated the throne was vacant, as James had clearly abdicated, while the Tory-packed Lords said that was nonsense: Mary might be Queen, or James was still King, but the throne could never be vacant (*and we want none of your republican elected monarchies, you dirty proles*).

Ultimately, William and Mary settled matters. Mary refused to be Queen by herself. William said baldly that they could make him King or he would go home and let the Tories try to control the Whig rabble without the help of his troops. The Lords said that now they came to look at the matter more closely, it appeared to them that the Throne might indeed be vacant, and would William be pleased to warm it? On February 13th, 1689, William and Mary became the joint rulers of England, Scotland, and Ireland, though the last two realms would take some catching. They were formally crowned as England's first Constitutional Monarchs on April 11th.

This was indeed a revolution. Coronation came only after King and Queen had sworn (reluctantly) to abide by a list of articles hastily renamed the Declaration of Rights (it was originally titled 23 Heads of Grievances). This declaration ratified a Bill of Rights passed the previous December. The Bill of Rights *severely* curtailed the royal prerogative. Some of its more important clauses provided that the Sovereign could not levy taxes nor suspend laws without consent of Parliament, could not infringe the right to petition, could not keep a standing army in peacetime (that is, in England at all unless she were invaded), could not deny a subject the right to bear arms, could not punish MPs for comments they made during a debate, could not interfere with elections, and could not inflict "cruel and unusual" punishments.

King William did not want the Bill of Rights. He was not an Absolutist, but he was an authoritarian. And part Stuart. There were pressing reasons why he should agree, however. He needed the money Parliament could provide, and he needed to secure his position in England. An insurgency was brewing in Scotland. A new campaigning season on the Continent might see the French changing fronts. And Ireland was a question mark.

The Reaction

> *"the popish party arm themselves with great vigour by the instigation of the priests, and were not to have mass unless they had skeeans [daggers] or some other weapons."*
>
> *JI, p.53.*

The Exiles

James quitted England for the last time on Christmas Eve, 1688. Ironically, thanks to a delay with the carriage relays, the King arrived at Versailles only a day behind his wife. To Lauzun's embarrassment, his own party was met at Boulogne by royal officials who politely intimated that his services were no longer required (*"thanks, we'll take it from here"*).

The impression James made on the Continent did not bode well for a counter attack:

> *"tranquil and insensible; he would rather stay in France occupied with devotional exercises and hunting, but he is driven to Ireland not only by Tyrconnel but by the French."*
>
> *Quoted in Simms, JI, p.58.*

The exiles were to be quartered at St. Germain, a mothballed palace even damper and draughtier than Versailles. James' two natural sons, James, Duke of Berwick and the oafish Henry, the Grand Prior, met the family there.

King Louis welcomed them (there was the heartfelt unofficial welcome and the official state visit that took place some time later). Chivalry played a large part in the Sun King's makeup. It lay behind his current warlike endeavours, and it ensured the Stuarts a home. The men were first cousins, and friends who had fought together on the battlefield; moreover, it was "the done thing" to extend hospitality to a fallen monarch.

[image: Louis XIV in 1690.]

[The exiles did not at first get on with their hosts. Court customs were almost universally reversed – for instance, at one court, the attendant Queen received guests standing, while at the other she was seated. Making the wrong move was deemed a grave insult. The French Queen was of German extraction, not used to great courts, and sulked in order to cover up the fact that she did not know the protocol when two Queens were in residence. But matters were soon smoothed out. King James II also asked for a minimal pension and establishment (though rendering his table unpopular with the French guard details). Louis' rather foolish deathbed (1715) recognition of James Edward Stuart as James III arose mainly from a promise made to his old mistress, Madame de Maintenon, who had a fondness for Mary of Modena.]

The view from Versailles was anything but rosy. At a stroke, a friendly neutral had become an enemy, and a brother monarch had been cast down. No one was surprised, however. Concerns had been raised when the anti-French League of Augsburg was first formed, in 1686.

England had always been anti-French. But Charles II had had a French mistress, his officers served alongside the French, and both King and officers received French pensions. As Protestant Lawful Heir, William of Orange was able to play on England's xenophobia, the more so when James II came to the throne, an open Catholic.

[Some officials, notably the Earl of Sunderland, took bribes from both William and Louis.]

The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685), which deprived French Protestants of their rights and drove them out of France, had been a big mistake. The War Minister, Louvois, was behind the expulsion of the Protestants, both for religious reasons and to remove a potential fifth column, but to his ministerial credit, he was one of the first to recognise the damage it had caused. State revenue had dropped by 30 million *livres*. Between 80-100,000 of France's most industrious citizens had fled the persecution, many to England, others to Prussia. 8,000 sailors had gone over to the fleets of other nations, and 10,000 soldiers to their armies, including 500 of the king's best officers.

What could France do? When Ambassador George Skelton came to Louvois cap in hand asking for troops in 1688, the War Minister knew the end had come. He had no troops to give. The French Army was tied down in the Palatinate and could not even put pressure on Holland. Her arsenals were depleted, and all her reserves had been sent to the Spanish and Italian frontiers.

So, let William invade. Perhaps the people would resist once they got a sight of foreign troops, and lock the Dutch into a bleeding war on the other side of the Channel. In the event, dislike of the Dutch did not extend to armed resistance in England, but there was always Ireland…

The most important step was to secure the person of the Prince of Wales, and this had now been done. In French hands, he would ensure William never enjoyed an easy moment. Should his father regain his throne, the prince could also be used as a hostage.

In fact, the French ministers held little hope for the father. They considered the principled obstinacy and blind honesty that brought him down to be mere dullness of mind. But in persuading him to leave England, they, not he, had played into William's hands. That was *their* blind spot.

[image: François-Michel le Tellier, Marquis de Louvois.]

There was still Ireland. Send James to Ireland by all means. He would be as a red rag to John Bull. And once William's forces were in Ireland, the natives would see that they never left.

However, James was still in apathetic shock. Deeply religious (despite all those natural children), he was clear in his mind that God was punishing him for his sins. Going to Ireland as the French wished would serve no purpose but to spill the blood of more of his subjects. Only when his sins had been paid for would God reestablish him; and that he never doubted would happen one day.

The Situation In Ireland

In Ireland, confusion reigned. Tyrconnel was in a very dangerous position. He had always advocated establishing Ireland as a second base for James, but the crisis had come faster than he believed possible. Half his army was dispersed in England. The Protestants, fearing a Catholic bloodbath, were everywhere taking up arms and refusing to obey the authorities.

As could be expected, the North was strong for William. Derry, the most rabidly Protestant city on the island, shut its gates against Lord Antrim's regiment on December 7th. But even Dublin was not safe. A plot to arrest Tyrconnel was only foiled by the Protestant Lords Granard and Mountjoy, Tyrconnel's subordinate officers. They still hoped for a peaceful settlement, but such hopes were waning daily.

An anonymous circular warned Protestants everywhere that the Catholics intended to rise on December 9th; boatloads of Protestant women and children shipped for England. Trade came to a virtual halt. The Exchequer emptied rapidly.

Tyrconnel, it appears, still wanted peace. On the 8th of December he issued a proclamation denouncing the rumours of a rising and promising protection to Protestants. At the same time he verbally issued a riot act, warning against the assembly of large numbers of armed citizens – such as the self-appointed Protestant Watches appearing on Dublin street corners. The Earl also commissioned the raising of additional army units totalling 20,000 men.

With the news of James' flight at the end of December, it was the Catholics' turn to panic, with rumours of an immanent landing by William's Army. Refugees of both persuasions thronged the roads. In places where a minority tried to stay, they found themselves driven out at gunpoint.

Local magnates in the South quickly began restoring order, usually by sending Protestant communities north, sometimes with compensation, often without. The Protestants in Ulster organised themselves for an uprising. Meanwhile, Tyrconnel negotiated, both with the Ulstermen and with the Williamite régime. Many around Tyrconnel believe there was no hope in armed resistance. The Earl himself appeared willing to submit Ireland to William's rule. The Williamites believed his offer to disband the army and resign; he asked, in regards the Catholics, that the situation return to that of Charles II's reign.

Some of King William's advisors, notably Lord Danby, suggested a show of force by the Royal Navy, but though it had declared for William, the Navy still contained men loyal to James (remember, as Duke of York he had been Lord High Admiral) and William did not trust it. Instead, King Billy sent a negotiator, Richard

Hamilton, a Catholic nobleman whom he had taken prisoner in November.

The Hamiltons were a powerful Irish family. Richard and his brother George were nephews of the ex-Viceroy, the Duke of Ormonde. Furthermore, George, now deceased, had been Tyrconnel's wife's first husband. Richard had been made a major-general by Tyrconnel and sent to England with the reinforcements mentioned above. He seemed the logical choice for negotiations. Unfortunately, Hamilton chose to disregard his instructions and urged Tyrconnel to make a stand.

This action marked Hamilton as a traitor – even the French, with their strict code of honour, saw it this way – but the truth was he had tried to join King James after his regiment had been disbanded. He failed and was buttonholed by William. Probably he was still undecided on his personal course of action and only came to a resolution after talking to Tyrconnel.

Here again, propaganda obscures matters. Was Tyrconnel really prepared to submit or not? At the time, both sides believed he would – the Dublin Catholics threatened to burn him alive in his home if he did. Later, the Jacobite "line" would be that the Earl merely played along with William until he was ready. Tyrconnel was one of those men that fanatics never understand: an opportunist.

William must bear some of the blame for the war, if only because he had very little interest in Ireland. Pressured to act by refugee interest groups, he instead allowed himself to be distracted with worry over Scotland. The Army, moreover, was not sound. There were officers and men aplenty, but the old establishment had been disbanded and William had all the problems of trying to satisfy demobilised soldiers, weed out undesirables and rehire trustworthy elements, and keep the peace with his small invasion force, much of which consisted of extremely unpopular foreigners (*Italians, Germans, French, or Dutch, all bore the unredeemable sin of* foreignness). The English Parliament had already turned with relief to knotty constitutional questions that would sink it into a comfortable mire of committee work.

[Remember the four rules of Civil Service crisis management: 1) we do not see that there is a crisis, 2) there may be a crisis but it is too soon to act, 3) there is a crisis but it is too late to do anything now, 4) there is no longer a crisis so there is no need to do anything.]

Tyrconnel used his Protestant regiments (Mountjoy's and Lundy's) to enforce his decrees in the North. Using Catholics would have been disastrous. James' writ barely ran there, and if anything went wrong, at least all the rotten eggs would be in one basket.

Londonderry was at last persuaded to accept a garrison composed of the Protestant men from Mountjoy's Regiment. In hindsight this was a mistake on the part of Tyrconnel. Major General Mountjoy was appointed Derry's representative. He began by bargaining for an end to the levying of troops and for immunity from prosecution, as regards armed assemblies. A Protestant, but obedient to the chain of command, Mountjoy harboured hopes that Tyrconnel would change sides, and so tried to enforce his orders. Presbyterian communities and Protestant landowners were reassured, sometimes by the Deputy in person.

Tyrconnel now made a tricky play. He gave the Protestant soldiers in the Army leave, ostensibly to demonstrate to their families that they were still alive and had not been massacred as rumours had it. At the same time, however, he mobilised the Catholic element.

Then, he got rid of the Protestant competition, Mountjoy, by sending him to Louis XIV in company with a man who had secret instructions to ask the Sun King to send Mountjoy to the Bastille. The French obliged, and sent a couple of investigative representatives to Dublin with authorisation to offer arms if they thought the situation favourable. King Louis saw the opportunity to pull William away from Flanders and tie him down in a drawn-out insurgency.

[Mountjoy was exchanged in 1692, for Richard Hamilton].

The Irish Army

Tyrconnel, the commissioners found, was busy levying troops: 40,000 men for 40 regiments of foot, 2 regiments of horse, and 4 of dragoons. Charles II's small Army in Ireland, purged by Tyrconnel, had been destroyed, mainly through being sent to England.

When Tyrconnel first took command of the Irish Army, there were only two foot regiments – Lundy's and Mountjoy's, backed by a large and purely Protestant militia. The militia, as has been described, was, rather ineffectually, "disarmed", and the regulars purged.

Two additional Catholic regiments had then been raised – Hamilton's Horse and Cannon's Foot – but these were sent into England for training. They were based first at Chester, and then at Nottingham, and were augmented by a dragoon regiment. All three units were brigaded under Lord Dumbarton, who also ran the Royal Scots.

[The latter regiment mutinied in favour of James in 1689 and had to be disarmed under the cover of Dutch cannon. Bound for Flanders, some 100 men escaped to Ireland, including Dumbarton himself. This event led to the Mutiny Acts: technically the country was at peace, and technically there was to be no Army in England when the realm was peaceful (by the new Declaration of Rights). So, a Mutiny Act had to be passed. But because there were always some troops on hand, enroute to some place or other, the act had to be reissued each year, until at last the act itself became the guarantor of a standing army – despite the technical illegality of such a creation. Only a British Administration…]

This shuffling of troops was intended to keep them out of the eye of the Irish Protestants, but unfortunately, it brought them to the notice of the equally nervous English Protestants, who, as has been previously stated, claimed James was building a new army of Irish mercenaries to overawe Parliament. In the aftermath of the Revolution, the regiments were disbanded.

Some small, mainly Protestant elements remained in Ireland, but they themselves were now in the process of disbandment. The cadres from England were coming back, but they were too few. So, a new Army was in the process of formation.

It suffered from indiscipline, brought on by irregular pay and strife between the new appointees and those they had replaced. Many of the regiments were really clan hosts, some several thousands strong, others only a few hundred.

According to Williamite propaganda:

> *"The meaning of the word courage is unknown among them, and for their officers the best of them had rather creep into a scabbard than draw a sword. As for their common souldiers what are they? but the very excrement of common prisons with which their army is cumbered not manned… As for their general it is the same Tyrconnel who is famed for a coward throughout Europe".*
>
> *Boulger, p. 80*

As war loomed, the Deputy's main difficulty was the question of finding arms for and and then training a force that had never had weapons, and had none now. To begin with, the arms secured from the Protestants were reissued to the Catholics, thus fulfilling the former's worst nightmare. More surprisingly, the Protestants, whose "public safety" associations had brought out a new set of weapons, allowed their outfits to be declared "unlawful" and have their arms confiscated a second time!

To find more men, Anthony Hamilton was sent to Limerick, and Justin McCarthy to Cork. Limerick was the home base of the O'Briens, Cork of the McCarthys, both powerful clans. The men were to make lists of potential recruits; some 50,000 names were subscribed, which was very heartening.

The officers of the new army were landed gentry, mostly without prior service, except for a hard core of veterans from Hamilton's Regiment, which had been part of King Charles' Army in exile. The rank and file were country yokels – the young men of the towns were predominantly Protestant artisans, both politically suspect and too economically valuable to feed the guns.

Recruits were encouraged by the very generous pay scales, on par with the French Army: 2 shillings a week for foot soldiers, 2s6d for the Guards, and 6s for the cavalry. But money was so scarce

that almost immediately the amounts were cut back to 1s6d for the foot and 2s for the Guards. There was grumbling.

[Annual pay scales for officers during the period were as follows:
£3,440 for a Lieutenant Colonel
£1,720 – £6,000 for a Captain (varies with regiment and seniority)
£1,000 for a Lieutenant in the Foot Guards
£600 – £1,075 for a Lieutenant of the Line
£400 – £610 for an Ensign
£2,100 for a Cornet (of Horse)
£1,000 for a Quartermaster]

By January of 1689 Tyrconnel was reputed to have 60,000 on the rolls. More disbanded soldiers were dribbling into Ireland. But they were *still* short of arms. The Army was enthusiastic, but about half the men had ancient muskets or pikes, and the rest had merely sharpened their hurling sticks. It was lack of arms, not recruits, that limited the Army to 40-50,000 men, That, and the fact that the regiments were being maintained out of their officers' own pockets.

[A legend arose that the Irish were always ill equipped, but this was not so. Just in the early days before they received the French arms shipments. And after each major battle, when they threw away their weapons.]

The French promised arms, but what Tyrconnel really wanted was money; he asked James to ask Louis for 500,000 *crowns*. Adding his own income, he could then undertake to supply the Army for a year.

[As security, Tyrconnel offered the towns of Galway or Waterford. This practise had precedence in the "renting" of Dunkirk].

The shaky logistics situation of course led to plundering and cattle reiving, which led to the Protestants arming themselves (a third time) rather than remaining passive. Tyrconnel issued proclamations to little effect. Civil strife increased. Already, bands of *rapparees* or *snaphaunces* were forming: bandit gangs targeting a specific side, who would soon become full fledged guerrillas. They included many men who had been turned away from the recruiting booths.

Valuable Protestant-owned industrial sites were among the locations now garrisoned by Protestant militia. In places with large Protestant garrisons, Catholics were harassed. In other areas, Protestants continued their exodus. Tyrconnel tried again to put a stop to the flight, mainly because the ships that took the Protestants away arrived back empty, and Dublin was running short of coal.

It was in February of 1689 that the Earl finally moved against the Protestant bands in Dublin, ordering them to hand over their arms (again), though Gentlemen were permitted to retain their swords. City-wide searches for weapons caches yielded thousands of muskets and pikes, which were appropriated by the Army. The search orders were expanded to include the impounding of all serviceable horses. Shortly thereafter, the same orders were issued nation-wide, on the argument that William's forces would soon land.

In Tyrconnel's defence, the Protestants, though suffering more from these instructions (since Catholic arms and horses were theoretically at the Army's disposal anyway) did feel he was trying to be impartial. Resistance was slight.

Meanwhile, on February 22nd, William had at last issued a proclamation demanding all Irish Jacobites lay down their arms. Amnesty was promised, and toleration for those who submitted in a timely fashion. The proclamation was ignored.

THE WAR

First Moves

By March, 1689, the war, though unofficial, had begun. Tyrconnel had firm control of Munster, Leinster, Connaught. Ulster was iffy, from the start, and by early spring was slipping from his grasp. So the Earl launched a small, three-pronged offensive northward.

The first center of resistance, at Hillsborough in Co. Down, was broken up easily. Lord Mountalexander, commander of the Protestant Association of Co. Down and Antrim, could not control his subordinates. Their plot to seize Carrickfergus and Belfast fell apart thanks to petty bickering. A second attempt on the former location was made, resulting in a standoff. A truce was arranged, whereby one of the Jacobite regiments in the garrison was disbanded, but the Jacobite Earl of Antrim, who commanded there, was allowed to communicate with Dublin, giving Tyrconnel valuable intelligence and leading to the first real action of the war, the Break of Dromore.

[The counties of Down and Antrim had an anomalous administrative arrangement, so that in some ways they functioned as a single political entity].

Richard Hamilton, now a lieutenant general, was ordered north with 2,500 men and a handful of field guns. On March 14th, he met Mountalexander's forces at Dromore, southwest of the latter's base at Hillsborough, and routed them. Mountalexander failed to coordinate his horse and foot, and the latter were threatened with encirclement. The action had a significance all out of proportion to the size of the forces involved. Armed resistance by the Protestants ceased in the region. Mountalexander fled to the Isle of Man. The garrisons of Hillsborough and elsewhere surrendered.

The second thrust was made towards Enniskillen (March 20th-25th). Enniskillen's Protestant garrison, under the veteran soldier, Gustavus Hamilton (*from the part of the family that had been on Cromwell's side*), proclaimed William and Mary in March, 1689. They had already challenged one "lawful" Jacobite attempt to occupy the village. Now they sent a small force southeastward to beat the Jacks off as they attempted to deal with a small castle called Crom that lay on their route.

On the west coast lay Sligo, gateway to Connaught, and also to Donegal. Sligo remained under Protestant control for a little while, but they voluntarily withdrew to the assistance of Derry (Londonderry). A column of Jacobite horsemen under Brigadier Patrick Sarsfield occupied the vacuum in May (he arrived in country with King James in mid-March) and established a base for raiding into the North.

At Colraine, hard by the northern coast, and along the line of the Bann River, the Jacobites had received a temporary check, from a second Gustavus Hamilton (rank of major), who held until flanked by an amphibious crossing of the Bann north of Antrim Town. Those Protestants still under arms fell back on Derry.

Though Enniskillen also held, the fate of Ireland now hinged on the fate of Derry. Nominally, James' writ ran in that city, too. The garrison, though Protestant, was under his authority. But a deputation from the citizens had visited King William and obtained a promise of military assistance. The promise was fulfilled right after James arrived on Irish soil.

France and the War of the Grand Alliance

> *The action was very far from being aggressive – it was not even defensive, in the usual sense: it was undertaken under the stress of desperation, and in its essence was purely protective.*
>
> *J. Conrad, Heart of Darkness*

Contemporaries blamed France for the coming European war, believing that the superpower was bent on conquest. In actual fact, French aggression was almost purely defensive in nature. King Louis and his ministers felt themselves ringed by a host of enemies and sought to secure every possible approach route to the national heartland, by fair means or foul. They began to "acquire" key fortifications that belonged to other Powers. Of course, holding such locations also gave them the ability to launch preemptive strikes…

A superficial examination of France's conduct of the war appears to demonstrate a complete absence of grand strategic thought. Holland was the threat, so naturally the French Army marched into the Palatinate. In reality, the strategy was there, but it was not one of conquest. It was an offensively-defensive posture from which one could respond to aggression only by limited reactive measures.

The drive into the Palatinate, as opposed to a "more sensible" attack on Holland, was prescribed by two additional factors. First, it was a punitive measure against the Emperor, with the added benefit of creating a wasteland glacis on France's border. Second, the Dutch commercial classes were still friendly to France, and supplied a number of key commodities, both luxuries and essential war stores.

Given France's strategic "absence of thought", the degree of help that they ought to provide King James was the subject of some argument, and even departmental intrigue. In James' present state of mind, he would be little more than the tool of whatever party managed to latch on to him; should he then be made a present to a restored English-Jacobite government that was still anti-French?

At a grittier, internal policy level, the question was split between the Minister for War, Louvois, and the Minister of Marine, Seignelay. As would be the case in the Jacobite Rising of 1745, the Navy favoured a limited amphibious operation while the Army did not. Louvois was fixated on the direct (Continental) approach, and rightly felt Seignelay was trying to undermine his position at Court. But the direct approach had not worked as well as it should have: Louvois was living under a cloud of policy failure. The clincher was that Louis' long-suffering mistress, Madame de Maintenon, did not care for Louvois. Seignelay, the famous Colbert's son, also had ties to the Ministry of Finance.

The next question was where, if an expedition was to go, should it be sent. James, if he absolutely had to get out of his rocking chair, would have preferred Scotland, where he would be assured of a civil welcome, even from his enemies. He had many supporters in England, but they were disorganised and demoralised; besides, the King wished above all things to avoid another civil war in England. They had only just got over the last one. England would have him back when he had paid the price, but it would have to be paid elsewhere.

The Irish, he felt, might fight for themselves, but not for him (in this assessment he was wrong, initially). Tyrconnel's letters, however, clearly indicated Ireland as the place surest of success. It was Seignelay who had sent the investigative commission on December. Their report, received when Ireland had very nearly been pacified by Tyrconnel, was highly favourable, claiming the Deputy had an army of 80,000 men and that, capped with the royal Presence, its very existence would serve to subdue Ireland.

In contrast, the letter they had borne to Tyrconnel from James was pessimistic. James gave no indication when he would arrive, if ever, and grudgingly allowed that King Louis had promised 7-8,000 muskets and nothing more. The exiled king wanted Tyrconnel to hold out until summer, in the hopes that uncertainty over Ireland would cause William's overthrow. Meanwhile France should pressure the Dutch diplomatically – the Estates did not see eye to eye with William over his dynastic ambitions, since it would make him independent of them.

James' dubious questioning had spurred Tyrconnel to write that glowing report of conditions in Ireland. The French commissioners seconded his arguments, stating that without help, the Jacobite cause would fail, but that with strong support, it would be possible to use the island as a springboard for an invasion of England.

That statement made an impression on James. Earlier, he had sounded both Pope and Emperor – currently enemies of France – on the possibility of his peaceful restoration. The Pope told him that Rome could do nothing so long as James was allied with France, and the Emperor made vague sympathetic noises but would not receive his envoy. Perhaps James would have to bestir himself after all.

The King did not like the idea of taking Irish troops to England, though. He had finally realised that they would be seen as mercenaries, just like the Dutch. But a two-stage invasion of Scotland might work. The Presbyterians had seized control of the Government there, imprisoning the Earl of Perth, James' Chancellor, and the Lowlands could not be expected to rise unaided – the Duke of Gordon held Edinburgh Castle and the Bass Rock fortress for William – but the Highland clans were restive, and James Graham of Claverhouse, Bonnie Dundee, was organising them into an army.

[The Gordons were Jacobites as a rule, but it was good policy to have a family member on the other side.]

Tyrconnel hinted that his sovereign would be free to depart Ireland after having "shown the flag". French political analysts reported that English Jacobites would much prefer to see him in Ireland, rather than the Enemy's country. The Queen, spoiling for a fight, also set to shake her husband awake (in later years, she received much of the blame for the way things turned out).

Ultimately, though, given the favourable news coming out of Ireland, James had little choice. To have spurned the French, the Irish, and his loyal supporters everywhere, would be base ingratitude and cowardice.

"King James is Going to Ireland"

Early in 1689 the French had a workable, if vague, plan. The Ministry of War envisaged a small expedition, led by *Major-Général* Maumont de Fontage, an able soldier. It would primarily be an escort for a war chest and arms shipment. The units involved were to be raised from Jacobite exiles and placed under command of the Duke of Berwick.

Should peace have broken out by the time he arrived, Maumont was instructed not to land – it was possible that Tyrconnel might have worked out a deal with William. Otherwise, he was to discover Tyrconnel's plans and help him to hold out until winter. Success might make it worthwhile to then send a French corps. Early offensive action by the Jacobites was to be encouraged. One million *livres* were to be allocated to the operation, but King James was not.

[Maumont was also instructed to obtain a lifting of all trade restrictions.]

Over at the Ministry of Marine they had different ideas. Seignelay was sure that James would be going. He received support from the great Vauban, who wrote a famous passage to Louvois:

> *"I have an idea that when a man plays his last stake he ought to play it himself or to be on the spot. The king of England seems to be in this condition. His last stake is Ireland; it appears to me that he ought to go there, where with the help that the king [Louis] can give him he can get on his legs again and be supported by those of his subjects who remain loyal to him".*
>
> *JI, p. 61.*

Dutch Billy had taken his best troops into England – just in case. Even a failed Jacobite rising would prevent their employment on the Continent in 1689. Another argument clinched matters: France's only other ally was the Turk. At the moment, the Habsburg foe was preoccupied in the Balkans, but a settlement might be reached at any time. James' participation was essential to the overall war effort.

"We are now threatened with enemies on all sides, which is a little too much. We must hope that a war in Ireland will effect a powerful diversion and prevent the Prince of Orange from tormenting us by making descents"

Madame de Sévigné, quoted in Boulger, p. 41

These arguments led Louvois to amend his instructions to include James. With a royal in the field, a major general was insufficient, and *Lieutenant Général de* Rosen was appointed to command the expedition; *Maréchal de Camp de* Maumont would serve under him, along with the *Brigadiers de* Pusignan (foot) and Léry, *Marquis de* Girardin (horse). Rosen, or Roze, was a bad choice, a coarse, wife-beating Baltic German (or Livonian) mercenary. He was accounted a good cavalryman, but had scant respect for public relations and no love for the Irish. However, no one with any influence at Versailles was likely to volunteer for such a potential career-buster as Ireland.

"He was subject to passion even to a degree of madness"

Duke of Berwick's opinion of Roze, quoted in Boulger, p. 48

[The French dislike of the Irish had been imported from England, their only source of impressions about the island.]

King James left St. Germain on the 25th of February, 1689. Proceeding to Paris, he offered prayers there, then had a last interview with King Louis that evening. He did not actually set out until the 28th, after a last word on the 27th. At their ultimate parting, the Sun King' final words to him were, "*the best that I can wish for you is that we shall never meet again*". James replied, "*Sir, you have forgotten only one thing, and that is to arm me*". The French monarch then unbuckled his sword and girt James with his own hands.

The first of the expeditionary troops were already assembling at Brest. There were delays in sailing, since the winds had to be right (the ship assigned to James also collided with another ship in Brest harbour), but on March 12th (OS), after an reasonably uneventful voyage, the King landed at Kingsale (Kinsale), on the south coast of Ireland.

[The fact that James was to lead an expedition was supposed to be secret, but people began to talk when the Archbishop of Rheims was reading the regular news bulletin from the pulpit and rather obviously skipped a whole section – the news had been published!]

Now or Never, Now and Forever

[Banner over Dublin Castle]

The expedition comprised 22 ships (13 men of war, 6 frigates, and 3 fireships) under the command of Admiral Gabaret. The flotilla carried about 1,500 Jacobite soldiers (elements of James' Foot Guards and the Grand Prior's Regiment). War stores included 10,000 matchlock muskets, 1,000,000 "charges" – ammunition – and a large quantity of timber and lead.

There were some English noblemen and their servants, and the Scottish Earl of Melfort, otherwise John Drummond, plus his wife. 83 officers in all. Drummond was made Secretary of State for Ireland and quickly became detested by both Irish and French. (In exile he was to have a pernicious effect throughout the Jacobean period; his wife had a pernicious influence from the start). There were numbers of Irish, too, including Patrick Sarsfield, who was already developing a reputation. Most of the soldiers were from Dumbarton's mutinous regiment, from the *Gendarmes l'Ecossaises*, or were old exiles from Austrian and Lorraine.

One of the more important members of the expedition was Antoine de Mesmes, *Comte* d'Avaux, Ambassador to the Court of James II. His family had been diplomatists for over a century, and the current count was skilled at his trade. He had been given charge of 500,000 *livres*. Three fifths of these were available to James, on call. The remainder were a secret between King Louis and d'Avaux, to be used *in extremis*. On top of that, the ambassador had a fund of 500,000 more *livres*, of which he was permitted to admit he had some 50-60,000.

The party's initial reception was somewhat flat. James' immanent arrival had already been announced by Lord Dungan, conveyed to Ireland aboard the frigate *Soliel d'Afrique*, a ship that actually returned to Brest before the convoy sailed. But there was no crowd to meet the King. Kinsale was a small place, with few amenities.

There were no horses. It took the King's party two days to find ten screws, though the locals came forward demanding compensation for the other, decidedly invisible "fine cavalry mounts" the French had "secretly stolen". The roads were almost too bad to support a carriage, if there had been any to commandeer. John Stevens, in his *Journal*, records a long and disappointing search for a mount to take him to Dublin. He wound up walking a good part of the way. D'Avaux commented in a letter that it "*takes three days to do what is done in one elsewhere*" (*Boulger, p. 87*).

The authorities had pacified the district, however. Lord Mountcashel (Justin McCarty), whose family ran this part of the world, had a firm grip on the town of Cork, which had a significant Protestant population, and the other southern ports. The noisy Protestant community at Bandon Bridge had taken up arms, but Mountcashel was able to overawe them and extract a promise of civil obedience in return for a pardon.

Tyrconnel himself met James at Cork, and the King then began a triumphal progress to Dublin, trailed by a ragged string of footsore supporters. The King's progress was marked by local curiosity, and signs of goodwill. James issued a proclamation contrasting his real treatment of his Protestant subjects with the lies of Williamite propaganda. But once he had passed on, the administration he left behind, much of it French, behaved rapaciously.

The Rocky Road to Dublin

The King entered Dublin on Palm Sunday (March 24th), to a rapturous reception. No one had ever seen a real king before. Appearing with less splendour than a viceroy was permitted, he behaved courteously to all, and was observed to weep. The next day he issued a proclamation of religious tolerance and an invitation for all refugees to return home.

"On Thursday the 14th of March the late King being recovered of the indisposition caused by the sea set out for Dublin, where he arrived on Saturday following, being the 16th of the month, being met and received by the Earl of Tyrconnel ten miles from Dublin, who conducted him thither, having caused all the forces to be drawn up at the entrance into the town, who saluted the late King's arrival with three volleys of shot. The Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council also met him in their formalities. The streets were lined with the Irish Life Guards even to the Castle Gates, where the late King was conducted and lodged. The Papist inhabitants shouting, the soldiers musquets discharging, the Bells ringing, and at night Bonfires in all parts of the town."

Marshal de Camp d'Estrades (trainer of the royal lifeguards at Dublin), quoted in Boulger, pp. 82-83

The honeymoon did not last long. The arguments began while they were hanging about Cork waiting for suitable transport. It soon became clear that James did not know his own mind, except that he was resolved on ending his journeys in Whitehall.

"Our chief difficulty will be the irresolution of King James, who often changes his mind and then decides not always for the best".

D'Avaux, quoted in Boulger, p. 83

[Boulger suggests that James was not particularly indecisive by disposition, but that he found himself in a false position, making war on his own subjects and leading the portion that he cared nothing for against those he did care for.]

Even before he reached Dublin, James found himself at the center of conflicting factions. His inner cabinet consisted of Tyrconnel, Melfort, and the French Ambassador, d'Avaux. Tyrconnel and Melfort got on each other's nerves at once. D'Avaux, wise minister, sided with Tyrconnel, feeling Melfort's advice to be unsound. James, naturally, back his own horse: Melfort.

The King, though he approved most of his Deputy's actions, was displeased that Richard Hamilton and Justin McCarty had been made lieutenant generals. Now he was forced to accord the French officers equivalent brevet ranks and those promotions cost money. He also, though he kept his mouth shut for now, did not

much like all the talk about repealing Poyning's Law – the law that kept the Irish parliament subjected to the English parliament. The Irish could ask for much, but they could not push him too far.

It was assumed that Ireland would soon be completely pacified. The critical question was, what to do next? The Irish councillors wished James to remain in the country and help them stabilise the kingdom, perhaps make it independent, perhaps bring it within the French orbit. This was to the liking of the French. From an 'operational" standpoint, too, it would be risky to shift base before securing Ireland. They felt James' presence was needed as a unifying factor.

Melfort's desires were more in line with James' own inclination, which was to quit Ireland as soon as possible and go to Scotland. Tyrconnel actually strengthened this attitude in his letters to various personages in Scotland, portraying the Irish situation as very stable. He also sent a lieutenant general's commission to Viscount Dundee. Dundee was a good soldier, a strong supporter of the King, and an influential figure. He was also opposed to having Melfort in the Scottish government.

Tyrconnel was of two minds. James in Ireland was a valuable asset, but his Court was an interference. Encouraging the Scots to ask for the King's presence would get rid of the Court, too. But, the Earl knew things were not as rosy as he claimed.

The Earl's deputy, Mountcashel, reported to Louvois that they were ready to take the next step and proceed to Scotland. The French War Minister was not convinced, and was worried that James in his enthusiasm would abandon Ireland immediately.

Dundee wrote back to James, asking for the King's presence and for Irish troops. James promised he would come, and in the meantime, that he would dispatch some 5,000 men. The King extended his guarantee of religious tolerance to the Protestants of Scotland.

Individual noblemen, including Highland chiefs, arrived, asking for help. James gave commissions to Sir John MacLean and Ronald MacDonald to raise their clans. He could not send the promised 5,000, but would send 2,000, plus some cavalry. In the event, it appears that only Purcell's Dragoons (3-400 men) left Ireland. Purcell's fought at Killiecrankie and returned to Ireland later on.

[Some sources claim infantry was sent as well, and that it perished in the Highlands. While such a fate is not that farfetched, the evidence is slim. Sometimes, it is said that only half of Purcell's was sent. In this case, perhaps the remaining troops were composed of picquets of infantry. Dundee's death at Killiecrankie spelt the end of the Scottish Rising. His replacement, Colonel Cannon, did not understand the Highland mind and frittered away both his opportunities and his army.]

All this was upsetting to d'Avaux. It did not suit French plans to have things settled so quickly, allowing William to potentially come to an accommodation with James and refocus on Flanders. James did not appear to care. The ambassador wrote to Mary of Modena imploring her to use her influence to keep James on track. He was convinced, also, that James was ill-served. Melfort was an intriguer and a trimmer, Tyrconnel "lazy" and desirous of giving up the burden of government; he was also in bad health. But the Earl was at least "zealous for France". James found d'Avaux "haughty and disrespectful" (he spoke his mind freely), but sensible. The Frenchman received official accreditation as Ambassador on April 15th (NS).

Day by day the Irish became more rancourous toward Melfort. James' normal practice was to take the advice of the last person he talked to, and since the inner council met every evening, this usually meant Melfort, who presumably accompanied the King to his chambers. Tyrconnel, suffering from one of his periodic bouts of illness, and very depressed, was sidelined – James did not like to hear bad news. The Earl was sent to the Army, which still needed to be restructured. This soured the Deputy even more, and disillusioned the Irish party, many of whom now openly stated that if James went to Scotland they would not follow him there.

[Not only were Melfort and Tyrconnel at odds, but so were their wives.]

"Evil Advisors"

As an aside, it may be instructive to examine the struggle to remove Melfort in more detail. Before the Revolution, he had been Secretary of State for Scotland, a lieutenant general, and Master of the Ordnance. The Drummonds were a powerful Royalist family, always devoted to the Stuart cause.

The Irish loathed him. From the French perspective his presence complicated matters. Louvois was never one for divided councils, and d'Avaux found it nearly impossible to deal with the Scottish peer:

> *"he is very hot-tempered and takes offense at trifles"*
>
> *Boulger, p. 113.*

There was more than a clash of personalities. There were suspicions that Melfort and his wife were diverting funds. According to the French Ambassador, one million francs had gone out to various "causes", but only 400,000 had come in from taxation.

> *"King James wastes his money, gives nothing for useful purposes, and thousands for useless. I have paid two hundred and fifty thousand francs to his Receiver, and I can get no information as to what has been done with it."*
>
> *Boulger, p. 113.*

Tyrconnel returned from Munster, where he had been organising the Army's recruitment. With his help, d'Avaux made a determined bid to deal with Melfort. He went to the King and protested that his Secretary of State was incompetent. James asked who would replace him, and the Frenchman said even Nobody would do a better job.

The Queen had been prevailed upon to ask for the Secretary's dismissal, but unfortunately, she also reported a comment by d'Avaux that the King lacked willpower and was completely under the thumb of the Duke of Berwick and his Hamilton cronies (*this was around the time of the Newtownbutler trial, to be recounted later*). Also, that he had shown ingratitude for not rewarding the French naval officer *du* Quesne for his daring seizure of prizes in the Irish Sea. Also, that the King's temper had a short fuze. This, the King now proceeded to demonstrate, was too true.

This double-sided letter was the work of the *Comte de* Lauzun. Through Lord Dover, the royal courier, who disliked the Irish and the French, but curiously, liked Lauzun, the courtier learned all the Court gossip. He played upon Mary of Modena, hoping to rid himself of both Melfort and d'Avaux, whom he regarded as stumbling blocks for the position he coveted – Commander-in-Chief of King James' Army.

Ultimately, it was Melfort himself who sealed his own fate. He refused to send 300 cavalry to aid Patrick Sarsfield's forces at Sligo. This slighting of an incipient national hero was too much. The Irish demanded his dismissal. Tyrconnel's nephew, William Talbot, was made the new Secretary of State for Ireland. Melfort, however, was still in the King's favour, and became Secretary of State for England. He could not influence Irish policy, but he could, and did, influence the King. The chance of James leaving Ireland now seemed stronger than ever.

Death threats finally accomplished what politics could not. In fear of his life, after allowing four Protestant peers, for a large bribe, to raise their own retinue of bodyguards – who were now engaged in daily encounters with Catholic bravos on the streets of

Dublin – Melfort pleaded to be sent to France as James' representative. He and his wife left Dublin in secret on August 22nd, 1689, carrying a gigantic fortune: reputedly, his wife had first instituted and then pocketed a collection taken in aid of the Scottish Jacobites.

[On a personal note, Melfort was jealous of the attentions the gallant King paid to his coquettish wife.]

History has determined that Melfort was not a traitor in any direct sense, merely a shallow, self-serving idiot. His main fault, ignoring the venality that was common to the period, was his insistence that James should leave Ireland. To his Irish opponents, it was almost as bad a fault that he was a Protestant.

Louvois wrote a note to d'Avaux:

> *"Tell King James bluntly that if he continues to listen to bad advisors it will be useless for King Louis to waste his resources in trying to help him."*
>
> *Boulger, p. 118.*

The Battle of Bantry Bay

> *It was not thought enough to cry up the advantage of the French at Bantry over a single squadron only of the English fleet into a complete and glorious victory, though never a ship taken or sunk or the pursuit followed. Every day supplied us with fresh fables of the entire defeat of both English and Dutch fleets, and with hyperbolical and monstrous relations of the greatness of the French both as to the number and bigness of ships: whilst both the former, which for so many years had been the terror of the seas and found none to contend with about the sovereignty of them; but between themselves, were vilified to such a degree as if they had been but a few Algiers pirates or Newfoundland fishermen.*
>
> *Stevens, Journal*

Meanwhile, military affairs progressed. A second French convoy was ready to sail, and did so the day James opened his Irish Parliament. The flotilla comprised 24 ships of the line, 2 frigates, and 6 fireships, and would escort those of James' soldiers (between 1,500 and 3,000) who had not accompanied him, additional French officers, including engineers, and more arms and money. Lack of shipping was forcing the French admiral, Gabaret, to use relays.

[Alternative figures are 25 or 28 ships of the line, 15 frigates, 11 or 15 fireships. The French men of war each carried between 40 and 60 guns, the frigates 22 guns each.]

The English Parliament was incensed at the ease at which James had been able to cross to Ireland. It demanded action, despite the fact that England and France were not as yet at war. But even now the Navy contained a strong Jacobite element. Moreover, the sailors had not been paid for some time. And, many ships were in need of repair. William ordered "personnel adjustments", and appointed a new commander.

Lord Arthur Herbert, the new appointee, was simultaneously C-in-C of the Channel and of the Irish Sea. He was instructed to begin patrolling between Ushant and the coast of Ireland, but by the time his ships arrived on station, James had already passed by. Herbert was ready for the second convoy. He would not be fighting Gabaret, however. To the latter's mortification, the French admiral had been supplanted by an inexperienced Court appointee, Château-Renault.

[In this period, navies did not engage in blockade duty, and rarely attempted sweeps. Instead, ships remained in port, sallying on report of an enemy's approach. This policy, and the prevailing winds and currents, had allowed William to land unmolested in England. A temporary reversal of wind and current similarly allowed James to travel to Ireland swiftly and safely.]

Sailing from Brest on April 29th, the French flotilla encountered English men-o-war off Kinsale. Herbert' ships, after spending the month at sea, had just finished a refit at Milford Haven. The English admiral's original intentions were to make for Brest, hoping to intercept the French as they came out of harbour, but an easterly wind forced him to make for Kinsale instead. Rather than risk a landing in the presence of the enemy, his opponent, Château-Renault, decided to withdraw.

Herbert moved to block the French from entering Kinsale, but then lost sight of them. He did not rediscover the convoy until the next day, in Bantry Bay, forty miles to the west. By the time Herbert caught up with the French, they had already unloaded their cargo. The English were outnumbered, with only 18 ships of the line, 1 frigate, and 3 fireships.

[There were also the fireships. Fireships were not always used as such. They were essentially hulks that could be sacrificed, but that could also be used as store ships or even as troop transports. They were performing the latter duty for the French.]

Herbert stood off that night, and entered the bay on the morning of May 1st. Still anchored, the French quickly made ready and engaged the English closely. They had the weather gauge. Herbert withdrew, hotly pursued. The action lasted from 11am to 5pm; Herbert broke off the action and made for the Scilly Isles, while Château-Renault put into Bantry Bay again.

The action was remarkably light, considering it is still accounted the most important naval action ever to occur off the Irish coast. The English suffered more, with several ships having damaged rigging and sails. Casualties were 96 killed and 250 wounded for the English, and 40 killed, 93 wounded for the French. Both sides claimed victory, the French with better reason. Still, Herbert was made Earl of Torrington and received a vote of thanks from Parliament.

[Much of this was simply an attempt to boost the Navy's morale; some knighthoods were given, and the sailors received a pay bonus].

James suffered conflicting emotions on hearing the news. He ordered a *Te Deum* to be sung, but was ashamed at the conduct of his old service, exclaiming bitterly, *"c'est bien la premiere fois donc"*. He decided Herbert must still be loyal to him. Château-Renault, perversely, was also upset; he wanted a crushing victory that would cover himself with glory. His subordinates lacked "the right stuff". His subordinates countered by reporting his lack of talent to King Louis.

Bad timing now prevented a great advantage being made of the French victory. James asked that the French Fleet be moved north to help with the siege of Derry, though what he really had in mind was a convoy to Scotland. D'Avaux, perhaps sensing the real reason, told him Château-Renault's orders were to return to Brest. James then asked that the flotilla come back and help with a proposed landing on Anglesey. Unfortunately, Château-Renault had already left the Irish coast by the time this plan had been approved, and could not be reached for comment.

In truth, the French would have had difficulty maintaining their position in the North, where shore facilities were nonexistent. A squadron of 3 frigates, under Du Quesne, was told off to transport 3-400 of Purcell's Dragoons to Scotland. This squadron then patrolled the Scottish coast for some time, collecting prizes, including the two small cruisers sent to deal with it.

The State of the Jacobite Army

What was worst of all the people, greedy of novelties and ignorant of the dangers and hardships attending the military life, flocked to be soldiers as if their whole business had been to live at ease and rifle their enemies but when they pyrceived [sic] how dear they were to buy their bread and liberty, rather than expose their lives or undergo the labours and wants a soldier is often exposed to, they deserted in vast numbers, returning to their former security, slavery and beggary on the mountains. Yet if the strength of an army had consisted in multitudes, the number of regiments might have made some amends for their weakness. But the want of discipline and experience, which we conceited in our enemies, and which made us despise them, was the heaviest misfortune we laboured under ourselves. Our men were newly brought from the mountains, used to live in slavery without the use of any weapon: the most of them had never fired a musket in their lives. A people used only to follow and converse with cows, so hard to be made sensible of the duty of a soldier or be brought to handle their arms aright, that it was difficult to make many of them understand the common words of command, much less to obey them. Besides their natural uncouthness, they are stubborn and conceited, to be governed with rigour and severity, not to be wrought upon with lenity and gentleness; for by experience I have found they not only fear, but respect and love the officer much more that beats them daily without mercy than

him that cherishes and carries a light hand over them. They will follow none but their own leaders, many of them men as rude, as ignorant, and as far from understanding any of the rules of discipline as themselves.

This was the utter ruin of the army, none fitter to raise men than he that had been ever bred in the mountains. When raised there was no respect from soldier to officer, they were all fellow mountaineers. The commissioned officer could not punish his sergeant or corporal because he was his cousin or foster-brother, and they durst not correct the soldier lest he should fly in their face or run away. These officers had seen and knew no more than their men, and consequently understood as little how to exercise or train them; every one thought himself qualified enough to bear a commission if he could march before his men, and repeat by rote the words of the common exercise. For want of arms most of the army was taught the little they learnt with sticks, and when they came to handle pike or musket they were to begin again; though I knew a colonel who said his regiment could exercise to admiration before ever they had handled arms. Many regiments were armed and sent upon service who had never fired a shot, ammunition being kept so choice that they were never taught to fire, and it is hard to guess when these men were upon action whether their own or the enemy's fire was most terrible to them. And the commanders, it has been often observed, have not only wanted valour to lead on or conduct to post their men to advantage but through ignorance have run themselves into dangers and then cowardly and basely been the first that betook themselves to a shameful flight.

These miscarriages were so far from being punished that they were excused, and palliated; the very reasons that ought to be urged as an aggravation of the crime, and consequently of the punishment, were offered and received as extenuations of the offence; as the inequality of numbers, being surprised, the disadvantage of ground, want of ammunition, and the like. Nor was this all. The cowardice of the officers was retorted upon the soldiers, and I have known a commander preferred for quitting his post, when the poor soldier suffered for the same. Particularly in the defeat of the Lord Mountcashell I observed some that never looked back till they came to Dublin, and others that lay in ditches were more countenanced than those that had brought up the rear in some order; nay those who had quitted their horses to tread the bogs and lost their very boots, shoes, pistols, and swords to run the lighter, were the men who carried it highest in Dublin. I do not design this to have it thought the private men were not faulty, they have given us too many examples of their baseness and want of courage; but doubtless had their leaders been such as they ought many enterprises I had met with better success. Nor is it a reflection on those worthy gentlemen, who understood their duty, had a sense of honour, had been abroad or served some time here. This will be found for the most part to touch only those, who from the plough, from following of cows, from digging potatoes and such-like exercises, because they had a few men to follow them, or bore the name of a good family, were put into commission without experience, without conduct, without authority and even without a sense of honour. Perhaps some may say this looks like an aspersion upon the king, who was then present, and by whose authority the army and kingdom were governed; but l have always had so great a veneration for Majesty, as not to suffer my very thoughts to censure or judge of the least action of my sovereign. Princes are said to see and hear all things, but they see with other men's eyes and hear with other men's ears. They, and only they, were guilty of all miscarriages and oversights who recommended and preferred unworthy persons, who palliated base actions and stifled the truth for their own private advantage to the great detriment of the public. Such a considerable number of experienced officers had followed the king out of England and France, as would have sufficiently supplied the want there was in the army, have well disciplined those raw men, and given them a good example of courage and resolution. These were laid aside and made useless upon pretence they had no interest in the country, that the people would not follow strangers, and that they were unacquainted with the manner of governing them. Lest so many gentlemen whose zeal had drawn them so far to serve His Majesty should perish for want of bread some expedient must be found, which was to give them subsistence as officers in second or reformed, that they might assist and instruct the effective, whose pride was such they would choose rather to live ever in their ignorance than owe their instruction to those who had learnt their experience with many labours and dangers. From this beginning sprung that multitude of seconds and reformados that the kingdom afterwards swarmed with. The officers of every regiment that was broken were put upon this list, nay any that could find no other way of maintenance and had but the least acquaintance with a field-officer was thrust in, and at last it came to that a pass that they were foisted upon regiments at a muster without king or general's knowledge. Not to speak of others, in the Right Honourable the Lord Grand Prior's Regiment wherein I serve, though but thirteen companies, we had at one time ninety-four officers. These supernumeraries, seconds, reforms or what you please to call them, were of no use to His Majesty's service, and a prodigious increase to the charge of the army.

Stevens

Army reorganisation was now in full swing. According to d'Avaux, Tyrconnel had rather unwisely allowed a free hand in the raising of regiments. This led to a wide range in the number of companies per regiment (up to 44 companies in one case, instead of the regulation 13), and the commissioning of men with no military experience, or even any leadership potential – i.e. the raising of companies by tradesmen and other *non-gentlemen* who had the means.

Tyrconnel's policy generated a paper strength of up to 100,000 men. And, it is possible that that there were that many men milling about Dublin. But there were no arms for them. Time would now be spent trimming the Army to a fixed number regiments: 7 of Horse, 7 of Dragoons, and 35 of Foot: a total of 35,000 men. This number would remain relatively steady throughout the war.

The artillery train is variously stated to have been either 8 small pieces or 12 pieces and 2 mortars, with an additional 4 non-serviceable guns. Though there were many cannon located in the various castles, they were too heavy to be moved. The artillery never numbered more than 20 or so light pieces, including those later brought by the French.

Most of the regiments were to have a single battalion, exceptions being the Guards, and other formations raised from the exiles who landed at Bantry, such as the Grand Prior's and de Boisseleau's. (This last was raised by the French governor of Cork, but was not a French regiment). The culling was not popular and led to much disorderly conduct. Also unpopular was the assigning of French officers to Irish regiments, with brevet ranks.

[Various sources report 40, 45, or even 50 regiments of foot, but an overall view shows a constant of about 35. The discrepancy may have arisen because some regiments had two battalions, each known by its commander's name. Later in the war, weak regiments were converged into single battalions, but retained their identities. Stevens gives 40 foot, 4 dragoons, 2 horse regiments, added *to the pre-war army.]*

[Boisseleau's regiment was a good one – as the man in charge of dispatching recruits arriving from overseas and based at the Army's entrepôt, he had the pick of the men and the weapons – but it lacked experience when it fought at the Boyne.]

To reiterate, Tyrconnel began with 8 regiments (4 of Foot, 1 of Guards, 3 of Horse, plus 1 troop of horse grenadiers), that could be considered "regulars", because most of the men were returnees. Other than that, the Army was essentially a militia force, and suffered the usual problems: lack of adequate arms, poor discipline, poor combat skills. But it was to prove resilient enough to endure and change. The French were not impressed with the men's soldierly abilities, but they were impressed by their size: 5' 10" on average – veritable giants! Clothing was in short supply (mostly taken from French stores) and medical equipment was minimal.

As to arms, the French managed to fix that problem fairly rapidly, so that, contrary to popular mythology, most of the units at the Battle of the Boyne were adequately equipped. It is true that dishonest contractors provided large quantities of broken muskets. And, only one in twenty of the muskets confiscated from the Protestants proved serviceable. It was reported that one of the regiments sent to the siege of Derry had exactly 7 muskets. Weapon-smiths were as gold, with only one Jacobite master craftsman in the whole Army. There was simple reason for this: as artisans, most weapon-smiths were Protestants.

Only the iron laws of combat would give mettle to the raw mass that Stevens describes. Battle drills, in an absence of discipline, were learned the hard way. This, not lack of equipment, was the

reason for the poor showing at the Boyne (omitting to mention, at this point, the abysmal failures in command).

The Irish Brigade

As early as February, 1689, Louvois had suggested an exchange of Irish troops for French. He did not see why he should send soldiers otherwise, though he was open to negotiations over the details. Tied to the troop exchange would be a formal alliance. Lord Mountcashel liked the idea. He wanted to return to French service. The deal was initially kept secret from James and Melfort. King James did not want to be beholden to French arms, but he was talked round by d'Avaux. Thus was born Mountcashel's Irish Brigade. The French demanded the best Irish troops; they did not get them.

To obtain the services of the French, James would have to wait a whole year – none could be spared from the front until December of 1689. Louvois was offering 4-5,000 in exchange for 6-7,000 Irish – to be led by "men of birth", not tradesmen. James bargained hard for an equal exchange. Mouncashel's early capture at Newtownbutler aided him: d'Avaux asked for the popular but relatively "low-born" cavalryman, Patrick Sarsfield instead, allowing James to throw a well-timed tantrum. The negotiations dragged on. In the meantime, King James called a Parliament.

Summer Fun, 1689

King James' Parliament

The Irish Parliament opening on May 7th, 1689, had been long in the making. It ran until July 20th. The conclave would set the tenor of the King's rule, reveal his intentions. For the Irish Catholics, who had been working since 1685 to reverse the Protestant Ascendency, this was their moment, but they were to be bitterly disappointed.

Irish parliaments were still Medieval in character, though they were divided into Commons and Lords like the English Parliament. They met irregularly. Prior to the Restoration, Parliament represented the English colony at Dublin, exclusively. During Charles II's reign, there was only one parliament, with a purely Protestant Commons, after which no parliament sat for 18 years.

[Absolute Monarchy boasts some permanent advantages over Democracy. Those were the days.]

The parliament of 1689 was experimental, in that it attempted to include all elements of Irish society, including the Gaels as well as the Old English. After the war of 1689-91, all Irish parliaments would be purely Protestant in composition. Unfortunately, James' English outlook alienated the Gaelic element and disappointed the Old English, while at the same time it failed to satisfy the "true" English elements in James' circle and frightened the under-represented Protestants. Some of the options James aired were quite advanced, even "liberal' for their day, but they were lost in the shuffle.

The key thing to remember is that James was an English king, with the commonplace English attitude toward Ireland: the kingdom was his by right of conquest – not his conquest, but the English Crown's – and the Irish were a conquered people. The Gaels got nothing from this parliament. The chief beneficiaries, though even they received little, were the Old English. True, it was not easy for James to have his will. Here, the famous Stuart stubbornness came in handy.

Thanks to Tyrconnel, the Commons was predominantly Catholic. The Lords, a mix of Anglicans and Catholics, was bound to the Establishment. The Commons began the process by presenting a variety of bills to the King. Though packed with the King's coreligionists, the House challenged many of his "outdated" policies. Opposition to the various bills came from the Lords, then, because, as in England, they by and large supported the King, who was the real opponent of much of the proposed legislation. (Even the few native Catholic peers were won to James' position, because they had received lands under the Act of Settlement).

The questions to be dealt with had vexed Ireland for a long time. Chief among them was Poynings' Law. This was the law that required all bills passed in Ireland to be vetted by the English Parliament (actually the King In Parliament). Since Parliament did not sit regularly, and was usually anti-Irish when it did sit, Irish law was more favourable to the English than the Irish. Lately, on the argument that Ireland and England were indivisible, the English Parliament had taken to making English law applicable to Ireland, without reference to Irish opinion.

[Every Irish parliament, both before and after the war, was subject to Poynings' Law. As royal power slowly passed to Parliament, this law gave the English people the right to legislate the laws for a foreign nation. The failure of James' parliament had as much or more to do with the Irish Question and the bloody formation of the Irish Republic as the Cogadh an Dá Rí*.]*

Now that the King was physically in Ireland and In Parliament, Poynings' Law was technically in abeyance. If James would agreed to be an Irish king, it could be repealed. James agreed to an act declaring Ireland independent of England, though still under his personal rule, but he did so very reluctantly. And he did not repeal Poynings' Law, although it was, under this new constitution, a moot point. He was an English king. Besides, Poynings' Law raised the issue of whose Government was legitimate, James' or William's. On point of law, James had more legitimacy, but the issue was being decided by the sword. James did not want to alienate his English supporters by detaching Ireland from the Commonwealth.

The repeal of the Act of Settlement meant even more to the Old English, but on this issue, James would not – at first – budge. Eventually, a modified bill was passed, exempting some of James' more powerful supporters who had gained by the old act. James also received personal compensation for the loss of his estates, gained through the act.

A court of claims was set up, but due to the state of war, did not proceed with business. Nevertheless, hundreds of officers left their posts to investigate their new (presumptive) properties. Critics warned that this measure, with all the debate it entailed, and the absenting of members of the Army, was a dangerous and foolish thing to have brought up at such a time, when the siege of Derry was at a dangerous stage.

The Protestants had always been annoyed with James. They were even more so when a bill of Attainder was passed. The object of this bill was to enable the King to reward his supporters out of the estates of attainted Williamites, and most of the names on the proscription list were hard-core Williamites. A period of grace was allowed, but the names were kept secret to prevent anyone actually suing for pardon – or knowing if the King intended to brand them as enemies so he could grab their land.

Religion was, naturally, a matter of great interest. Again, James favoured the Old English and even more the Establishment Church. An act for liberty of conscience was passed, which reads very modern. The wording seems to favour the Dissenters, though Catholics could take advantage of it equally. It dispensed with the Oath of Supremacy by stating that everyone was entitled to liberty of conscience provided their ideas did not interfere with allegiance to the king. Tithes were to be paid to one's own Church. This benefited the Catholics, but Parliament also lightened the tithes for Ulster Protestants.

The Act of [religious] Uniformity was not repealed, although it was made dormant. Later in the year, James forbade the expropriation of empty Protestant churches by the Catholics (after all, he was collecting the incomes). But this decree was repeatedly violated.

James had done his part, wringing blood out of his very body for his people. Now it was the people's turn to do something for him. At bottom, James' does appear to have had the enlightened goal of enforcing liberty of conscience (begging the question of how "liberal" it can be if enforced), not merely making things better for himself. All his legislation tended toward that end. Parliament, in contrast, only cared about land rights.

Ultimately, James' policies always failed because he neglected to consider his subjects' needs, as they perceived them. Grown men do not like to be told that "Daddy knows best".

In order to push his agenda through the King had to make concessions that watered it down. For example, he was

apparently opposed to disarming the Protestants entirely, and in particular to requisitioning their horses, but was forced to give the order, which alienated that portion of "his" people even more. Again, he refused to declare war on England. To do so would have meant acknowledging William as its lawful king, but not doing so prevented him from issuing letters of marque to privateers, a measure that would have been very effective in bringing the merchant princes to reason.

Brass For Gold

Money, naturally, loomed large. The Revenue was in a terrible state. Trade had virtually ceased. Customs dues had dropped to 4/7ths of their pre-war level. The Army's case was deplorable. Tyrconnel estimated he needed £100,000 a month. James asked Parliament for a modest £15,000 for 13 months. The Commons graciously raised this to £20,000. But these numbers assumed that regular taxation was possible over all of Ireland, including the Protestant-controlled regions. In practice, the revenues collected fell far short of even these low targets. In consequence, the Administration began issuing "money of necessity" – that is, brass and copper coinage, obtained in some instances from melted-down cannon.

These tokens, almost a form of credit, had value when the Jacobites were prospering on the battlefield. They were worth next to nothing at the end of the war. The French compounded the problem when they arrived, because their men insisted on being paid in silver. Rampant inflation ensued: at one point, a single *pistole* was worth three literal pounds of brass money. Fittingly, from the Catholic perspective, it was the Protestant trading communities that suffered most.

King James contributed to the problem. £20,000 was lost to the enemy as a result of his desire for clemency. The Williamite Lord Inchiquin had the money, but Lord Mountcashel allowed he and a companion to leave the country because Inchiquin's father had led the Confederates against Cromwell. James dithered and the countermanding order came too late.

[This was not a unique instance. Very early on a traitor was discovered among James' entourage. The French desired his execution but James would only imprison him in Cork. He escaped to England.]

The Irish economy, once relatively vibrant, was collapsing, even without the presence of mighty armies traversing the land. Take coal as an example. There was a ban on English coal. English coal took the bread out of the Irish coalminers' mouths. Any anyway, there was a war on. But Ireland did not produce enough coal even to heat Dublin. In the winter of 1688-89, fences throughout the city disappeared.

Neither did the French ship arms and money out of the goodness of their hearts. They expected commodities in exchange, particularly wool. They also expected to receive "most favoured nation" status. James again showed his English colours and did not repeal the laws that gave England a monopoly on Ireland's wool. For the duration of the "emergency", though, wool *was* exported to France. In other matters of trade, James also showed an English preference.

All in all, the "Patriot Parliament", as it was called, was a failure. The Protestant Ascendancy was not replaced by a Catholic Ascendancy. The Irish saw clearly that if James won the war, they were to remain part of the English Commonwealth, though with perhaps some improvement in their lot. Their Protestant overlords saw that they would remain on top, but with a much less secure seat in the saddle. The French saw they would be dropped as soon as James had no use for them. For his part, James had even less use for the Irish than he had had when King of England. Oh, if only he could be back in Whitehall!

From Derry to Newtownbutler

The Patriot Parliament dragged on for months. So did the war. The siege of Londonderry is still celebrated in Ulster; the town was the last bastion of hope for the Ulster Protestants.

Although there were many in the city who were uncomfortable with the idea of defying their lawful sovereign – notably the Protestant Governor, Robert Lundy – in December 1688 a few fierce spirits, the famous Thirteen Apprentice Boys, had defied the King by shutting the Ferryquay Gate in the face of Lord Antrim's Regiment when it arrived to secure the town for James. These same men and their elders now kept the resistance alive, encouraged by promises of support from King William.

By Lough Erne, over the hills to the south, the fortified village of Enniskillen guarded the central passes to the North. These two habitations were the centers of Protestant resistance. If they fell, Ireland would be secured by the Jacobites, and James could continue with his invasion of Scotland.

As previously recounted, after the break of Dromore, Lieutenant General Richard Hamilton's force of 2,500 had continued north, swinging around the eastern seaboard, taking Belfast, relieving Carrickfergus, but halting on the Bann, where a small band of Protestants under Major Gustavus Hamilton held the crossings long enough for the population to escape.

Hamilton's force was in any case not strong enough to besiege Derry. The French Ambassador, d'Avaux, pressed for sending a French-led corps directly to the town, leaving 6 newly raised regiments to garrison Dublin. Hamilton could cover the right flank of the advance, and scattered bodies of troops in the West would cover the left by pinning the small garrison at Enniskillen. To d'Avaux's dismay, James accompanied the reinforcements, but fortunately left the column at Omagh upon word that a Williamite squadron of 13 ships (under Captain, later Admiral, George Rooke) had appeared north of Derry.

Hamilton had by now swept the north country as far west as Lough Foyle. Crossing the Foyle opposite Derry was next to impossible, so he marched 15 miles upstream to the first bridge, at Strabane. Here he linked up with reinforcements, under the nefarious *Lieutenant Général de* Rosen.

On March 21st, a Captain James Hamilton, nephew of Richard, but a staunch Williamite, landed at Derry with £1,000 and some arms, plus the promise of 2 regiments. The town officially declared for William and Mary.

The council in Derry decided on a forward defence along the line of the Foyle, but they moved too slowly. On April 15th, the Jacobites forced a crossing of the tributary Finn River, at Clady. According to the Duke of Berwick:

> *"on April 15 we marched to Cladyford where the rebels [Williamites] to the number of 10,000 [sic: there were 7,000] were inclined to dispute the passage. There was no ford and on the opposite side of the bridge, which was broken, the enemy had posted some infantry, well entrenched. We had brought with us no more than 350 foot and about 600 horse. The rest of our little army had been left near Strabane. Our infantry advanced to the bridge that had been broken down and by the fire of their musketry drove the enemy from their entrenchment. [Lieutenant General Richard] Hamilton, to avail himself of the disorder the rebels appeared to be in, ordered us to swim over the river. We instantly threw ourselves into it on horseback and gained the opposite bank with the loss of only one officer and two privates drowned. The infantry at the same time contrived by means of planks to pass over the bridge and taking possession of the entrenchments began to fire on the main body of the rebels, which was formed on the rising ground. This, joined to the bold action we had just performed, threw them into such a panic that instead of advancing to attack us as we came out of the water they all took to flight."*
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> *Simms, War & Politics, pp. 138-139.*

Success here enabled Rosen and the main body to cross at Lifford, where the Finn and the Mourne join to form the Foyle. He had not expected success, because the river was high, the bridge broken, and the Ulstermen secure inside a fort. But they fired one volley and abandoned the place. Governor Lundy should have ordered the holding of St. Johns Town, on the road north to Derry, where there was one of those long raised causeways so frequent in Ireland, but the defenders' plans were still in flux.

With the Jacobites now in the rich Laggan country south of Derry, the Protestants were about ready to give up. The two Williamite regiments newly arrived in Loch Foyle were sent back to England, accompanied by much of the local leadership. The

stay-behinds were told to get what terms they could. In England, the despondency of the exiles caused William to call a halt to any further support to the town.

The Jacobite advance drove a crowd of refugees before it. There were now some 30,000 people squashed into a Medieval walled town only 500 yards long and 300 yards wide, garrisoned by the Protestant half of Mountjoy's Regiment and regiments of local volunteers – all males between the ages of 16 and 60.

King James was persuaded by his son Berwick to make an appearance at Derry. That would be enough to conclude the affair. But this was to reckon without the "Luck of the Stuarts". Negotiations were already in progress; a deadline had been set for the 18th of April. Before that time arrived, Rosen had agreed to remain stationed at a 4 mile limit from the town. James and part of his escort, probably thinking the restriction did not apply to the Royal Party, rode up quite close to the walls, where they came under fire and withdrew in confusion after suffering casualties.

This act widened the divide between the citizens. There was shock that the King's person had been assaulted, and many left the town. What remained were the fanatics. They trumpeted the "breach of faith". James was told any envoy would be fired upon. The King countered that two delegates who had visited him had reported matters of army intelligence back to the town – namely, that the besieging force had no heavy guns – thus invalidating the agreement. The siege was on.

[The Duke of Berwick, James FitzJames, and his brother Henry, the Grand Prior, were sons of King James by Arabella Churchill, the sister of the future Duke of Marlborough. Berwick was only 19 years old when he served in the siege of Derry, but already a veteran of the Turkish Wars.]

[Tyrconnel and d'Avaux had been opposed to James leaving Dublin. It was bad enough that Parliament was sitting in the middle of a campaign. Now the King was going to leave it spinning its wheels while he gallivanted around the front?! Moreover, d'Avaux feared Melfort would drag James off to Belfast and then take ship for Scotland.]

The Siege of Derry

Derry, along with the Boyne, is probably the most written-about action of the war. Whole "histories" of the war can be found that expend half their pages on the one event, another third on the other, and a few pages at the back to the rest of the conflict. Psychologically, there is a correctness in this. If Derry had fallen, that would have been the end of the war in Ireland. If the Boyne had gone differently, the Williamite régime might have collapsed. But they were not the only chances the Jacobites were given.

Derry-the-myth was fuelled by the great Whig historian and Orangeman, Macaulay, who wrote a stirring "Valley Forge" account of amateurs enduring the unendurable and triumphing over a professional army. The later author, Hilaire Belloc, attempted to debunk him, pointing out the Jacobite besieging corps was undermanned, and not equipped to do more than blockade the town – and not even that, since they did not command the sea.

In 1689, the town was relatively new, though the site has been occupied in one form or another for thousands of years. Modern Derry was founded in 1619 by the City of London (*hence "Londonderry"*) as part of the Plantation of James I. Derry was established as an entrepôt and as a city of refuge for the settlers – in 1641, it had held out against the bloody rising of the Ulster Gaels. As a financial investment of the City of London it benefited from rich farmland to the south, called the Laggan, and fisheries on the Bann and the Foyle rivers.

As late as Elisabeth I's day, Derry's future site had been an island, one of several. During the course of the 17th Century, however, the western arm of the river had subsided, leaving an extensive bog that still served to isolate the town on its patch of high ground. At the time of the siege, the tidal estuary of the river Foyle to the east ran quite close to the walls; the Shipquay Gate actually let right out onto quay above the sands at the foot of the northern bastions. The walls were a mile in circumference, 20' high, with 2' thick stone curtains filled with earth. It was deemed sufficient to keep out angry Gaelic tribesmen, but not a modern army. Many of the houses in the town rose higher than the walls.

Apart from the Shipquay Gate, the Ferryquay Gate faced east, right by the river, the Butcher's Gate faced west, toward the hills that dominated the town, and the Bishop's Gate faced south onto a knoll featuring a windmill. This spur, on which the town was built, was separated from the surrounding hills by the aforementioned patch of marsh to the southwest, and an orchard to the northwest. South of the Ferry Gate, within the walls, was the Cathedral. The town square was to the north, near the Butcher's Gate. The town owned 20 cannon, 2 of which were at some point removed from the walls and sited in the Cathedral's spire.

Despite a steady dribble of deserters, there were in April still enough men in Derry to form 7 regiments of foot and 1 regiment of horse: 7,020 men and 341 officers. Over time, the garrison actually increased – to about 10,000. Being a soldier guaranteed you a certain amount of food.

Lundy stood down as Governor. As a professional soldier in the King's service, he was opposed to openly fighting his boss, though he had accepted a commission from William and participated in proclaiming William and Mary. Two men replaced him: Major Henry Baker, and the Reverend George Walker. Soon after, Lundy escaped to the Jacobite camp; he is still burned in effigy at the annual "Shutting of the Gates" ceremony.

[Walker was a fire-and-brimstone parson of the Cameronian sect. He also left a detailed diary, showing himself as the mainstay of the defence. Other accounts praised other leaders, the split being generally between Scots and Irish. It became a famous controversy.]

Command of the siege was given to *Maréchal de Camp de* Maumont, with Richard Hamilton as his second. Rosen and James were to return to Dublin. The Jacobite headquarters was established at St. Johns Town, 5 miles away. Outside Derry, the Jacobites established their main camp in the hills to the west, with posts at Pennyburn Mill to the north, and at Culmore Fort, 5 miles downstream.

Culmore Fort commanded the Foyle channel, which was extremely narrow at that point. Other works (the Red, Green, and White Castles) lay along the western shore of the Lough. The only navigable channel in the otherwise shallow bay lay close to that shore. On the east bank, batteries (to use the term loosely) were sited northeast of the town, in Strong's Orchard, and southeast, in a parcel of enclosed woodland.

The Jacobites controlled the coasts to the east, but the west, as far as Ballyshannon, at the mouth of the Erne River, was Protestant-held. In particular, Inch Island, or Inchowen, an outcrop in Lough Swilly, beyond the ridges overlooking Derry, soon became the camp for a relieving force under General Percy Kirke.

[Men from this region – Donegal – fought on both sides. In particular, this was the recruiting ground of the Jacobite chieftain Balldearg O'Donnell, whose family originally owned much of the county. Opposed to him and the men who went to join the regular Jacobite regiments were the local Protestant militia and corresponding volunteers for the Williamite regular forces.]

Jacobite efforts were plagued with one disaster after another. Apart from a constant dribble of their own deserters, and the usual difficulties of supplying a static force, Maumont and his second, Pusignan, both good officers who got on well with the Irish, were soon killed. Maumont died in the skirmish of Pennyburn Mill, which only occurred because the Jacobites, lax in discipline, permitted the defenders a sally, and Major General Pusignan died 4 days later. Separately, the senior artillery officer, *de* Pointis, was severely wounded and his replacement, Massé, killed. One of the best engineers was killed in a duel with a certifiable madman. Command devolved on Richard Hamilton, who had no experience of siege warfare, and little experience of senior command. He had difficulty imposing his authority.

The besiegers had 4,000 men and no siege guns. The batteries on the east bank consisted of mortars, but they were only useful

against the houses; once those were knocked town there were few targets. A 24-lber and an 18-lber were eventually sent up from Dublin, but there were difficulties with the ammunition supply, and the guns were deployed at Culmore Fort to deter the Royal Navy.

[587 bombs were fired during the siege: 326 small and 261 large.]

The lack of a proper train was not the commanders' fault, however. Even the Williamites would be forced to import a siege train from Flanders. Ireland in the 17th Century was one vast bog, and it was only with tremendous effort that guns could be moved at all. There were cannon at Charlemont Fort, many miles away, but transport could not be had. 2 additional guns were requested from Carrickfergus; one's carriage collapsed, and the other vanished in a ditch. All the foreign officers who came to Ireland said the same thing: "*what a country!*"

The Jacobites were reduced to enforcing a blockade. But, at first, their lines were far enough away that the defenders could graze their livestock on the commons outside the walls. The closest enemy troops were 2 battalions covering the Orchard Battery on the east bank of the river. It was not until May 5th that Hamilton attempted to close the blockade, sending a party to occupy Windmill Hill. The defenders sallied and drove the Jacobites off, quickly throwing up an earthwork around the position.

And that was the extent of the action for May. During all this time, ordinary people were permitted to leave the town – as part of James' policy of "clemency" – and about 10,000 eventually left. But James ordered a halt to the practice because it helped ease the defenders' food crisis.

A report from a French supply officer dated May 27th states:

> *"the siege of Derry continues. Now that the purchasing of rations is finished and we can give our men bread and the arms for those without them have arrived and the French engineers here are going to Derry, we are going to send additional troops to make a regular siege. Work is going ahead on tools and other things that the engineers have asked for, but very slowly. Most of the soldiers in front of Derry have only pointed sticks, without iron tips."*
>
> *JI, p. 105*

[What equipment there was, was not evenly distributed, either.]

Word now came that William, prompted by Derry's unexpected stand, had belated dispatched a relief force: 4 regiments of foot under the brutal Major General Percy Kirke. Kirke was a veteran of Tangier in the 1660s, and the man notorious for stamping out the embers of Monmouth's Rebellion (1685) with great cruelty. His conduct throughout the campaign was to raise questions in people's minds as to where his true loyalties lay, and he was eventually relieved of command.

The Jacobites now hastened to place a boom across the Foyle at Culmore Fort, and then a second one 2 miles north of the town. The first sank, being made of untreated oak. The second, made of fir, floated. It is said that Hamilton had been loath to take this step because he feared that any blocking of the channel, especially by sinking local boats, would hurt the town's postwar trade.

[It was also claimed that the Jacobite gunners who later engaged the enemy ships when they did try to force the boom were drunk, and by design, not negligence.]

It was now early June. Rosen returned to Derry as advisor, though he was a cavalrymen with no siege experience. Hamilton had made it clear he would not serve under him. What rankled even more with the professional soldier was the fact that James corresponded directly with Hamilton. In Rosen's opinion, the siege was being badly mismanaged. He put some fire into the besiegers, but the work was difficult.

[Something that should not be forgotten was the language barrier: most of the Irish did not understand French words of command, which could be a crucial problem in the heat of action.]

It rained continually. At every high tide, the trenches flooded. Tools broke and were not replaced. Astonishingly, the Irish had no knowledge of how to bake bread (or perhaps no means of baking it). There was no salt. The beer was so badly brewed that dysentery ensued, with a mortality rate of 10%.

June 28th: Clancarty's Regiment, one of the better Jacobite units, made an assault out of a trench dug near the Butcher's Gate and obtained a lodgement in the town, inserting a group of miners in a cellar under one of the bastions. Repulsed, Clancarty lost the miners and 100 men. The Jacobites reverted to a pure blockade.

On the 30th, Rosen ordered the population still living in the area to be driven under the walls, an act for which he became infamous. The town council debated the wisdom of letting them enter. In the meantime, the refugees huddled as best they could in the waste ground between the two armies. In reprisal, the defenders erected a gallows and threatened to hang their prisoners. Hamilton overruled Rosen and allowed the refugees to leave. King James was outraged that his guarantees to the common people should have been violated.

> *"If Marshal Rozen were my subject I would hang him"*
>
> *Boulger, p. 107*

Proceedings were instituted to replace the general. Rosen blustered, saying Ireland was no country for a real soldier.

[Alternative histories have Rosen yielding to the combination of the gallows threat and a petition from the town, but a direct order from the King is more likely to have been the cause of his relenting.]

[There is a curious story told that d'Avaux was all for a scorched earth policy at Derry, and a general massacre of Protestants, which horrified James. The story comes from Macaulay, and is therefore overblown. Despite his reputation, Macaulay had a habit of cribbing his history from old broadsheets. James is supposed to have replied to some vague suggestion murmured by d'Avaux, that he was not about to cut his subjects' throats, and that d'Avaux took refuge in courtliness and murmured that after all, what he proposed was "not so very inhuman". Apparently what he actually wanted was to have leading Protestant agitators arrested, and used rather gory language, which makes much more sense. The King misunderstood, given Ireland's history.]

Here Comes Kirke… There Goes Kirke

The relief of Derry turned out to be nearly as sickly and mismanaged an operation as the siege itself. Kirke's operations were extremely slow. Arriving off Lough Foyle, he balked at trying to force the boom on the Foyle, despite positive assurances from his pilots. He feared the channel had been blocked with sunken boats. Derry's spirits were raised by his arrival and lowered when he sailed away again. But he had only gone around the headland, to establish a base on Inch Island, in Lough Swilly.

The town was on its last legs. King James gave Hamilton authority to treat with the defenders without referring to Dublin. Negotiations began. Offered free exercise of their religion, indemnity for their defiance, and permission to go to Scotland if they preferred, the only sticking point remained the timing of the surrender. The Jacobites demanded an immediate capitulation. Derry wanted 10-12 days, in case Kirke was still around – no word had reached them of his whereabouts. Then a boy smuggled himself into the town by swimming the Foyle, bearing a letter from Kirke. Derry refused to budge on the time, and the Jacobites broke off the talks.

By now, near the end of June, morale on both sides was low. The horrors within the town can be imagined. The defenders had been reduced to eating vermin, tallow, and hides. Reverend Walker set out a price list for dogs, cats, rats, and mice. Cannonballs were fashioned from balls of brick dust covered in lead. With most of the houses damaged, people had to sleep outside, in the rain, bringing on fevers. Already, several thousand had died, including the able Governor Baker, and a considerable section of the garrison wanted to quit. But Baker's replacement was John Mitchelbourne, famous for raising "the bloody flag" of no quarter.

[After the siege, it turned out that numbers of prominent citizens had been hoarding food.]

Outside,

> *"the troops are tired and many of them are ill; they have been out in the open for several months without tents in a country where it rains almost every day and the nights are extremely cold".*
>
> *JI, p. 110.*

Desertion was so severe that James had to issue a blanket pardon to obtain re-enlistees. Hamilton was told to prosecute the siege vigorously, but was also told not to maintain the blockade if he felt his position was becoming dangerous, and also to guard the river crossings eastward. Rosen's opinion was that even Vauban could not take Derry with the equipment on hand. By the end of July, plans were being made for withdrawal.

Kirke's expedition, meanwhile, had been fooling about in Lough Swilly. On July 9th the ships anchored off the village of Rathmullen. At Rathmullen, there were rumours that the Irish had a large "cow camp" some 6 "Irish miles" (i.e. 12 miles) away at Tully. This would be a boon for Kirke's men if they could take it. But they needed a base. An engineering party was sent to Inch Island, near the east shore of the lough. It was connected to the mainland by a wide strand at low tide. Landing at high tide, the Williamites established a redoubt on the landward side, so that when the tide went out and some Jacobite dragoons from Derry made a foray, they were repulsed.

On the 11th, Inch Island was reinforced. A boat was also sent to Lough Fern to rescue Protestants camped out on an island. On the 17th, news came that the Duke of Berwick's cavalry were in the neighbourhood. The Jacobites, based at Cavan Park, were simultaneously attempting to guard the coast and launch forays against enemy units coming from Enniskillen.

The locals were evacuated to Inch and the army occupied the island in force, leaving a small garrison at Rathmullen. The latter was engaged by about 1,500 of Berwick's dragoons but the latter could not break into the town; the garrison was supported by gunfire from Rooke's frigates. The young commander retired on his base at Cavan Park.

[Inch Island was fortified as follows: two redoubts containing a total of 16 cannon, plus two small ships stranded on the sands with 10 guns and protected by 35 men each. Several times the Jacks appeared but would not brave the guns. The island also contained an estimated 12,000 refugees. Out of them, Kirke was able to form 5 "additional" companies (i.e. replacement cadres) for his regiments.]

Percy Kirke (c. 1646-1691)

Son of George Kirke, a court official during the reigns of Charles I and II. Percy returned from exile with Charles II upon the latter's restoration. In 1666 he was commissioned in the Lord Admiral's Regiment. Transferred to the Blues and served under the Duke of Monmouth (Charles II's illegitimate son) at Maastricht in 1673. Fought in two Rhineland campaigns under Turenne (England was friendly to France at this time).

Made Lieutenant Colonel in 1680, then Colonel of a Tangier garrison regiment, and finally Colonel of *the* Tangier Regiment (the Queen's, or 2nd of Foot). Made Governor of Tangier in 1682. Suited for the post, but led a dissolute life – it was said no woman was safe in his presence, except for his wife.

Tangier was evacuated in 1684. Kirke commanded his regiment under Lord Feversham in 1685, during Monmouth's Rebellion in the West Country, and became notorious for his cruelty to the rebels. In 1688 he joined William and was promoted to Major General as a reward. Commanded the Relief of Derry in 1689 and later held a semi-independent command in 1690, but was transferred to the Low Countries for "lack of zeal" in 1691. Died at Brussels in October of that year, with the rank of Lieutenant General. His son, of the same name and same eventual rank, also commanded the Queen's, or "Kirke's Lambs".

A month went by. Still Derry clung to life. On July 22nd King James wrote to Hamilton allowing him to raise the siege if he did not feel Derry could be starved out. Then, in the nick of time, Kirke acted. The letters he had been receiving from William made him concerned about his future employment. The Navy was sure the boom on the Foyle could be forced.

On July 28th, the attempt was made by 3 provision ships backed by a part of the fleet. The crew of the cutter *HMS Swallow* dealt with the boom. The Derry ship, *Mountjoy* (135 tons), riding the incoming tide, caught on the boom anyway when the wind died, and was fired upon from the shore, but the tide soon lifted her over, while the other merchant vessels floated in safely. Derry was saved!

The Jacobites broke camp on the 31st and marched for Lifford, after ravaging as much of the countryside as they could. They had lost 8,000 men, the defenders, 3,000. D'Avaux commented:

> *"the troops returning from the Siege of Derry are entirely ruined, and it is useless to expect anything from such men."*
>
> *Boulger, p. 111.*

It is generally agreed that the Jacobite failure stemmed from poor leadership and lack of experience in siege warfare. The men, many of whom came from Munster, did not like serving so far from home. Melfort, responsible for the logistics end in Dublin, could not organise a sack race, and Hamilton lacked initiative. Rosen's sour attitude, communicated to the other French officers, did not help. In d'Avaux's view, Hamilton worked actively against the French. The author of *A Light to the Blind* goes so far as to say that the real reason for Kirke's dallying was that he was involved in buying Hamilton.

Because they lacked proper siege equipment, only a tight blockade would have won the town, and this Hamilton failed to achieve. So Derry held out, despite William's disbelief and Kirke's snail's pace. And the Derry men felt they had won the war singlehandedly. The Reverend Walker went to London, where William rewarded him with £5,000.

Enniskillen

The Enniskilleners, too, raised a myth out of their efforts. Enniskillen, more of a region of discontent than a single locality, was a base of operations for mounted reivers.

Enniskillen itself was a mere village of 80 houses, plus castle, a Protestant settlement established in James I's time. It was situated on an island between Upper and Lower Lough Erne. On one side was the lake, and on the other a river and marsh. The whole Erne valley was a Protestant stronghold; Ballyshannon, a similar choke-point at the mouth of the Erne, was also under their control.

As briefly mentioned before, in December of 1688, 2 companies of Jacobite troops arrived at Enniskillen, but were refused admittance. They did not attack. Tyrconnel merely posted them elsewhere. Enniskillen did not seem to be that important.

After the town declared for William and Mary, the Jacobites sent, in March 1689, one Pierce Butler, Viscount Galmoy, to bring the region under their control. At Crom (Crum) Castle, 15 miles up the lake from Enniskillen, he was repulsed by the local garrison after failing to impress them with his two fake tin-bound buckram cannon. He also made a bad impression by hanging a Williamite prisoner instead of exchanging him, *after* the Williamites had given up their Jacobite prisoner.

The action heated up. Augmented by men from Sligo, and led by a natural guerrilla fighter, Thomas Lloyd, the Enniskilleners began raiding. At the same time, the Jacobites attempted to break into the "Ulster triangle", formed by Derry, Enniskillen, and Ballyshannon.

The most famous action was that of Belleek, a village on the lower Erne, on May 7th, 1689. The lower course of the Erne, northwest of the lough, could only be crossed at two points. One was at Belleek, near the lough, and the other was at Ballyshannon. The bridge at the latter place was guarded by a gateway and tower. Protestant control of these two locations locked the Jacobites out of the northwest.

Patrick Sarsfield, already developing notoriety as a daring cavalry leader, was the chief Jacobite on this front, operating, first, out of Roscommon, then out of Sligo. The enemy used the Erne as a supply route, bringing boats along the coast and up the river. Sarsfield intended to break through the line at Ballyshannon to interdict the traffic and come to the aid of Derry's besiegers by ravaging the Erne valley.

Patrick Sarsfield, 1st Earl of Lucan (c.1660-1693)

Born in Lucan to an old-established Anglo-Norman family. His mother was the daughter of Rory O'Moore, who organised the 1641 rebellion.

In 1678 joined Dungan's Regiment of Foot. Had a reputation for duelling. Challenged Lord Grey for an insult to the Irish people, and on another occasion was run through while acting as a second.

In 1682-83 was in London and participated in two kidnappings of wealthy heiresses – one for his friend and one for himself. The affair did not end well, but he got away.

Served with an English regiment under Louis XIV and returned to England in James II's retinue. Participated in the suppression of Monmouth's Rebellion (1685) and was made colonel. Handpicked to assist Richard Talbot in his program of "Catholicizing" the Irish Army.

In 1688 he commanded the body of Irish soldiers sent to England and fought in both engagements against the Williamites – the skirmish at Wincanton and the Battle of Reading. Followed James II to France after William of Orange decided to allow the Irish to depart. Accompanied James to Ireland, where he initially campaigned in the northwest, securing Connaught and raiding Ulster with a large and elite body of cavalry. This led to rapid promotion: Brigadier and Major-General, though James said he was "*a very brave man, no doubt, but with no headpiece.*" (*Boulger, p. 146*).

Others thought the same. The Duke of Berwick commented, "*Sarsfield imagined himself to be a great general*," and Ambassador d'Avaux said, "*a very brave man, but a* bad officer*, and with no common sense*." (*ibid*).

Sarsfield was at the Boyne, but did not fight, and was the most active cavalry commander during the first siege of Limerick. He rose to star status with the Ballyneety Raid which sabotaged the Williamite siege train. Already celebrated for his generosity, bravery, and commanding presence, he became a national hero.

The following year he participated in the last campaign, commanding the rearguard at Aughrim and so allowing the bulk of the army to escape. During the second siege of Limerick, he decided the war was lost and became the chief negotiator for peace on the Jacobite side.

No admirer of King James, and an advocate of continued resistance – even suggesting a national alliance with France (he had a French pension) – he was always at odds with the King's Deputy, Earl Tyrconnel, but despite this was made Earl Lucan in recognition of his services.

At the end of the war he arranged for a large portion of the army to be shipped to France. He fought with the Irish Brigade in Flanders as a *Maréchal-de-Camp* until killed at Neerwinden (Landen) in 1693. Looking at his blood, his last words were reputed to be, "*would that this were for Ireland*". Though in some matters he behaved as selfishly as any of his contemporaries, especially where personal advancement was concerned, he is remembered as a great Irish patriot.

Meanwhile, Lloyd was marching to Ballyshannon's relief. He intended to cross the Erne at Belleek and take Sarsfield in flank, but the latter, having heard reports of a supply convoy of barges near Belleek, was already on a collision course. The resultant action did not go the Jacobites' way:

> *"Sarsfield and five or six more narrowly escaping, the rest being mostly killed and about two hundred taken, the best of which they kept and the rest they stripped and sent away to carry the news to their friends."*
>
> *JI, p. 115.*

This reverse disrupted Sarsfield's forces, allowing further raids eastwards, on Cavan and even Kells, which was only 40 miles from Dublin.

King James ordered Rosen to deal with the threat. He was to have 4 battalions, plus horse and dragoons, and 4 pieces of cannon. But at the rendezvous, the Frenchman found only a few ill-equipped horsemen and 2 poorly armed battalions. The ammunition for the cannon was the wrong calibre. Rosen said he would do the job anyway, but, as previously recounted, received orders to proceed to Derry instead.

The Enniskilleners did not have a clear field, though. They suffered losses harassing the Jacobite line of communications at Omagh as part of an attempt to ease the pressure on Derry.

Toward the end of June, James ordered his son Berwick, serving with the cavalry at Derry, to take Enniskillen in a pincers operation in cooperation with Sarsfield. Berwick had 400 horse and dragoons in a "flying camp" on the Finn River. Sarsfield was prepared to link up, but, as usual in these affairs, there was no coordination.

The Duke's first action was a probe against Enniskillen, but, baulked at Trillick, 12 miles to the northeast of the ville, he made a diversionary raid against the town of Donegal instead. The latter place contained an enemy garrison of 300 militia. Coming via Barnesmore, the Jacobites rode into the town at dawn, looting and burning, but could not take Donegal Castle. After destroying the military stores, they retired, with 1,500 head of livestock.

Ordered to proceed against Enniskillen once again in early July, Berwick shifted his base to Trillick, routing the half-hearted bands sent against him, but was soon recalled by Rosen when enemy ships were reported in Lough Swilly. As recounted, Berwick was there unsuccessful in driving off Major General Kirke.

The Battle of Newtownbutler

> *"A Irishman is only to be taught his duty by the stick."*
>
> *General Wolseley, quoted in Boulger p. 137*

Newtownbutler was the Jacobites' last kick at the cat in Ulster. Exasperated by Enniskillen's continued success, King James now ordered Viscount Mountcashel to take the place. The latter marched north with 3 regiments of foot, 16 troops of horse and dragoons, and 8 field pieces. Enroute he was to link up with more dragoons under Brigadier (or Major) General Anthony Hamilton (brother of Richard) and a band of Gaels under Cuconnacht Mor MacGuire. Mountcashel hoped to join forces with Berwick and Sarsfield as well. James even thought to accompany the expedition, but was dissuaded.

It should be understood that this was really a counter-insurgency operation, not a formal campaign. By taking the town of Enniskillen, the Jacobites would be establishing themselves in the heart of the enemy's country, a land of bogs and lakes, dotted with "drumlins" or glacial moraines. They could then begin to pacify the area. It would also be a moral victory.

In the event, the Enniskillen men would be hard pressed, but Kirke had sent them reinforcements, including a regular officer named Colonel William Wolseley, who understood how to use the local talent.

The operation began on July 30th with an assault by Mountcashel on Crom Castle, which lay off the main route to the town. This action was on direct orders from James. Otherwise the position would probably have been bypassed. The approaches were covered by earthworks, easily taken, but the Jacobites then

rushed to the castle walls, from which they received a hot fire. They fell back in dismay. Meanwhile, the garrison commander sent word to Enniskillen, and a relief column was soon on its way.

On the 31st, Mountcashel detached his dragoons under Anthony Hamilton, with orders to take up a blocking position against the relieving force. The Jacobites were successful in forcing the enemy back up the road. Unwisely, they pursued for some 5 miles, until they came to the spot where the road crossed the Colebrooke River on a long causeway over marshy ground. The dragoons dismounted and began to cross. The Enniskilleners ambushed them, firing from both sides of the road. Hamilton was wounded. Now it was the Jacobites' turn to fly, and they suffered heavy casualties.

The dragoons rallied when they bumped into Mountcashel and the main body. Wolseley had by now joined the Williamite column, and, showing the temper of the situation, put the question to his men whether they should advance or retire. All voted to attack. The watchword was "*no popery*".

Mountcashel fell back to a position south of Newtownbutler, by tradition at Kilgarret. It was a good position with the road running uphill after passing through a bog. His guns were sited to cover the road and his men were placed on the hill. When the Enniskilleners attacked, their horse, road-bound, could make no progress, but the dragoons dismounted, and in company with the foot assaulted and took the guns. This allowed the horse to charge the slope.

The Jacobite foot did not stand very long, but soon broke, the men throwing away their arms and fleeing cross-country. The critical moment came when Mountcashel gave a regiment the order to "face right (or possibly left), march" but was misheard, the regimental officers passing the order to "face right about march". That regiment withdrew and the rest, apart from Mountcashel's own regiment and Lord Bophin's (rallied by a French officer), panicked:

> *"But after a short dispute, brigadier Hamilton sent the word by captain Lavallin to his men to wheel to the left, as if it were to rejoin Mountcashel. Lavallin delivered it 'to the left about,' as he thought it was, though Hamilton maintained it afterwards that it was as aforesaid ['face right, march']; whereupon the men marched off the field and flew away, as did the brigadier. The enemy thereat marched forwards towards Mountcashel, who, understanding that his valour was fled, and that thereby he himself became inferior to the enemy, put his body upon a pass, which was a causeway, on each side a morass. He planted at the end of the causeway two or three small pieces of cannon, behind which he set a troop of horse, on each hand his foot and dragoons. The enemies came to the pass, against whom the artillery was discharged, and some of them dropped. At this they drew back and passed through a wood that was at one end of the said morass, and marched unperceived against the rear of the Irish, who, seeing the foe coming surprisingly upon them in that posture, took their retreat towards Derry. The lord of Mountcashel was made prisoner, being wounded in several places. He was brought to Enniskillen, where he remained until about the twentieth of December following, when he made his escape by artifice, and came to Dublin. Thus the loyal party lost the field on the thirtieth of July, with the loss of a small number, amongst whom was major Fraine, a foreign-bred officer. The rebels lost also a few. But how this mistake in delivering the abovesaid word happened (which gave the occasion of that retreating) it hath been disputed. In three weeks after the action, brigadier Anthony Hamilton and captain Lavallin were brought to a trial before a court-martial in Dublin, wherein general de Rosen sate president. The brigadier was acquitted, and the captain condemned to a military death, though at his execution he protested that he delivered the word as he had received it; and many believed his protestation. He was a gentleman of a good estate in the county of Cork, within twelve miles of that city, and was much regretted by his friends."*
>
> *A Light to the Blind, p. 82*

Unfortunately, most of the men came from Munster and did not know the land. They fled southwest into the bogs and eventually came up against the River Erne. The Enniskillen Horse cut the only escape route, at Wattle Bridge, while their Foot formed a skirmish line and beat the bushes as if at a partridge shoot. Those they flushed were gunned down without mercy. Others tried to swim the icy Erne and were drowned.

Hamilton fled on to Navan in County Meath. For this he was court-martialled, but acquitted; unfairly, his subordinate was executed. Rosen was the presiding general at this court-martial, and he took the opportunity to make statements such as "*Irish incompetence would see his own army defeated*". The French ambassador seemed convinced that the powerful Hamilton clan had brought pressure to bear to save their kinsman – the early stages of the conflict were sometimes jokingly referred to as "the Hamiltons' War".

Mountcashel and a few followers hid in a wood, until he decided to make an end, riding out and firing at a body of the enemy who were guarding his captured cannon. He was shot several times, but his pocket watch stopped the potentially mortal wound. One of his own officers came to the rescue by calling out to the men clubbing him that he was the general. He was taken prisoner to Enniskillen, where a doctor and surgeon sent from King James were allowed to treat him.

Mountcashel's forces constituted the best trained and best armed units. If the column has succeeded in its object, Berwick had hoped to seize Ballyshannon in conjunction with Sarsfield and break the Enniskilleners' lifeline:

> *"Dear Notorious,*
>
> *This is to give you notice that Marshal Rosen or I will march within three or four days from this place [Cavan Park] to Ballyshannon, so that if you look out sharp this way you may see us laying on these rebelly and cowering rogues; which may give you also an opportunity of attacking on that side of the water to make a diversion… In the meanwhile I remain, dear Notorious,*
>
> *Your kind friend and servant,*
>
> *Berwick"*
>
> *W&P, p. 144.*

But the disaster cancelled all remaining Jacobite operations in the region. Now, the Jacobites were in full retreat. They had suffered 2,000 dead and 500 taken prisoner at Newtownbutler, besides losing their entire supply train. Wolseley estimated his 2,200 men had faced and defeated 5,500. The battle served to demoralise the Jacobites and won the Enniskilleners a place in the Williamite Army. The French War Minister, Louvois, was by now convinced that the Irish affair was a fizzle, but his sovereign's word was at stake, so the farce must continue.

The Coming of Marshal Schomberg

> *"The new king much blamed for neglecting Ireland, now like to be ruined by the Lord Tyrconnel and his popish party, too strong for the Protestants".*
>
> *John Evelyn. Quoted in J.I. p. 121*

Marshal Friedrich Hermann, Duke of Schomberg, took command of the Williamite expedition to Ireland in July of 1689. At 74, he was still active, but a cautious, even meticulous, general, disinclined to take risks. His reputation was very great. A Huguenot, most of his service had been under Louis XIV, but the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes changed all that. Now serving under the Elector of Brandenburg, that prince offered him to William, who was delighted to accept. Schomberg, too, was pleased. Although born a German, his mother was English, and he had tried unsuccessfully to gain service in the army of Charles II. Schomberg led the Williamite army that invaded England in 1688.

In the early days, King William did not concern himself with Ireland directly. The war was left to a committee of the Privy Council, of which Schomberg was a member. The King chose Schomberg to lead the Irish expedition because of his wide experience (especially, he had built and led a polyglot force in Portugal), and his ability to speak English well.

An immediate descent on Ireland could not be made. England was scarcely secure, and there was a Jacobite rising in Scotland. William had ordered John Churchill to take 8,000 of the best troops into Flanders, in exchange for an equal number of Dutch (per the request of the Dutch Government). He did not trust the English, and Churchill least of all. The Dutch *were* better troops, besides being above suspicion.

The Irish Expedition was to consist of 18 regiments of foot and 5 of dragoons and horse. It would draw its manpower from Irish exiles now living in England, especially those who had served in the old Irish Army, fleshed out with English recruits. Dutch and Huguenot regiments would provide a stiffener. A contingent of Danish troops would be added.

The summer dragged on. Schomberg fretted at Chester, waiting for troops and supplies. He blamed Shales, his chief commissary, who, true to type, reputedly accepted bribes to pass on flimsy muskets, issued watery beer (and not enough of it), and swathed his office in red tape. He was further suspected of being a Papist. Apart from Shales, the Admiralty made the usual nonsensical difficulties about shipping (*after all, what do tides really matter?*)

July of 1689 was the critical month. Up until then, it looked as if Schomberg would be too late. But that month Viscount Dundee was killed in action, leaving no one of sufficient stature to command the Scottish Highlanders, Derry was relieved, and Newtownbutler removed the threat to Enniskillen.

There were so many delays that Schomberg did not leave England until August 12th. The North Channel was a secure passage, but due to a shortage of suitable ships, Schomberg took only 12 regiments of foot, leaving the horse and other infantry units to follow on later. Initially, he planned to wait at the Isle of Man, but the weather was so good, some of the ships sailed on, anchoring in Bangor Bay on the 13th.

The marshal, with about 5-6,000 men ashore, all infantry, heard of a local party of 500 horse, under Brigadier Maxwell, and immediately ordered his men to dig in, fearing a night attack. Maxwell withdrew, not even burning Belfast, leaving only 2 battalions of foot at Carrickfergus to threaten the Williamite flank ("*lusty, strong fellows, but ill-clad*" according to the Williamite chronicler, George Storey). For this Maxwell, a Scotsman, was soundly criticised by the Jacobites.

[The units at Carrickfergus were either McCarthy More's and a battalion of Cormac O'Neill's, or, per A Light to the Blind*, Owen McCarty and McCarthy More].*

Schomberg was welcomed with tears of joy by the Protestants of the region, and soon established secure base. While waiting for the rest of his army, principally the cavalry, he ordered the siege of Carrickfergus. It lasted a week, and involved all 12 regiments of foot (9,000 men), a prolonged bombardment by land and sea, and a full-scale assault. The Jacobites acquitted themselves well, and were given honours of war. Ominously, the Williamite soldiers chose to ignore the terms and gave the garrison, and the townspeople a rough handling – "barbarously" according to the Jacobites. Schomberg was forced to ride in amongst his men, waving his pistol in displeasure.

Schomberg's arrival changed the complexion of the war for the Jacobites. They were already despondent. Fingers were being pointed, and some of them were pointed at James. But it was Melfort who took most of the heat. The Irish said he was either incompetent, or a traitor. Threatened with assassination, he asked leave to go to France, and disappeared from the scene at the end of August (22nd). James stayed, but only because Melfort told him Tyrconnel wanted him to go; he had lost all hope.

Schomberg's name was enough to cause panic. A review of the Jacobite Army was held and it was discovered there were only 6-7,000 men, a third of whom were unarmed. Ammunition amounted to 4 rounds per man. "Gun-money" (the brass tokens) was causing rampant inflation. The Protestants in Dublin stirred.

Friedrich Hermann, 1st Duke of Schomberg (1615-1690)

Born Heidelberg, of a German father and an English mother. Orphaned shortly after his birth, he was raised by friends of the family, including the Elector Palatine, whom his father had served.

Military career began under Frederick Henry, Prince of Orange, but passed into Swedish service in 1634, then went to France in 1635, where his family was quite prominent. Retired for a few years but joined the Dutch Army in 1639, serving in it until 1650. Rejoined the French Army as *Maréchal de Camp* and fought under Turenne in the Turenne-Condé campaigns. Made *Lieutenant Général* in 1665.

In those years he was sent as a military advisor to Portugal, where Charles II of England had interests, raised and led a Portuguese army in three campaigns against the Spanish, culminating in the victory of Montes Claros (1665). Then participated in a revolution which overthrew the King of Portugal in favour of his brother. Returned to France as a naturalised Frenchman and bought an estate with the f.5000 pension he had as a Grandee of Portugal.

Invited to England in 1673 to command the Army, but popular sentiment was against the French and he did not get the job. Returned to France and fought in Catalonia in 1674-1675, at first unsuccessfully due to poor quality of the army, but was made a Marshal of France in 1675 for his capture of Fort de Bellegarde. But as a Huguenot, he suffered persecution. At the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685) he left France and joined the Army of Brandenburg, where he was made General-in-Chief.

Loaned to William of Orange in 1688, as his second in command. In 1689 was made Knight of the Garter, created Duke of Schomberg, and appointed Master-General of the Ordnance, with a vote of £100,000 from Parliament to make up for his lost estates. In August 1689 he was appointed commander of the Irish expedition. The campaign did not go well and he was slighted by William in the next year's campaign, though he donated the money voted him to the war effort. He was killed at the battle of the Boyne, trying to rally the Williamite center.

His son, Meinhardt, led the advance guard of the left wing at the Boyne, and afterward, in favour with William, continued to serve in Ireland and the Low Countries. His eldest son, Charles, inherited the title but was killed at Marsaglia in 1693.

A general call up of all Catholic males from 16 to 60 was issued. Coastal dwellers were ordered to remove themselves 10 miles inland. Protestants were disarmed (again). Local officials used the orders to help themselves to livestock, horses, and recruits, and had to be reprimanded, with little practical effect. The Jacobites even tried bribing Schomberg's men, but only acquired some of the "Huguenots", who, it turned out, were actually Catholics. James ordered the formation of a Dublin Militia, without respect to religion, at which the French had a fit; the order was rescinded.

The French also recommended the Jacobites abandon Dublin, which was indefensible and had a large Protestant fifth column. As in Cromwell's war, the Jacobites should defend the line of the Shannon River, or at least concentrate at Athlone. By that time, French regiments ought to be on their way. Dublin should be burned to the ground. But James refused to abandon his capital: "*he was resolved not to be tamely walked out of Ireland, but to have one blow for it at least*". *(JI, p. 125).* James was backed up by Tyrconnel.

To get away from the cloying atmosphere of the Court, the King, on August 26th, rode to Drogheda with a small escort of 200. Here he held a council of war. Again the French counselled retreat. The Irish faction instead recommended speeding up the

Army's reformation so that they could meet Schomberg in an engagement at Drogheda. To slow the enemy down, Berwick was told off to hold a forward position at Newry, and to destroy all the bridges and causeways in the vicinity. Tyrconnel brought additional troops to Drogheda.

Dundalk

> *"I was forced to go and dig potatoes, which made the greatest part of a dinner to better men than myself; and if it was so with us it may easily be supposed the poor soldiers had harder times of it."*
>
> *George Story, quoted in JI, p. 126.*

Schomberg marched out from Belfast on September 2nd. and established a camp at Dundalk on September 7th, after marching via Lisburn, Hillsborough, Loughbrickland, and Newry. The Williamites had 19 regiments of foot (2 Dutch, 3 Huguenot, and the rest Anglo-Irish), 6 of horse, and 1 of dragoons, plus a substantial (for Ireland) train. In all, 13,000 infantry and 1,500 cavalry.

Enroute to Dundalk, the Army was joined by 3 regiments of mounted but poorly equipped Enniskilleners (about 500 men at the minimum estimate), whom Schomberg, contrary to his own rules, allowed to function under their own discipline. He did not even give them orders, but let them scout for the Army as they saw fit. Kirke's forces, including his own regiment, Hanmer's, and Steuart's, arrived at Dundalk on the 9th. Including static Protestant militia forces, the marshal had about 20,000 men.

[In separate essays, Simms says 18 or 19 regiments of foot, the difference being 1 extra Dutch regiment. It may be that this is a mistake for a two-battalion regiment. Boulger gives a strength of 10,000 men, plus 16,000 Ulster militia.]

Brigadier Sir Charles Kearny had been the senior Jacobite commander in Co. Down and Antrim, and he prudently withdrew the 1 or 2 regiments he had had at Coleraine, along with another on the upper Bann (*Grand Prior's, T. Butler's, & Dillon's*). Berwick now commanded the advanced guard of the Jacobite Army, based at Newry. He burned that town, and the surrounding countryside, and withdrew south. The Jacobites could have made trouble at the Moyry Pass, which was the only practical direct route from Dundalk to Newry, but they did not, though Rosen had fortified the southern end with two redoubts.

The camp at Dundalk, which was to be the Williamite army's home for the next 2 months, was a wretched place. Located a mile before Dundalk, on either side of the main road, it was pitched on flat bottom-land, and in wet weather – which it was, constantly – the place became a marsh.

> *"The already spongy ground was so softened by the rainy season, which set in earlier than usual, that one could not pitch a tent that the rain did not throw down."*
>
> *W&P, p. 96.*

Schomberg could have occupied higher ground, south of Dundalk, and this would have allowed him to use the town, which was walled, as a base, but he was concerned about his lines of communication with Carlingford and Newry. If he had camped south of Dundalk, his communications would have had to cross a single bridge over the Castletown River.

Despite its insalubrious location, from the point of view of defence, the current position was a strong one. Beginning at the sea coast, a line of outposts was established on the west of the town, running north-south. These were entrenched and contained elements of a Dutch regiment, backed by English dragoons, with the Enniskillen foot in reserve.

The camp itself was to the northeast of the town, connected to the latter by that bridge over the Castletown River. The artillery park lay between the camp and the river. The Enniskillen dragoons camped by themselves in the hills to the west. Schomberg was headquartered at Castletown itself, which was an old but solid manor-fortress on the south bank of the river.

The marshal has many times been faulted for fussing about with camps when he should have been Seizing the Capital, Making Deep Penetrations, and Waging Battles of Annihilation. King William would; he was up on all the latest theories, though he never seemed able to find practical applications.

Ignoring the critics' minimal understanding of the time period under examination, it should be pointed out that much of the baggage had not arrived. It was ordered to meet the Army at Carlingford Lough; the heavy guns were also sent by sea. Storms delayed the ships.

Marching in Ireland was a new experience, even for the veteran Schomberg. It rained continually. High winds made pitching tents a nightmare. The metalled "horse roads", though accounted "advanced" by the engineering standards of the day, were full of potholes, while the footpaths that ran by the side of them vanished into the bogs. Newry they found burnt by Berwick's cavalry screen. *What a country!*

[The roads would have been excellent in a country that had less rain.]

The Williamites began to be in want, particularly after they ran out of bread. The countryside provided little to eat beside potatoes, and Schomberg was forced to use his artillery horses to haul supply wagons (at which his artillerists protested vigorously).

The West

In the West, there was a war of outposts.

Sligo, like Enniskillen and Ballyshannon, was a small place that acted as a focal point for guerrilla activities. It had more strategic value for the Jacobites since it was the gateway to Connaught, but before the war the district had a large Protestant population. The village was defended by a tumbledown castle, an elderly stone fort, and a modern earthwork, called the Green Fort. The latter covered the northern approaches to the village from high ground.

In the days leading up to the war, the Protestants became alarmed at rumours that Sligo would receive a Catholic garrison. In consequence, the locals formed Associations, and took over the defences. They also garrisoned outlying positions at Grange, on the road to Derry, and at Newtown, Manorhamilton, Collooney, Markree House, and Ballintogher.

A number of minor actions occurred during the early days of the war between Protestant and Catholic locals – the usual amateur affrays involving the seizing of arms caches, the breaking in to manor houses in the dead of night, and the slaying of the odd man by concealed blunderbuss or lynching party. Prior to the siege of Derry, Colonel Lundy wrote to the Sligo men suggesting they come to the town, since he did not feel they could stand up to the regular forces approaching from Dublin. The village was abandoned on March 24th, 1689 and taken over by the Catholic party, who would hold it for most of the war.

As it turned out, when the population of Sligo arrived at Ballyshannon, they found a letter from Lundy saying there was no means of providing for them after all. After this insult, some left by boat for England, but most pressed on. By the time they reached Derry, on April 7th (after a brutal march), they found the place besieged. Unable to return home, most moved on to Enniskillen.

The Jacobites, meanwhile, had made Sligo their regional base. From here, Patrick Sarsfield and his cavalry rode out against the Enniskilleners. The governor was another cavalryman, Henry Luttrell, who was later branded a traitor; he and Sarsfield were thick as thieves, united in their dislike of Tyrconnel. Luttrell's strength was augmented after the failure at Belleek. In all, there may have been more than 5,000 horsemen operating on a regular basis in the West.

After Newtownbutler, Sarsfield's forces fell back on Sligo, shadowed by a small Williamite column under Colonel Francis Gore (3 troops of horse and 150 foot). Gore employed a stratagem to take Sligo. His men captured a Jacobite who turned out to be Gore's foster brother. After threatening him, Gore let him go with some "private" news for the handful of Sarsfield's officers who were their acquaintances: Gore's column was the advance guard of a 20,000-man army. The lie had its effect: the

Jacobites abandoned Sligo precipitately and fled toward Athlone. Gore collected their cannon, and a substantial quantity of stores.

Conygnham's Dragoons, sent out of Donegal, and led by Sir Albert Conyngham of Mountcharles, soon reinforced the position. Then in September, Thomas Lloyd took over, bringing an additional 3 troops of horse. Shortly after, Lloyd led a column to take Boyle (Abbey Boyle), fighting a Jacobite party on the slopes of the Curlews. Located on the road from Sligo to Boyle, the Jacks had posted picquets on the hills, who were overrun in the night. In the morning, their main body held a walled deer park against Lloyd's men until Conyngham's Dragoons broke in and outflanked them. The Jacobite foot dispersed into a bog while the horse bolted through Boyle too fast to be caught.

This only served to stir the Jacobites up. A Williamite garrison at Jamestown was attacked by 5,000 of Sarsfield's troopers, aided by 2,000 wild men of Connaught. The onslaught washed the Williamites back to Sligo. Here, their cavalry had already withdrawn to Ballyshannon, but Lloyd and a Huguenot officer named St. Sauveur decided to hold the town as long as possible. Lloyd's men were Enniskilleners; St. Sauveur's were grenadiers. The latter held a pass at nearby Ballysadare until their ammunition ran out, then fell back on the town.

[St. Sauveur was reputedly an excellent marksman, and stood with his men, coolly potting at the approaching Jacobites.]

St. Sauveur occupied the Stone Fort while Lloyd held the Green Fort. Lloyd managed to temporarily drive the Jacobites back with a sally (possibly in order to cover St. Sauveur's retreat, though that is not explicitly noted). Both sides brought up reinforcements, but the Jacks managed to overrun the Green Fort and the Enniskilleners, with their supports, fell back into the village and occupied the old castle of the Fitzgeralds that stood in the center of it. Here the two sides blazed away at each other.

The castle had to be abandoned. All the defenders crowded into the Stone Fort, where they managed to hold out for another 5 days. The Jacobites, lacking any modern siege equipment, built an enclosed wooden siege tower. The defenders managed to set it alight by dumping wood shavings at its base and lowering a man over the wall to light them – he was rescued just in time after his rope was shot through. The defenders also took and burned a "sow" – a hide-covered mobile hut that would allow the besiegers to mine the walls under cover – after it was spotted approaching in the night.

But provisions and water were low. Given honours of war, St. Sauveur's men were allowed to march away. The story goes that Sarsfield stood on the bridge with a hat full of guineas for any who would join him, but that only one man did so, and deserted next day, after being equipped with horse and harness.

From October of 1689 to the end of the war, Sligo remained a Jacobite stronghold. The Williamites did not forget about it, but they put a low priority on it. The focal point of the war had shifted south. Given the burgeoning Ulster home defence forces, a Jacobite thrust from Sligo was unlikely to succeed. On the other hand, a Williamite attack was unlikely because the terrain was so bad. Also, the Williamite commander later assigned to this sector, Lieutenant General Douglas, was less than enthusiastic.

Luttrell was placed in command of Sligo again, and had under his command his own regiment of horse, Sir Niall O'Neill's Dragoons (later detached to fight at the Boyne) and 3,000 Foot. Luttrell repaired the defences and built a third fort covering the approach from Ballyshannon.

Challenge at Dundalk

> *"Next to the honour of never engaging in a bad cause there is nothing braver than to desert it"*
>
> *Billet distributed by the Jacobites to encourage desertion.*

Back at Dundalk, in the fall of '89, the situation was grim. The Dutch quickly set to work building shelters and digging latrines, and in consequence lost few men, but the British regiments were as raw as red meat and had no clue how to provide for themselves; of course, their officers would not allow themselves to receive instruction from "foreigners".

According to eyewitnesses, much of the trouble in the Williamite camp stemmed from the venality and laziness of the English officers. They failed to order the erection of huts until it was too late and all the wood was wet. They pocketed the regimental allowances for food and clothing and purchased inferior product for issue to the men.

"*The officers are incapable, but their slackness and laziness are worse still*." (*W&P, p.99*). The only "British" units that impressed Schomberg – despite their shoddy appearance – were the Enniskilleners.

Lack of discipline led not only to disease from exposure, but from poor diet:

> *"The prevailing sickness was the bloody flux [dysentery], caused by bad food, which was almost entirely limited to oat-cakes… and the drink of fresh beer and water from a stagnant bog."*
>
> *W&P, p. 94.*

When this diet was suddenly supplemented by a herd of sheep, it only served to exacerbate the flux.

[That vital mineral, salt, was a precious import that could not be had for love or money. Soldiers' powder flasks were sometimes found to be minus gunpowder and full of salt. Unsalted meat was a prime cause of sickness in both armies.]

In all, Schomberg was to lose about a third of his army – 7,700 men out of 14,000 – at Dundalk. Evacuation to the hospitals of Belfast did not help. Of 2,000 sick transported up the coast by sea, 800 died enroute, and during the period of November 1, 1689 through May 1, 1690, a further 3,762 died in hospital, and 1,700 in the camp itself. There were reports of transports sailing under their own power, full of dead men.

> *"the living occupants [of the camp's huts] seemed very sorry when the others were to be buried… whilst they had them in their huts they either served to lay between them and the cold wind or at least were serviceable to sit or lie on."*
>
> *George Story, quoted in JI, p. 130.*

Many of his officers nagged at the marshal to continue the advance. Unable, in his view, to proceed without sufficient supplies, he vented his spleen in letters to William:

> *"My Irish lords are constantly for giving battle; they are eager to get back to their own estates".*
>
> *W&P, p. 96.*

An advance against the Jacobite position at Drogheda would likely have succeeded. The enemy had no more than 20,000 men at Drogheda (acquired by culling out every garrison in Ireland), and the Williamites had the support of Rooke's naval squadron. Local Protestants had even begun collecting supplies for their deliverers. The Jacks were recovering their morale, but slowly, and little was being done to ready the men for the ardours of the battlefield.

Schomberg was no fool. But he let his present circumstances master him, until he was no longer able to overcome the psychological inertia required to get going again: the horses are being used to transport supplies; we cannot continue the advance. There are now too many sick; we cannot continue. It is too late in the season and the roads have disappeared; we must sit it out. Later, his men dying like flies, he could not see the possibility of entering winter quarters (which would have dispersed the men, improved their lot, and reduced sickness) until the Jacobites did so.

King William was later to comment angrily that the marshal was in his dotage, but William was an impatient man whose own efforts in the field were repeatedly stained with the pointless slaughter of his own men, and who had no experience of the conditions in Ireland, conditions which appalled Schomberg.

The Jacobites, who had assembled most of their army at Drogheda by September 10th, were emboldened by the Williamites' non-appearance. They picked up stakes and advanced, camping at Ardee, halfway between Dundalk and Drogheda, on September 14th. This stretch of country had been left intact, on James' orders, and further supplies were seized from Protestant stockpiles laid in for their "deliverers".

On the 16th the Jacks took up positions on the enemy's side of the River Fane, only 5 miles from the opposing camp. James' headquarters was at Knockbridge. It is recorded that the Jacobites, high and low, were extremely nervous about being so close to the enemy.

[Although, while the main Jacobite camp was tossing and turning in fear of a sudden enemy sally, a French officer doing his rounds of the sentries found them all asleep, except one!]

Meanwhile, Rooke's squadron of 12 ships made an attempt to support the Protestants in Dublin by cruising the coast and entering Dublin Bay, but the governor, Simon Luttrell, turned out the garrison onto the shore and forced him to leave. This action led to speculation that Schomberg was waiting for a general Protestant rising, but the Army and the Navy were not on such intimate terms as to co-ordinate operations.

On the 20th, Schomberg finally received a convoy of 11 provision ships. But he still had few carts and other transports. 120 artillery horses still reposed at Chester. Half the army had no shoes. There was a panic at headquarters when a large body of Jacobites was reported to be making for Newry, which held a garrison of only 50 men. But they were on their way to support Sarsfield's assault on Sligo and missed a golden opportunity.

King James offered battle on Saturday 21st. It was a bright, sunny day. About 7am Jacobite horsemen were seen approaching the Williamite entrenchments south of the town. By 10am their main camp was astir. Soon the Williamite picquets caught sight of the Royal Standard as the Jacobites marched out in perfect order, deploying about half a mile away, on a line of hillocks running southeast-northwest.

Their battle order was the standard one for assaulting entrenchments: cavalry on the wings, and two lines of infantry in checkerboard formation (which allowed tired assaulting formations to be quickly replaced or reinforced). King James took the center, Rosen the left, and *Captain-General* Tyrconnel the right. Between the armies lay a marshy stream, crossed by the main road and a handful of paths. The Jacobite right was within cannon shot of the Williamite left.

Schomberg ordered up first one, then another battalion. He had to play for time; most of his cavalry was away foraging. His senior commanders pushed for a battle, but Schomberg merely said, "*let them alone, we will see what they will do*". He did not believe the enemy would attack. Most of the infantry appeared to be armed with scythes. The marshal's enemies later blamed him, but why should he do anything? The Jacobites *could* do nothing, and would daily become weaker, whereas his situation could only improve.

James gnawed his glove, but the Jacobites as a whole were enthusiastic. Rosen believed an assault would work. Tyrconnel did not, and neither did the King. But the Army was so in favour of it that James decided to make a demonstration and see if Schomberg would come out and play.

A party of 60 volunteer horsemen under John Carey, Lord Hunsdon, rode down the main road toward the enemy. Schomberg countered by putting more men in the trenches and advancing a party of 300 men to oppose the horse. The marshal was in doubt, he made arrangements to summon his cavalry, then he very deliberately laid down and appeared to go to sleep.

The Jacobites pushed forward some bodies of dragoons and grenadiers, to take the Williamites under a crossfire if they should attack their horsemen. The grenadiers took cover in some wooden huts and began to snipe at the Williamites at extreme range. The fire was returned and casualties began to mount. But after three hours of sporadic firing, catcalls, and bravadoes, the Jacobites had failed to lure Schomberg out of his works. At 2pm James ordered his army back to camp. He remained with the rearguard, but apart from some minor skirmishing by overeager Enniskilleners the Williamites did not move.

Proclaiming himself satisfied that his men were prepared to engage a "superior" enemy, but unwilling to actually put them to the test, James went back to the Fane. The French were impressed. Jacobite propaganda spoke of the terror inspired by their scythe-armed soldiers. D'Avaux wrote:

> *"the improvement in the Irish army is almost inconceivable."*
>
> *Boulger, p. 123*

[Army strengths for the period of the standoff are 13,600 (September 20th) or 19,989 (October 2nd) for the Jacobites, and 18,888 for the Williamites. The scythes may have been poor substitutes for muskets, but they were fabricated to order. If properly wielded they could be more effective than pikes.]

At the Fane, where the Jacobites remained for two weeks, they enjoyed pleasant weather; over at the Williamite camp the rain continued "in judgement upon them".

[These "micro climates" are a feature of Ireland.]

Annoyed at the outcome of the mighty non-battle, King William urged Schomberg to be more aggressive. Schomberg complained that his officers were poor stuff, and the recruits even poorer. He was low on supplies. There were great numbers of sick. It rained incessantly, which turned the roads, if one could dignify them with that appellation, into rivers of mud. He thought it would be better to march west to the Shannon and asked for a second amphibious landing somewhere on the north coast. William began to be vexed.

The proximity of the armies enabled a number of deserters to come over to the Jacks. Most were French Catholics who had been recruited without question in England, after having previously deserted the Sun King's army. It was speculated that concern about a fifth column was the real reason Schomberg did not attack. 500 "Huguenots" were imprisoned in Carlingford. In a letter from the latter to King William, describing the demonstration:

> *"This morning [the 21st] some squadrons of the enemy appeared near this camp, a bog being between us, and then three or four regiments of the infantry, whose colours we saw and judged by their cries that King James was passing before their battalions. I believe that all these movements are intended to draw some deserters from our army, they having spread about a quantity of English and French printed billets. This has obliged me to examine more narrowly the regiments of French infantry and I find that the greater part of the recruits which were drawn from deserters about Brussels and Frankfort were papists."*
>
> *W&P, pp. 97-98.*

The Jacobites attempted to free the French imprisoned at Carlingford. The officer in charge of the party, when challenged, as a ruse declared he was for King William. He had neglected to explain his plan to his men, and they now loudly denounced him as a traitor, saying they were true Jacobites! Needless to say, the rescue attempt did not come off.

The Jacobites fell back to Ardee on October 6th, and remained there until November. On breaking camp on the Fane they fired their huts. The smoke caused great confusion, and to everyones' consternation it was discovered that the King had been left behind! James and his minimal security detail were two miles back when his absence was noted. Fortunately the Williamites did not notice either.

[The history of a war in its early stages is always amusing. No one has a clue how to "properly behave" and the protagonists are not tired and

jaded. The history of a period of "late war" is usually as repetitive as the zombie-like blows the opponents deal each other.]

The new camp was a poor one and the Jacks began to suffer some of the maladies already experienced by the Williamites. (By the spring, they would have suffered 15,000 casualties out of a total army strength of 40,000).

At the beginning of November, both sides went into winter quarters. Dundalk was occupied after Schomberg had withdrawn; there was some debate as to whether the location could ever be made fit for habitation again. James returned to Dublin. Schomberg deployed his army in Ulster, with his headquarters at Lisburne.

The arguments for Schomberg's hesitation have already been advanced. To them can be added the fact that a high proportion of his forces – 17 battalions out of 22 – were newly raised English. In 1690, King William would mainly employ well-trained foreign troops; his lieutenant, Baron Ginkel, in 1691, lost a comparable number of English, some 7,000, to the same causes.

On the Jacobite side, many were equally critical of King James for not overturning Schomberg's camp. In his memoirs, which are reasonably true to the facts as memoirs go, James says Rosen was to blame, for insisting that only French troops could have done it. But this ignores the fact that Rosen wanted to attack. By the time those words were written, James was well aware that Schomberg had been weak and had been playing for time. In truth, the King had little faith in the Irish.

Winter, 1689

> *"The King has decided to send M. de Lauzun to Ireland with 7000 infantry including 15 or 1600 English, Scottish, and Irish troops now at Lille. Roze [Rosen] is to come back [to France], and Lauzun is to hold the rank of Captain-General."*
>
> *Boulger, p. 128*

The moral victory at Dundalk proved a curse. Exuberant, the Jacobite high command did little to prepare their army for the challenges of the next season. James and his Court "wasted" the winter in "revels and debauches". The main sport seemed to be gaming, closely followed by duelling between French and Irish. James himself spent most of the winter far away from the Court – at Kilkenny – in a state of torpor. When at Dublin, he was said to be either wrapped up in religion, or absorbed in "balls and operas".

Some work was done, mainly by Tyrconnel and the Irish officers. Dublin was fortified, and Dundalk strengthened. Quarters were mainly along the line of the Boyne, and at Dublin, with advanced posts at Cavan, Belturbet, and Charlemont.

The Earl wrote repeatedly to France, to Mary of Modena, for provisions, copper for money, and steel for weapon making. An armaments factory was set up, mostly staffed by Protestants (!) which began to produce firelocks (flintlocks). Ironically, they did not have the materials to make the older matchlocks. Money supplies were very low; wine as well. The troops began to murmur, until pay was raised (though in brass) and sutlers houses licensed to sell cheap ale.

[The transition from matchlock to flintlock was a slow one in most armies because of the expense. The newer weapons were safer, and easier to master, but they cost more. The English Army, being small and habitually subject to disbandment on the outbreak of peace, was one of the first to make the full transition, following the Dutch example. The Dutch could make the switch because they were rich. The stocks the French shipped to Ireland were all decrepit matchlocks out of storage.]

King James at last ordered the complete disarming of the Protestants in Catholic areas, but the the King's Printer forgot to print the proclamation for several weeks in a row – yes, the reader has guessed it, he was a *Protestant*. James could not bring himself to condemn the man; likewise, he allowed a spy to escape the country to avoid the onerous duty of ordering him hanged.

The French passed the time in duelling and the Irish in murdering. The most dangerous quarrel occurred between the Grand Prior, who was the King's natural son, Henry, and Lord Dungan. The latter had made a toast in Henry's presence of "*confusion to Melfort and all bad councillors*". Melfort was a friend of the Grand Prior, and the latter was a hot headed young man. He threw a glass in Dungan's face. Fortunately, Dungan remained calm and the matter was passed over.

For the Williamites, conditions over the winter "continued very bad". The army was thoroughly demoralised, and wintering in Ulster would not improve matters. It is estimated that more men died in winter quarters than at Dundalk. A little action occurred at Belturbet, but nothing to write home about.

There were a few moments of excitement. Lord Mountcashel escaped imprisonment. Given parole, he told his captors he intended to escape. They withdrew the parole, and this allowed him to escape with honour intact. Back in Dublin, he and James and d'Avaux then tackled the thorny problem of the promised exchange of troops. After much argument, the Irish scraped up 5,387 men for 5 regiments. D'Avaux complained that two-thirds of the officers were useless. The men were barely human. The French took them, nonetheless. In France, they were reformed into 3 regiments: Mountcashel's, Dillon's, and O'Brien's – the nucleus of France's Irish Brigade.

[Despite initial impressions, the Irish were soon, and remained, in high demand. Their oath bade them serve the French King "against all the world with no exception, save against the king of Great Britain".]

A Jacobite raid on Newry made the French yellow press. It was trumpeted as a great coup – the discovery of an arms cache and the capture of a Williamite lord. In reality, the Irish captain dispatched by *Colonel de* Boisseleau on this raid panicked and fled after stumbling across the weapons.

There was also the Neanagh Castle affray, in Co. Longford. The castle was owned by Sir Thomas Newcomen, an Orangist, and held by his wife and a small garrison. Brigadier Patrick Nugent made a demonstration that secured the castle's surrender (with honours of war). The wife was sent packing in some distress. This prompted Schomberg to bestir himself.

In February of 1690, Brigadier William Wolseley, having already taken Belturbet, attacked Cavan with a mixed force of Enniskilleners and English: 700 infantry and 300 cavalry. The defenders were led by Major General Wauchope, who had been an officer in the Guards and was a friend of the Drummonds (Melfort) and Berwick. Two Jacobite relief columns, each of 800 men, approached, one under Nugent, out of Westmeath, and the other under the Duke of Berwick, out of Longford. Nearly all the Jacobites were infantry, except for 1-2 troops of horse.

The Jacobites arrived at Cavan on February 10th. The Williamites met them a day later. Unwisely, Berwick deployed his men in the open, allowing Wolseley to occupy some enclosures and remain on the defensive. The small band of Jacobite cavalry routed the stronger Williamite horse but the Jacks lost 200 men ferreting them out of their position, with Brigadier Nugent and 10 other officers taken prisoner. The Jacobite left wing fled into the castle. Berwick had a horse killed under him in the affray. The Williamites took losses amounting to 53 killed and 60 wounded. Wolseley was obliged to retreat, though he held the field, because the castle remained in Jacobite hands.

Charlemont, the last Jacobite outpost in Ulster, was besieged in a desultory fashion; the commandant, Teague O'Regan, earning his knighthood from James, though in the end he was forced to capitulate. O'Regan was one of Charles II's veterans. A hunchback, he reputedly went about wearing a moth-eaten old wig, his cravat askew, and "boots of a thousand wrinkles". But he was a doughty warrior.

O'Regan's force consisted of 300 men, defending a Medieval castle and ditch. Schomberg, whom O'Regan had served under as a lieutenant in the Scots Gendarmes of France, permitted him to receive a convoy of supplies and 600 more men, women, and children, which overloaded the garrison. O'Regan could not get rid of the dependents. His men would desert if he did.

Schomberg's comment was, "*well, there seems certainly to be a good deal of love in it, but also a good deal of foolishness*". Nonetheless, the garrison held out until May 12th, 1690. Given honours of war, O'Regan was dispatched to command at Sligo.

Enter Dutch Billy

From a personal standpoint, Dundalk blighted the last days of Schomberg's career; trapped by circumstances, his mistakes were magnified by the hyperbole of the subsequent parliamentary witch hunt. He would not receive a state funeral.

> *"It has cast such a mist upon him that the remainder of his life will not be able to dissipate."*
>
> *W&P, p. 101.*

His death at the Boyne in 1690 has often been seen as an attempt to repair his reputation. On a positive note, Commissary Shales was arrested and received direct blame for the failure of the army (but he appears to have retained employment in the government, which is not surprising; he was, after all, an *apparachik*).

The most important consequence of the fall campaign was that William, though he dodged calls for an official inquiry that might have undermined some of his supporters, resolved to go to Ireland in person. This decision was not made lightly. Ireland was a long way from Holland, and there were many political issues in England that needed his attention, particularly the animosity between the Whigs and Tories. There were also a lot of prominent English Jacobites at large. In the end, his Continental allies persuaded him that it was necessary to "waste" this year and secure his rear.

William's anger at having to go to Ireland should not be underestimated. In his mind, he ought to be in Holland organising the fight against King Louis, and it was all Schomberg's fault. The old marshal would find himself disregarded during the 1690 campaign. The pettiness of the Parliamentary debates also inflamed Dutch Billy's indignation, and he prorogued the body abruptly at the end of May 1690.

The Campaign of 1690

The silver stream is crimsoned wide
and clogged with many a corpse,
As floating down its gentle tide
co- mingled man and horse;
Now fiercer grows the battle's rage,
the guarded stream is crossed,
And furious, hand-to-hand,
engage each bold contending host.

The Battle of the Boyne

In brief, the campaigning season of 1690 opened with the Jacobites concentrating at Dundalk and the Williamites north of them at Newry. The main action began in June. It was never possible to begin the main campaign any earlier, due to the climate. The Jacobites withdrew to a defensive position on the south bank of the Boyne River, which flows into the Irish Sea about halfway between Dundalk and Dublin. It was the last significant obstacle before the capital.

The Williamites arrived a day later, and the following day, the battle was fought. King William crossed the Boyne after sending a third of his army to the west to outflank the Jacobites. Aware of this, but misjudging the numbers involved, the Jacobites repositioned two thirds of their army to face the threat. Their weakened right flank was smashed and they were forced to retreat.

The loss of the battle caused King James to give up the struggle and flee to France. The Jacobite Army disintegrated, but only temporarily, reforming at Limerick in the west, where, under siege, it would successfully defend itself until the end of the campaigning season.

That, in summary, is the campaign of 1690, and in many histories, it is the summary of the war itself.

The Battle of the Boyne has been exhaustively researched, but there are still questions. Did the Jacobites intend to fight at the Boyne from the start, or not? Did James intend a "battle royal" or only a delaying action? How strong was the Williamite flank attack, really? Did the Jacobite right panic and flee, as the French and the Orangists claimed, was it overwhelmed by superior tactics and firepower, or was it outmanoeuvred? Did King William mean for things to turn out the way they did or not? Could the situation have been saved, or was James commanding a motley crew of peasants that was bound to run away?

Every one of those questions has been answered in the affirmative and in the negative; perhaps the real question ought to be, "what is the motive of this particular chronicler or historian?"

The Boudoir General

Tyrconnel was, if possible, less happy about the French than they about the Irish. Lauzun was back on the scene. His gallantry had made a deep impression on the ex-Queen of England. She had requested he lead the 1689 expedition, but the "peacock" had demanded the rank of captain-general – imagine! Having swallowed some of his pride, however, he was now enroute as Rosen's replacement with the title of *Maréchal de Irlande*. The Balt was permitted to retire to France.

Lauzun's appointment is important historically because it was the first senior field command that King Louis ever gave to a courtier rather than a proven soldier, and it opened the floodgates, leading to that marked decline in the quality of the French Army that culminated at Rossbach.

Of course, Lauzun had more experience than his enemies credited. They said he had done no more than function as a garrison commander, but in reality he had seen some combat. He had not, however, commanded a combat formation of any size.

The real issue was that Lauzun's appointment infuriated War Minister Louvois, who was not consulted in the matter. If it could be wagged about that Louvois alone in the nation had rejoiced at the death of the great Marshal Turenne, what must the appointment of a Lauzun have done to his blood pressure? Moreover, Lauzun was a personal enemy of Louvois. The minister began to drag his feet.

Louvois could not interfere with the conduct of operations where the King was so closely concerned, but he could play the war "by the book" – just about the oldest trick in a quartermaster's repertoire. He would give Lauzun *all the support he asked for*.

The French officers already on the ground were dismayed for other reasons. They called the count an intriguer. D'Avaux, whom James was now very tired of (he carped constantly), was to be sent back to France on the ships that brought Lauzun. The count's intrigues were partly responsible for this, *vis* the letter citing James' temper. The Ambassador was glad; at least his career would not suffer by being yoked to a Lauzun.

Toward the Boyne

The taking of Charlemont opened the new campaigning season. It was a necessary operation, ensuring a secure line of communications for the summer, and the timing was good, because Rosen had just left, while Lauzun was still finding his feet. The latter had had his farewell audience with Louis at Marly, on February 15th, took ship on the 17th, and with favourable winds, made Cork on the 22nd. He, too, found no reception committee.

Lauzun complained about the transport arrangements. Considering the landing site had been changed from Limerick, to Kinsale, to Cork at the last minute, he was lucky to find so much as a dog cart. King James apologised, saying it was the fault of Lord Dover, the new intendant-general of Cork; this caused a breach of friendship between the two men. Something deeper was going on, however, since the French demanded Dover be tried as a traitor. James instead gave him a passport for England, where he made his peace with William. One wonders if he was selling news to the Williamites, but it may simply be that they believed he had facilitated Lauzun's takeover. The appointment of Lauzun *could* be conceived as a traitorous act.

Antoine Nompar de Caumont, Marquis de Puyguilhem, Duc de Lauzun (1632-1723)

Son of the *Comte de* Lauzun and the daughter of the *Duc de la* Force. Raised in company with his relative, the *Comte de* Gramont, and was also a kinsman of Turenne. Served under the latter and in 1655 succeeded his father as commander of the 100 Gentlemen of the *Maison du Roi*. Became a favourite of Louis XIV and was made Colonel of the Royal Dragoons and a Maréchal de Camp.

"Short and ugly", but fascinating to women. Having a ready wit and being fond of practical jokes, he built a reputation as the Court buffoon. But he was prone to jealous fits. He prevented a meeting between his heart's desire, the Princess of Monaco, and the King, and lent himself to *Mme de* Montespan's intrigues. His goal was to be appointed Grand Master of the Artillery; refused, he turned his back on the King and broke his sword, saying he would never serve a monarch who broke his word. Louis let him cool his heels in the Bastille for a while, then accepted him back on probation.

The Princess Royal (*La Grande Mademoiselle*), Anne *de* Montpensier, fell in love with him and encouraged him to think of marriage. The date was set, but the King forbade the match. *Mme de* Montespan, his bitter enemy since the blow up with the King, leagued with the War Minister, Louvois, and had Lauzun arrested, sent to the Bastille, then transferred to remote Pignerole and kept in solitary confinement. Here, he displayed signs of madness, but this may have been a ploy, as he made several escape attempts. While there he met a number of famous figures portrayed in Alexandre Dumas' books, including ex-Finance Minister Fouquet and the real Man in the Iron Mask.

Now, *de* Montpensier had given Lauzun three extensive properties, and after he had served 10 years, the Louvois-Montespan cabal forced him to sign these over to the King's eldest son (by *de* Montespan). Lauzun at first refused, then agreed, but was still not allowed to marry; reputedly the couple did marry, but secretly. However, he also courted the daughter of Fouquet, though she married someone else.

Released, Lauzun went to England in 1685 to serve the new King James II. He had previously served under him in Flanders. Lauzun made a great impression, and after returning to France appeared again in 1688 to help the Royal Family escape.

In the fall of 1689 was made commander of the expedition to Ireland and served there as *Maréchal d'Irlande*, but his performance left much to be desired. The verdict depends on ones sources, some repute him to be honest, but out of his depth, placing himself in the equally confused Tyrconnel's hands; other contemporaries called him an intriguer.

Returned to France to find himself permanently out of favour, except with Mary of Modena. His last footnote in history was in 1715, when he brought the news of the Battle of Sheriffmuir to the Stuart Queen.

In Dublin, Lauzun's party threw their weight around. According to a Protestant source, the new captain general even boxed the governor's ears. From deserters and spies, the Williamites learned that the incumbent army chief intended to act on the defensive, setting tripwire positions at Newry and points south as far as the Boyne; the Jacobites were hoping for an English rising, or that the French Navy would somehow gain ascendancy.

This idea was not that far-fetched. Jacobite activity in England was increasing, especially as it was known that William intended to leave the kingdom. Tyrconnel even suggested that the French take themselves off to England with some of his men and leave him to hold the fort until London was won. King Louis was not amused: in practical terms, Jacobite support in England was still notional, and the French Fleet seemed to be developing an inferiority complex. Lauzun's defensive mindset was reinforced from Versailles.

The convoy that brought Lauzun was another resource that the Jacobites tried to expropriate. James asked Admiral Gabaret if he could interdict the Williamite sea lanes between Chester and Belfast. Gabaret and his second, Amfreville, had 41 warships 4 fireships, and 5 "flutes", and were now ferrying a French expeditionary brigade. The admirals did not actually refuse, merely took the first opportunity to set sail for France, leaving a note to the effect that they had to catch the wind when they could. Besides, they had to take d'Avaux home. The Royal Navy was outfitting at Torbay and since the enemy was planning to link with the Dutch Fleet, Gabaret thought it best to go now. They left on April 18th. James' sycophants praised his strategic insight and castigated the French as cowards.

Those worthies now constituted a strong element in the Jacobite Army: 7,300 men in 7 battalions, plus 12 (*or 22*) field guns. The convoys had also brought several thousand stands of arms, 300 bombs, and 6,000 grenades. Originally scheduled to leave Brest in December, 1689, the crossing was effected in March, 1690, primarily because at that time the Royal Navy was involved in an operation to escort the new Queen of Spain from Holland. The French troops landed at Cork on March 12th (some sources say the 14th).

Drafts of Irish filled up the ranks. 4 regiments were French with a high proportion of foreign troops, 1 was Walloon. Then there was Zurlaben's "Swiss" regiment (of 2 battalions). Zurlaben was a Swiss, but his regiment, though technically Walloon, contained 2,000 Swabian POWs plus a number of men recovered from a captured ship. They discomfited the Jacobites by attending the Protestant church in Dublin. King James complained to King Louis.

Ignoring Lauzun, there were some stellar officers to command this contingent: [brevet] *Lieutenant Général le Marquis* Léry de Girardin, one of the best cavalry officers in the French army (though the French brought no cavalry), and *Maréchal de Camp le Marquis de la* Hoguette, one of the bravest. There were also to have been 1,700 Anglo-Irish reinforcements, but their numbers were scaled back to 3-400 (possibly because James would not release the matching number of men for Mountcashel's brigade).

By the 18th Lauzun was at Dublin, having discovered just how bad Irish roads were. *What a country!* As Schomberg could have told him, even a seasoned commander would find the situation difficult.

The enemy was moving, but James seemed to be waiting for the French to solve all his problems – after all, it was their war. His army was still spread out in winter quarters, and the men were still not all trained or all armed. This was not entirely the fault of Headquarters. Ireland had no saltpetre, but the French could not believe this, and did not allow adequate supplies of gunpowder for training. One shipment of arms had been captured by the Royal Navy. On top of that, the 7,000 stands of arms allocated to Mountcashel's brigade were taken out of the Jacobites' allowance – the Irish Brigade was not to be issued weapons until it reached France.

[From logistical and security points of view, withholding the weapons makes sense – why ship them to Ireland and back, and why risk having them diverted, or issued to men who might then desert. But it smacked of penny-pinching. It was penny-pinching. The pudgy hand of Louvois clutched at the purse.]

The Jacks were not ready to commence operations until mid-June. Sarsfield arrived at Dundalk with 4,000 men only on July 4th. (*The cavalry, of course, had to go through the process of switching from winter oats and hay to green grass, and then spend time bringing the horses up to trim*). This gave Lauzun an army of 24,000 to play with. It was by far the biggest force he had ever commanded, but he was still outnumbered.

In the North, Schomberg's pleas did not go unanswered. Over the winter his army was augmented by a stream of regiments, including a Danish brigade of 6,000 foot and 1,000 horse, commanded by the Duke of Württemburg-Neuenstadt (on loan from King Christian V of Denmark at an exorbitant price). The enemy squalled when the Danes appeared. They had racial memories of the ancient Danish invasion and there was a prophecy that Ireland would be destroyed by a second wave of Danes. The Orangemen chortled.

Ferdinand Wilhelm von Württemburg-Neuenstadt (1659-1701)

Second Duke of Württemburg-Neuenstadt. Sixth son of Frederick, founder of the branch and Clara Augusta *von* Braunschweig. Choosing a military career, he first saw action in the Franco-Dutch War, serving in the Alt-Lüneburg Regiment, then went on to serve Denmark in the Scanian War, being promoted to Lieutenant General in 1682. He was only 23.

Volunteered to fight the Turks and was present at Vienna in 1683, then campaigned in Austria and Hungary until 1685, when he received a severe head wound. Recalled to Denmark in 1687. Commanded the brigade group sent to Ireland in 1690. After the war, he and his younger brother Carl Rudolf, who had served with him, worked for King William in the Low Countries. Fought in several battles, notably Steenkirk.

At the Peace of Ryswick (1697) was made Governor of Dutch Flanders. Took the field again in 1698 commanding the Saxons and Poles against the Ottomans (Polish-Ottoman War of 1683-1699). Led the Danish Army in Holstein against the Swedes (Great Northern War). After returning to his governorship, he died in 1701 of complications arising from his old head wound.

[His brother became the third and last duke, and also had a distinguished military career, beginning with the Venice's war in the Morea in 1687, where he took a bullet in the lung that stayed with him for the rest of his life, and ending with the rank of Generalfeldmarshal *of the Holy Roman Empire.]*

The incipient presence of the King solved many of the problems of the preceding year. The notorious Shales was replaced by two commissaries-general, one of them a Dutchman who had lived in Ireland. A Jewish firm in Amsterdam, well acquainted with army provisioning, was given the bread contract. Arrears in pay were dealt with piecemeal. More troops arrived.

No attempt was made to stop the build up. The new Williamite squadron commander, Sir Cloudesley Shovell, was concerned about French privateering, but there was never any interference. Instead, Shovell began raiding the Irish coast, including a very daring raid into Dublin harbour, which involved crossing the bar into the Salmon Pool and cutting out a 20-gun frigate belonging to the small Jacobite navy.

The Great Offensive

Suspecting that the Jacks intended no aggressive moves, Schomberg contented himself with preparing for his sovereign's arrival – it would have been bad form to begin operations without him, though characteristically, Dutch Billy complained of the marshal's inactivity.

King William sailed from Hoylake on June 11th, 1690. He was accompanied by 300 ships, including Shovell's squadron. Delayed by fog, he arrived at Carrickfergus on June 14th. The 300 ships contained 15,000 additional soldiers, a Dutch artillery train, and £200,000 cash. Comparatively few of the soldiers were English. Many new regiments had been raised, but the King was content to let them garrison England, partly because they were new, and partly because he believed them unreliable.

Also present were his Irish Administration, including the Duke of Ormonde, Prince George of Denmark (Princess Anne's husband), William's close friend Lord Portland (Willem Bentinck), and Sir Robert Southwell (Secretary of State for Ireland).

William's reception at Belfast was cool at first – the populace had never seen a king before, and the runty, asthmatic William did not look like much – but the crowd was soon cheering heartily. Sir Christopher Wren had designed a special portable house for the King (shades of "Monty in the Desert") so that he could sleep in the midst of the soldiers, which, of course, they loved. His Calvinist religion made him popular with the Presbyterians. The population was also impressed by the number of ships dotting the harbour. Clearly, things were about to happen.

The King took charge of operations immediately, going into every detail, and ignoring Schomberg, much to the other's annoyance. The marshal advocated a two-pronged advance via Belturbet and Armagh. This would have accomplished the defeat of the enemy more efficiently and saved lives. The marshal was a humane commander, though is not quite clear whether his plan stemmed from a knowledge that the men were now able to conduct such an operation, or the fear that they could not stand up to the Jacks in battle.

[If Schomberg was "humane", why the mess at Dundalk the year before? Probably, in his view, some events were "acts of God", outside his control. They must simply be borne. His rage at the English commissariat was genuine enough.]

King William was on a mission. As God's chosen instrument he could not fail. There was no need for fancy footwork. The Army would advance direct from Newry to Dundalk via the Moyry Pass. As a slight concession, Lieutenant General Douglas could take a small force via Armagh. William was not a master general. In fact, he was a rather poor one, prone to making rash decisions and reinforcing failure. But in this instance, against a hesitating commander and untried troops, his rashness paid dividends.

This operational "frontal attack" was suggested by Schomberg's rival, Count Solms. Solms was a general whom William had worked with before. Not one of the "great captains", he favoured operations with few moving parts, a minimum of delay, and many opportunities for the commander to shine in personal combat. For him, no doubt the Battle Royal was always a clash, not of armies, but of Monarchs. William did not so much adopt Solms' views as confirm them.

The Moyry Pass

William's offensive was destined to show up Schomberg, but he was lucky the Jacobites were so unenterprising. Once again they did not make good use of the Moyry Pass. "Moyry" means "four mile", which suggests the pass was about 8 miles long, Irish miles being twice English miles. "Pass" is a misleading name. It was a long, north-south causeway across a bog, which ended in a gap between a line of drumlins. Rosen had reinforced the defile with a pair of redoubts. To the north was Newry, to the south, Dundalk. It was easy enough to march around this obstacle, but doing so would cut an army off from communication by sea and leave its supply line vulnerable to a thrust up the coast.

On June 16th, King James set out for Dundalk, where the bulk of his army was gathering. The intention, according to Stevens, was to give battle here. The ground was advantageous. It was the site of last year's "victory". Not only did the main road run through the Moyry Pass, but the rolling countryside enabled a small army to hide its true strength. The King was "full of energy", riding 18-20 hours a day, but his stubbornness was becoming, if possible, more mule-like than ever.

The Army was ordered to begin wasting the surrounding countryside to make things even harder for the enemy. This has sometimes been interpreted as a prelude to a retreat, but the Jacobites had the shorter line of communications and could afford, they thought, to sit in a desert, at least for a little while.

Moyry Pass was not held initially. Eventually, a force was dispatched to monitor its southern end: 4 grenadier companies (200 men) under a Colonel Fitzgerald – a very able professional officer – and 60 dragoons under a Colonel Dempsey – a veteran of Schomberg's Portuguese Army. They discovered the northern end of the causeway was held by 300 Williamite infantry and dragoons.

This band of Williamites was in the habit of advancing and harassing them each day, then retiring. On the 22nd of June, the Jacks ambushed them at a place called Half-way Bridge. Vigorous action drove the Williamites back with a loss of 30 men, but at a cost of 10 dead, including Dempsey. Two Williamite officers were captured.

The action may have sealed James' fate. It turned out that one of the captured officers was personally known to the King. Lying through his teeth, this man claimed that King William had an army of 50,000 men, including 15,000 cavalry and 30 guns. The Jacobites' scorched earth policy would avail them not: the Royal Navy would float down to Drogheda in support. The numbers were inflated but not unbelievable. In actual fact, by calling on every garrison within range, William had amassed 36,000 men, and had about 40 guns.

But James believed his old acquaintance. He ordered a general retreat. With 50,000 men, William could strike at Dundalk and outflank it at the same time. The Jacobite Army was in good spirits, but still inadequately armed and short on supplies. Even Lauzun, at this time supremely confident in his abilities, or at least pretending to be so, was worried that James had overextended himself by approaching the enemy.

An alternative reading of events has it that the Jacks intended to retreat to the Boyne from the start. It was possible the enemy, fearing a flanking attack, might halt and suffer the same fate as Schomberg. It was possible they might foolishly launch a frontal assault over the Boyne. But it was also possible, nay, likely, they would bypass the Jacobites, and in that case, the river would help delay pursuit as the Jacks broke west and made for the Shannon. On the Williamite side, the same factors are said to have applied in their thinking; with Schomberg advocating the march on Dublin from Armagh. The best place to cross the Boyne was at Navan, far upstream, not by its estuary at Drogheda.

This interpretation is faulty. Why concentrate at Dundalk if they intended to withdraw from the start? Better to use only an advance guard. It is possible that the idea stems from the Williamites' view of events.

The retreat was conducted in good order; the Williamites moved to take the ground as it was vacated, a day or two behind.

> *"Monday the 23rd [of June]: the whole army prepared to march early in the morning, and moved about noon. Men were detached from each regiment to receive salt meat and bread at the stores at Dundalk, but it being known the king designed to abandon that place, the soldiers in a disorderly manner fell to plundering the stores, which caused no small confusion, every one there laying hold of what he could, and running a several way."*
>
> *Stevens, p. 119*

The schedule was as follows:

23rd Dundalk to Ardee
27th from Ardee halfway to Drogheda
28th to Drogheda
29th to a camp on the south bank of the Boyne

Because of the proximity of the Williamite advance guard, the Jacobites were forced to form line of battle at every halt, which tired the rearguard severely.

According to the Danish war journal,

> *"On Friday June 27 the army assembled at Dondalck. The King with part of the army came there via Nury, and the Duke of Wurtemberg came with 31 regiments by Ardmack [Armagh]. The enemy camped that day at Ardee, but getting information of our approach he struck camp at 10 a.m. and made for Drogheda. Our cavalry was to have pursued the enemy in the afternoon, but as a result of their long march and the great heat it was not considered advisable to send them into a situation demanding vigour and strength. Nothing was done, therefore, and the army rested until June 28. That day the King saw the Danish infantry, with which he was extremely pleased. In particular, he said he had never seen a better battalion than the Guards. A number of deserters came in; they considered King James's condition to be quite good as regards pay and maintenance. They had in general a poor opinion of the Irish. As the French thought there would be no great shortage of water for themselves they sent a number of them [? deserters] into our camp to poison the wells and standing water. Two of them were caught and without trial were roughly handled, tortured and put to death with swords by the English regiments. As, however, this was at once discovered the whole army was warned to beware of such water. So no unfortunate occurrence on this score was heard of."*

The Battle of the Boyne, July 1st 1690

Significance

Acquaintances often ask a writer what his current project is. Told, "the War of the Two Kings", or "the Williamite War", or "the War of the League of Augsburg or Nine Years War as it applies to the Irish theatre of operations at the end of the 17th Century", one always receives a glazed look, and a mumbled "how interesting" before the subject is quickly changed to the equally boring (to said author) recounting of some child's first hockey match. Mention "the Battle of the Boyne" and there is a glimmer of intelligence, especially if they are British or grew up in Toronto (famous for its Orange Day parade).

[Considering that the roots of the multi-party parliamentary political system begin in the 17th Century, and that this war lay at the heart of those developments, people should pay more attention. They might even think it worth while to try a new political system.]

The Boyne is Ireland's most famous battle, and the largest land battle ever fought in the British Isles. As may be expected, there are a number of points of contention, primarily because there are so many first-hand accounts, each with the author's own viewpoint. Then there are the official statements, from each side. And the memoirs. And the interpretations of the above by partisan historians (this *is* Ireland, after all).

Williamite-Whig historians, like the Orangeman Lord Macaulay, claimed a great victory of English professionals against a band of ragged Irish peasants exploited by an Absolutist king and his foreign advisors. They fastened on the French letters to King Louis which attempted to justify their defeat. The alternate view, of pro-Jacobite historians, is that the Boyne was a minor action, which became important because, as one French writer said, it was the only action that King William ever won. Modern historians tend to favour a balanced view, which, in itself, need not be the correct approach.

The battle is significant out of all proportion to its tactical results (which fell far short of Williamite designs), for its *psychological* effects on the protagonists. Catholic hopes were dashed, Protestant hopes exalted, and Stuart ambitions thwarted. And, it was hailed as a great victory not only by the Protestant Irish and the English, but by the Catholic allies of King William, Spain and the Empire – even the Pope – all of whom recognised a check to Louis XIV's ambitions at a time when he seemed to be doing rather well on the Continent.

It was this international element that gave the battle its real value. It made the front page. It was a symbol – the clash of two great forces, one of which seemed bent on world domination. William believed the war was as good as over. James retired from the struggle with the same belief. But the war did not end. The French abandoned them, turning the war into a parochial bun-fight as far as Europe was concerned, but the Irish Catholics fought on. And, although they lost in the end, their dream of independence did not die.

Preparing for Battle

BEFORE Drogheda, I July 1690. 'My last was from Dundalck. I humbly report that after two days march we arrived before Drogheda, where we found King James in position with his army. He has Drogheda on his right, a deep river in front, and his left covered by a large ravine. Yesterday a great misfortune almost occurred; the King, while reconnoitring, was grazed in the back by a cannon ball which tore the skin away. However, he is in no danger, thank God, for after spending some hours on horseback he rested well last night. A ball from a field-piece passed close to His Highness Prince George and struck a man beside him. During the whole afternoon there was a heavy cannonade on both sides. Although the enemy is in such an advantageous position the King intends to attack about ten o'clock at ebb tide when the water is not so deep. I hope to be able to report in my next letter that Your Majesty's troops have distinguished themselves.'

Letter from the Danish Ambassador to King Christian V

The first thing to realise, is that in a technical sense, the Boyne is a schizophrenic battle. It has two faces. The first is that of a set piece battle in which two kings would decide the fate of western Europe. The other is of a withdrawal under fire that went wrong. And the source of this split personality is King James.

Sometime during the retreat from Dundalk, James had a change of heart. He decided to make a stand. This has always been portrayed one of the worst decisions he ever made (after putting the Seven Bishops on trial). The French insisted (again) that he should retreat to the Shannon line after burning Dublin. While the Irish were content to fight, they said it should have been at Moyry; the Army was now mentally geared to retreat. James had lost the initiative. Neither Lauzun nor Tyrconnel appear to have influenced James; the decision to halt was entirely the King's.

It was not incompetence, or even mood swings. On the retreat, James had time to think, and he realised he was making the same mistake as in 1688, when he had refused to trust his soldiers and ordered the Army to disband instead of meeting William on Salisbury Plain. This time, he would not abandon the struggle without one last show of defiance.

"James had got himself into such a position that he must either fight a battle or evacuate Dublin, and it was his realisation of what life in Ireland would be out of Dublin that drove him to the desperate course of fighting an army immeasurably superior to his own."

Boulger, pp.144-145

He likely expected to lose, and perhaps half unconsciously was looking for means of walking away with his honour intact. Unlike his grandson, he was not prepared to spend even a day "crouched in the heather". And, he was enduring the agonies of command without a close confidant. Lauzun, already despised by the other officers, was playing Achilles-in-his-tent. The other Frenchmen were not on familiar enough terms with the King, and did not know the situation in Ireland, so they deferred to his will. As for the Irish, James had always kept them at arm's length.

The Jacobites were retreating in the face of a Williamite advance that was too strong for them. The enemy had roughly 36,000 men, and supposedly 50,000; the Jacobites about 24,000. In those days, 3:2 odds on the battlefield were almost a guarantee of victory. North of Dublin and south of Moyry, the only place that might act as a "force multiplier' was the Boyne Valley, near the sea.

[Jacobite numbers range from 24-26,000. The Williamites are fixed at 36,000; this is occasionally said to include garrison forces that were not present.]

The Jacobites crossed the Boyne on the 29th of June, the cavalry by the Oldbridge Ford, the infantry by the bridge at Drogheda, 3 English miles downstream.

King James claimed the position they chose was an "indifferent good" one. Its weakness was at an "operational" level, not tactical. Defending a river line is not the best move. There are too many places to guard, and too many "odd angles". The enemy is free to concentrate where he will. Only top quality troops, able to move rapidly to counter any penetration, or a force that is heavily dug in, can be expected to hold for long. Tactically, however, and properly interpreted, the position was quite good.

The Boyne valley is rolling agricultural land. Not particularly rough, but some of the slopes are quite steep and others are very long, translating into slow manoeuvres by tired soldiers. The battleground is not far from the sea, and the river is affected by the tides even above Oldbridge. There were several suitable crossing points. There was a bridge at Drogheda, but that was secured by a Jacobite garrison in the walled town, which lay on the north bank, with a suburb on the south. There was Oldbridge Ford (Oldbridge in those days did not actually have a bridge), and between Oldbridge and Drogheda a string of grassy islands close to the south bank that could be used to assist a crossing. The primary island ford was that of Donore, but there was also Mill Ford halfway between the bridge and the islands.

All these fords were (in the days before canals) affected by the tide. During low tide, passage was easy – according to Lauzun's correspondence, the drummers of the Jacobite foot regiments were able to play as they crossed the Oldbridge Ford at ebb tide on the 29th. At high tide, boats would have to be used. In the event, Mill Ford would prove the most critical, but the Jacobites believed, correctly at first, that the enemy did not know of it. It was revealed to the Williamites by a sympathetic local.

Above Oldbridge, the river loops to the south around a knoll, now occupied by Oldbridge House. The western slope of this is quite steep – not assayable by units in rigid formation – while downstream the slopes are gentle. There was another ford, the Mattock River Ford, running from west to east beside a tributary of the same name, which was overlooked by the knoll.

Further upstream the river turns west again, and here the ground on the south bank is abruptly higher than that on the north. Several places were fordable, most importantly at Rosnaree. Six English miles away the road over Slane Bridge in those days ran on a northwest to southeast line into the village of Duleek a few miles behind the Jacobite position. Before it did so it met up with a road running northeast to southwest from Drogheda's bridge, forming a Y-junction, then crossed a long causeway over the boggy Nanny Water into the hamlet. By the seacoast, the main road from Drogheda ran south via Naul and Swords to Dublin. West of Slane, the road net carried one around the Boyne to cut the Dublin-Galway road.

The Jacobites arranged their camp in battle order on the Hill of Donore, which dominated the lower crossings. Their right lay on the ridge of Rathmullin, which extended out of the hill to within a mile of Drogheda. Their left lay south of the bend in the river. Lord Iveagh commanded the garrison of Drogheda: 1,300 men (3 regiments plus 300 men in detachments from other regiments).

The bulk of the army was camped between a mile and half a mile from the Boyne. James set up his pavilion on the right of the line (out of potential cannon range). He had in his army 8 regiments of horse, 2 troops of lifeguards (equivalent to a strong regiment), 2 of dragoons, and 24 of native foot (most probably 32 battalions), 6 of French foot (7 battalions), plus 18 6-lber guns in 3 batteries of 6, 12 at least of which were French.

[Armies of the period commonly camped in the same order that they would fight, slightly behind their intended starting positions.]

The army was arranged in the standard manner: two lines of equal strength (probably 16 battalions in front and 15 behind), with the cavalry on the wings, and a *corps de reserve* of 1 battalion (Brown's) and a half-regiment of horse (Purcell's – the other half still in Scotland) under Sir Charles Kearny. In the morning, the army would advance closer to the river, ready to repel any crossing. The regiments of Antrim and Clanricarde would be pushed well forward to the hamlet of Oldbridge (a row of wattle and daub huts and a single stone structure) near the river bank. The cavalry of the right would be strung out along Rathmullin ridge.

[The technical usage of the period gave the term "rearguard" to a third line that was as strong as the other lines, but "corps de reserve" to a small body that could be used as a fire brigade.]

The positioning of the artillery is debatable. In camp, it would be corralled in an artillery "park", though guns could be sited to cover weak points. For battle, the three batteries would normally be deployed on the left, center, and right, the flanking batteries being between the infantry and the cavalry. The problem is, that James ordered the guns withdrawn, the French commander says he disobeyed this order, and there are clear records of some of them being in action.

While the men set up camp, the generals debated. Lauzun did not like deploying in that great loop of river which, though it protected the Jacobite left, might easily become a death trap. Encirclement could theoretically come from downstream or upstream. Downstream seemed secure, they held Drogheda and its bridge. Men had already been dispatched to break down the bridge at Slane, 6 miles away. It was initially believed that there were no passages across the Boyne between Slane and the Army. But Lauzun claimed to have reports of numerous fords; there was a prime one at Rosnaree.

[Given that at least three of James' colonels owned land in the vicinity, it is argued that he should have had a much better appreciation of the ground, but a) the King was not approachable by mere Irish colonels, and b) they may have been absentee landlords.]

His subordinate, *Lieutenant Général* Léry, was more sanguine. William's men could only cross the river when the tide was right, and could be engaged piecemeal, as usual when crossing rivers under fire. Still, the danger of being outflanked, either at an operational level, or locally, was very great, and of that danger all were acutely aware. That fear would become the Jacobites' bane. James wanted to send a picquet to Rosnaree. Léry wanted a strong cavalry force. They compromised on a single dragoon regiment, Sir Niall O'Neill's, taken out of Sarsfield's command.

[With the West secure, much cavalry had been brought in to support the field army.]

Asked for an opinion, Tyrconnel could not decide. Abandoning Dublin and Leinster for Connaught meant abandoning the richest part of the island, the bulk of the population, and the only region that could support a large army. There would be no hope of preventing the enemy from eventually building a juggernaut that could crack any defensive line. Holding the Shannon meant crossing ones' fingers and hoping the English would rise, or that France would conquer Holland in one season. But on the Boyne, they were sitting ducks.

James caught the mood of his advisors. Some accounts have it that he agreed to resume the retreat during the council of war on the 30th. Others that a second council of war was called in the early morning and the decision was made then. The critical fact is that the Jacobites waited until morning before packing up.

The army would retire via Duleek, but because they believed William's forces to be camped further to the northwest than they actually were, the left wing, including the French, would march out westward before hooking south. Tyrconnel, commanding the right, would hold the Oldbridge position and then follow after. The baggage would start immediately, and head due south.

[James has been faulted for not employing the French on the right, but his Foot Guards refused to yield precedence to them.]

There are thus three interpretations of what was to take place: a pre-arranged retreat dating from the night before, a last minute decision to retreat, and also a version where the Jacobites remained committed to fighting.

This last interpretation can probably be discounted. The Jacobites were already positioned to fight. Why then did they need to manoeuvre so far as to break their army in two? (In itself a foolish move). If James fully intended to stand, his forces were already arranged to face what he thought was King William's center, on a line slightly northeast to southwest. In actuality, William's weight was positioned toward the Jacobite right, but this was not known.

Given James' assumptions about William's location, and the availability of fords, in their current posture the Jacobite right was anchored by Drogheda. James would advance a few battalions into the loop to contest Oldbridge during the critical period of low tide; that section was also covered by one or perhaps two batteries. If the Williamites crossed over to the left, their army would be split, and their right wing would, after coming all the way back downriver, have to engage the bulk of the Jacobites. By breaking the bridge at Slane, a wide outflanking move was prohibited.

If James had wanted to retreat all along, however, he should have left on the 30th instead of waiting an extra day. So, it is likely that he was persuaded, as he so often was, by the last man to give an opinion. That man's name has not been recorded with any accuracy. Lauzun is usually blamed.

The Danes believed James had intelligence of the planned flank march to Slane. Such a move would render the Boyne position useless. But James presumably knew the bridge was now down.

After the council of war, James sent an agent to Waterford to book passage to France and ordered his bags to be packed. He asked Lauzun to send the artillery south. It is also reported that the King did not order the construction of defensive works along the river (as should have been done when facing odds of 3:2, or as he thought, 2:1).

Against the above can be set physical evidence of earthworks, notably on Donore, some reinforcement of the kitchen gardens at Oldbridge, and more works covering some of the fords above Oldbridge. But these were very rough positions. (Though that might be put down to inexperience and a lack of engineers). Also, at least two of the three artillery batteries appear to have been in action until reasonably late.

Because the French artillery commander disobeyed his instructions to remove the guns, he at least expected a battle, and probably most of the lower ranks did so. The men were in no way discouraged, though tired after their week's marching. So they felt betrayed when the retreat began, and more so because of the fact that the actual move came during the battle and not before. This feeling no doubt contributed to the subsequent "rout" in the days after the battle.

But it should also be remembered that James, though a military monarch, considered himself to be on a plane above the directing of an army. That was Lauzun's job. The King wished a retreat, the marshal must arrange it. Assuming he knew how. Stevens states that during the battle, while participating in the famous march to the left and subsequently off the field, he met no officer of importance who could explain the situation.

The Artillery

Most accounts say that at least 12 of the 18 pieces were withdrawn before the battle. Since no guns were lost to enemy action, this fact has some weight. But the French artillery commander, Laisné, later said that either he ignored the order to withdraw, or, according to La Hoguette, that he sought confirmation from the King before acting. Also, at least two sets of guns are recorded in action for part of the battle, and a possible third is recorded moving in support.

On the 30th, at least one battery engaged a reconnaissance party (including King William). These guns were withdrawn when the opposing bombardment became too heavy. A battery was then deployed on Rathmullin, covering the Oldbridge position from the right. It was too far away, and during the battle was moved closer, participating in the Jacobite counterattacks that came after the Williamite crossing. Some guns (perhaps as many as 5) were also with O'Neill during his holding action at the ford of Rosnaree. And, when the Jacobites decided to counter the crossing at Rosnaree in force, a battery of 4 Irish and 2 French guns went with Laisné in support of the French brigade. There are also reports of a battery covering Mattock River Ford.

O'Neill's position might have used battalion guns, but there are no records of battalion guns; there appear to have been only 18 6-lber guns in all. Besides, 4-5 guns are too many battalion pieces for a dragoon regiment that would not usually own such things. This was probably the "left" battery, minus 1 gun that is known

to have been dismounted. No guns remained on the field, so the dragoons got them away safely when they retreated. Perhaps the battery was re-sited to cover the Mattock River Ford.

The guns sent to support the French were either the "center" or "right" batteries. The right battery, reported in action at Oldbridge, could have been dispatched, since it was under enemy artillery fire and also had no clear targets by that point. More likely, the center battery, perhaps positioned to cover the Mattock River Ford, could have been used.

Here Come the Williamites

On Monday the 30th, the Williamites appeared, camping behind the crest of the slope to the north of the river at the hamlet of Tullyallen. The King's headquarters was located some distance back up the road to the northwest, and it was information about this positioning that led the Jacobites to believe the enemy were preparing to outflank them via Slane.

The main camp stretched from the heights above Oldbridge to just short of Drogheda. Like the Jacobites, the Williamites camped in battle order, with the King on the Army's left, Marshal Schomberg in the center, and the latter's son, plus the Lieutenant Generals Portland, Albuquerque, and D'Espinguen on the right. Lieutenant Generals Douglas and Solms commanded the infantry of the right and left, respectively.

The cavalry of the right, which was the more heavily weighted, included Dutch and English regiments, that of the left more Dutch, the Danes, and the Huguenots. Typical of the period, the infantry battalions were grouped in brigades of 4-6 battalions, generally by nationality, though at least one brigade was mixed. In all, there were 2 troops of lifeguards (with attached grenadiers), 23 regiments of horse, 5 of dragoons, and about 40 of foot (perhaps 46 battalions).

[Numbers are not 100% accurate for either side, because the reviews from which the estimates are taken took place a few days before (Jacobites) or a few days after (Williamites). The odd battalion might have been dispatched as a garrison, or a reinforcement might have been added.]

Apart from outnumbering the Jacks, the Williamites also had far more artillery – 40 odd guns, not counting battalion pieces – mainly concentrated above Oldbridge. The grand battery began to bombard the Jacobite positions late in the day. Unfortunately, the range from the northern slopes to the enemy's camp was too great, but it prevented the Jacks from closing up to the river bank.

Meanwhile, King William went on reconnaissance. His generals urged him to attack immediately, but, superstitious, he refused to try the crossing on a Monday. In any case, the thing did not look practicable. He feared the enemy's position was too strong. However, he did "blood" his Dutch by marching the Guards down to the river bank, where they came under enemy fire. Opinion is divided on what the King intended, but it is likely, since he had no need to "blood" the best unit in his army, that he wanted to test the Jacobites' resolve with a demonstration. If they had withdrawn immediately, he could have quickly secured a bridgehead.

[Some historians deride the "superstition" of the King as merely an excuse to cover some more mundane but unknown reason, such as a regiment being late to arrive. But for that age, there is nothing odd in it.]

> *On Sunday June 29 the army marched to Ardee through a fine, well-cultivated countryside. There we received intelligence that the enemy had again withdrawn, had crossed the river Boyne and had at last decided to dispute the crossing. Everyone made preparations for this, and on June 30 we marched there and found the enemy in position in good order on the other side of the river. The King himself reconnoitred the situation – too closely indeed, so that at the first shot from a field-piece the Prince of Darmstadt's horse was hit at the King's side. The second shot hit the King himself, caught his greatcoat, leather camisole, shirt and a piece of skin the size of half a [? crown?] from his right shoulderblade. Without changing his expression he said "No closer". He remained unmoved and calm, had another greatcoat brought, rode to Count Schomberg's tent, had himself bandaged and at once rode through the army again to counter evil-minded rumours and mistaken ideas. We should undoubtedly have attacked the enemy that day if it had not been a Monday, a day on which the King never undertakes anything of importance. So nothing further except that each side fired heavily with field-pieces at the other's camp. To help the next day's action Count Schomberg was sent against the enemy's left flank with the greater part of the cavalry and dragoons, to find a ford and make a diversion. The enemy must certainly have had intelligence of this, as, according to the statement of a deserter, he packed his baggage that evening and prepared to send it off.*
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> *From the Danish war journal*

While examining the enemy positions, as described in the Danish journal entry above, the King was espied by Jacobite gunners and fired upon. A lucky shot tore across the back of his right shoulder, but his leather jerkin saved his life. According to one Dean Davies,

> *"as his Majesty passed our line they fired six shots at him, one whereof fell and struck off the top of the Duke of Würtemberg's pistol and the whiskers off his horse and another tore the King's coat on the shoulder"*

It was a considerable shock, though William put on a brave show. Other accounts suggest that the command party was in fact having a little picnic when it was fired upon. Lenihan argues that the fall of Jacobite shot indicates William was on foot when hit. The Jacobites believed he had been killed, and a report reached Paris to that effect, where there was much rejoicing. This was the first of three near misses.

William's council of war on the evening of the 30th was divided. In essence, the same operational choices were brought forward as solutions to the tactical question, and by the same people. Schomberg and some of the English generals favoured a feint at Oldbridge, while the main body crossed upstream at Slane. Solms argued for a frontal assault. They could also take Drogheda, but that was the least favoured option – bit of a waste of time.

William, recognising the difficulty of the crossing yet wanting a battle, compromised. He ordered a strong cavalry detachment, to be commanded by Schomberg's son, Meinhard, to flank the enemy, while the bulk of the army crossed at Oldbridge, and the left flank under royal command crossed simultaneously at Mill Ford, nearer Drogheda. The enemy would be caught in a classic double envelopment. Clever.

Number Crunching

The flank attack upriver is one of the debatable points of the battle, to the point that it overshadows the really critical move – the flank attack by the Williamite left. Yet, it is rather an important point. Meinhard's chief was Lieutenant General Douglas, commander of the right wing infantry but also responsible, under Marshal Schomberg, for that wing as a whole. Now, William had 36,000 men in all: 7,000 to conduct a right hook, 8,000 to conduct a left hook, and 20,000 to attack in the center. But it is always stated that 1/3, or 12,000 men went with Meinhard. What happened was that General Douglas was ordered to support young Schomberg with an additional body of men consisting of the rest of Douglas' command.

The first question is, was this a prearranged move or an emergency response? The second question deals with the numbers and may help to answer the first. Meinhard had 7,000 men initially, and either, depending on the historian, another 12,000 under Douglas to follow, making 19,000 in all, or another 5,000 under Douglas, making 12,000 in all.

[Solms had command of the left wing in like manner to Douglas, but since the King took charge of the cavalry, he was relegated to commanding the central assault that was carried out by the infantry of the left wing and the Guards. Schomberg senior, remember, was "of the party of unsound method", and though nominally the captain-general under the King, and the man who ordered the general assault, was more or less ignored; in consequence he took upon himself a sort of roving commission.]

The second case fits with the "1/3 detached" figure, but unfortunately, it is not based on hard numbers, but extrapolation by early historians – i.e. it is derived in reverse, from the fact that

William is supposed to have had 36,000 men, of which 1/3 were detached, *ergo* Meinhard had 12,000 men. The figure of 19,000, however, means that William engaged the Jacobite right flank at odds of 17,000 to 8,000, or 2:1. It also means that William, quite typically, overreacted. A quantity of 12,000 leaves William with 24,000 to 8,000, or 3:1, which also means William, atypically, behaved astutely. Perhaps he was listening to Schomberg after all.

However, of the two sets of numbers, the weight of evidence supports a total of 12,000. The composition of the flank attack is well documented: 9 regiments of Dutch cavalry (including the elite *Gardes te Paarde* and *Gardes Dragonders*) making 1,600 men, 7 English cavalry regiments, including Oxford's (the Blues), the Life Guards, and Schomberg's Huguenots (2,100 men), plus some light guns, plus Trelawney's 5-battalion brigade of infantry (3,100 men). 6,800 men in all. Call it 7,000.

The remainder of Douglas' command consisted of a single brigade of 6 battalions under Brigadier Bellasis. 5 of these were taken by Douglas: 5,000 men (actually there would have been fewer than that, given that a battalion was 780 men at full strength), which, when added to the initial force at Rosnaree make 12,000. Bellasis' last battalion supported the crossings at Oldbridge.

The rest of the center, including the reserve, initially 20,000 strong, now appears as 15,000. William's reserve consisted of 10 English foot battalions, 7,000 men in all. This left Solms and Schomberg with 8,000 men (perhaps 10,000 if one reduces the raw strength of Douglas' reinforcements) to carry out a river crossing in the face of the 7-8,000 of Tyrconnel's right wing.

The only available units that, *added to* an *initial* 12,000, could have given the right hook a total of 19,000 were the 10 reserve battalions. Every other unit's role is accounted for. If William had detached these battalions – and he would have had to use all of them – he would have had no reserves. Unfortunately, that would have been quite in character.

All the same, most accounts are quite clear that Douglas only had 5 battalions with him when he caught up with young Schomberg. There is also the clear statement that William considered the reserve battalions unreliable, suitable only for making a show and guarding the camp. Only one of them, at most, participated in the attack directly, and though there is evidence that the rest moved in support of the King's crossing, they remained too far behind to participate in any combat.

It becomes clear that young Schomberg's force was originally intended to be a flying column, complete in itself. It was intended to march all the way to Slane, and cut round behind the Jacobites. Douglas' reinforcement was not a prearranged move. There would have been no way he could have supported such a wide flanking operation. The Danish account states quite plainly that William ordered Douglas to go in aid of Meinhard Schomberg after a dispatch rider came up saying they had crossed at Rosnaree, and could they please have some help.

[The courier, by the way, having ridden several miles, was now as much in ignorance of events on the right as everyone else.]

William was stretching it pretty fine, as he usually did. Sending Douglas away was a useless move, since the men took no part in the action at all. But the King was not relying on the central attack, or even the right hook. The critical move would be a second flank attack, by the 8,000 men of the Williamite left wing, led by the King in person.

Dutch Billy like to fabricate "clockwork" plans that rarely functioned properly after contact with the enemy, and, once they were broken, compensated by making snap judgement calls of an aggressive nature. Against a poor set of generals such a habit might save the day; against a marshal such as Luxembourg or Turenne it was suicidal. The Boyne was indeed his only clear victory.

First Blood

Meinhard Schomberg left before daybreak. A participant says they were roused at 2am.

> *"next morning [July 1st] we were up at two of the clock and marched to gain a passage two miles off about five in the morning. The passage was a very steep hill and a shallow river at the bottom. That led into a very fine plain [that is, the hill was on the south side and descended to the alluvial plain]; as we came there we found a party of the enemy with four or five pieces of artillery ready to receive us, but that did not daunt our men. They went down briskly, notwithstanding the continual fire upon us. The grenadiers and dragoons were first on the other side and we soon followed them [the witness was with Schomberg's Regiment of Horse].*
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> *W&P, p. 109.*

Looking across the Boyne (in flood) to the west of the loop. The photo was taken at the base of the knoll. The hedgerow in the middle distance marks a secondary lane probably used by Meinhard Schomberg's men to cross the Mattock River. There is another road beyond it running in a more westerly direction. The water in the foreground is the an old (but not that old) canal (mainly used for controlling the tidal flux) (Author's photo).

By the original plan, young Schomberg's goal was Slane Bridge. At some point it became clear the bridge was down, and a ford would have to be used. This automatically turned a strategic move into a tactical one. It is not clear when the bridge was found to be "out", but it was probably on the 30th. If young Schomberg had only learned of the fact after marching off, he would have been groping for a crossing point in the dark and fog. Also, his instructions were to engage the enemy flank by about 9am (allowing him something like seven hours from start to finish). These would not be his instructions if he were still destined for Slane.

Rosnaree, 2 miles from the bridge and 4 miles from the enemy's position, was the best place. But after bumbling about in the night, Meinhard was not even on his marks by dawn. By sheer chance, the timing of his appearance at Rosnaree would help William win the battle. First, he had a grace period. Ebb tide at Oldbridge was estimated between 8 and 9am, but in fact it was really between 10 and 11am. Second, because he made a crossing in the vicinity of the battlefield, and only an hour or two before the main assault, he helped pull the Jacks off balance and set them up for a knockout blow.

[Most maps show Schomberg's column proceeding direct from the camp to Rosnaree, but this is ridiculous. They would have had to use the road to Slane for part of the route, because of the guns. There is at least one major stream cutting across the line of march.]

The crossing at Rosnaree was fiercely contended for half an hour by Sir Niall O'Neill and his regiment of 800 dragoons, augmented by one of the Jacobite batteries, already minus one gun. O'Neill had been detailed to cover Slane. Most likely, it was his men who wrecked the bridge. For a while, they continued to cover the crossing point, but, learning there were fords below him, he used his initiative and moved down to Rosnaree.

The Williamites arrived about 6am. The horse regiments, led by 100 mounted grenadiers of the Guard and supported by Dutch dragoons, swept through the tumuli on the flanks of *Brú na Bóinne*, and into the river. The wording of the various accounts lends itself to different interpretations, but it would appear that contrary to popular history (and military practice), the Jacobite dragoons engaged them on horseback as they emerged from the ford. Seeing the enemy in disorder, Meinhard Schomberg counter-charged with his main force.

[Many second-hand accounts have the dragoons in a skirmish line above the ford, but since they were mistaken for a regiment of horse, this is unlikely. Dragoons mixing it with heavy horse was rare in the period, but not unknown, and these men, not bound by doctrine, would have had good mounts, perhaps better than the enemy.]

[No one seems to have realised they were fighting on top of a burial site that predates the Pyramids. The bumps in the ground were just handy places to site the guns.]

The fight lasted between half an hour and an hour. The Jacks gave way after Schomberg got his guns into action, and retreated downstream. O'Neill was mortally wounded when a cannonball smashed his thigh as they broke contact. The Williamites pushed the dragoons back some two miles, leaving their foot behind in the rush. At that point the attackers encountered a deep, wide ravine, with a stream at the bottom and a morass at the upper end. Their horses blown, the cavalry rested while the rest of the column caught up.

[O'Neil's was accounted one of the best regiments, but after the Boyne it fell apart. Like many such units, it was really a clan host, and with the chief dead and with no formalised command structure to tick over in the day to day routine of life, the men were directionless. Their obligation was to O'Neill, not King James.]

From the Jacobite Camp

With a third of their army way out on the right, a frontal attack by the Williamites would be very dicey indeed. Unless the enemy responded by redeploying. Which, of course, they did. But while William's partisans ascribe the Jacobite response to his "brilliant feint" at Rosnaree, and called the "echeloned" crossing of the river in three places "genius", the results were really an inevitable consequence of the Jacobites' own plans.

To reiterate, it is most likely that King James had decided to retire, but that he felt he was safe enough waiting until morning. The baggage was sent away first, though the order to pull the guns out was ignored. Then, as the mist rose at 8am, the whole camp could be seen in retrograde motion. To the Williamites, as their grand battery boomed out, all on the far slope seemed panic and confusion. And there was confusion. But there was also a plan.

Again, from King James' point of view, the Williamites were centred northwest of him, not on his right, as was actually the case. But, his own position was not, as is shown on many maps, within the loop of the Boyne – a static defence just asking to be encircled – but on a line running from Drogheda in the northeast to the southernmost point of the bend of the Boyne, along Rathmullin ridge and the Hill of Donore.

As already decided upon, the Jacobite left was moving off to the west, where it would swing wide for safety before heading south. While this was happening, the right wing would advance closer to the Boyne near Oldbridge, while a few units were moved as far as the hamlet itself. Mill Ford was believed to be out of the enemy's ken, but 2 regiments of dragoons from the right were sent along the ridge in that direction to observe it.

Two things now happened. The Jacobites learned of the action at Rosnaree – Lauzun, commanding the left, records that the combat was clearly visible as he marched along the forward slopes beside the Boyne – and King William learned his enemy was retreating. But as William gave orders for an immediate pursuit, generating just as much confusion in his own camp, James was giving orders to halt the retreat and engage the enemy. He had seen an opportunity.

Believing, though incorrectly, that William was planning to pin him opposite Oldbridge and attack with the bulk of his forces via Rosnaree, James now intended to crush this attack with the bulk of his own army, leaving Tyrconnel and the cavalry of the right, supported by some infantry under Richard Hamilton, to hold in place. The Jacobites would then have an opportunity to cross at Rosnaree themselves and catch William with his back to the sea.

Though he was not aware of it, the French had executed this very manoeuvre at Fleurus ten days before, with devastating effect. At the worst, Meinhard Schomberg's column would be bloodied, allowing the Jacobites a free retreat.

Only two facts would spoil the whole thing. The first, of course, is that William intended to attack Tyrconnel in far greater strength. Ironically, William's own mistake with Douglas cause the Jacobites to make a wrong assessment themselves. Seeing this column moving off to support Meinhard Schomberg, James would order additional units from the second line of the right wing to support his left, ultimately leaving Tyrconnel with only 5,500 men, changing a frontal assault across a river at 1:1 odds into something closer to 3:2.

By itself, however, this was not enough. As is clear from the calculations above, thanks to William's dispatch of Douglas' brigade, Solms and Schomberg still had only a minor superiority in numbers. In the event, they were very nearly thrown out of their bridgehead.

The other fact usually cited as costing James the battle is that between the two opposing wings on the Jacobite left lay a stretch of impassable ground, undiscovered until the last minute. But again, this was not enough, though it stopped the Jacobite counterpunch.

What was really crucial was the delay in forming up for battle on that flank, coupled with William's use of the Mill Ford. *That* delay could not be helped, it was simply a fact of life for 17th Century armies. William was given enough time to conduct his left hook and take Tyrconnel's wing in flank.

It is pointless to say that James should have turned his army around and marched back to counter William. He only received notice that his right was broken at the very moment he was ordering the advance on the left. 17th Century armies were not mechanised corps with T-O-T artillery support and satellite comms. It would have taken two hours at least to save Tyrconnel's bacon, and his men were already in full retreat.

At best, some of the cavalry could have been sent back. Here, at any rate, the hesitation in the high command is blameworthy, but they were also worried about Meinhard's horsemen, who appeared to be moving to cut their lines of communication. The Jacobite cavalry could not chase those troops, support the attack, *and* aid Tyrconnel, all at the same time.

According to James' own memoirs, he first detached Léry, commanding the cavalry of the left wing, per the initial retreat plan, then, believing that William was about to send the bulk of his army west, ordered Lauzun to follow with the foot, including the French brigade and the battery of guns already mentioned. Lauzun was instructed to take up a position beside the Boyne somewhere close to Rosnaree. In the event, he met O'Neill's dragoons at Roughgrange and settled on that. There was a nice slope.

Tyrconnel remained at Donore/Oldbridge with the right wing cavalry (depleted by the detachment of Sarsfield's Horse and Maxwell's Dragoons) and 2 brigades (8 battalions) under Hamilton; sufficient force to hold against the expected probing attacks.

A wide gap now existed between the two wings, covered only by the *corps de reserve* and perhaps the battery above Mattock River Ford (assuming there was one). This meant the reserve could not be used to aid Tyrconnel.

At Oldbridge, the right wing cavalry under Dominick Sheldon (Tyrconnel's Horse, 2 troops of Life Guards (Berwick), Parker's Horse, and Sutherland's Horse) was held back, with a couple of dragoon regiments (Clare's and Dungan's) sent, as noted, along Rathmullin ridge toward Mill Ford, to observe and maintain contact with Drogheda.

Tyrconnel began to advance his infantry (Hamilton) into the loop, but only 1 regiment (Clanricarde's) was initially deployed at the hamlet of Oldbridge, using the enclosures and some very hastily slopped together earthworks as cover. The remaining 7 battalions of the first line (2 battalions of Foot Guards, 2 battalions of de Boisseleau's, Antrim's, and 2 battalions of the Grand Prior's) were held upslope, concealed from any force at the crossing but under artillery observation from the Williamite grand battery north of the river.

[Clare's Dragoons are sometimes mistaken for O'Brien of Clare's Foot. They were the Dragoons Bly – the Yellow Dragoons – from the colour of their uniforms, though their behaviour at the Boyne lent their name another interpretation].

Around 10am the situation is as follows: Meinhard Schomberg, having crossed at Rosnaree, is enroute to Roughgrange, which he will reach around 10:30. There, he will discover an extensive obstacle that prevents him from reaching the road that will allow him to cut the enemy's retreat. He is already behind schedule. His courier, sent much earlier, when the crossing appeared doubtful, has arrived at the Williamite camp asking for reinforcements, and General Douglas is receiving orders to take the rest of the right wing (only 5 battalions), to Rosnaree. None of his forces will play any part in the battle. King William has seen the Jacobite camp in motion, and it appears to him that they are retreating unmolested; he has given orders for an immediate crossing which his troops are now almost ready to conduct.

At Oldbridge

View of the Oldbridge sector looking east from the visitors' centre on the lower slope of the knoll. The village is out of sight on the left, just short of the line of trees in the distance. The mass of trees in the center obscures a significant berm, 15'-20' high, that runs from the knoll to the far line of trees. Upslope (to the right) the ground climbs gradually once the berm has been surmounted. The flats in the center and distant left are where the infantry attacks took place, crossing from right to left. The cavalry swept down in the same direction but from beyond the line of trees, then cut in along the riverbank toward the camera. The guns in the picture are for show. This area is well within enemy artillery range. None of the trees existed at the time of the battle (Author's photo).

Chroniclers have assigned start times for the Williamite assault ranging from 10am to 4pm (!). The reliable George Story gives 10am for the initial crossing, which fits with the tide tables, but the Williamites did not cross simultaneously. After marching down a ravine still known as King William's Glen, they had to line up along the river, and the impatient monarch could not wait to dot his i's and cross his t's but ordered his brigades to cross as soon as they were ready.

The various maps one finds showing this deployment are extremely vague and misleading, usually showing the regiments moving down to the river on a broad front, sometimes even meandering about to "reinforce" one another. These diagrams cannot be accurate.

First, it would have taken a few hours to descend to the river if the units had already formed in line. The slopes are mild, but not that mild. From 8am when William ordered his camp to "stand to" until ebb tide is only 2 hours. Not enough time.

Second, there was no reason to form in line from the start, because of the intervening river – furthermore, William was in a hurry and expected to fight a pursuit battle. This indicates that the Army (its center, anyway) marched in column down King William's Glen, then marched parallel to the river and deployed "to the left", a technical phrase which means specifically that the lead unit peels off first, the one behind it marches past and wheels onto the lead unit's left flank, and so on. In contrast, when deploying to the right, all the battalions can turn at the same time because the lead unit will already be in its proper position when the column halts. Forming line of battle to the left is thus much slower, and ordinarily, the right-hand formation ought to wait, but as noted, William had given orders for an immediate crossing.

[Unlike a modern army on parade, units could not simply have their men face a different way. All the officers, NCOs, and supernumeraries would have to push their way through to the other side. The companies were precisely organised by experience and seniority. Moreover, armies habitually displayed their best men in the first rank. By simply turning the other way, their worst men would now be at the front. Also, in some cases pikemen were not grouped in the center of a battalion, but arranged in the last rank. There was also the important issue of regimental seniority. Every unit had its place. Don't laugh. In the French Army, this cult – no lesser word will do – lost them many battles.]

To avoid congestion, the King took the left wing cavalry under his own command via another defile that led to Drybridge Ford. Drybridge Ford is not on the Boyne, it crosses a stream running into the Boyne from the north, just to the north of Mill Ford. This was where he intended to cross and complete a – simultaneous – double-envelopment.

Tyrconnel had 5,000 foot and 1,500 horse facing Schomberg and Solms, who, though they officially had 15,000 men, really only had 8-10,000 for the crossing. When Tyrconnel saw the enemy deploying, he moved up his first line infantry, less the Grand Prior's 2 battalions, which King James had already called for in addition to Tyrconnel's entire second line. This left the Earl with only 5,500 men.

[Some histories give a strength of 7 battalions, after all deductions, instead of 6. Usually, the Foot Guards are given a third battalion. It is possible this is actually Clancarty's Regiment, which was nicknamed "foot guards". That unit ought to have been present, but cannot be identified elsewhere on the battlefield.]

The day was hot, the sky now clear. The tides still were not right, but there could be no more delay. At 10:15am, the two battalions of the Dutch Blue Guards and their cadet corps began to cross the Boyne at Oldbridge Ford. In column, 8 or 10 abreast, the Guards waded through waist-deep water. The dense mass of men actually retarded the flow of the river. Halfway over, they were fired upon by Antrim's and Clanricarde's, but kept on. As the Guards reached the south bank, the Huguenot brigade (reinforced) began to cross a little lower down. Thanks to the "human dam" of the Guards, the water was lower, but they were nearly swept off their feet when the other column cleared the water and released the flow.

[Most accounts say the Blue Guards had three battalions, but the third battalion was never deployed in the field. The unit did have a cadet corps (officers, not boys), however. There is also a very slight chance that the White Guards – Graben's, not a formal Guards unit in any sense – is meant for the third battalion, though it was not brigaded with them.]

The two brigades cleared the immediate bank of enemy picquets, but were almost immediately re-engaged, the Guards by an infantry assault by the other enemy battalions, the Huguenots by a series of cavalry charges. Veterans said they could not remember so hot an action.

As reported by the Danish envoy, the infantry counterattack came first, but made little headway. The Jacobite battalions "suddenly appeared" on the lip of a low, steep rise to the south of the hamlet. They advanced quickly across the low ground, trying to close the distance so that the enemy artillery would be forced to stop its bombardment. There was not much space. They halted at the what they thought was the regulation 50 paces to fire, but only the first volley – conducted by ranks in the French manner – was well-controlled, and even it did little damage.

The two bodies then came to "push of pike" among the kitchen gardens, but the Dutch, equipped with a higher proportion of muskets and employing the new method of platoon firing, blasted the Jacobites at every opportunity, until they had had enough and withdrew, much battered.

Almost immediately there began a series of Jacobite cavalry charges. By some accounts there were ten charges in all, that, according to Berwick, "amazed" the enemy and caused their attack to stall completely.

During the infantry fight, the Huguenots arrived on the scene. Two of the three battalions began heading over to aid the Dutch, where 3 squadrons of King James' Life Guards were moving to strike the Blue Guards in flank. William was on tenterhooks; he could see his Guards being overwhelmed:

> *"'My poor guards, my poor guards, my poor guards'; but when he saw them stand their ground and fire by platoons, so that the horse were forced to run away in great disorder, he breathed out as people used to after holding their breath upon a fright or suspense, and said he had seen his guards do that which he had never seen foot do in his life."*
>
> *JI, p.149.*

The Blue Guards had withstood a cavalry charge in line, and driven it off by firepower alone. Apparently the enemy horse broke into the formation, but the men on the flanks faced inward and began discharging volleys by platoon; the men in the forward ranks are reported to have done the unimaginable and reloaded while lying down under a thicket of bayonets and pikes.

[Some accounts state that the Dutch were broken, but though their formation was penetrated, it was not broken.]

Tyrconnel's orders had been disobeyed. He had ordered all the cavalry to assist the infantry, not just one troop. As the Foot retired, Tyrconnel recognised the situation and ordered fresh charges, first by Tyrconnel's Horse, then Berwick's Life Guards, Parker's Horse, and Sutherland's. It was Tyrconnel's, riding in support of the Life Guards, that broke into the Dutch.

Two "determined" charges were made against the Blue Guards, and in the second, the Huguenots were mauled. Lacking bayonets or *chevaux-de-frise*, and with less than the necessary number of pikes, Cambon's and Caillemotte's battalions were routed. Marshal Schomberg, observing the calamity from the north bank, spurred his horse across, rode in among his French and rallied them, losing his life in a mêlée among the shacks as the Jacks returned for a third charge. The situation was stabilised as Hanmer's mixed brigade of Enniskilleners and English entered the fray. Parker's Horse stormed through Hanmer's Regiment but only cut its way out with difficulty.

*[*Chevaux-de-frise *was the barbed wire entanglement of the 17th Century. Carried in –barely – portable sections, it could be rapidly assembled when cavalry threatened. The Russians were still using it on the steppes in the 1730s.]*

There is some evidence that the Jacobite infantry was still fighting at this point. Though Schomberg is variously said to have been shot accidentally, or plugged by a trooper of the Life Guards as they galloped through his command group, the man tradition names as his assassin appears to have served in James' Foot Guards, not the Life Guards. Significantly, at least one illustration shows the marshal receiving his wound (at the hands of a cavalryman) within Oldbridge hamlet, and that is where he was initially buried.

[The other famous casualty was Reverend Walker of Derry, but where William regretted Schomberg's death, he commented that Walker was a fool for even being there. Walker was exercising his prerogative as a civilian "lookie-loo" and was slain while crossing the river.]

It was now 11am. Schomberg was already dead by the time the Danish infantry crossed at the Donore Ford (sometimes called the Yellow Island crossing). The tide was coming in now, and they were fording neck deep, and in single file. The Danish Horse rode beside them to help break the current. It was the only notable service they would perform that day. The Danish commander, the Duke of Württemburg, supposedly had himself carried over on the shoulders of his grenadiers, but since he was a young man, this seems unlikely.

[If the septuagenarian Marshal Schomberg could ride across and start hacking at the enemy, why not the 29 year old Württemburg?]

[Above] Standing on the edge of the berm above the Oldbridge flats, looking south to the Hill of Donore. [Below] Looking the other way – north to Oldbridge (the buildings are a rough reconstruction). The Boyne lies at the line of trees. King William's Glen is behind the clump of trees on the left. In those days, none of the trees existed. A canal has also be constructed since, running parallel to the river (Author's photos).

Initially, the Danes were only opposed by the hesitant Jacobite flank guard that had been sent along the crest of Rathmullen ridge. Of Dungan's and Clare's Dragoons, only the former made any attempt to dispute the crossing, successfully routing the Danish Horse, who were extremely raw and ill mounted, besides being few in numbers. The bulk of the Jacobite cavalry was making a tired attempt to finish off the Blue Guards. So, the Danish foot had time to form a bridgehead using their *chevaux-de-frise* and two guns before the continuing series of cavalry charges, now consisting of a jumble of squadrons, reached them. When Dungan was killed his regiment left the field. Elsewhere, however, the Jacobites continued to charge furiously against all and sundry; reputedly, many of them were drunk.

According to the Danish war journal:

> *We could see this [retreat] on July I, when all the enemy's tents were struck. Orders were therefore given in our camp that everyone should be ready to march and that the musketeers should strike their tents and leave their greatcoats and knapsacks with the tents. Meanwhile the enemy began to move and retired to the hill;*

he was, however, still disturbed by our cannon. As news arrived at the same time that Count Schomberg had forded the crossing on his flank, our camp advanced and the brigades marched to the places assigned to them, where they were to cross the river. When this movement took place, the enemy turned about again. As he supposed that the fighting would most likely be heaviest on the right wing where the crossing was easiest – he regarded it as difficult though not impossible on the left wing – he moved towards our right wing where the Dutch Guards were. There was a very sharp fight there in which Marshal Schomberg was killed. When the enemy realized that, contrary to his expectation, our men were advancing into the water up to their armpits, some enemy battalions marched back again from our right wing towards our section, as a result of which the Dutch gained more ground. So the Duke of Wurtemberg decided to gain the other bank while he was unopposed, and was himself the first of the Guards to enter and cross the river. As those following could see the enemy dragoons and cavalry on the road that we were to take, they thought our grenadiers and the Guards battalion were doomed unless they were quickly supported. They accordingly hurried after them and crossed, each man as best he could. Thus under cover of the fire of those who were still on the other side we began to take up our position rapidly and with firm determination in spite of the enemy's salvo, which did us no harm at all, except that three men of the Guards were wounded.

[Notice the Danish account makes no mention of Württemburg being carried.]

[Above] Looking toward Yellow Island from in front of the Jacobite line. Again, the Boyne is marked by the line of trees. This entire area was the scene of numerous cavalry charges. [Below] At the same location as the last photo, now facing toward the Jacobite positions, with the Hill of Donore on the skyline (Author's photos).

With his Foot fully engaged, indeed, nearly overthrown in places, William now massed his remaining cavalry and led it across the Boyne a mile east of the main battle, at the Mill Ford. The river was deep now and even the cavalry had to swim. The King's mount foundered, and, asthmatic as he was, he had to struggle through the mud on foot before being remounted. The opposite bank led immediately up Rathmullin's slope to a high feature on the Jacobite right, where their artillery had originally been sited.

Immediately, the King ordered a charge, by 6 regiments under Baron Ginkel, against Clare's Dragoons, who made only a feeble attempt to hold before bolting off. A second regiment – mostly the reformed Tyrconnel's Horse – coming up behind them fared little better. With their way cleared, the Enniskilleners took the lead with William at their head, up to the village of Donore at the crest of the high ground a half mile behind the Jacobite position and astride their escape route.

[The original village was not at the present location.]

Tyrconnel was already aware his flank had been turned. With no reinforcements from James, and with his cavalry blown, he ordered a retreat. Some of his men anticipated him, but it seems that the bulk of the infantry had not "run away" as Orangist propaganda and French excuses had it, but had only fallen back to regroup out of artillery range. Now that the cavalry was leaving, it was pointless to stay.

[Above] Looking toward Drogheda, from the Jacobite side. On the right is a modern (grey concrete) viaduct. Just short of this is Mill Ford. Again, the Boyne lies along the line of trees. [Below] Looking toward the extreme right of the Jacobite line, Drogheda off camera to the left. The right-hand battery was initially placed to the right of the copse of trees (which did not exist), facing toward the cameraman's left (Author's photos).

There was a confused melee at Donore, where Richard Hamilton defended the churchyard with all the stragglers he could collect. The Enniskilleners were certainly enthusiastic warriors. They charged the Jacobite horse, they charged the reformed Danish horse, they charged the Dutch horse, and one of them nearly put a bullet into William.

> *"it was about a mile [from the Mill Ford] further on top of a hill where were some old walls that the enemy had well lined with firelocks ["commanded musket" detachments or skirmishers]. Here His Majesty [William] led up some Dutch troops, but before they had got in the Inniskillingers had made an assault on the other side and did very bravely at first, but espying another great party whom they took for the enemy just ready to surround them they began to fly and did actively put in disorder the Dutch horse and all others that stood in their way. The place was unfortunately full of holes and dungpits and the passage narrow; but above all the dust and smoke quite blinded them. His Majesty was here in the crowd of all drawing his sword and animating them that fled to follow him. His danger was great among the enemy's guns which killed thirty of the Inniskillingers on the spot. Nay one of the Inniskillingers came with a pistol cocked to His Majesty till he called out 'what, are you angry with your friends?' The truth is the clothes of friends and foes are so much alike that His Majesty had had the goodness to excuse all that passed."*

The Enniskilleners became separated from William after the initial charge cleared the way. He tried to reorient the column, but the Enniskilleners misinterpreted his movements and turned away. Some on the Williamite side put this down to lack of training, others to cowardice, but there was an obstruction of some kind, probably a hedge with only a narrow gap, and it may be that they were merely using their initiative in choosing another way through. This is how they came to attack Donore from another direction and mistake King William for the Jacobite commander.

According to the Danish journal:

> *When we had crossed the river and were mounting the hill we found the enemy dragoons and troopers more inclined to fight than the infantry, which hurried away before us so fast that our men could never engage them. The enemy horse advanced on our Guards, but as they found there the* chevaux-de-frise *and vigorous firing they retired again. They were actively pursued by our cavalry who were, however, unable to achieve anything of importance. They [the enemy cavalry) fought so well that their infantry gained time enough to save themselves. When they [the infantry] had got a fair start the cavalry retreated in good order and style. When the Iniskillingers on one occasion pressed the enemy too closely he chased them back on to our cavalry. I certainly believe that in the confusion and the thick dust they and Donop's regiment charged one another in the belief that they were charging the enemy. Our infantry were in no way affected by this and the cavalry soon recovered.*

In this fight Hamilton was taken (after receiving a light head wound), but his resistance had permitted the bulk of the Jacobite Army to escape.

Württemburg's letter to Christian V summarises the events:

SEVEN miles from Dublin, 5th July 1690. 'My last was dated July 1. I humbly report to Your Majesty that the King resolved to attack the enemy on that day, although many, and especially the Duke of Schomberg, considered it hazardous. Accordingly Count Menard Schomberg was detailed with the right wing of the cavalry and Trelany's brigade to make an attack four miles upstream, where there was a fairly convenient crossing. The King himself pointed out the ford where the [main] attack was to be made. About eleven o'clock, as soon as Count Solms had attacked with the right wing, the King ordered me to cross with the Danish troops and Hamore's [Hanmer's] and La Mellioniere's brigades. The Dutch Guards attacked but met with great resistance; the battalions of Caillemotte and Cambon supported them but were overwhelmed by the enemy cavalry because they had no chevaux-de-frise. Many of the two regiments were killed and Col. Caillemotte was mortally wounded. Unfortunately the Duke of Schomberg was also in this melee and was shot by some of King James's Life Guards. The Dutch Guards, consisting of three battalions, did wonders and repulsed the enemy infantry and cavalry. While they were engaged I crossed the river with Your Majesty's troops. Some squadrons at once appeared to dispute the crossing and charged us. We replied with a great volley which so astounded them that they retired. Where Your Majesty's Guards crossed, the water was so deep that it came up to their armpits. We marched across by divisions. The bottom was very boggy. While we were marching out of the water a squadron of dragoons came up and attacked the Guards. I allowed only the grenadiers and some platoons to charge, on which the enemy was repulsed; Col. Bover [? Dover] the commanding officer was taken prisoner. Then the cavalry on the left wing crossed and attacked the enemy but were driven back. The enemy forces would not attack again with their infantry, giving the excuse, according to prisoners' statements, that they were afraid of the chevaux-de-frise. *In the end they took to flight and were pursued for four miles. The Irish cavalry behaved extremely well but the foot behaved very badly. All their baggage was lost. Next day we halted to bring up the baggage, knapsacks and greatcoats which had remained in the camp.*

The account telescopes the action somewhat. The Irish infantry did not rout until much later, and then only some 6 battalions were broken. They were ridden down by their own cavalry. The baggage, already well off the field, was taken later.

Roughgrange

[Thanks to road construction and a date with an aircraft, the author did not obtain pictures of Roughgrange.]

King James went with Lauzun, watched him get organised, then returned to his headquarters at Donore. Lauzun drew the Jacobites up for battle roughly 500 yards from the enemy, facing them across a shallow valley at the top of the ravine leading north down to the Boyne. Both he and James were surprised at how small the enemy force seemed to be. They feared it might be a screen for another force heading south, based on the dust clouds they could observe (actually made by a detachment looking for a way round the obstacle).

James' mood improved. Perhaps there was an opportunity here. Attacking at Roughgrange, James could defeat a portion of the enemy army in detail, cut off any column to the south, and threaten to envelop William. By pulling some more units from the right, the Jacobites could achieve local superiority: They already had 5,000 or so French, a battery of guns, and 7 regiments of cavalry against Schomberg's 7,000 men equipped with only a few light guns. James could and did detach a full unengaged brigade of Irish from the second line.

The enemy appeared to be sidling to their left. Lauzun adjusted his position to match them, and to allow room for the additional forces James was now dispatching. Obviously the enemy intended to work their way around into the Jacobite rear (but according to accounts from their side, it was difficult job).

Back at Donore, the King learned that Tyrconnel was heavily engaged, but holding. He siphoned off the Grand Prior's in addition to the aforementioned brigade, sending Lauzun 7 more battalions. He also took away the *corps de reserve*, which, as already noted, was now deployed as a "hinge" between the two wings. This left Tyrconnel very thin. Douglas' move to reinforce Meinhard Schomberg had been observed, which gave the impression that William was also stretched thin, justifying the risk.

James arrived back on the left wing to find the situation unchanged, except that Lauzun had sent some cavalry out to examine the ground. The King did not order the attack right away. The Irish reinforcements (including the eyewitness John Stevens) was still enroute, *sans* any officer who could explain what was going on. Then, as the wing was completing its final "dressing" in preparation for the attack, the courier crying Tyrconnel's overthrow arrived.

[Just like the Williamites, Lauzun's forces had to deploy "by the left", making everything that much more complicated.]

Actually he did not cry it. The ADC spoke quietly to the King, who then approached Lauzun and whispered the bad news to him. But, he said, they could still fool William. If they attacked now, and broke the enemy right, the balance would be redressed. There was hope that a standoff would ensue, allowing them to withdraw safely. Lauzun began the routine, but hesitantly. His subordinate, La Hoguette, placed himself at the head of the Foot. The dragoons were dismounted and arranged in the intervals

between the battalions. James' whispers became louder, more insistent. At last, the command was given, the regiments took their first step… and the generals Sarsfield and Maxwell rode up shouting "stop the music". There was no way through the ground in front of them – not without becoming hopelessly disordered. It was cut by two deep ditches and a very marshy brook.

According to La Hoguette, the obstacles were insignificant and Lauzun was merely a coward, but La Hoguette had no use for Lauzun. The latter concluded they should retreat before anything else went wrong, and proceeded to march the army off "by the left", but instead of heading due south for the Dublin-Slane road he sent them on a road that converged with the retreat route from Oldbridge, at that long narrow bridge over the Nanny Water, before Duleek.

The infantry quickly left Rosnaree; the cavalry remained as a screen. Lauzun assigned Sarsfield's regiment the duty of protecting the King. Pulling away at last, the Frenchman urged the cavalry to go "faster, faster". His nervousness communicated itself well. The horses were nearly in full career when they slammed into their own infantry north of Duleek. They routed the Grand Prior's regiment so badly that only about 80 men could be mustered at Dublin, and the Grand Prior's was accounted one of the best of the Irish regiments, comprising motivated exiles. Other regiments were also broken by the cavalry's retrograde zeal.

A full disaster was averted by Zurlaben's Blue Regiment. Composed of competent German and Walloon mercenaries, this unit opened fire on the cavalry to clear them out of the way. Dispersed, the Jacobite horse were no longer a threat to either side.

The French brigade, primarily Zurlaben's regiment again, also performed a good service at Duleek. The Nanny Water was not a wide stream, but it lay amidst a boggy ravine that was extremely wide, spanned by a very long, narrow bridge. While the rest of the army streamed past, the French made a stand, covered by artillery from the far bank. The Williamites, mainly disordered cavalry units, did not press very hard.

Postmortem

> *Five battalions [and 6 squadrons] under Brigadier Melloniere were detailed to summon Drogheda [July 2] which surrendered [July 3]. The garrison marched out without arms leaving all their baggage behind. There were three regiments of foot and 300 unattached troops in the town. On the third day, Thursday, while the army was on the march, a deputation came from Dublin and sought the King's protection; apparently most of the Catholics have withdrawn. On the way we found arms for 4,000 men, which the enemy had thrown away. On July 4 two battalions of the Dutch Guards were detailed to take possession of Dublin; the army observed a day of rest. The enemy has left his magazine and his copper money behind. Lt.-Gen. Hamilton has been taken prisoner together with some brigadiers and colonels and several hundred common soldiers. Today the army is marching to Dublin.'*
>
> *Duke of Württemburg to King Christian V*

King William did not pursue the Jacobites beyond Duleek. It was late in the day, his army was exhausted, and the enemy still appeared to have some cohesion. According to Württemburg,

> *The enemy was pursued until late in the evening, more hunted than defeated. He did not leave more than 1,000 dead on the field and we have only about 200 dead and wounded.*

Losses were slight for such a large battle: 1,000 Jacobites and 500 (not 200) Williamites, with few prisoners taken on the field. King William's official losses were reduced by some 500 Swabian POWs, who defected from Zurlaben's. The Jacks did lose all their baggage and most of their artillery, but only after the rot set in at Duleek. The battlefield was littered with discarded muskets and pikes. Some officers were seen discarding swords and even boots in an effort to be first into Dublin. Most importantly, the Army had lost its morale. Drogheda surrendered the next day, its garrison and inhabitants permitted to go to Athlone.

Marshal Lauzun seemed to care nothing for the state of his army, only for the person of the King. He urged James first to reform the troops at Dublin, and then to flee the country. It is possible he had some concern for his own person as well, but in saving the King he was obeying his instructions: from the point of view of Paris, James was a valuable chess piece, his men just so many crumbs on the board. At least he had not lost any Frenchmen.

The Williamites had failed in their attempt to encircle the enemy and finish the war. Provided the Jacobites could restore their composure, the Boyne was not the end of the world. Schomberg's untimely death was not an issue (unlike Aughrim, where the commander's death has sometimes been labeled *the* issue). William himself had never given instructions about a pursuit. It is speculated this was because he wanted to give James the opportunity to absent himself from the scene entirely, but it may be because he had not envisaged the failure of his flanking move – that is, the move succeeded in the secondary object of levering the Jacobites out of their position, but failed to ensure their annihilation.

The Jacobite Army was virtually intact; even if much of it vanished like smoke, it reappeared behind the walls of Limerick. The Grand Prior's for example, had 1,000 men at the start of the battle, dropped to 400 in retreat, then to 80 when mustered at Dublin, down to 20 on the march to Limerick (which was all Stevens' could observe of it), had 150 men during the siege of that place, but was reconstituted as a battalion of 450 men, retaining that strength for the rest of the war.

The real problem during the retreat was the Jacobite officer corps. They abandoned their men. The French were the worst culprits. Zurlaben was the only one honoured by an audience with King Louis. *His* regiment had no difficulty replacing its losses: in gratitude many Irish volunteered to serve under him. According to Zurlaben, Lauzun and brave la Hoguette were unmanned by the battle, and the colonels Famechon, Merode, and Chamerade had pocketed their colours – a disgrace second only to actually losing them.

[La Hoguette is responsible for the tale that the Irish ran away "like sheep". For some reason, this exceptionally brave officer somehow "lost it" that day, and thought to cover his shame with a lie, which to his credit he later recanted. Elsewhere in his report, he noted that both wings arrived at Duleek in "good order". Chamerade, by the by, was not a soldier, but Gentleman Usher to the Dauphiné.]

For fear of spreading alarm, and partly for shame, the regiments were to assemble outside of Dublin, but these instructions were not properly disseminated and many officers went into the city of their own accord, some to leave the country, others to settle their affairs. Leaderless, the rank and file drifted away and by some subconscious process, chose Limerick as a place of refuge.

The battle drowned out the bad news of the naval action at Beachy Head (June 30th), in which the French under Admiral de Tourville defeated an Anglo-Dutch fleet under Admiral Herbert. An invasion of England was feared, but the French took no further action besides a minor raid. They did not even use their new command of the seas to cut William's supply lines, which was his greatest fear.

Pedibus Timor Additdit Alas

[Tag to a Protestant coin of the day, showing a wingéd deer on one side and a running king on the other.]

Danish correspondence:

> *DUBLIN, 9 July 1690. 'My last was dated July 4 [5]. I humbly report that the King entered Dublin on Sunday July 6. He dismounted at the Cathedral, where the Te Deum was sung. At the end of the service he rode back to the camp in the same order of procession.*
>
> *All our intelligence is that the Jacobite army is in great disorder.*
>
> *King James and Lauzun have embarked at Kingsahl for France. The French battalions under La Hoguette have made for Limerick, where there are apparently provisions for a month. The regiment of Zurlauben is badly broken up. A few days ago 500, mostly*

Germans, came to Dublin; most of them have joined the army. About 100 have joined Your Majesty's battalions.

Yesterday the King got news of the naval battle [Beachy Head], which greatly displeased him, as the English showed little spirit and left the Dutch in the lurch. It is to be hoped that when they get the news from Ireland they will show more vigour.

ONE mile from Dublin, 9 July 1690. 'King James has abandoned Ireland, so that to all appearance only Limerick can be defended.

The king held a thorough review of the army which lasted two days. He was quite satisfied with the Danish foot. An amnesty will be announced for all Catholics, provided they lay down their arms within a certain time. Our battalions have been reinforced by Germans whom the French had brought with them: they had been taken prisoner last year by M. Duras. Col. Caillemotte has died of of his wound.

Today the army moved camp and crossed the river to the other side of Dublin. Lt.-Gen. Duglas has been detailed with ten battalions of foot and 14 squadrons of cavalry and dragoons to march to Athlone. Five battalions remain in Dublin under Brigadier Trelany and one battalion at Drogheda. If Limerick intends to hold out we shall march on it, and the King will keep with him 24 battalions and 50 squadrons of cavalry and dragoons. Sickness is beginning. 'I shall take every care for the preservation of Your Majesty's troops.

The city of Dublin declared for the King that day. King James had reached it late in the evening on the day of the battle and had gone on in great haste the next day. The whole army followed with similar haste and had to march 15 miles in one day. It is believed that the King [James] has left by ship with the Duke of Barwick and Vice James [Henry], his illegitimate sons. It is thought, therefore, that the enemy will reorganize at Waterford or Limerick and the King [William] will pursue him there with the army.

King James arrived in Dublin on the evening of July 1st. Here he received heartening news: the French had won a great victory at Fleurus. However, he was resolved now to leave the country. The Irish had let him down badly. There were also letters from the Queen urging his return. In Paris, she said, he could ride the current euphoria and talk the French into giving him a real army.

[That state of affairs came about in 1692, leading to an – aborted – invasion of England, but at this time it was merely an idle wish of the Queen.]

Bent on leaving, he took council nonetheless, and was unanimously told he should go. Tyrconnel even said it were better "*for King James to go back to France and leave us to fight our battles in our own way and for our own ends.*" (*Boulger p. 147*). Word also came from Lauzun and Berwick, stationed somewhere outside the city, who reported they had 7,000 men but little cavalry (Sarsfield having ridden off with most of it). James had no excuse to stay.

[The Jacobite cavalry retained its strength until the end of the war. It seems to have been competently led.]

Pausing only to castigate his council for the shameful performance of the Irish, the King left at sunrise the next morning (July 2nd) escorted by his Life Guard and members of his retinue. His son Berwick decided to remain in the country. A party of French officers caught up with the royal party, claiming the Williamites were on their heels; their horses were so lathered James left them behind. (In reality, they had encountered James' Life Guards covering the road to the rear!)

Stopping in Duncannon, the King's party arranged for a ship. It must indeed have been booked ahead of time, given the rather apt name – the *Lauzun* (a 28-gun privateer). No doubt the paint had barely dried. The ship was floated down to Waterford, and from here, King James set out, rendezvoused with a French squadron of 10 frigates at Kinsale, and sailed for France, never to return.

James was the first to bring news of his defeat to King Louis. The Sun King commented privately that he had "*spoiled everything by a mixture of ignorance, over-confidence, and folly.*" Irish opinion was unanimous: good riddance to bad rubbish. As Sarsfield said, let us switch kings and try again. In the Gaelic, James is forever *Séamus an Chaca* (Shamus an Kakka), which means exactly what the reader thinks it means.

James never trusted the Irish. He found them too extreme in their opinions, always at each others' throats and demanding that he take one side or the other in their quarrels. In his later writings, made for his son in hopes of his eventual reinstatement, he suggested that Irishmen never hold positions of authority in Ireland, and that state education should be geared towards making the younger generation English in all but name. He justified his flight by saying Tyrconnel pressed him to leave (omitting to mention Lauzun).

In contrast, William's supporters thought their king's conduct was "splendid". This is a primary reason why the battle is seen as the defining moment of the war. It solidified his reign, despite some anxious moments to come.

With the flight of James the Jacobite – now emphatically Irish – capital was transferred to Limerick. The Army held together, loosely. It badly needed arms and ammunition. Tyrconnel arrived in Dublin on the 2nd, to find James gone. The move west was made in a miasma of fear and disorder.

A panicky Dublin was given over to Protestant looting, though a provisional government was soon formed and order restored. King William camped at Finglas, sending only 9 troops of horse to secure the capital . He entered the city on the 5th of July. The mob:

"ran about shouting and embracing one another and blessing God for his wonderful deliverance as if they had been alive from the dead; the streets were filled with crowds and shouting and the poor Roman Catholics now lay in the same terrors as we had done some few days before."

JI, p. 157.

The First Siege of Limerick

COLCULDING [Kilcullen] Bridge, 13 July 1690. Lt.-General Duglas has gone with 10,000 English troops towards Slego and Atlone and the king goes to Waterfort. We have ten days for our march there. The countryside is very fine with cultivated ground everywhere, interspersed here and there with hills and marshes. King James has removed nearly all the inhabitants and animals, so that our army cannot make use of them and all our bread must come from the Dublin stores by cart. I hope Mr Perera can keep his contract or that the English fleet will put out again so' that our provision ships can go safely to Wexford, which has declared for King William. Sickness is spreading among our troops but they are not dying yet. Our numbers have been well made up by deserters from the Surlopen [Zurlauben] regiment who are fine experienced men. We have left a party of our sick in the Dublin hospital, which is in one of the finest buildings one could see. I hope the treatment given to the sick will be in proportion to the magnificence of the house.

Divided Counsels

With James out of the picture, the Irish lacked a spiritual focal point. Opinion was split between those, like Tyrconnel, who favoured surrender on good terms (possible because they still had an army to bargain with), and those, like Sarsfield, who wanted to fight to the bitter end, more or less for the same purpose: decent terms.

The Jacobite apology, *A Light to the Blind*, explains Tyrconnel's thoughts. He,

"observed that the great army at first raised was disbanded to almost the moiety; he considered the ill success of the remaining army at Derry; their miscarriage at the Boyne; by which the province of Leinster and the best part of Munster was lost: that the king returned to France; that the French brigade was going away: that the brass money… was brought to no value: that there was no stores of provisions: that the province of Connaught…was not able to maintain the army and the vast multitudes of people entered thither… that Limerick was a very weak town, yet was the chief

defence against the enemy: that, if the Prince of Orange should be beaten in a pitched battle, England, with the assistance of Holland, would send another army, and another after that, rather than be at the mercy of the king [James], if he should be restored by the Irish: that the most Christian Monarch [Louis XIV] was not in a state to send them competent aids, by reason that he had so many enemies, as kept all his armies at work: that while the Catholic army was entire it was the proper time to get advantageous conditions from the Prince of Orange, who would readily grant them, for to secure his crown; that in fine it was not prudence in the above said circumstances, by a strained undertaking to run the risk of destroying the lives of the people, the expectations of their estates, and the hopes of enjoying their religion."

It took 5 weeks for the Williamites to come to Limerick. William had a civil administration to set up. He also had artillery that had to be hauled along things optimistically described as roads. The Jacobites were permitted to reorganise.

Tyrconnel found he had a substantial army after all. He left 8,000 poorly armed troops to defend Limerick, and sent rest to Connaught. The cavalry was pastured in Co. Clare. About the 23rd of July, Athlone, guarding the upper passage of the Shannon, was under siege. The Jacobites were sufficiently reorganised to send a relief column consisting of a battalion of the Guards, 3 "converged" battalions (consisting of 2-3 "regiments" each), 4 guns, and some French detachments under command of Sarsfield and Berwick. This small force caused the Williamites, led by the timorous Lieutenant General Douglas, to raise the siege.

The French withdrew to Galway, to wait for ships to take them home. Lauzun, writing to Louvois, hoped that some of the better Irish regiments could also be rescued from the wreck. He himself would "*rather drive a gun-carriage in France*" than remain in this wretched country.

A depressed Tyrconnel himself also went to Galway, where he held a council of war. He asked if any wanted to leave with the French, but found no takers. His opinions were challenged by Sarsfield, now leading a party of his own. The latter won the day, even compelling Lauzun – though not his troops – to return to Limerick.

The Earl was 60, and in poor health. Sarsfield was 40-ish and the darling of the Army. The Williamites also admired him as a worthy adversary, the hero of the war: even today one cannot walk a block in Limerick without seeing his name. There is even a Sarsfield Bridge.

[According to the Duke of Berwick, Sarsfield was "a man of an amazing stature, utterly devoid of sense, very good-natured and very brave." (JI, p. 158). Though only a colonel, Sarsfield's social status was high. He had Gaelic blood, too, which Tyrconnel did not.]

Morale was stiffened by William's hard line. The Finglas Declaration of July 7th offered pardon to the common people, but the leadership was to be "*left to the event of war*" unless they were prepared to grovel for mercy. The Williamites hoped to separate the leaders of the "rebellion" from their followers. They met with no success.

[There is debate over whether the harsh terms were William's own idea, or whether the "Cromwellians" demanded them. It would appear that William believed, as James did, that the war was over. Thus there was no need for conciliation.]

Matters were not helped by Douglas' column, the 10,000 men sent off to besiege Athlone. They plundered Catholics indiscriminately, whether they could show a protection or not. The Ulstermen especially seemed to think it was open season on Catholics. Men of property were not impressed by the Finglas Declaration because there was no guarantee for their lands.

The Avengers

At Athlone, the primary crossing point of the Shannon upstream from Limerick, Richard Grace, a veteran of 1641, held against Douglas, whose 10,000 men consisted of 3 regiments of Horse, 2 of Dragoons, 10 battalions of Foot, 10 field guns and 2 small mortars.

Summoned to surrender, Grace went up on the wall, fired his pistol at the enemy, and said he would stay "*until he had eaten his old boots*". The siege, if it can be called that, lasted a week (July 7th to July 15th), until Douglas heard that Sarsfield was on his way with "15,000" men and fell back on the main army taking the direct road to Limerick. He had lost 40 men to enemy action and 300 to disease without accomplishing anything.

July 8th, William received word of Beachy Head (June 30th). Parliament at Westminster, attended by Queen Mary in the King's absence, had already voted funds to replace the lost ships, but William was still angry with Lord Herbert. It was rumoured that 28 French frigates were being sent into the Irish Sea. If they were supported by the rest of the French Fleet, William would be cut off. And, a request from London was on its way for a part of the Army to be returned to defend against invasion. The dispatch was received at Waterford on the 16th. By this point the threat had receded, but William did not know that. He sent word he would return in about a week, and arranged for the shipment of some units; he felt the campaign could be wrapped up this summer.

[The forces that actually left the kingdom comprised a troop of Life Guards, Meinhard Schomberg's (Dutch) Horse, Matthew's Dragoons (the Royals), and Trelawney and Hastings' regiments of foot.]

Meanwhile, Williamite columns were securing the south: King William to Kilkenny on the 19th, then to Castledermot in Co. Kildare, Meinhard Schomberg to Clonmel on the 20th, William to Carrick on the 21st, Kirke to Waterford on the 22nd, which surrendered with honours of war on the 25th, Brigadier Eppinger with 1,000 cavalry to Duncannon on the 26th. At Wexford, there was a Protestant rising.

Waterford (garrisoned by the Jacobite regiments Barrett's and Kavenagh's) had surrendered on the King's approach, as did Duncannon. This opened Waterford Harbour to communication with England. William left the Army under the command of General Solms and returned to Dublin, intending to cross to England.

Arriving at the city he learned the danger was past: the French had landed a party and burned Teignmouth, but for the present were hunkered down in Torbay. It was also reported that the action at Beachy Head had been lighter than assumed; Herbert had retreated instead of engaging the French closely, allowing his Dutch allies to take a beating (another reason for William to be angry).

King William returned to Dublin on the 27th of July, not rejoining his army until the 4th of August, at Golden Bridge on the Suir River, only 22 miles from Limerick. The town was invested on the 9th.

Limerick

"Ye toads, are ye there? We'll be with you presently"

Williamite soldiers calling to the enemy in the trenches at Limerick.

Maréchal de Lauzun wagered Limerick would fall in 3 days: "*Limerick could be taken with roasted apples*". King William thought it would last a couple of weeks, no more. According to the rules of Continental warfare, they were right. Limerick was a decrepit Medieval structure that would be battered flat if it had been sited in the Low Countries. Unfortunately, the Irish had never seen a "Vauban" fortress. They regarded the town as impregnable, and made it so by that belief.

Limerick was divided into English and Irish towns. English Town was situated on an island – King's Island – in the Shannon, close to the east, or Co. Limerick bank. Thomond Bridge crossed from the island over the Shannon to the western or Co. Clare bank. Baals Bridge, to the south, linked English Town to Irish Town over the Abbey River, on the Co. Limerick side. Both towns had walls, but these were old and inadequate. English Town had the ancient King John's Castle, just south of Thomond Bridge, for a citadel.

The old walls did have one useful feature: small towers that could be used by marksmen. The Irish added a ditch and covered way outside Irish Town, and a palisade. A few redoubts were constructed, and the suburbs were knocked down to prevent the enemy from approaching under cover.

The surrounding countryside was blanketed by small, hedged fields, and there were many sharp skirmishes as the Williamites sought to envelop the town and secure a base. In particular, the Irish tried to hold on to a couple of Cromwellian forts that had been used in the last siege. One was named, appropriately if unimaginatively, Cromwell's Fort. The other was Ireton's.

[Even today, Limerick is quite a small place. Approaching by the main road from the north, one passes, with sinking heart, the same sort of strip malls and car dealerships to be found in any American city, and behind them can be seen modern-looking suburbs. Except for the style of construction, it might be an outlier of Seattle – say Fife, or Tacoma. But it is a facade. Down in the town center, the scene is typical "British High Street", with a mix of modern high-rises and old stone. It looks like the blocks might go on forever. But just two streets down from the original narrow High Street, running along the crest of the ridge on which the town is built, and which is only a couple of blocks from the Shannon, the town abruptly ends in green fields.]

Major Général de Boisseleau, a man familiar with the vagaries of Irish troops, was installed as governor of Limerick. The garrison consisted of 1 regiment of horse (Henry Luttrell's), 1 of dragoons (Maxwell's), and 28 regiments of foot (about 14,000 infantry, half still unarmed; most of the "regiments" were converged into a fourth the number of battalions). Over in Co. Clare, roughly 6 Irish miles away, was Sarsfield with 2,500 (or 3,500) horsemen. With him also were Berwick and Generals Sheldon and Maxwell.

[Other sources cite 14 regiments of foot, 2 of horse, and 3 of dragoons at Limerick. Some sources claim as many as 20,000 infantry, but this probably included men who added their names to the rolls for food.]

In Connaught, Hugh Balldearg O'Donnell, a major general recently arrived from Spain, was busy raising an army of his own. Balldearg was a man of prophecy. It was foretold that a man with a red birthmark (*ball dearg*) should deliver Ireland at a spot outside the walls of Limerick. He had come in hopes that the prophecy would prove true, and the Irish would hold on like grim death in hopes he was right.

King William unfurled the Royal Standard before Limerick on August 7th, 38 days after the Battle of the Boyne. He had brought the field train. 8 siege guns were still enroute. William did not expect to need them. He summoned the garrison to surrender on the 8th. Many of the garrison wanted to give up; Sarsfield, Boisseleau, and Berwick concocted a lie that 50,000 French had just landed in England. They said that Balldearg was on his way to fulfil the prophecy. To the Williamites, Boisseleau said he wanted to give a demonstration of how a governor should command one of William's fortresses. The Williamites were compelled to make a formal siege.

[Balldearg's "army" did make an attempt to relieve Limerick, but his ragged clan host moved very slowly, spending much of its time stripping the countryside like a swarm of locusts, and never approached close enough to be more than a nagging worry to the Williamites.]

As a preliminary move on the 10th of August, Generals Ginkel and Kirke raided into Co. Clare for forage. Berwick countered by ordering all the corn in a 10 mile radius to be burnt, which harmed his side more than the enemy. The Jacobite cavalry had to be withdrawn to Co. Galway.

On the night of August 11th, ignoring Tyrconnel's strict injunction against raiding, Patrick Sarsfield conducted his famous "Ride" to Ballyneety, 14 miles southeast of Limerick and 7 miles from William's camp. The siege train had laagered at the hamlet of Ballyneety for the night. Guided by a local highwayman named Galloping Hogan, the raiders rode in via Tipperary and out via Banagher and Killaloe, swimming the Shannon to elude pursuit. 500 troopers destroyed 2 siege cannon, dismounted most of the others, ruined a number of tin boats, burned almost 100 wagons, and blew up 12,000 pounds of powder, match, and grenades. The Williamite commander, Lord Portland, did not respond until daylight.

This was a tremendous fillip to Irish morale. Lauzun and Tyrconnel, however, were displeased, the former because he might now be ordered to remain in Ireland, the latter because he had been disobeyed. The Williamites were dismayed, though they made much of the fact that operations were not stopped, only delayed. 6 of the 8 guns were salvaged. But the raid put them 10 days behind schedule, and they were short of ammunition.

On the 12th, the Williamite Brigadier Steuart took a column with 4 guns to take Castle-Connell, a key position upriver. Its garrison of 120 men was soon out of water and surrendered. However, no attempt was made to cross the Shannon and invest Limerick from the far bank – Thomond Bridge remained open. The Williamites were down to 25,000 men. Not enough for a complete investment. As already mentioned, the King had detached some units and sent them to England. He was also obliged to garrison a number of locations. Present were the Dutch, the Huguenots, the Danes, besides the Anglo-Irish.

[Another contingent that is often named is Brandenburg. Brandenburg did contribute troops to the War of the Grand Alliance, and they were paid for by the Dutch Estates, but the regiment in question was actually a proper Dutch regiment "of Brandenburg" that had been on the books for many years. The troops from *Brandenburg served as garrison units in the Low Countries.]*

The Williamites approached the southeast wall of Irish Town, and secured Singland Hill, site of the prophecy, on which were the two Cromwellian forts. Between the hill and the town lay a bog. The first trenches were dug from Singland Hill toward Irish Town, and two batteries were erected, one of 5 12-lbers at Cromwell's Fort, and another of 4 opposite an important "hornwork" called the Yellow Fort, at the southeast corner of Irish Town, which covered John's Gate. This was to be the prime target.

Fortunately for the besiegers, the season up to this point had been unusually dry, so the morass in front of the town was passable. A trench was dug opposite the enemy's redoubt. From the 17th to the 27th, the bombardment never ceased. More guns were brought in from Waterford, and the damaged siege train was repaired.

The Irish fought hard to retain the poorly constructed redoubt (its walls were so low that grenades could be tossed into it). 3 regiments (2 Danish and the Dutch Brandenburg Regiment) spearheaded an assault on the 17th, but it failed. The next day the defenders were blasted out of the "covered way" north of the redoubt with point-blank fire from 4 guns, and a new assault was launched with English troops. It got no farther.

On the 19th the Danes renewed the assault on the redoubt, after a night approach that placed them within 30 yards of defences. The attack initially went well, but Boisseleau had secretly positioned 150 marksmen on the walls of the town, and concealed 300 cavalry nearby. These did great execution and forced the Danes to abandon their gains.

The Williamites countered by opening another battery and hammering the redoubt until it collapsed. Grimly, the Irish held on. The Williamites finally took what was left of the Yellow Fort on the 20th, after hand-to-hand fighting that cost the besiegers 100 dead and the defenders 300. With this position in Williamite hands, they were able to set up a new battery of 5 24-lbers and a 36-lber and begin to create a breach in the main walls north of John's Gate, centred on a work called Cogan's Tower.

On August 25th, it began to rain:

> *"this morning it began to pour down at such a furious rate that some of our trenches have been two feet deep. I find by this one day's fierce rain a strange damp as to our success among any of the chief officers and that our army must draw off or be ruined if the rain should hold; nay that it would be a great task in these deep ways to get off our cannon".*
>
> *Robert Southwell, quoted in JI, p. 169.*

The rain stopped and the Williamites commenced a bombardment of the walls and town using "carcasses" (incendiaries), red-hot shot, and roundshot. A breach 12 yards wide (*Boisseleau gives 42 yards wide*) was made, despite efforts to protect the wall by suspending woolsacks from the battlements. The governor ordered a retrenchment to be built behind it.

On the afternoon of August 27th the Williamites made their final assault. Ordered to take the counterscarp 30 yards in front of the

wall, but nothing else, the troops went as far as the breach itself, enduring a fierce enfilading fire from the walls. Boisseleau, who led the counterattack in person, had placed 3 cannon inside the breach, erected a screen of rubble, stationed the entire garrison in the side streets, and prepared a sally port at the north end of the ruined section of wall.

There was some confusion, because everyone was wearing red coats. The Irish fell back (the Foot Guards actually abandoning the position precipitately, with the assaulting grenadiers hot on their heels), but were stopped by a screen of their own dragoons, and rallied. Only a few Williamites were actually within the town.

Boisseleau's own regiment repulsed the enemy, aided by 400 men from MacMahon's throwing stones from the ramparts, and women throwing broken bottles. The battle lasted two hours. Reinforcements were sent, but they knew no more than to help the original attackers keep the gap open. The town was not penetrated. Williamite casualties numbered 2,300.

> *"At first the Irish ran from the counterscarp, and something good could have been accomplished had the proper dispositions been made beforehand. But they soon came one again and did us great damage from the walls with grenades, stones and muskets as well as with their cannon which flanked us on both sides. Our people withstood this for nearly two hours until they were forced to withdraw. The Duke [of Württemburg] came into the approaches with two regiments, Prince Frederick's and an English regiment, in an effort to support them, but could not help. In this we lost many; Prince Frederick's and the Green Danes [Funen/Fynske] have more than 350 dead and wounded."*
>
> *Danish Correspondence, pp. 51-52. The author of this letter was killed at Aughrim the following year.*

The next day the bombardment recommenced, but so did the rain. Voices began to raise the question of withdrawal before the guns sank in the bog and everyone came down with fever. Ammunition was gone. Powder could not be shipped from London because the French were in the Channel, and the last convoy to arrive had only brought hollow cannonballs. The breach was not yet wide enough, it appeared. On the 29th William, bitterly disappointed, raised the siege and left for Waterford and London. The rest of the war would be conducted by subordinates.

The withdrawal was badly managed. A hospital full of wounded men burned down during the demolition of some abandoned stores. William wrote to his allies blaming the rain for the failure of his gamble, and apologising that he had wasted a season. The Duke of Berwick could not help crowing that it had only rained during the siege (though this was not strictly true).

A view of Thomond Bridge and King John's Castle, looking north up the Shannon. The old walls belong to the castle; the town walls were demolished long ago. This is a new Thomond Bridge. The original was only as wide as the space now allotted to foot traffic. (Author's photo).

The following extract from the Danish war journal gives a day by day account:

> *THURSDAY Aug. 14. 'The King reconnoitred the town on the right, but as he exposed himself too much the enemy laid an ambuscade with some dragoons and fired a full volley at him, so that Count Menard [Meinhardt] Schomberg's horse was killed. That day there came out of the town a captain of the reformed religion who reported that there were 14,000 men in the town, but not all armed. The French were at Galway waiting for their ships in order to return to France.'*
>
> *Friday Aug. 15. 'The camp was moved from the left flank so as to invest the town more closely. Accordingly I [the Duke of Württemburg] was stationed by the water, with five battalions of foot and eight squadrons of horse, as reinforcements can come in by water. As information was received that the enemy had crossed the river with strong parties, Lt.-Gen. Ginkel was detailed with Maj.-Gen. Lanier with 16 squadrons to cover all the convoys.'*
>
> *Saturday Aug. 16. 'A major came from the enemy's camp, who reported that they intended to defend the town to the last. Of the pieces dismounted by the enemy [at Ballyneety] six 18-pounders came into camp and were placed on other carriages and so were available. A drummer came out of the town to inquire about some prisoners, but was soon sent back. The enemy advanced with some platoons against our encampment, where it was full of bushes, on which the platoons of Your Majesty's Guards charged them. A sergeant of the colonel's company of the Guards was shot dead. The enemy cannonaded the camp heavily and did much damage. A major of Duglas's [Douglas] was shot dead in his tent. When the word was being given the King ordered me to hold myself in readiness the following day to open the trenches with seven battalions. Accordingly the following orders were issued:*
>
> *1. All barrels, casks, bags, baskets and anything else of the sort shall be brought to the artillery and counted there, especially as the English have not half the full quota of tents' that they should supply.*
>
> *2. All guards shall be taken from the general officers, except for two or three sentinels to be retained with the baggage.*
>
> *3. As there is little equipment available, the working parties in the trenches shall deliver their equipment to the majors and be paid two pence for it; whoever loses his equipment shall be severely punished.*
>
> *4. All those who can work on batteries, and understand how to do so, shall report to the artillery and be paid; similarly with all tailors, to make bags.*
>
> *5. From each regiment there shall be given only 14 grenadiers and one sergeant; the rest shall guard the camp.*
>
> *6. All majors who enter the trenches shall report to me at twelve o'clock to await further orders and dispositions.*
>
> *7. Each regiment which enters the approaches shall provide 85 men for the work.*
>
> *8. Each regiment shall have 300 fascines in readiness.*
>
> *9. Two drummers from each regiment shall enter the approaches; the rest shall remain in camp.*
>
> *10. Maj.-Gen. Kerck [Kirke] and Brigadier Bellasis shall command under me.'*
>
> *Sunday Aug. 17. 'I marched to the parade ground with the seven following battalions to open the approaches. First a battalion of the King's Guards, the regiments of Brigadier Bellasis, Brigadier Hamor [Hanmer], Maj.-Gen. Count Nassau, Brigadier Mellioniere, the Danish Guards battalion and the Jutland battalion. The following dispositions were made: First, two companies were formed from the 14 detached grenadiers from the seven battalions. The battalion of the Danish Guards has the right flank, where the enemy still occupy a redan and a small redoubt. It will detail 50 grenadiers, commanded by an English captain with two lieutenants. They will be supported by 50 fusiliers, commanded by a French captain and two lieutenants, in order to drive the enemy out of the redan. Then the working parties will be posted and extend to the left. There will be 85 workmen from each battalion; the rest of the battalion will take up a position 80 paces*

to the rear in the hedges where they find the best cover, but openings must be made in the hedges so that the workmen can be at once supported if the enemy should attempt a sortie. The extreme battalion on the left will be the Danish Guards, which will have on its left the 50 detached grenadiers under the command of the Danish Capt. Arenswald, who will have two lieutenants with him. In addition there will be a platoon of 40 formed from the workmen, to cover the workmen.

The workmen will start to work from a ruined house and extend to the right. The battalion will take up its position so that it can support the workmen in all circumstances.' Brigadier Bellasis's regiment will take up a position beside the King's Guards; the other battalions will take their positions on the ground so as to be able to support the first. Although the four battalions are stationed somewhat in the rear, they will nevertheless supply their workmen and their platoons of 40 men, commanded by a captain, a lieutenant and an ensign from each battalion. Towards dawn the platoons will retire and enter the approaches; they will take up a position 50 paces in front of the working parties and lie on their stomachs.

About 9 p.m. work was begun on opening the trenches, and the Irish after firing a heavy volley were at once driven out of the redan. On the left the workers were not set to work until 11 p.m., because the English engineer Rickard was somewhat confused by the heavy firing, as the enemy had a stone redoubt on a height to the left and seriously enfiladed our working parties. I ordered Capt. Arenswald to attack them with the grenadiers; this was vigorously executed and he drove the enemy out. Towards morning the enemy attempted a sortie with four battalions on the right and drove back the platoons and the workmen, and also Brigadier Bell[as]is's regiment, many of whom threw away their arms. However, I at once advanced with the Danish Guards battalion, the Jutland regiment and Nassau's and restored the situation. Our workmen did not give way, but towards morning were under better cover than the others. The other regiments cannot work like the Danes.'

Monday Aug. 18. 'In the morning two deserters from the town reported that they intended to defend themselves to the last. The enemy kept up a heavy cannonade all day. Work was continued in the approaches on the banquettes and on widening them. Towards evening, about 9 p.m., Lt.-Gen. Duglas relieved us with the following battalions: the other Guards battalion, Stouart's, Duglas's, Brandenburg, Cambon's; the Danish regiments of the Queen and Funen. Duglas had orders to take the large redoubt late in the evening, and then to occupy it with a communication as far as the approaches. The grenadiers were detailed for this, together with Lt. Unger of the Funen battalion. However, as it was very dark, some confusion arose; while the redoubt was being attacked, the enemy made a sortie with the cavalry and they [? our men] were driven back with a loss of 100 dead and wounded. The greatest confusion was among the English, as many of them threw away their muskets, to be found later by the Danes. The result of this confusion was that not much work was done on the approaches. Of the Queen's battalion seven were wounded, four killed and four taken; of the Funen nine dead and 17 wounded.'

Tuesday Aug. 19. 'As things were in such confusion the previous night, the King proposed that the reliefs should be carried out in daylight, so that everyone could take up his post in daylight. Accordingly I relieved Lt.-Gen. Duglas at 4 p.m. with the following battalions: first, the third battalion of the Guards, Lord Lisborn's Meath's, Kutz's [Cutts'], Belcastell's, Prince Frederick's, Prince Christian's.

In addition, two squadrons of cavalry were ordered to take up a position down at the waterside, to repulse the enemy if they should come out again with the cavalry. Of the major-generals Tettau was detailed, together with Brigadiers Melloniere and Hamore. The King left it to me to decide when I would attack the redoubt, and it was accordingly decided to attack it by day. Meanwhile an approach 80 paces closer to the redoubt was made by night.'

Wednesday Aug. 20. 'In the morning the King visited the approaches and ordered me to make the arrangements for the attack, but not earlier than 2.30, so that the relieving battalions might be in readiness. Accordingly I made the following arrangements: first, an advance will be made by the grenadiers of Belcastel's, Cutz's, Meath's and Lisborn's, 30 men from each company with a captain, Lieutenant and ensign. They will be followed by 16 men who are to carry the four ladders made from the chevaux-de-frise that have come with us from Denmark; a lieutenant is to be detailed to them, so that they may be brought up without fail. 100 fusiliers of the King's Guards were detailed, and in addition another 100 fusiliers commanded by two captains. The Guards battalion and Belcastel's support the entire attack in case of need. In addition 200 workmen, selected from those who were freshest, were detailed. Each will carry a fascine and a hatchet or shovel; similarly 200 men were detailed to carry wool packs used as mantlets. A lieutenant of Cutz's was detailed to the workmen. At 2.30 the signal was given and the attack began. At first the grenadiers were driven back; on this I ordered up the French regiment of Belcastel, as the colonel himself took command of the men and urged them on. For the workmen found it impossible to make a hole in it [the redoubt]; then they crossed with fascines on the ground or in the water, which had flowed in, and so it was mounted by means of the ladders. The enemy then took to flight, but there were about 60 or 70 killed in the fort. On this the enemy opened a terrific fire from the town, both from the counterscarp and from the walls and towers. The lodgment was effected under cover of the woolsacks, for it was a good 100 paces from the redoubt to the approaches. When we had been in possession of it for only a couple of hours, the enemy made a sortie with four battalions of foot and three squadrons of horse. At once I made the Guards battalions, together with Cutz's regiment, advance from the approaches, and a vigorous combat ensued. Col. Greve's [Groben's] regiment, which had been intended to be in support for the relief, advanced from the high ground and I made support Be1castel's, which had no more ammunition; it at once repulsed the enemy. Our cavalry, which had been detailed under Boncour, advanced in fine style and engaged the enemy hand-to-hand peslemesle [pell-mell], and advanced into the gateway. The enemy reformed for the third time, but was gradually driven back. The action lasted until 7 p.m., on which the battalions withdrew again. Of the infantry 300 were killed or wounded; of Col. Belcastel's – he was himself wounded – 39 commissioned officers were killed or wounded and 109 non-commissioned officers and men. Chief Engineer La Motte was wounded, but not dangerously. Of the cavalry more than 100 troopers were killed or wounded, as were Col. Boncour, Maj. Hansen and Rittmeister Bussiere of Donop's. Of 20 reformed officers of Schomberg's regiment 16 were killed or wounded. Towards evening Lt.-Gen. Duglas relieved us with the following regiments: Kercke's, Erle's, [? Gustavus] Hamilton's, Greve's, Michelborn's, Prince George's, Zealand.'

Thursday Aug. 21. 'The enemy attempted a sortie against the redoubt on the left, but was at once repulsed without much damage having been done on either side. A great deal of work was done on the batteries. The King examined the captain who had been captured in the redoubt on the previous day. He said there were three captains in it with 150 men; that they had formed 39 battalions into 13, and that there were 1,200 horse and 1,000 dragoons in the town. At 4 p.m. I relieved Lt.-Gen. Duglas and had with me Maj.-Gen. Sidney, Brigadiers Stouart and Hamore, and the following battalions: the Queen's Guards, Hamore's, Bellasis's, Nassau's, Melloniere's, the Danish Guards, Jutland. We were very much on the alert during the whole night because a sortie was expected; they kept up a heavy fire, but few were shot dead.'

Friday Aug. 22. 'A heavy cannonade was kept up from a battery of four 24-pounders, so that before I was relieved a tower was knocked down. About 4.0 I was relieved by Lt.-Gen. Duglas with the following battalions: the second Guards battalion, Stouarts, Duglas's, Brandenburg, Cambon's, the Queen's, Funen. During the night red-hot shot was fired into the town, but without effect.'

Saturday Aug. 23. 'Walter died of his wound. Your Majesty thereby loses a good officer; he was much regretted by the King. At 3.0 I relieved Lt.-Gen. Duglas; I had with me Maj.-Gen. Tettau, Brigadiers Stuart and Hamore, with the following battalions: the third Guards battalion, Lisborn's, Meath's, Kutz's, Belcastel's, Prince Frederick's, Prince Christian's. Before evening carcasses were fired into the town from mortars and a great fire started, which later proved to be harmful to us as it became too bright for

our workmen. In spite of this, a great deal of work was done, and very close to the counterscarp. About 60 were killed or wounded. Of the English one captain was wounded and one lieutenant wounded; of Prince Frederick's Lts. Segar and Leviston [Levingston]; of Prince Christian's a quartermaster was shot dead.'

Sunday Aug. 24. 'The enemy enfiladed our approaches from the other side with light guns. A sergeant deserted to us and reported that the garrison of the town was 12,000 strong. Towards evening I was relieved by Duglas.'

Monday Aug. 25. 'The heavy rain continued so badly that the approaches were full of water. For that reason many left the trenches, and as a result over 30 were killed or wounded. The enemy had constructed a battery of four guns on the island, with which he did much damage to our trenches en revers. Towards 4o [4 o'clock] I relieved Lt.-Gen. Duglas with the same seven battalions which had opened the trenches on the first occasion. The rain continued until nightfall, so that the approaches to a great extent collapsed. There was therefore work enough to do the whole night through to repair the trenches and make an outlet for the water. The enemy kept up a heavy fire during the whole night; none of the Danes was shot, but five of the others were killed and twelve wounded. Because the rain had deepened the morass between the right and left wings to such an extent that no communication between them was possible, the left wing, which was posted beside the river, was ordered to move its camp.'

Tuesday Aug. 26. 'About 4 p.m. Lt.-Gen. Duglas relieved the approaches and a heavy cannonade was maintained, so that a fair breach was made. When I came to the King in the evening to make my report, he declared that he wished to attack the counterscarp in the morning with the same battalions that were in the approaches. I made so free as to protest to him that it would be very difficult to attack the counterscarp so as to make a lodgment; that it was much too close to the wall and they could give a lot of trouble to our men with stones; but that if we were willing to wait a couple of days longer so as to enlarge the breach a general assault could be attempted, because there would be no ditch and we should lose fewer men. This was contradicted by several others and the decision already taken was adhered to. Towards evening the Duke of Berwick, who is a lieutenant-general in the Irish army, sent a trumpeter to me with a letter; he also sent a quartermaster of Your Majesty's troops who had been captured, with a request that I would remember our old friendship in Hungary and do him the favour of having sent back to him a corporal of the Life Guards who was taken at Dublin.'

Wednesday Aug. 27. 'It was finally determined to attack the about 2.30 p.m. and that, if a lodgment there was gained, I should relieve Duglas as usual. I protested once more to the King in the presence of Prince George and asked them to be good enough to postpone the attack and take into consideration what had previously been reported; also, as the breach was of such a size, they should enlarge it so that 16 men could attack abreast; also as the men had already stood for a night in the approaches were rather fatigued, they should do so with fresh battalions. It appeared, however, that it was desired that the English should [do] something too, in order to prevent jealousy.

Duglas made the following arrangements: first, nine grenadier companies were to attack with 100 reformed French officers; they to be supported on the right by one of the battalions of the Guards and Duglas's regiment; on the left they were to be supported by the Funen and Brandenburg battalions; the regiments Stuart and Cambon were to support the others. As soon. as I marched up with the seven battalions which were to relieve the trenches, the attack began. The resistance was at first very stout, they had made preparations for the attack and had previous intelligence of it, and so our attack was against a whole army. They kept up a very heavy fire, the like of which few experienced officers had seen. In spite of all this they were driven from the counterscarp; as the enemy retired through the breaches they were pursued and [our men] attacked the breach without orders. They carried [the] breaches and the enemy began to give way altogether; but as Duglas had had no orders in advance to attack the breach, the fellows were not supported.

The Funen battalion did wonders, and held out for three hours under fire without one man wavering. As the engineers were now mostly dead or wounded, the lodgment on the counterscarp made no progress and many men were killed, because the defences of the gates were not sufficiently engaged and the enemy still had two batteries which enfiladed them from the rear. The Guards lost six captains; the Brandenburg regiment was almost entirely destroyed, because it came upon scattered mines. While the attack was in progress I sent Maj.-Gen. La Forest to the King to request that, as it was going hard with the lodgment on the counterscarp, the breach should be attacked and an attempt made to become masters of the town, since all the soldiers showed great eagerness for this. Count Solms opposed this to the King, giving it as his· opinion that it was too late. Meanwhile the enemy gained time and re-formed his men and made a sortie; so Prince Frederick's advanced to relieve the Funen battalion and came under heavy fire, but did famously. Then, because night was falling, the attackers withdrew to the approaches. In all 441 of Your Majesty's troops were killed or wounded today; of the English, Dutch and French 1,883, including 60 captains; of the three French regiments, of officers alone 197. [Danish casualties, 136 dead and 305 wounded.]

Thursday Aug. 28. 'During the night all was quiet and no one was wounded. The trenches were repaired again, as they had been destroyed when the men climbed out of and into them. About 10 a.m. Count Solms came to me in the approaches and desired in the King's name to know what was to be done, and whether or not it should be decided to raise the siege. I replied, why not continue the bombardment and enlarge the breaches, but also increase the size of the batteries. However, he represented that there were no more cannon-balls available; with the last convoy instead of cannon-balls unfilled bombs had been sent, which were of no use as we had only one mortar. Because it was suspected that some wounded were still lying under the dead, a drummer was sent in to ask for an armistice to bury the dead. After waiting a couple of hours he brought back with him an unsigned note [from a French officer] on a scrap of paper: "Send a drum at 4.0 to the head of your trenches. There will be a cease fire from 4.0 to 5.0 to take away your dead. Let your drummer give three beats of his drum. I shall be there myself. You will not approach the place within 20 paces and your dead will be brought to you from the covered way." However, as this was regarded as being in an arrogant tone, the armistice came to nothing. Towards evening I relieved Lt.-Gen. Duglas. That day Maj. Hansen had his arm amputated, as gangrene had set in; two hours later he was dead.'

Friday Aug. 29. The enemy sent some prisoners out of the town to be exchanged, including an ensign of Col. Belcastel's regiment called Bourgvé, who was taken in the assault the day before yesterday. He said that the commandant, Boisseleau, said that if it had been pressed home we should have become masters of the town. A grenadier captain was killed in the town with 30 grenadiers. The commandant made his dragoons charge the garrison to bring them to a halt again. It was this day resolved to raise the siege, because there was a shortage of balls and powder. This cruel decision greatly affected the King. Towards evening I relieved Lt.-Gen. Duglas and received orders to evacuate the approaches after the artillery, ammunition and equipment had been removed. Three of the Danish Guards were shot.'

Saturday Aug. 30. 'Accordingly the approaches were evacuated in good order. The King left the army and took the road towards Waterford. On departing he was very gracious and expressed his thanks for the manifest good services rendered by Your Majesty's troops. Towards afternoon the enemy made a sortie against our outposts and pressed the English. Our grenadiers supported them and repelled the enemy. The heavy baggage and artillery went off today.

Sunday Aug. 31. 'The retreat was made in the following manner: first the remainder of the baggage went off with the artillery, and what could not be brought off was burned; the cavalry was mixed throughout with the infantry, and the camp was leveled; I had the rearguard with Your Majesty's troops and marched five miles, the enemy following only at a long distance. Towards evening the dragoons brought in three prisoners, including a lieutenant, who all reported that in the end they were short of powder and bread.

So it is to be regretted that so little information available and that we were lacking in the necessary requirements. Thus the Irish war would have been ended at once.'

The Williamites had lost 5,000 men, the Jacobites 1,062 and 97 officers (*alternate sources: 2,184 dead*). Critics claimed the King should have isolated Limerick from its supplies in Co. Clare, but the army was not large enough; there was always the possibility that the French at Galway would intervene. Plans were made for a naval blockade, but Shovell's squadron never even left port until after the French had left Ireland. Paradoxically, the latter would have been happy to stay, now, but their transports had arrived with strict orders for them to leave.

*[The French suffered losses on the voyage out. Colonel Merode died at sea, while many of Famechon's regiment drowned while unloading in Brest harbour. In the opinion of the intendants who inspected the corps, most of the regiments would have to be reformed. Ireland, one Frenchman commented bitterly, was "*a country where there is no corn, no bread, no medicine, and where a wounded man is as good as dead*."]*

Lauzun waited until the siege was raised and the enemy was obviously going into winter quarters before he sailed. He had hoped to take 6-7,000 Irish with him, but Sarsfield, though willing to go, *in extremis*, preferred to stay and fight, while Tyrconnel, trying to salvage his political position, said that the troops were required to maintain the defence until spring. Meanwhile, he would come to France with the French and talk with James and Louvois. They left on the 12th of September. The Duke of Berwick, a young man of 20, was left as titular commander. Real power was vested in 12 commissioners, and the Army was guided by a council. Tyrconnel had been forced to agree to Sarsfield's presence on it.

CULLEN, 1 Sept. 1690. It is unfortunate that the campaign did not end as we wished. There is no doubt that it was very rash to attack a place in which there were 15,000 men, with the country behind left open. In spite of that, if the Sarsfield disaster [Ballyneety] had not occurred and if the King had been honestly served as regards the artillery, the operation might easily have succeeded. But the considerable garrison made the place a strong one. When leaving the King said he wished to send Your Majesty's troops to Flanders in the spring.'

Württemburg to Christian V

Cork and Kinsale: Marlborough's Debut

The Great Captain

John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough, first appears in military history as the actual field commander of James' army at the battle of Sedgemoor, in 1685 (the titular commander was the Earl of Feversham, a Huguenot). He was not a Duke then, nor even an Earl, but plain John Churchill. Sedgemoor was not his first action by any means, but it raised him to prominence. In 1688, Churchill adroitly changed sides. William, quite rightly, did not trust him, and sent him to Holland to serve under Count Waldeck.

Churchill was no Orangeman. He was Tyrconnel's brother-in-law, and had other Jacobite ties. His connection to the Williamites was James' daughter Anne, whose protégé he was. King William disliked his sister-in-law more than he did his uncle, James.

"Petticoat politics" earned Churchill a colonelcy at age 24; he was now 40. King James had made him a Lieutenant General, and this rank was confirmed by William. He was made Earl of Marlborough in 1690, specifically to give him a reason for remaining with William. There were many men of his ilk, professional soldiers who liked to play politics and did not mind switching masters in order to remain employed. None, however, have had as great effect on English political AND military history.

Back in England later in 1690, Marlborough laid a bold proposal before the Government. He wanted to lead an expedition to Munster to seize the ports of Cork and Kinsale, which would cut the shortest line of communication to France. At the time, this plan was considered incredible. Thanks to the failure of the Anglo-Dutch fleet at Beach Head on June 30th, the French controlled The Channel and an invasion appeared immanent. The enemy had landed in England and burnt Teignmouth. A French fleet remained anchored in Torbay until the 4th of August. Even if they did not invade, the French could easily, it seemed, cut William off. Very few in England, therefore, were in favour of this reckless plan of Churchill's, but Queen Mary passed the idea along to William, who approved on the advice of his Secretary of State, the Earl of Nottingham, and that of the new commander of the Royal Navy, Lord Russell.

[Beachy Head did for Lord Herbert.]

Approving the operation took time. Organising it took more time. Churchill made his proposal on the 7th of August. William approved it on the 14th. The Earl received a warrant to embark the expedition on the 25th, and actually did so on the 30th. They then waited 2 weeks for favourable winds. By the time the expedition sailed down the Channel on the 17th of September, escorted by the Home Fleet of 42 vessels and 10 fireships, plus 17 Dutch ships (mostly 3rd-rates; including transports, 80 ships in all), William had returned to England. The expedition landed at Passage West in Cork Harbour on September 23rd.

[The alternate landing site was to have been Crosshaven.]

The expedition involved 8 regiments of foot: Trelawney's, Princess Anne's, Hasting's, Prince of Denmark's, the Fusiliers, Hales', Collier's, and Fitzpatrick's, plus 100 men from Winchester's (Bolton's) and 200 men from Monmouth's. It is noteworthy that they were all English – King William was not about to sacrifice Dutch units. The first three had fought at Boyne and were sent to England during the invasion scare. The others had served under Marlborough in Flanders.

The Navy was independently issued a warrant to employ 2,000 marines from 2 regiments: the Earl of Torrington's (Admiral Herbert's) and Earl of Pembroke's Maritime Regiments of Foot – the closest thing England possessed to marines. These troops were to be under Marlborough's direction if he should require them. Still besieging Limerick when the plans were approved, the King had promised to send him cavalry once he was ashore, but no guns from the siege.

The flagship of the expedition was the 70-gun Kent, and the flotilla was commanded by a committee of three admirals: Haddock, Killigrew, and Ashby. Marlborough travelled in the 70-gun Grafton, commanded by the Duke of the same name, a personal friend.

The Baron

General Solms now commanded in Ireland. He had dispatched the Dutch Guards to England and settled into winter quarters, headquartered at Tipperary. Between the Williamite and Irish cordons lay a "debatable ground", the haunt of raiding parties, rapparees, and bands of deserters.

Solms eventually handed command over to his subordinate, Lieutenant General Ginkel and went home in September. Before he did so, it was decided in a council of war to support Marlborough with 2 Danish regiments under von Tettau, currently stationed on the Blackwater River (the one in Co. Cork), and a mixed force of Danish, Dutch, and Huguenot cavalry under the Dutch general, s'Gravemoer, based at Mallow.

[This von Tettau is an ancestor of the von Tettau familiar to students of Operation Market Garden. Curious how the Dutch connection persisted.]

Ginkel, despite the fact that his father disliked William, served the latter faithfully. He first came to notice for suppressing the mutiny of the Royal Scots (Dumbarton's), and he had fought at the Boyne and Limerick. Ginkel's instructions for the winter were to prevent the enemy from saving Cork and Kinsale from Marlborough's attack. Otherwise he was to wait for the Spring.

The Irish gave him little trouble in the way of regular operations. Tyrconnel had gone to France. This contributed to an attitude of "wait and see". His absence not only took away any sense of purpose, it also removed the lightening rod for everyone's bad humours. Riven with dissension, the leadership spent most of the winter plotting against each other. A sample of "spleen" may be

given: the Duke of Berwick was supposed to be the commander-in-chief (though since he was very young, a ruling council was appointed to "advise" him); he found himself overshadowed in popular acclaim by Patrick Sarsfield, and said:

> *"[Ballyneety] had puffed him up so that he thought himself the greatest general in the world; Henry Luttrell turned his head and cried him up everywhere, not because he really esteemed him but to make him popular and so able to serve his own purposes".*
>
> *JI, p. 176.*

There was a great deal of this sort of thing.

The Irish did try to mount one moderate-sized operation, ostensibly to relieve the southern ports, but the attempt was repulsed without much difficulty.

Godert de Ginkell, Baron van Reede van Ginkel, 1st Earl of Athlone and Baron Aughrim (1644-1703)

Eldest son of Baron Ginkel, with the title of Baron Reede until his father's death. Created Earl of Athlone by King William. Served in the Dutch Army from his youth. Participated in the Glorious Revolution as a general officer. Assigned to garrison duties in England in 1689, he was responsible for the pursuit and capture of the mutinous Dumbarton's Regiment (Royal Scots). Recognised for this, he accompanied William to Ireland in 1690.

Fought at the Boyne, where he commanded a brigade of cavalry that turned the Jacobite right flank. Also at the first siege of Limerick. During the autumn and winter he commanded bodies of troops in the south. General Solms was theatre commander, but he wanted to return home; William agreed that Ginkel could take over as interim commander, but no better replacement was found.

In 1691 he commanded the final assault against the Jacobites, directing the siege of Athlone, the Battle of Aughrim, the siege of Galway, and the second siege of Limerick. Was responsible for the final peace treaty. Received a vote of thanks from the House of Commons, and the vast estates of the Earl of Limerick, but these were later clawed back by the English Government. Ginkel continued in William's service, going to the Continent in 1693 and fighting at Namur (1695), Neerwinden, and the raid on Givet. In 1702, as commander-in-chief of the Dutch Army, he agreed to serve under the Duke of Marlborough. He died the following year.

Cork

Meanwhile, Marlborough laid siege to Cork. In the 17th Century, Cork, rather than Belfast, Limerick, or Galway, was Ireland's second city, with a population of 20,000. Cork harbour is large and deep, and there are two passages to the town around either side of a large island: Passage West and Passage East. Both were covered by forts.

Old Cork – the walled town – itself was on another, small island in the River Lee. The Lee River was marshy and cut into numerous channels both above and below the town. Cork's walls were some 50' high and in places 10' thick. The old town ran north-south across the island, which ran east-west; each end of the town had a gate exiting on to a bridge. The length was 750 yards and the width 250 yards. Channels had been cut along the outside of the walls to form a moat.

But walled Cork was dominated by high ground on either side, slopes which, thanks to recent prosperity, were well covered in suburbs. The ground to the north was occupied by Shandon Castle and by two new Jacobite forts. On the south side was Elisabeth Fort, built on a rocky outcrop overlooking the southwest corner of the walls. Garrisoned by 200 men, it had some brass cannon, including a 24-lber. Southeast of this fort, and dominated in turn by it, was a half-built outpost called Cat Fort.

[Elisabeth Fort was also used as prison for Protestants during the siege.]

Of the town an expert observer wrote,

> *"it is fortified with a very good wall and curious stone bridge on which are several works; an being environed with water, were it not for the hills near it… it might be made a place impregnable, but the hills has [sic] such a command of it that a battery from thence would beat the town about the ears of the garrison."*
>
> *W&P, p. 122.*

Cork's governor was Roger MacElligott, late of the Isle of Wight POW camp. He and his regiment had fought well at the Boyne. Cork had a garrison of 4,500 men: the regiments MacElligott, Clancarty's, Tyrone's, MacCarthy's, O'Sullivan's, Barrett's, and Cavanagh's. There were also some unspecified dragoons. The last two foot regiments had arrived from Waterford after being given honours of war in the summer. Some of the other regiments had been rushed to the scene in a futile effort to bolster the position. All they did was consume the supplies at a faster rate. They would be permanently lost along with the original garrison, for Cork was to be the first fortress whose garrison would go into captivity.

[One Macgillicuddy is sometimes named as Governor. Macgillicuddy's Regiment and O'Sullivan's are the same unit. Barrett's did not fight at the Boyne. O'Sullivan's may have.]

Isolated, MacElligott received conflicting instructions. Berwick told him to burn the town and withdraw. But MacElligott had previously been the governor of Waterford. Insults over his "rapid" surrender of that place forced him to defend his honour by holding to the last man.

Marlborough had not wanted the help of "foreign" commanders or troops, and asked for Major Generals Kirke and Lanier (both English and in some sense "fellow-travellers") with their English commands. Ginkel appointed s'Gravenmoer, already at Mallow, and Württemburg (Tettau's superior), with a mixed bag of Dutch, Huguenot, and Danish troops. *Very funny*.

Württemburg had volunteered. As commander of the Danish contingent, he had 8 years under his belt as a lieutenant general. He insisted on commanding the Cork operation by virtue of his seniority. It could be argued, however, that he had no such right, being a commander of "auxiliaries", as allied troops were known. Marlborough, showing his usual tact, compromised with alternating commands. He made "Württemburg" his first watchword, which forced the latter to make his first watchword "Marlborough".

So, in addition to the 8 regiments of English foot and the marines, Churchill could now count on 2 weak battalions of Danes under Tettau (661 men), 900 horse and 300 dragoons under s'Gravenmoer, and another 2,900 foot and 390 horse, mostly Danes, under Württemburg.

The invasion flotilla appeared off Crosshaven, which is at the entrance to the harbour, on the 21st of September. Engaged by a shore battery of 8 guns in Rupert's Tower on the east side of the channel, the marines were sent ashore to rout out the gunners. They tipped the guns into the sea.

The official landing took place on the 23rd at Passage West, which lay 7 miles from Cork. Marlborough's force approached the town on the 24th. The vanguard, Hale's Regiment, had a light skirmish with a parcel of dragoons in Cat Fort. At the same time siege guns were dragged up to form a battery on Cat Hill. The main body remained camped a mile and a half to the south.

During the night, the Irish dragoons decamped from Cat Fort and the Williamites occupied the place. This allowed the latter to advance "within musket shot" of the town on the 25th. Their

allies, under s'Gravenmoer and Tettau, appeared on the northern slopes the same day. They established a battery on Fair Hill in order to deal with Shandon Castle, but the Irish pulled back, firing the suburbs. s'Gravenmoer summoned Cork to surrender but received an "impertinent" reply.

[The Jacks had destroyed the suburbs on the south bank as well, and this annoyed the Williamites, because MacElligott had been promised £500 in silver if he left them intact. Apparently MacElligott and s'Gravenmoer knew each other from Flanders.]

Also on the 25th, Marlborough's siege equipment was shipped in from Waterford; it included 8 heavy siege guns. An amphibious force was organised to harass Cork Island from the east.

The 26th saw an advance up to the river on the south. Elisabeth Fort was bombarded and engaged with sniper fire. s'Gravenmoer moved his battery to Shandon Castle and also fired on the fort. Dutch and Danish cavalry was sent south of the river and posted at Gill Abbey to the southwest (Marlborough having no mounted troops). Württemburg also arrived.

The bombardment began in earnest on the 27th. A local man (the population was predominantly Protestant) showed s'Gravenmoer how he could engage Elisabeth Fort from the top of the cathedral tower just across the street; the detachment commander kicked the ladder away to ensure his men remained at their task until Elisabeth Fort capitulated. Marlborough's men pummelled the same site with a battery of 2 24-lbers and 3 18-lbers at Cat Fort. Mortar bombs showered down on the city. To the east, a battery of huge 36-lbers began to roar from the Red Abbey south of the river and balls began to shake the eastern wall of the town.

MacElligott decided he might have to surrender after all. As a goodwill gesture he released 1,300 of the Protestant inhabitants, plus the bishop and his clergy. This was foolish, because the Protestants reported that the garrison's ammunition supply was nearly used up.

MacElligott then wrote asking for terms. Cleverly, he wrote to s'Gravenmoer, then to Marlborough, and also to Württemburg, asking for a ceasefire. s'Gravenmoer merely referred him to Marlborough, who insisted the garrison be made prisoners of war. But Württemburg offered free passage provided the garrison laid down their arms. Throwing away his advantage, MacElligott did not feel this was good enough. He wanted full honours of war. So, he held onto the Williamite hostages (an exchange had taken place to propitiate the ceasefire) until the tide came in and then refused both offers.

On the morning of the 28th, the bombardment recommenced. A large breach was made in the east wall. At 1pm, during ebb tide, the Williamites launched a two-pronged assault into the eastern breach, the men wading the marshy Lee chest-deep. The attack was supported by naval gunfire.

Marlborough's brother, Charles, led the southern prong and Württemburg the northern. The former's column made it as far as the moat, opposite the breach, where the men took cover behind one of the few remaining buildings while a bomb ketch and another vessel tried to suppress the garrison's fierce responsive fire.

The Danes led the assault from the north. Here, a small bridge led up to the wall, but it was soon filled with dead. "20 or 30" men jumped into the moat. The Danes went to ground as the Irish attempted a sortie. But it was the defender's last gasp.

MacElligott called for a parley. He agreed to Marlborough's former terms on condition his troops and the citizens of the town would not be mistreated, and that Marlborough would intercede with William on their behalf. The Williamites have been accused of breaking their word, because numbers of seamen and "loose persons" broke into the town ahead of time and began looting and roughing up papists. Once the troops were able to enter, on the 29th, this ceased.

The garrison's trials did not end. The senior commanders were sent to the Tower (they included the extremely wealthy Earl of Clancarty and the Earl of Tyrone); the rank and file were at first camped in the marshes and later stuffed into a handful of buildings. Very many died, though from the incompetence and neglect of the authorities rather than from policy. On top of everything, one of the men-o-war, the 60-gun *Breda*, suddenly blew up. The shockwave rattled the town. Carrying POWs as well as a full complement, there were only two survivors, both POWs. Among the dead was Marlborough's friend, the Duke of Grafton.

Kinsale

After Cork, Kinsale. This was the last important harbour on the south coast. At Kinsale, Marlborough and Württemburg continued their arrangement. The cannon were to be sent round by sea while the horse and foot marched overland. The advance guard, a Danish and an English brigade, arrived on the 29th of September; the main body arrived on the 2nd of October.

Kinsale was not walled, but there were two harbour forts, Charles' Fort on the east, and James' Fort on the west. The latter was on a peninsula.

Summoned to surrender on the 29th, the 70-year-old commandant, Sir Edward Scott, who had only 2,000 men (he had sent 2 regiments to Cork) threatened to burn the town. They had told him if he did not surrender he would be hanged, and if he did, the garrison would be prisoners of war. The Williamites managed to seize the town quickly, while the populace and the garrison fled to the forts.

Summoned individually, both forts ran up the red flag, signifying resistance *á outrance*. The Williamites camped in front of Charles Fort. They needed artillery to take it. But James' Fort was supposedly weak. On the night of the 2nd, Major General Tettau led a mixed column across the Bandon River using local river craft and tried to surprise the garrison in the dawn. James' Fort had 46 guns, and they were well used, but eventually the garrison was overwhelmed. The commander and half the garrison were killed.

Scott was in Charles Fort, with 1,200 men. Summoned again, he told the Williamites to call back in a month's time. The weather had turned sour, preventing the ships from bringing the siege train. The guns now had to be dragged overland, with the Danish Horse engaged in the humiliating task of carting ammunition. A battery was only established on the 12th of October, and it did not open fire until the 14th. But a breach was made on the 15th, and according to the laws of war, Scott asked for terms. This time, it was Württemburg who offered the same terms as Cork, and Marlborough, anxious to go home, who allowed them honours of war. It was found that the fort contained enough provisions for a long siege.

Summing Up

Both MacElligott and Scott had expected to be relieved. It was at this time that Berwick made an attempt to advance to Kilmallock with 7-8,000 men. But he could not break through the enemy cordon. s'Gravenmoer engaged him at Mallow and forced him to retire.

Nevertheless, Marlborough was concerned at reports that Sarsfield and the Irish Horse were only 25 miles away at Macroom, and that they were being augmented by Balldearg O'Donnell and his men (who were actually many miles away). These forces could have easily molested the Williamite supply lines.

Württemburg's command remained in the south over the winter. The campaign over, Marlborough left for England, where he received a backhanded compliment from King William:

> *"no officer living who has seen so little service as my Lord Marlborough is so fit for great commands".*
>
> *JI, p. 184.*

It is possible the King was jealous, his own operation against Limerick having so signally failed.

The taking of Cork shows Marlborough's skills in microcosm: meticulous planning and aggressive action coupled with an

ability to obtain support from his allies, and most amazing of all, from the Navy.

MacElligott, on the other hand, was roundly criticised. By disobeying orders, he cost the Jacobites 5,000 men. Some say he gained them a week, but given that the main armies were in winter quarters this is spurious. It was a mistake for the Jacobites to reinforce Cork; Kinsale was the better harbour.

John Churchill, 1st Duke of Marlborough (1650-1722)

There is no room here for a lengthy biography of one of Britain's greatest soldiers. Eldest son of an impoverished Royalist MP named Winston Churchill, he was entered as a Court page upon the Restoration of Charles II, serving James, Duke of York during the 1670s and 1680s. He was commissioned in the First Foot Guards in 1667, then served three years at the insalubrious post of Tangiers. Showed great military and diplomatic skill and received rapid promotion.

In 1671 he took the "insatiable" Barbara Villiers as mistress, though she was also the King's mistress. Charles was reputedly aware but forgave him because he "did it to get his bread". In 1672 served at sea with the Duke of York. For valour at Sole Bay was promoted to a captaincy in the Admiral's Regiment, provoking much jealousy. In 1673 he served with the Forlorn Hope that broke into the fortress of Maastricht, and saved the Duke of Monmouth's life. In 1674 and 1675 he served under Turenne in the Rhineland as a colonel of one of the English regiments serving with France.

Back in England, he fell in love with and married the hot tempered Sarah Jennings, Maid of Honour (at that time) to Mary of Modena, in 1677 or 1678.

1678 served in a diplomatic capacity at The Hague, where he met and impressed the Prince of Orange. Though the mission was unsuccessful, he displayed great skill and tact. Also held temporary rank of Brigadier General (there was a hope of war against France, but this did not happen).

Forced to accompany the Duke of York into exile from 1678 to 1682. The Duke's Catholicism was politically explosive; Churchill was Anglican, and now began to distance himself from James' policies. For services rendered, he was made Lord Churchill of Eyemouth (Scottish Peerage) in 1682. In 1683 he was appointed colonel of the Royals.

The same year he escorted Prince George of Denmark to his marriage with Princess Anne; Anne took his wife into her service. Churchill set himself up as Anne's "champion" and began to drift out of James' orbit.

Promoted Major General in 1685, and commanded the Foot at Sedgemoor in 1685, acting as Lord Feversham's second in command against the forces of the Duke of Monmouth. Though Feversham commanded, it was Churchill who organised and planned the operation, and who led the troops in the battle. Rewarded with the colonelcy of the Third Troop of Lifeguards, a very lucrative post.

In 1688, disturbed at the direction the country was taking, he left James II's service and entered that of the Prince of Orange. He had the example of his father, who had backed the wrong horse and lost everything, but he was also genuinely opposed to James' policies. Behind the scenes, he was close, through his wife, to the center of the plot to introduce William into England, but was not one of the chief movers. Yet it is said that James despaired after learning of his betrayal.

As a reward, William created him Earl of Marlborough, a member of the Privy Council, and Gentleman of the Bedchamber. But the new king never really trusted him. In 1689, after assisting with the reorganisation of the Army, he led a corps of 8,000 men in Flanders, fighting with distinction at Walcourt. However, he remained in a subordinate role. Was made colonel of the 7th of Foot (Royal Fusiliers).

As a member of Anne's inner circle, he lost favour with William and Mary. Mary did not trust him either, and Anne had fallen out with the King and Queen because she had expected William would only be Regent, allowing her to claim the throne. Nevertheless, in 1690 Churchill was made commander of all troops and militia in England, and one of the Council of Nine advisors to the Queen.

Put together a bold plan for the amphibious capture of the key ports of Cork and Kinsale, his first independent command, which succeeded brilliantly. However, after being refused the Garter and appointment as General of the Ordnance, he openly opposed William's policy of appointing foreigners to high places. He also entered into correspondence with the Jacobite Court, hoping to obtain pardon for his betrayal – he had family ties to James II through his sister, Arabella Churchill, who was the latter's mistress; their union produced the Duke of Berwick. Many others followed a similar course as an "insurance policy", but only Marlborough was feared by William.

After conducting the Cork operation, was transferred to the Continent and served there throughout 1691, but on returning to England with William was stripped of all his offices and banned from the Court. In 1692 spent 5 weeks in the Tower for having signed his name to a document advocating the arrest of William and the restoration of James II; this was the summer that the French massed forces for an invasion. The letter was dismissed as a forgery, but in 1694 Churchill was suspected of having alerted the French to an English raid on the port of Brest, which ended in disaster, including the death of one of his rivals, Thomas Tollemache. Even today, this remains only a suspicion.

At the end of 1694, when Queen Mary was dead, the Churchills were allowed back at Court, but Marlborough received no appointments. After the intercession of well placed friends, he was made governor to Anne's eldest son and restored to his military rank and the Privy Council.

His career peaked with the War of the Spanish Succession. Initially left behind to govern England as one of the lord justices, after William's death he was raised by Queen Anne to the post of generalissimo of the Allied forces – a post requiring extreme diplomatic skill – and won many famous victories. However, his star set when his wife broke up with the Queen. A Tory who flirted with the Whigs (because they were driving the war) he was regarded as too powerful and too dangerous, and was forced into exile. It was also necessary for the new Tory Peace Ministry to dispose of a "warmonger". Much of the evidence against him was manufactured or inflated, but there was sufficient truth to make it stick.

On Anne's death in 1714 he returned with George I and was reinstated, but his health was now bad. He led the Army against the Jacobite Rising of 1715, but it was his lieutenant, the Earl of Cadogan, who did all the work. After suffering periodic strokes, he died in 1722.

Intensely ambitious of wealth, fame, and power, ruthless and unscrupulous, under Anne, Marlborough became the wealthiest man in England – Blenheim Palace being the most obvious indicator. But his abilities are undoubted, and he was not only the greatest military-political figure of his day, but one of the greatest in British history.

Winter of Discontent: 1690-91

"Yesterday there was definite news that a French frigate, with 30 officers who had been sent from France and a great deal of ammunition, went aground in the estuary of the Schanon [Shannon] and only two officers and seven seamen were saved." Waterford, 12th Nov 1690.

Letter of Duke of Württemburg to King Christian V. DC, pp. 91-92.

Cabals

As soon as the fighting died down, the Irish were at each others' throats again. The War Party, headed by the Luttrells, Simon and Henry, Nicholas Purcell, and some others, agitated to have Sarsfield given the supreme command: Berwick was too young, and a pawn of Tyrconnel's. The latter's remaining influence must be snuffed out! A deputation was organised to sail to France and have the Earl removed from his viceregal position. To thwart them, Major General Maxwell was sent by a faster boat. In the event, bad weather delayed all and Tyrconnel, equipped with greater authority and the promise of French aid, met them at Brest on his way back to Ireland.

The Earl had been well received, given a fine set of apartments at Versailles, an audience with the Sun King, and gifts: the Garter from James and a portrait set with brilliants from Louis. Orders of the Garter were hard to come by. Tyrconnel's vacancy came from the young Duke of Grafton, who was blown up on the *Breda*.

[Unlike the practice at the Imperial Court, there is no record of him having to sign a chit for the portrait or give it back "because they only had the one".]

Suspicious of the Luttrell-Purcell mission, Tyrconnel wrote to James, asking that the deputation (he called them "mutineers") be kept in France, where it would be unable to act as Sarsfield's brain. James was fearful that "his" Army would go over to William if the deputation were imprisoned. On a more personal note, they claimed that the Duke of Berwick would be imprisoned if they were not allowed to go back. Mutineers indeed.

James received them coldly but allowed them an interview with King Louis. Claiming that the Irish magazines were exhausted (true) and that only a foreign commander could unite them (also true), they extorted the promise of a French general to command the Army and returned to Ireland in time to cause more havoc.

Winter Ops

Both sides had established a frontier roughly following the Shannon. The Irish were based on Connaught and Co. Clare, the latter area most suitable for cavalry, Co. Kerry, and Co. Limerick, which supplied cattle. The keys to the line were Limerick, Athlone, and Sligo.

The Williamites lay back from the river, their line running from Cork to Cashel, Birr, Mullingar, Longford, Cavan, to Enniskillen, then along the Erne to Ballyshannon. They thus controlled Ulster, Leinster, and most of Munster. Ginkel located himself at Kilkenny. Lieutenant General Douglas commanded in Ulster, from Legacurry. Württemburg lay at Waterford, with his Danes pushed out as far as Clonmel, and back to Wexford.

The armies, badly supplied and only intermittently paid, stole out into no-mans-land for plunder; in the rear areas they plundered their erstwhile supporters instead. Local commanders took what they wanted "for the Army", but little of it reached the magazines. The Danes were especially fingered, but at least they only plundered the Protestant storekeepers who overcharged them. Between the armies, a third army of rapparees gleaned a subsistence. Usually they focused their attentions on the Williamites, because King James had given them liberty to do so.

No fight of consequence occurred. The Williamites made strides in pacifying their sectors by establishing large militia forces and engaging in cordon and sweep operations against rapparee bands. The civil administration was up and running (with two lord justices, one a former Jacobite, and the other a Whig so Whiggish that other Whigs thought him dangerous). The tedious business of land redistribution had already begun.

The Irish repaired the walls of Limerick. From February, they had the help of French engineers. The defences at Athlone were also improved, and a forward post was established at Ballymore, 10 miles east of Athlone, consisting of 1,000 men (*including Ulick Bourke's Regiment*) and 2 "Turkish" cannon.

Berwick's attempt to relieve Cork had taken place between September 24th and October 6th. The column, consisting of the "combined" battalions of Grand Prior's/Slane's/Boisseleau's, Ed. Butler's/Creagh's/Westmeath's/Grace's, Art & Hugh MacMahon's/Iveagh's (*sans* muskets), Gordon & Phelim O'Neill's, marched to Kilmallock via Sixmilebridge in Co. Clare, and Bruff, fortified a camp, made a demonstration, then retired.

[Strangely, Stevens says Berwick already knew Cork had fallen. He also says Macgillicuddy's and Kenmare's marched to Kerry, though the former, sometimes O'Sullivan's, was at Cork. It must have been a late arrival. Creagh's and Kenmare's are supposed to have disbanded completely by this date. The commonality of names is certainly a problem.]

Around September 14th, Berwick and Sarsfield took the cavalry across the Shannon to raid Birr Castle, near Banagher. The object was to secure winter quarters in Leinster province, which still had food. The castle was only lightly guarded by a company from Tiffin's Regiment of Foot, but the attempt failed when General Kirke brought up reinforcements.

A lighter raid, employing some rapparees, was made against Kilarney, where a Danish column had probed. In reprisal, the Williamites terrorised the locals. It was to be the Duke of Berwick's last action. Still fearful of his fate in the hands of the likes of Sarsfield's clique, King James recalled him to France.

The Williamites were more active, but accomplished just about as little. But there was some peace correspondence between the two sides, and King William wanted to turn the screws.

The Danish Major General *von* Tettau, was sent into Co. Kerry, but found he had insufficient troops. The Irish stripped the lands along his path, forcing him to stop at Killarney, as mentioned before. He retired into Ross Castle, sent a party to capture a small fort nearby, they withdrew from the area. His main hindrance had been the roads, or lack thereof, which denied him the use of artillery or aid from either Ginkel in the central sector or Württemburg in the south.

The northern commander, Lieutenant General Douglas, had much the same problems. He was ordered to take Sligo. But he decided it was not worth the effort:

"I have neither engineer, battery master, instruments or other necessaries and thus I do not incline to make another Athlone siege [in reference to his last attempt]; and suppose you had all the necessaries for a siege I do not see it possible that cannon or waggons can be brought to Sligo from this province [Ulster], but if there be any gentlemen more knowing than I in this country let him undertake the matter of conveying the cannon and waggons to Sligo and I shall give him all the assistance I can, but I am sure the thing cannot be performed."

W&P, p. 175.

And again,

"The king has writ to me and is very desirous I should besiege Sligo. I am as willing as any mortal but, as I have told your excellency [Ginkel] before, it is not possible to carry cannon or wagons any way from Ulster to Connacht in the winter."

W&P, p. 194

Told to stop whining and get on with the job, Douglas sent General Lanier to cover his flank, and that gentleman had the gall to lose control of Lanesborough, a crossing point on the upper Shannon. There were rumours of treachery. Douglas did no more than move up to the Shannon at Jamestown and then retire.

Grudgingly, William accepted that the upper Shannon line could not be breached without a major effort. Douglas, he decided, should be booted upstairs to a command in Flanders. In the meanwhile, the bridge at Belleek was reinforced so that it could bear heavy guns.

Sarsfield's energy served to embarrass Douglas. After the earlier raiding, Sarsfield assembled a cavalry force of nearly 5,000 men and began systematically to clear the left (eastern) bank of the Shannon. He stirred up a hornet's nest when his men penetrated Leinster to within 12 miles of Dublin. But he ran his corps into the ground.

Tyrconnel returned from France in January of 1691. Out of favour with most of the Irish, and with Louvois (who refused to send more soldiers unless more Irish recruits were forthcoming), he yet held James' mandate as Deputy. His remaining supporters suggested he leave army matters to the incumbent French marshal and confine himself to civil matters.

[King William was incensed that the Royal Navy had not thought to intercept Tyrconnel even though he had given strict orders to patrol all the coasts. Given the number of things that made him mad, it is surprising that he never suffered apoplexy.]

Despite Louvois' tough stance, the French had been impressed by the Irish performance at Limerick. Louvois only wanted 500 more men – that was how finely stretched the French Army was. The War Minister's real problem was lack of resources to send. Understanding this, Tyrconnel had cut back his requests to a matter of supplies and some good officers. The pay situation was so bad that the funds the Deputy brought were sponged up in no time.

The new French commander was to be [brevet] *Maréchal* St. Ruhe, more popularly known as St. Ruth. Charles Chalmont was a fighting general who had learned his trade under *Maréchal* Catinat. Commander of the new Irish Brigade on its maiden deployment in Savoy, he had been favourably impressed and said so. The Irish were pleased he was coming. St. Ruhe's two main faults were vanity, and rabid anti-Protestant views; he was a terror to the Huguenots and Vaudois in Savoy. His other weaknesses were lack of local knowledge, and a lack of command over the English language – which meant it would be difficult to obtain local knowledge.

Peace Talks

> *"A stroke of the pen could end the war in Ireland, and if the king wishes to help his allies he will have to give it".*
>
> *Duke of Württemburg*

There had been an ongoing peace process from the start, but only now did it begin to bear fruit. For those with a stake in the contest, the two key issues had always been land and religion. The Old English worried about losing their estates (William would have to get the money to pay back his war loans from somewhere). The Gaels simply wanted their lands back.

The struggle between Protestants and Catholics was more bitter, involving the question of religious tolerance at a time and place where religious freedom meant more real power for the Catholics and less for the Protestants – virtually an overturning of Irish society.

Of the two Kings who had started the war, James was out of the running for now, but could jump back in if William lost too much prestige. Dutch Billy was only concerned to end the war quickly and get on with the real deal in Flanders. He tried taking a hard line, and taking a soft line – anything, so long as it worked.

[It should be noted that William's poor health played a role. He became ill under stress, which made him peevish and less likely to conciliate his enemies.]

The first Williamite initiative came in February of 1689. A proclamation called on the Catholics to surrender (they had hardly started) but promised to leave them their estates and their religion untouched. Furthermore, a parliament was promised, which might grant them additional favours. This olive branch was rejected. At the time, it did not seem to offer enough, and there was a perception that William would not be on the throne for long.

The next offer was the Finglas Declaration of July 1690. Issued right after the Boyne, the message was a hard one. William intended to make the "rebels" pay for the war by forfeiting their estates ("*left to the event of war*"); the common people would be pardoned. An amnesty deadline was imposed: August 1st, 1690. Finglas stemmed from a suggestion of William's Secretary of State for Ireland, Robert Southwell. It was an attempt to split the Jacobite ranks by targeting the rich. He argued that with the Jacobite landed gentry in flight, there would be plenty of land available for redistribution.

The plan backfired. The only people with any motivation for the war were the rich. Catholic society was still clan-based, and the common man would obey his chief, not some foreign king. Also, because the main penalty for being on the other side was forfeiture of property, William, and even more so his Protestant Irish Administration, were tempted to expand the proscription lists, merely adding to the number of their enemies.

> *"But the estated gentlemen the prince excluded from his mercy. This was a foolish edict, and the first of its kind, I believe, that ever had been; for commonly a prince, entering into a country in order to conquer it, doth in the first place encourage the principal persons to submit unto him, and when these are gained the rest do follow in course. I suppose the prince of Orange was persuaded to go against reason in favour of his great officers, who would have the Irish Catholic lords of Ireland to be rejected from all expectation of recovering their estates, because the said officers were sure in their own conceits that the Irish army would be overcome at last, and because then they might have those lands by the prince's grant."*
>
> *A Light to the Blind*

[NB. If a source uses the name "prince of Orange", it is almost certainly Jacobite-biased.]

The failure at Limerick caused William to change his tune. Leaving the country, he delegated the sovereign's prerogative of of making war and peace to his principle army officers, Count Solms, and then his replacement, Baron Ginkel. Unfortunately, he did not take negotiating authority away from the civil power. The winter of 1690-91 saw major parliamentary battles over this issue, not only on broad grounds, but in the details. For example, Parliament wanted sequestered estates pooled and the money distributed evenly, while the King did not. William not only had to pay for his army's operations, he had to reward his supporters, and improve his own income.

Ginkel and Lord Portland (acting for the King) agreed on a negotiated settlement. They came under fire from those who wanted the complete destruction of Irish Catholic society. William was torn between his desire for property and his desire to end the conflict, but he eventually agreed that "rebel" landowners should receive a liberal offer. He was willing now to free his army for action on the Continent even if he had to pay for its removal from Ireland.

On the Jacobite side, the mere rumour of a settlement sent cracks through the fragile alliance – the dispossessed Gaels, the Old English, and the Catholics; the Catholics split amongst themselves between the "new interest men" who gained under the Act of Settlement, and the rest. A number of colonels found themselves under arrest, while the Irish Secretary of State and the governor of Galway were dismissed.

The Old English were happy with the new peace proposals. They applied to anyone who had estates in 1684, with the except of Clancarty and Antrim, the two richest lords. The guarantors were to be the Pope, the Emperor, and the King of Spain (William's allies). The Jacobite leaders subscribed to the following statement:

> *"we are fighting not for King James nor for the popish religion but for our estates."*
>
> *W&P p. 189*

The Williamites were hopeful that the Old English and the New Interest would deal, but the Gaels were another matter. They had nothing to lose by fighting. O'Donnell's Army was poorly equipped (feared by the Jacks as much as by the Orangemen) but he had some 7-8,000 supporters based near Sligo and had written to d'Avaux offering to fight on if supplied independently from the rest of the Jacobites. He was no longer taking orders from

them. The last thing King William wanted was another eleven year guerrilla war.

[According to General Douglas, Balldearg's "followers pretend that it is he who will free Ireland from the occupation of the prince of Orange and they do not want to be commanded by any other general. (W&P, p. 195).]

The primary obstacle to peace beside the Gael seemed to be William's own subordinates, who were running roughshod over the countryside. Douglas' corps, for instance, certainly not the most aggressive of the field commands, "*traversed the country like the plague of Athens, paying no regard to declaration or protection*." (*W&P p. 189*). Ginkel was not perceived as having the necessary clout to make any agreement stick if William should change his mind. He could merely "*try the temper of the Irish*".

The Williamites believed that Sarsfield, not the ageing and discredited Tyrconnel, was the key man:

> *"Draw him away and they [the Irish] are gone; Tyrconnel and he are no great friends, neither can he abide the French; Tyrconnel never stirred abroad but once since he landed, and his countenance denotes something of despair."*
>
> *W&P, p. 197*

Sarsfield did not present himself before Tyrconnel until March of 1691, when the peace process stalled. He got himself made Earl of Lucan, and was promoted to Lieutenant General, but still had no use for the Deputy. Sarsfield agreed to cooperate in military matters, so long as Tyrconnel never gave him an order in battle.

His deputation to France, though it had not nobbled Tyrconnel, brought back a clear promise of French aid. It also brought back supplies, and 6 months back pay. Sarsfield was *the Man*! His party still advocated war, mainly to remind the Williamites that they could lose the struggle, and to ensure that critical sites did not become bargaining chips for the other side through their capture. The talks broke down in March.

> *"The published amnesty has so far had little effect, as the French have sent a large amount of money and thus corrupted the majority. Accordingly it has been decided to let matters proceed to extremes."*
>
> *DC, p. 101, dated March 25th 1691.*

The deadlock was not broken by a vague promise of tolerance and non-persecution of Catholics by the new régime. In the spring of 1691, however, a new proclamation was prepared in Queen Mary's name. Its contents were "leaked" and seemed to be well received, but,

> *"it will be absolutely necessary upon any terms to end the war in Ireland this summer and the most probable means will be by giving the large terms mentioned in the proclamation. The English here will be offended that the Irish are not quite beggared, and what the house of commons will say when they see those lands gone which they designed for the payment of the army you can better judge than I."*
>
> *W&P p. 191*

William decided not to issue the proclamation, but to give Ginkel a modified version that he could issue at his own discretion. This he would do after the fall of Athlone, on July 7th. So, on both sides the coming campaign would be waged for advantage at the negotiating table.

The Last Round Up, 1691

Initial Moves

What with the peace negotiations, Sarsfield's Dublin raid, and the failures of the southern and northern winter thrusts, Ginkel's war machine got off to a slow start. There was some talk of having him replaced. He seemed out of his depth. In the end, though, William let him continue. Douglas and Kirke, however, were transferred to Flanders, where the King could keep an eye on them. Neither commander was behaving aggressively enough (though this may not have been so much from "crypto-Jacobitism" as a desire to prolong the duration of their independent commands).

As replacements, Ginkel received two other Britishers, Major Generals Mackay (*pronounced Ma'k-eye*) and Tollmache. Mackay was the man defeated by Claverhouse at Killiecrankie, but for all that he was a good officer, though argumentative, and by this time had restored his reputation in a series of mundane mopping up operations in Scotland.

Things had yet to get off the ground by mid-May. The Irish lords justices in Dublin complained:

> *"The army had long since taken the field if the arms, clothes, recruits and horses had been here… above all the want of money is what presses us".*
>
> *W&P, p. 202*

At the end of May, no coin had appeared, but a new siege train had: 36 heavy guns and 6 mortars. These along with tons of munitions and other supplies, replacements, and new mounts.

> *"They who beheld the vast preparation for the campaign had a fair prospect of their majesties' [William and Mary] extraordinary care and providence for the total recovery of Ireland… all the proper ports of the kingdom continually filled with ships and vessels, some transporting money, others recruits to the army… amazing quantities of provision, arms and ammunition, five hundred draught horses at a time for the carriages, and such other vast stores for the artillery."*
>
> *W&P, p. 203*

The Jacobites were equally slow – in truth, there was not much point doing anything before June, it was too wet. St. Ruhe arrived on May 9th, bringing with him a large convoy of supplies in 32 ships and a few new French officers: the experienced *Lieutenant Générals* d'Usson and de Tessé, and Colonel La Tour as Governor of Limerick. There were also a handful of artillerists and clerks. Henry Luttrell and Nicholas Purcell returned with them; they would more than negate this talent when the time came.

[Because of the capture of Cork and Kinsale, the convoy, commanded by the Chevalier de *Nesmond, was forced to make landfall at Limerick. Thanks to the unpredictable seas on the Kerry coast, it could not leave until July.]*

Once again the Royal Navy displayed masterful inaction. Admiral Russell feared to weaken England's coastal defences by sailing over to examine the French Ports or patrolling the seas off southern Ireland. The Williamites were unconcerned, saying the arrival of the French was "*like pouring brandy down the throat of a dying man*". Ginkel's main fear was that the raw masses of English and Irish he was receiving would take too long to train.

Tyrconnel's star was setting. Unwilling to divorce himself from his creation, he and St. Ruhe had heated arguments about who was in command. King James would not shame his friend by formally revoking his authority, but he effectively divested him of his powers one by one. Finally, a series of small mutinies convinced Tyrconnel he should step down, but even then he accompanied the Army on its march to relieve Athlone, where it took a petition and even threats of physical violence to dislodge him from the camp. The opposition was more noisy than strong, but the Earl feared the Army might shatter, so he left for Galway.

Athlone was to be the focus of the first phase of the campaign. In the north, Sligo was holding, protected by Balldearg's small army, though Enniskilleners under Colonel Zachariah Tiffin began raiding out of Ballyshannon in March.

In the south, Limerick was stoutly held and French engineers were at work improving it. The danger would come from a crossing of the Shannon's middle reaches, and the best place to do this was at Athlone, where the river was shallow and there were several fords in addition to the bridge in the town.

St. Ruhe was not sanguine about his chances. No real preparations had been made for the campaign. The food shortage was critical, and there was a tent shortage as well, which, given the climate, was nearly as bad. Tyrconnel was blamed for failing to acquire boats that they could use on the Shannon to supply the army, but the river was not navigable along its whole length. Sarsfield boasted about his winter operation, and how he had set up garrisons in Leinster as a screen, but St. Ruhe saw those garrisons as so many men lost; Sarsfield decided he did not really like St. Ruhe after all.

Leaving strong garrisons at Limerick and Galway, and a party of 200 of Burke's Fusiliers by Lough Gur, the Jacobites marched to Athlone in several columns, over the period of about a fortnight (23rd May to 7th June). The Foot marched by way of Killaloe, where there was a camp, to Graig, Portumna, Meelick, and Ballinasloe – that is, a route closely following the Shannon. The guns and cavalry took a wider circuit because the roads were better – probably Limerick-Gort-Loughrea-Ballinasloe. Stevens reports a total of 13 line battalions and 2 guard battalions in the camp at Killaloe, and 20 regiments of foot when they reached Athlone. This is in addition to the garrison, under command of General Wauchope, and does not include a further 7 regiments that were on the march to other destinations. The whole force amounted to a total of 32 weak battalions, according to d'Usson. In all of Ireland there were only 9,000 more infantry, including the garrisons of Limerick and Galway, though possibly excluding O'Donnell's host.

Surprisingly, Ginkel was not really aware of what the Jacobites were up to – Sarsfield's screen of outposts had had at least that much effect. Obviously, they would move to counter any thrust he might make, but perhaps they could be misled. Much depended on where their camps were located, and on whether they were stronger or weaker than the Williamites. Ginkel seems to have believed the Jacks were the stronger in raw numbers, but that (perhaps because of this) they were not yet ready to take the field.

In reality, the Williamite Army was roughly as strong as the Jacobites. At the end of May, it was mustering at Mullingar. General Ruvigny commanded the cavalry. Württemburg's Danes were moving out from Cashel, but would first feint at Banagher, 15 miles south of Athlone, before joining Ginkel. There was even a chance that the Danes would be able to secure a crossing, allowing the Williamites to cut the enemy off from Limerick. A similar operation would take place in the north, to pin Balldearg. Ginkel had to be careful, however. If he left the road through Athlone open, the Jacobites could easily attack Dublin, with unimaginable consequences.

The first job for Ginkel's corps was the recapturing of Ballymore. On June 6th they left Mullingar, and on June 7th they were before the enemy works. Ballymore was a small fort on the eastern shore of Lough Sunderlin. It lay on a peninsula jutting into the lake, whose shore was quite steep. Trenches had been dug across the neck of the peninsula. The commandant, Colonel Ulick Bourke, was well supplied, and refused a summons to surrender. Ginkel deployed his batteries, but he also sent four boatloads of grenadiers down the lake. It was the sight of these, rather than the bombardment, which made Bourke surrender "at discretion" on the 8th. The prisoners were sent to Lambay Island, off Dublin – a horrible place, with no cover and no sanitation.

[Ginkel had a special train of tin boats constructed, and was aching for a chance to use them.]

The Williamites ought now to have pressed on to Athlone, which was still lightly garrisoned, but Ginkel was waiting for a pontoon train, enroute from England. To his mind, there was no point marching to the Shannon if they could not guarantee a crossing. He left Ballymore on the 18th and met with Württemburg's men that night. The combined army sat down before Athlone on the 19th. Ironically, the pontoons, which did not arrive at Athlone until the 23rd, proved to be the wrong sort.

Athlone

> *ATHLONE, 1 July 1691. 'Yesterday at 6 p.m. the general attack on Atlone [sic] took place; it went off with extraordinary vigour and success in the face of the enemy's army, and Your Majesty's troops distinguished themselves remarkably. The loss is not appreciable; the enemy have lost over 1,000 men. A major-general named Machsfield [Maxwell] has been taken. On the Danish side Capt. Wulfing is dead, Capt. Wedel of the Guards and Capt. des Loges mortally wounded. The enemy's army is in retreat; to all appearances the Irish business will soon be over, and we shall soon be thinking of a descent on France to save the common cause from slavery.'*
>
> *Letter to the Danish chief minister from Colonel Munchgaar*

Athlone was the typical English-Irish binary. Both towns, one on the west (Connaught) bank of the Shannon, and the other on the east (Leinster), were walled. They were joined by a stone bridge. The Jacobites garrison, though weak, chose to hold English Town, on the Leinster side, but Ginkel's preliminary bombardment on the 20th of June sent them scurrying back across the bridge as soon as a breach was made. The Williamites poured in, but could not catch them. The bridge, with an old-fashioned gate-drawbridge tower at the western end, was broken down. It s possession became the focus of both the besiegers and the besieged for the next few days.

St. Ruhe arrived on the 21st. His army camped on a ridge, two miles to the west, in battle array – two lines, separated by a valley. By now it was fully assembled, with 16,000 foot, 3,000 horse, and 2,000 dragoons. D'Usson was the camp commandant. Flying in the face of popular history, there was no shortage of modern weapons, only a critical shortage of bullocks to pull the guns – the people responsible for them having neglected their charges, most of them had died the previous winter.

Rather than squeezing the army into Irish Town, which covered a small area, had poor defences, and was under observation from the higher eastern bank, d'Usson chose to supply the garrison with relays of fresh troops each day. Each relay consisted of perhaps a small brigade of infantry. He hoped in this way to accustom the whole army to enemy fire and the routines of siege life, but it turned out to be a bad idea. The regiments were not of equal quality, with regard to men, officers, or equipment, and the dénouement would come on the day the two worst regiments in the army were on duty.

Meanwhile, Ginkel was leisurely bombarding Irish Town. He allotted ten days to the task, after which Irish Town ceased to exists as a recognisable entity. It had endured the heaviest bombardment in Irish history, then or since: 12,000 cannonballs, 600 shells, and tons of stone balls from the mortars. But the Williamites still had to take the place.

Night and day they launched sorties to seize the western end of the bridge. Sometimes they took it, but not for long. Veterans on both sides could not remember enduring so hot a fire. According to the chronicler George Story,

> *"we labour hard to gain the bridge, but what we got there was inch by inch as it were, the enemy sticking very close to it, though great numbers of them were slain by other guns."*

Ginkel cast about for fresh ideas. General Mackay suggested he lead the Enniskilleners and Derrymen in a flanking march to Banagher or Meelick, or to Lanesborough to the north. They would move rapidly and be across the Shannon before the Jacobites could respond. Ginkel thought this too risky. They thought of using the pontoon train to cross within the battle zone, but it had not been designed to be laid under fire. Perhaps a local flanking could be made. Parties were sent up and down river, looking for fords.

On the 24th a recce party discovered an excellent ford that the Jacobites had not noticed – then the commander gave orders to rustle a herd of cattle on the far bank and in doing so revealed it to the enemy! The next morning it was strongly guarded with an earthwork. Two days later, however, three Danish soldiers found a shallow place near the south of the town. It could be brought

under enemy fire, but they had survived the crossing and returned.

[Legend says the three men were criminals – not Danes – under sentence of death who were given their lives in exchange for this duty, but the Danish correspondence says they were Danish volunteers.]

On the 27th, Ginkel, hoping the defenders had been distracted, attempted another attack on the bridge. The Jacobites poured fire on the "forlorn hope" from a breastwork at the western end. With great sacrifice the men laid planks and fascines down to cover the gap, only to see the defenders rush from cover and set them alight; the sole remaining Williamite soldier threw himself into the mess and managed to pluck out the burning material before being shot down. The Jacobite Stevens was one of the party at the bridge that night, and called it the "*hottest place he ever saw*", "*a mere hell upon earth*".

It was another three days before the Williamite commander decided the southern ford would have to be used. He was still dubious, but both Württemburg and Mackay were adamant. News was also received from deserters that the southern ford was only lightly guarded. The regiments detailed to cover it were "the two worst units" in the Jacobite Army, O'Gara's and MacMahon's. They did not hold it in strength, but, overconfident after the last few days, simply placed a picquet there to sound the alarm.

[MacMahon's was probably a composite of the two original battalions of that name. Both had been present at the Boyne, but it is almost certain they were part of the Drogheda garrison and not on the field. O'Gara's was at the Boyne as well, but on the left.]

That evening (30th June) the final assault began. As a church bell pealed the signal, a forlorn hope of grenadiers in "three-quarters" body armour, supported by heavy artillery fire, plunged into the river and waded desperately across. They earned their bonus guineas handily – there was no opposition. O'Gara's was holding the ford, and they simply broke and ran at the sight. MacMahon's was immediately dispatched by d'Usson, but they ran as soon as O'Gara's careened into them. d'Usson, who was with them, leading from the front, was knocked off his feet and trampled. The commanding general now unconscious, the defence went to pot.

It took only 30 minutes for 2,000 Williamites to overrun Irish Town, the Danes slaughtering anyone they could get their hands on. Looting was not a problem, the town was just a heap of rubble. The proper thing for St. Ruhe to do now, was to counterattack. But there was a problem. The laws of siegecraft dictated that the Engineer's Word was law. The particular French engineer in question had insisted, against St. Ruhe's objections, that a rampart be retained on the western side of the town. This was supposed to prevent an attack from that side, and so it proved – it prevented St. Ruhe from attacking and annihilating a very weak and disorganised enemy garrison.

[Tyrconnel had also suggested the wall be removed, but was merely laughed at by his enemies, who could not very well have turned round and backed St. Ruhe on the same issue.]

Danish Report of the Siege of Athlone (pp. 116-118 in *DF*):

ATHLONE, 3 July.1691. 'This town is divided into two parts by a river called the Shannon, of which the eastern part is strongly walled. We placed some batteries and breached the wall on the 20th, and took the place by storm almost without loss. The other part of the town was guarded by a good wall and a strong castle, with a garrison of 1,000, and difficult to approach because of the river.' On the 22nd we began to bombard the town with cannon and attempted to repair the bridge, two arches of which had been' thrown down by the enemy; we suffered a number of casualties, among them Lt. Zimmer, of the King's Battalion, who had been called from the works by the Duke. It was resolved that the crossing of the river should be attempted as soon as a breach was made. On the 23rd, as we have heard from some captured officers, the enemy approached with 33 regiments of foot and 18 of horse hoping to relieve the town. Meanwhile the town was bombarded continuously by 30 guns, nearly all 24- and 18- pounders. The Duke of Würtemberg tested the depth of the river on the 27th, and as he found it fordable at the place where we had made the breach, the 29th was appointed as the date for storming the town. But when the troops detailed had already moved into position, the enemy set fire to the bridge, raising thereby such an alarm that the attack was put off until the next day, especially as the enemy, on observing our movements, had pushed a few battalions into the town. Meanwhile some English deserters, among others, had assured the Irish that it had been decided, on the part of the English, to defer the attempted storming. So it came about that on the 30th of June, the very day on which we took the place, the French general Sain Rued [St. Ruth] who was camped about an Irish mile from the town called together all the higher officers of the army and made merry with them because we intended to raise the siege; this was about 4 pm, at the time when we were about to advance from the works.

All the force detailed for the action, 800 grenadiers and 1,800 musketeers, were at the appointed place at that time. For our part we provided 50 men from each battalion, 300 in all, under the command of Col. Munchgaar, and 50 grenadiers with Capt. Wedel. This attack was led by two major-generals, Tettau and Mackay, two brigadiers, Bellchyr and Melloniere, six colonels, six lieutenant-colonels, six majors, and other officers according to rank. The storm was carried out like this – the Royal Danish, French and Dutch troops, in all 400 grenadiers and 900 musketeers, had to wade through water which reached their belts in order to mount the breach. Meanwhile the bridge, over which the English troops were to follow, was repaired. Lt. Schack, of the grenadiers, with an ensign, two under-officers and fifteen selected grenadiers, all in armour, went first. Then came a captain with 50 grenadiers, next Capt. Wedel with 40 grenadiers of the Guard, followed by Lt.-Col. Erffa with 200 grenadiers, followed by Col. Munchgaar with the 300 musketeers from our battalions, and behind him came the 600 French and Dutch. The attack went very well; our troops got into the town without many casualties, seized the castle and drove the Irish who were not killed or taken prisoner out of the town. The enemy advanced some battalions, but failed to halt the rout, and, finding us in possession of all the works, withdrew his whole army before nightfall. By God's mercy we lost only one officer – Lt. Wulffen of the Jutland regiment, a grenadier corporal and not more than 20 men, against which we killed or captured most of the enemy garrison; among the prisoners is a Major-General Maxfeld [Maxwell], who does not speak well of the French general. As to wounded, we have Capt. Wedel, in the shoulder, Capt. des Loges shot through the groin, and only about 20 men wounded. Thus, by God's mercy, the siege has cost us very little. Capt. von Uffeln, who was severely wounded in the chest while in the approaches, is recovering. By the passing of the Shannon and the taking of this place we have secured our whole position, and now we march on Gallway as soon as possible.'

The Bill

Not for the first or last time, claims of treachery were brought forward. The target was not the unfortunate engineer, but Major General Maxwell. Maxwell, a Scot, was one of Tyrconnel's supporters. He did not like the Irish, *per se*, and they did not like him. Sarsfield criticised d'Usson's decision to give him command of the vital spot that day, and this fact was coupled first, to a later report that one of Maxwell's officers had been observed swimming the Shannon to talk to Ginkel, and second, to the fact that he had decided not to issue ammunition to the troops that day "because they would just waste it". He had also been heard to criticise St. Ruhe's decision not to command the garrison in person, but to remain with the army at a distance (though there was nothing unusual in such a practise).

All highly suspicious. Maxwell had been taken prisoner and was unavailable for comment. But Sarsfield had a down on Maxwell because the latter had gone to France to sabotage the Luttrell mission. In the end, though, it was Sarsfield's henchmen who would betray the Army.

Stevens only comment was "*never was a town which was so well defended before so basely lost*."

The Siege of Athlone cost the defenders 1,200 men, including 500 killed on the 30th. There were so many bodies buried in the rubble that the town had to be evacuated of troops. The besiegers suffered a reported 13 dead and 35 wounded, though this may have only been in the last action.

The loss of Athlone caused general dismay among the Jacobites that could not be alleviated by finger-pointing. Ginkel judged the time was right to release the latest peace proclamation. The original version of this offered freedom of worship, and the restoration of lands even to Catholics, so long as they submitted.

Now, it was the Protestant Irish who baulked (especially those who owned property formerly belonging to Catholics):

> *"It will be absolutely necessary upon any terms to end the war in Ireland this summer, and the most probable means will be by giving the large terms mentioned in the proclamation. The English here will be offended that the Irish are not quite beggared, and what the house of commons will say when they see those lands gone which they designed for the payment of the army you can better judge than I."*
>
> *letter of Lord Justice Porter to Queen Mary*

The Queen gave the lord justices the authority to go ahead, but their own people dragged them down. They also differed with Ginkel. He wanted a quick end and was prepared to offer a blanket pardon. The Irish Administration wanted to finesse things – what did they care about a Continental war, especially when so much juicy land was at stake. The Protestants came up with a list of 2,000 proscribed Jacobites – *yummy*.

All this wrangling led Ginkel to water down the already watery proclamation. It was set forth at Athlone on July 9th. and billed as Ginkel's own version, to be compared with a slightly harsher "official" one, prepared long ago but dated two days before. Instead of guaranteeing freedom of religion, it stated that William and Mary would summon a parliament to see if protection could be given to Catholics. Both the Protestants and the Catholics were outraged.

There were more problems. For example, officers were required not only to surrender themselves, and their men, but whatever fortress they might be garrisoning, too. And the same rule applied to civilian governors. On the plus side, it did address the issue of civilians, but it did not cover those "rebels" who were out of the country or who were prisoners of war.

Aughrim of the Slaughter

"In Aughrim of the slaughter they rest;
Their skeletons lying there uncoffined,
have caused the women of Ireland to beat their hands,
The children to be neglected, and the fugitives to wail."

Séamus Dall MacCuart, quoted in JI p. 229

What to do? As Stevens said, after Athlone,

> *"such a panic fear has seized our men that the very noise of ten horsemen would have dispersed as many of our battalions, above half the soldiers scattering by the way without any other thing but their own apprehensions to fright them."*

The Jacobites had four choices: surrender, "go guerrilla", seal themselves up in garrisons, or try and turn the tide with a field battle. St. Ruhe, shamed by his failure at Athlone, plunked for the latter.

He was confirmed in his opinion by the Army's rapid recovery. Many had fled after Athlone, but they soon returned. St. Ruhe fell back a few miles to Ballinasloe, now the site of Ireland's greatest horse fair but then a mere hamlet, regrouped, and called a council of war.

The marshal's original idea was to hold the line of the River Suck, a tributary of the Shannon. It was not as wide, but it was marshy and difficult to cross. Sarsfield recommended they fall further back, hold the towns of Galway and Limerick, and conduct raids into Leinster and Munster, perhaps even sack Dublin.

D'Usson sided with the cavalryman. He argued that morale, especially among the officers, was still very low; they had 32 battalions (37 overall) of foot, plus the Guards, but only 7,000 men. St. Ruhe's reply was to send d'Usson to command the garrison at Galway and promote *de* Tessé to second in command. The army would fight a field battle – at Aughrim, 5 miles to the west.

Aughrim was just another hamlet, but the surrounding countryside had advantages. The lands further north or south were boggy and untracked, while the road from Athlone to Galway ran through the hamlet, along a narrow raised causeway. There was a tumbledown old castle that commanded this causeway from the north, a small church south of it, and a collection of shacks set among kitchen gardens.

The remains of the castle, with a cross commemorating the battle. The picture was taken from a modern lane that roughly follows the old causeway (Author's photo)

The Jacobite Army deployed on a ridge, Kilcommadan Hill, that rose out of marshy ground to the south of the ville. At the southern end of the position lay a substantial stone building, Kilcommadan Church. The slope, which ran roughly north-south, was long and gentle on its eastern side, and not much more dramatic on the others, but before it lay a wide morass stretching right across the enemy's approach route. The position was isolated by two streams that ran through the bog, one to the north and the other to the south, crossed by narrow bridges. Through the center of the bog ran another stream.

Looking along the Jacobite first line infantry's position, from the right (Author's photo).

Every inch of dry ground was cut into small fields surrounded by hedges and narrow sunken lanes familiar to D-Day veterans – perfect defensive terrain for an army that could not afford to fight on the conventional billiard table. The Jacobites had 4 days to prepare and improved matters by fortifying some hedge lines and cutting gaps in others through which they could quickly retreat, advance, or flank an enemy force that broke into any of the fields.

The village church, from the east. Appears to be a newer or reconstructed building (Author's photo).

According to Stevens, on the day of battle the Jacobites had either 10-11,000 infantry and 4,000 cavalry, or, on a different page, 20,000 infantry and 5,000 cavalry. The discrepancy can probably be accounted for by assuming a numerous body of militia, which effectively doubled their numbers, though its fighting value was negligible. The Williamites thought they had 19,000 infantry and 8,000 cavalry. There were 12 regiments of cavalry, but only 8 of regular infantry; by name, there were many more, but most were so weak that they had been combined for battle (32 so-called battalions, 11 regiments of horse, and 8 of dragoons). Ginkel was estimated to have 17-19,000 men: 6 regiments of Horse, 3 of Dragoons, and 10,950 infantrymen in 15 battalions of Foot. In reality, the two sides were evenly matched.

St. Ruhe and his opponent would both adopt the traditional deployment in two lines, with cavalry on the wings, but each would adapt the model to the ground. Infantry of this period always fought in line, but left large gaps between each battalion to allow for freedom of movement. The Jacobites spread themselves out even more, since each field could be treated as a miniature fort.

> *According to the Williamite, George Story,*
>
> *"The enemy's camp lay along the ridge of a hill… from thence to the bog below was nigh half a mile, and this cut into a great many small enclosures which the enemy had ordered so as to make a communication from one of them to another, and had lined all these very thick with small shot [commanded muskets]; this showed a great deal of dexterity in M. St. Ruth in making choice of such a piece of ground as nature itself could not furnish him with a better, considering all the circumstances; for he knew that the Irish naturally loved a breastwork between them and bullets, and here they were fitted to the purpose with hedges and ditches to the very edge of the bog."*
>
> *W&P, p. 221.*

Musket-and-pike armies had developed a special tactic for fighting in close country. Within a given field, the battalion or portion of the battalion, would be drawn up in the open, invisible to anyone beyond the hedge in front. Between 2-4 files of musketeers would be sent forward to the hedge, where they would snipe at an approaching enemy; usually, one man per file did the firing and the remainder of his file passed their muskets forward and reloaded the discharged ones, but they could be arranged in a skirmish line as well. In the latter case, after firing, the next set of files would double forward and original men would retire to the main body.

At Aughrim, it proved exceedingly difficult for the Williamites to batter down the hedges, but assuming they did so, they might just catch a glimpse of the Jacobite rearguard ducking through a hole in a hedge on the far side. Then the process would repeat itself. If the Williamite battalion advanced too quickly, it would find itself caught in a crossfire from either side. Shaken, the next thing its men would experience would be a wild charge by an enemy intent on clubbing them to death.

In a normal "push-of-pike" on open ground, one side usually gave way before contact, but the Irish did not have the Continental aversion to fighting hand-to-hand. The pikemen – in the Jacobite Army, many men were armed with purpose-made scythed polearms which were of more use in a melee – could be brought forward to poke at anyone trying to get through the hedge, or would lend weight to a counter-charge.

On the right flank, 3 dragoon regiments were pushed forward and adopted a similar dismounted skirmish formation on the enemy's side of the southern stream. From here they would gradually work their way back across a bridge; 4 regiments of horse remained farther back, placed to countercharge down the bridge, and the edifice was targeted by a battery.

On the left, a small battalion (*E. Butler's*) was deployed in the castle, and another skirmish line formed in the hamlet, supported (according to some sources) by a battery of guns, but the main defence was entrusted to the cavalry, deployed to the northwest of the castle and hamlet on the only decent bit of flat ground. 4 dragoon regiments were drawn up as skirmishers, and 4 regiments of horse awaited the signal to charge. An enemy would have to come down "*an old broken causeway only large enough for two horses to pass it at a time*", run the gauntlet of fire from the castle, and then spend a considerable time deploying into line. This would allow the Jacobites to countercharge and overthrow them.

A single regiment of horse – Galmoy's – constituted the *corps de reserve*, located behind the center.

St. Ruhe placed himself on the hill, slightly right of center, near his central battery. De Tessé commanded the right. Dominick Sheldon commanded the cavalry of the left, along with Henry Luttrell. *De* Tessé commanded on the right, with Sarsfield in command of the horse.

This is a tributary of the Melehan stream, looking south. The dark patch in the far distance (center) is Urraghry Hill (Author's photo).

Ginkel had had to wait a week at Athlone for more ammunition. His army spent the time cleaning up the town and establishing a magazine. With no word on the Jacobites, whose scouts prevented adequate reconnaissance, the Chief fretted more about potential raiding than encountering a field army. He believed the Jacobites to be split into three groups, one at Limerick, one at Galway, and one at Sligo, and planned to spread his army out along the Shannon to cover the various crossings and prevent raids. 4 cavalry regiments were sent off to Kilkenny as a flank guard. Ginkel felt sure Sarsfield, known to favour such a strategy, would have his head. St. Ruhe he believed to be at Galway, struggling to plug holes in his leaky army. The Dutchman was disabused of his notions on July 11th.

On that day he and his advance guard arrived at Ballinasloe, intending to take the road for Portumna. After driving off a strong

cavalry screen, they saw the whole Jacobite Army lining the slopes of Kilcommadan Hill and knew there would be a fight.

At first, the general was at a loss. There seemed to be no way to get at the enemy, and if he tried to move around, or back up, the Jacobites might attack him of the march, which would be a disaster. Then a local family volunteered to show him two "passes" across the bog. It was still going to be a difficult job.

In a thick fog on the morning of the 12th, the Williamite main body crossed the Suck, leaving their camp on the far side. As the fog lifted, the enemy cavalry engaged their own advance guard in an escalating skirmish that lasted an hour. Then the Jacobites withdrew.

Marshalling on another, low hill east of the bog, called Urraghry, the Williamites deployed out of their line of march to the left, regiment by regiment, until they were lined up roughly parallel to the enemy. It was 3pm before they were ready to attack.

Ginkel had 28 battalions and 47 squadrons arranged in two lines. The Danish, Dutch, and Huguenot cavalry took the left, the English cavalry the right. The infantry was arranged by nationality the same way. Batteries were set out at intervals along the front. They would be firing at extreme range.

Portland's Dragoons (*Gardes te Paarde*) came up late and was immediately transferred out of the reserve to the right wing, which needed strengthening. In the south, the proximity of the Jacobite dragoons led to some early skirmishing involving a portion of the infantry.

While this was going on, Ginkel called a council of war. Should they attack now, or tomorrow? Delay might allow St. Ruhe to withdraw, so it was decided to attack immediately. The plan was Mackay's. The Williamite line would attack in echelon, from the left, and pin the Jacobites. The coup de grace would come on the right – the Causeway was tricky, but beyond it the land was open.

[Echelon attacks were not much "done" in this period. Not deliberately. Instead, the entire line would advance as one. Much easier to coordinate when regiments march in open order, without cadence. However, it seems clear that the echeloning at Aughrim was deliberate, not merely a function of the poor terrain. Mackay probably felt that coordinating a solid line through a bog would be impossible anyway, so they might as well adopt the sort of tactics used to assault strongpoints.]

Bloody Hollow, from the Jacobite right (Author's photo).

The advance began at 5pm. The enemy dragoons were driven back over the southern stream by a mixed force of horse and foot, but then the infantry attack on the left became mired – literally. The Danes and Huguenots took heavy casualties, the latter becoming trapped in a piece of low ground up against the Jacobite line – Bloody Hollow.

> *"The Irish behaved themselves like men of another nation, defending their ditches stoutly: for they would maintain one side till our men put their pieces over at the other and then, having lines of communication from one ditch to another, they would presently post themselves again and flank us."*
>
> *W&P, p. 223*

In the center, the Williamites advanced under a friendly bombardment from 18 heavy guns that lasted an hour and a half. The Jacobites replied with 9 pieces, to more effect; the Williamites were firing at extreme range, while the Jacobite targets were advancing toward them. Ginkel attempted to rectify the situation by advancing one battery some distance, on to a knoll in the bog. Danish observers also report the deployment of 2 batteries of 12-lbers along the Causeway; possibly to a knoll just before Melehan Bridge, or perhaps to another knoll further west.

The fight on the Jacobite right was intensifying, and St. Ruhe, unwisely, though it seemed safe to do so, began stripping units from the center and left. These movements were observed and the attack in the center picked up speed. By accident more than design, the Williamite line forked, with some units drifting south to aid the left wing and others achieving a penetration of the weakened northern sector, where 4 regiments stormed through waist deep muck and across a stream to the dry ground beyond.

Exhausted after three hours of intense fighting, the attackers halted and were driven back in a counter attack against their center that captured the forward battery. From his vantage point on Kilcommadan, St. Ruhe cried out, "*Le Jour est à nous, mes enfants*". Only the timely intervention of a fresh Dutch battalion from the second line, and the judicious use of *chevaux-de-frise*, saved the Williamite center from collapsing. The Jacobites were chased back, and the fight moved into the bocage.

Dusk was coming on, and Ginkel had yet to achieve victory. There was one last throw to make. Gambling that the other assaults had drawn off sufficient enemy units, he ordered the attack along the Causeway to begin. At first, they could make no headway. The horses recoiled from the heavy fire being directed on the lead units, until a series of fortuitous events fell into Ginkel's lap.

Tristaun River at Attibrassil Bridge, looking east toward the advancing Williamites. This area was thick with dismounted dragoons. Sarsfield's troopers, a battery, and supporting infantry awaited the enemy off camera to the left, and behind (Author's photo).

St Ruhe saw what was happening and was galloping over at the head of his bodyguard, only to fall lifeless from a freak chain-shot that took his head away. Concurrently, Oxford's Regiment of Horse – the famous Blues – made a mad dash down the Causeway, two abreast, and spilled into the dry fields beyond, into the gap between the Jacobite infantry and its cavalry wing. The defenders in the castle were out of ammunition. Instantly, more regiments followed. The day could still have been saved, but instead of counterattacking, Sheldon and Luttrell took their horsemen off the field and vanished! They later claimed their horses were stiff from standing all day and that there was no room to mount a charge.

[Apparently, the castle's defenders had been issued the wrong calibre of ammunition – English instead of French.]

[The shot that killed St. Ruhe is usually said to have come from the forward center battery – the one that that changed hands twice – but it may have been fired from the batteries set up by the Causeway.]

Major General Ruvigny is usually cited as the leader of the cavalry charge. Boulger states that the attack was led by the Huguenots, but this is a mistake. Ruvigny directed the attack, but his regiment, the ex-Schomberg's Horse, was on the other flank. Actually, Ruvigny and s'Gravemœr held joint command. The Blues and Villier's Horse formed an advance guard, led by Sir Francis Compton, Colonel of the Blues, and the remaining regiments followed them.

The charge very nearly did not happen. General Mackay ordered it, but could not persuade the cavalry to advance for love or money. Finally, he rode down the Causeway, a lone horseman, all the way to the end. Spurring his horse at a wall, the creature stumbled and he was thrown; he had to make his way back on foot, dishevelled and sore. Then it took a second impassioned speech to move the two brigades.

The battle was not over. It took time for the Williamite right to roll up the Jacobite line. But the defenders' new commander, *de* Tessé, was hardly aware he had been promoted before he was down with multiple wounds leading a countercharge against the Williamite left. He was still alive, however, and refused to give Sarsfield, the only remaining active commander, the authority to run the battle. The latter did what he could. Successful on the right, the Jacobite foot thought at first that the troopers coming along the ridge were reinforcements. Some battalions broke, but others fought their way out, aided by the remaining cavalry – Sarsfield's and Galmoy's horse – who wore themselves out riding about the field.

The Jacobite Army was annihilated, yet only for the moment. Losses would have been heavier if the Williamite cavalry had been able to pursue, but it was now dark. Ginkel offered sixpence per captured musket, but there were so many he reduced the price to tuppence. The next day, naked bodies could be seen littering the landscape for 4 miles around.

The Verdict

Casualty reports vary. The highest total is of 7,000 Jacobite dead on the field – a 50% casualty rate – including 400 officers and 80 priests (who not only gave sacraments but led charges). Lord Galway was the highest member of society to be killed. There were 450 prisoners, including many of the gentry. Worst of all, the Jacobites lost all their guns, all their baggage, 11 cavalry standards, and 32 infantry standards. Equipment losses were the worst blow. As should be clear by now, the Jacobites at the Boyne and Aughrim were quite well armed, but they kept throwing the muskets away, meaning yet another convoy had to come from France before they could risk engaging the enemy.

Lest the Williamites be thought to have triumphed unnaturally, let it be noted that the highest loss estimate for them is 5,000 dead: about 25%. Other estimates include one giving equal losses of 4,000 and 4,000, compared with a detailed report of 673 killed and 1071 wounded on the Williamite side; the estimate for the Jacobites in this case is 4,000.

Sheldon and Luttrell were universally condemned for their "betrayal". *A Light to the Blind* commented, "*and so let them keep their priding cavalry to stop bottles with*," and, "*trickery and grave treachery were shown by the officer who stood at our walls, fatal Aughrim, in a narrow passage* [now known as Luttrell's Pass], *stationed as an insuperable obstacle to the enemy, had not the guard been removed*".

Luttrell later received a pension from King William, though it should be remembered that the peace terms were quite lenient to those who submitted quickly. It should also be remembered that *all* the Jacobite cavalry, not just the generals, consisted of those wealthy enough to afford their own horses, and who were looking for ways to end the conflict and preserve their estates.

Aughrim did not have the same international impact as the Boyne. Win or lose, the armies in Ireland were isolated from the grand struggle. *If* Ginkel had lost, there might have been a greater stir, but the Irish were doomed anyway. With the death of the French War Minister Louvois a few days before, any hope that France would make capital out of a Jacobite win also died. Aughrim only mattered to the Irish, and to day it is merely a footnote to the Boyne, though their performance against a professional army was a hundredfold better in 1691.

[The battle site is so little regarded that the authorities laid a motorway across it. All the visitor has to guide him are a set of signs scattered about the countryside, half buried in the weeds. The Boyne, in contrast, boasts a visitors' center, museum, audiovisual displays, and gift shop. It is odd how a country can often make more capital out of a shameful defeat. Of course, the Boyne site was originally preserved by the victors.]

Report to King Christian V of Denmark from the Duke of Württemburg (pp. 118-123 in DF):

A full account of the main engagement at Aughrim between the armies of King William and King James on Sunday 12 July last.

'After the taking of the fortress and castle of Athlone and thereby securing the crossing of the difficult River Shannon, a delay of ten days was found to be necessary in order to obtain much needed supplies; almost the entire supply of shot had been used up, for 12,000 rounds from the batteries and 3,600 from the field guns had been shot away. In addition, the breaches were repaired. On Saturday 11 July the army, with 30 cannon, marched to Ballinislo[e], which is an old castle situated on the River Suck. The enemy had left such outposts four days earlier and had selected a camp site at A[u]ghrim, three miles away on the road to Galway. Gen. St. Ruth himself had chosen this advantageous site with the intention of making a stand there and to that end had assured the Irish that any attack by us on such a good position would undoubtedly be defeated. In the morning the officers and men received the Sacrament and were encouraged by the chaplains to win or die. The intention had been to cross the river and camp on the other bank on that same day, but as all the artillery and baggage were still far behind and could not come up before midnight because of the continuously narrow defiles, Gen. Ginkel resolved to camp on this side. The bridge was occupied by a strong infantry guard and strong cavalry pickets were sent across the river to observe the position and movements of the enemy.

'On Sunday 12 July the army crossed the river. The foot marched over the bridge while the horse rode through the water at two places on the left and on the right of the bridge. The enemy had posted small parties of sentinels on the high ground, and some enemy officers appeared to observe our movements. As soon as the army had crossed, Rittmeister Dewitz was ordered with some advanced troops to drive in the enemy outposts, and some squadrons were ordered up to support him. The advanced troops engaged the enemy with great vigour and drove them back into their camp. Thereupon the General Staff reconnoitred the position of the enemy camp, while our army advanced in battle order as far as the terrain would allow. The enemy was encamped upon a great height; his left flank was at the foot of the hill, and the castle and village of Aughrim lay in front of his positions – he had occupied these with one regiment of foot and two of dragoons. As soon as the enemy became aware of our advance he moved out of his camp in battle order and took up position on the heights, setting his main effort against our left wing, because his left wing was to some extent covered by the Castle of Aughrim, while the marsh came to an end some distance beyond his right wing. Here he sent forward cavalry and infantry from the hill down to the low ground where the situation made it possible for him to lodge his infantry very strongly, covered by numerous hedges and breastworks. Here, on our left flank, it appeared that the greatest effort would be made because of the more open ground, and Gen. Ginkel decided to strengthen the left wing with two regiments of horse, that of Maj.-Gen. Ruvigny (this was the regiment of the old Duke Schomberg) and that of Maj.-Gen. Lanier, each consisting of six squadrons. Our left began the action by advancing against the enemy right. The enemy had put a detachment into some houses at a point where our men had to defile because of the bog, and Cunningham's Dragoons were ordered to drive them out of the houses, while Major General La Forest was ordered to support them with the Dragoon Guards and Portland's Regiment. The enemy retired as soon as they saw our advance, but Cunningham's Dragoons followed them with too much energy farther than they had been ordered, so that the enemy pushed forward some squadrons and battalions and drove them

back upon the two regiments, which, however, held firm, beat the enemy back and occupied the positions. Meanwhile the regiments of our left were advancing as rapidly as the ground would allow; it was all cut up by the marsh and by hedges and banks, and was, moreover, quite strange to us. Foot by foot more ground was occupied on our left wing, to ensure that the enemy should not fall upon our flank, and also to improve our chances of attacking the enemy where some open country leading to the high ground could be seen, and eighteen cannon, 9-pounders, 6-pounders and 3-pounders were brought forward and placed here and there. The enemy also moved but could scarcely close with us because of the boggy ground. The enemy's army consisted of 63 [33?] battalions and 8,000 cavalry and dragoons, making 27,000 effective fighting men. We had no more than 17,000 effectives because of the many parties detached on convoy duty, and were further reduced by the garrison of Athlone. Our right wing advanced towards the bog where the enemy's left was in position. The foot advanced through the bog, while the cavalry defiled over a paved causeway which led towards the castle. Beyond the castle and the bog there was firmer ground and some space in which troops could form up in battle order. The English units had the right wing while the allied troops were all on the left, according to the order of battle. The afternoon was almost gone before contact was made, but about 6 p.m. our right and our left wings both began their attack on the enemy. The right went forward and won some ground through the bog, the left did likewise on the hill. The enemy resisted much more vigorously than we had expected, but had much advantage over us, his position, the sun, the wind and his greater numbers. The fight was fiercely disputed on this side and on that, the issue was much in doubt and for two hours nobody could be sure how the victory would go, for our right could not dislodge the enemy from the castle and the bog was very difficult to pass, which was to be regretted because the enemy could all the more easily bring all his force against our left wing. Twelve 12-pounder guns were brought forward over the paved causeway, and set up on a little hill which was in the middle of the bog. Under the fire of these guns four battalions passed over the bog out of musket-shot from the castle. Meanwhile the other battalions passed over the paved causeway together with the cavalry, in spite of the musketry from the castle. The above mentioned four battalions, after they had passed the difficult bog, advanced too far towards the high ground and did not wait for the others. The enemy advanced upon them very fiercely with horse and foot, and after some resistance they were repulsed and forced to retreat in confusion over the bog. Col. Foulck's [Foulkes] Regiment lost two flags, two English colonels were made prisoners; one of them was liberated later. The battalions on the left wing also attempted to make their last effort at this time; the enemy did the same. The action began to look very desperate on our side when, very luckily, three horse regiments, among them the Oxford Regiment, commanded by Maj.-Gen. Ruvigny, opened a passage for themselves fifty paces from the castle, formed up and drove the enemy back, and gave time for the rest of the cavalry from the right flank to come up, for these had to defile in twos, and this changed the aspect of the whole affair. Nevertheless the Irish kept up their fire with renewed vigour and drove back some regiments, but others stood firm and came to pike thrusts with them. Some of the Irish officers were so full of valour that they leaped over our chevaux-de-frise. Several battalions were cut off, especially those that stood in the corps de bataille, but the Danish cavalry was ordered to support them in all haste, and these restored the situation at that point with conspicuous dash. The Danish battalions were at no time repulsed, but moved forward foot by foot, until finally four enemy battalions fell upon Your Majesty's Guards, in the hope of wiping them out, but were repulsed with great steadiness and courage with well aimed and well timed fire. The Regiment of Ruvigny, composed entirely of French Protestants, charged with sword in hand into the enemy squadrons and engaged King James's Guard who defended themselves very bravely and lost 72 dead and wounded, and would have lost more had they not worn cuirasses. The Regiment of Lanier also did very well. Meanwhile the enemy had dismounted his dragoons, but was charged with such fury that his right wing was hurled back; at the same time the English drove back the enemy's left wing, so that both his wings were thrown into confusion and took to their heels. Whereupon our cavalry began to cut them down, and would have destroyed all their infantry had there been two more hours of daylight. 7,000 enemy dead lie on the field of battle, and they have lost a very large number of officers. On this occasion they disputed the victory very vigorously and showed themselves to be brave soldiers. The great victory must be ascribed to our Lord God, as the enemy was so strong and it was so difficult to make headway against him when his second line moved up to his first and must be engaged as much as his first. Just at the beginning of the action General St. Ruth was killed by a cannon-ball. Mylord Galway is dead, as are Brigadier Barcker, Col. Moor, Lt.-Col. Baggot, Lt.-Col. Morgon; 4-00 officers lay dead on the field. Major-General Hamilton is a prisoner, as are Maj.-Gen. Dorrington, Brigadier Guile [Tuite], Brigadier Gordon Onial [O'Neill], Cols. Mylord Detlon [Dillon], Mylord Slane, Mylord Kilmore [Kenmare], Mylord Bophin, Mylord Grace, Walter Bourcke, Clonmel [?Connell], Butler, Lt.-Cols. Roberts, Brodier, Butler, Chappil, Lawles, Will. Bourcke, Majors Edmond Butler, Kellons [Kelly], Lawlis, 29 captains, 3 I lieutenants, 20 ensigns, 4 cornets, 5 quartermasters and 4-15 common soldiers. Lt.-Gen. Tesse is also wounded. 14 standards and 33 flags were taken, as well as a pair of kettle drums. On our side Maj.-Gen. Holzapfel is dead, with Col. Her [bert], Col. Munchgaar. Dead from the cavalry are 5 rittmeisters, 3 lieutenants, I cornet and 400 troopers; cavalry wounded are 1 major, 8 rittmeisters, 15 lieutenants, 13 cornets and 448 troopers. Infantry losses are: dead, 2 colonels, 4 majors, 13 captains, 9 lieutenants, 12 ensigns, 637 common soldiers; wounded are 3 colonels, 3 lieutenant colonels, 3 majors, 23 captains, 33 lieutenants, 24 ensigns, and 669 common soldiers.'

Aftermath

Low Lie the Fields of Anthenry

After Aughrim, the Williamites began what they expected would be the final mopping up operations. Ginkel marched to Athenry, where he was visited by a deputation from Galway town. From its location on the edge of the Connaught Gaeltacht, one would expect Galway to be a Jacobite breeding ground. In fact, it was an island of Old English. Many of its inhabitants had profited from the Act of Settlement or had purchased land from impoverished Gaelic nobles. The town had voted against a repeal of the act in James' Parliament. Hearing of the new peace proposals, the citizens thus responded warmly.

The garrison consisted of 7 badly understrength regiments (*or 6: possibly 6 regiments making 7 battalions*) totalling 2,500 men. There were also 6 guns. They were commanded by *Lieutenant Général* d'Usson, who was living in daily expectation of a court-martial at the hands of St. Ruhe until word came of the latter's death. This did not predispose him to make energetic preparations. The civilian governor was Lord Dillon.

D'Usson had asked for an additional 1,500 men from Limerick, but had been refused. The question now was whether relief could be obtained from Balldearg O'Donnell, whose army was located somewhere in the wilds of Connaught.

Balldearg had come back to Ireland from Spain to take part in the war just before the siege of Limerick in 1690, but he had been "slighted" by Tyrconnel, who only gave him a brigadier's commission despite his having managed to raise 13 battalions and 3 squadrons – some 9,100 men. Richard Talbot, being only titular Earl Tyrconnel while Balldearg was the real thing, and believing the latter wanted to restore a Gaelic Ireland, was not disposed to aid a rival and deliberately kept him in want of supplies, siphoning off his best men for the Jacobite Army. In consequence, they became:

> "*a rabble that destroyed the country, ruined the inhabitants and prevented the regular forces from drawing that subsistence that they might otherwise have had from the people*"
>
> *W&P, p. 237*

Galway lay on a narrow neck of land between the sea and Lough Corrib, with the Corrib River along its western wall. A bridge over the river was guarded by an outwork. But the weakness of the town was that it lay beneath high ground to the east. Advanced works had been hastily thrown up to hold this ground, but they were undermanned. The citadel had only 8 guns.

Balldearg was on the march from his base near Sligo, but, encouraged by secret visitations from the town, who all said Galway would surrender if the Williamites merely made a show of strength, Ginkel threw caution to the winds and decided not to wait for his artillery. He had been hoping the Navy would send a squadron to blockade Galway Bay, but they resisted the idea – the West Coast was no place to station ships – only appearing after the town fell.

On July 19th, Ginkel advance on the town. The Jacobites retreated, burning the suburbs. The peace proclamation of July 9th was read out, but d'Usson and Dillon decided on defiance, arresting the mayor and some others for corresponding with the enemy. On the night of 19/20, however, a party of Williamites rode Ginkel's tin toys down the Corrib to cut the town off from relief. Balldearg was not that far away, but he retreated into Mayo on learning the town was isolated.

That morning, Ginkel's men carried the outworks on the eastern high ground, the Jacobite commander, Clanricarde, withdrawing some of his men without orders. Left without options (the walls were barely defensible), Dillon sued for terms without consulting d'Usson.

The bargaining that went on here became the model for the surrender of Limerick, which was itself the general surrender of the Jacobites. The main alteration from the original offer was that civilians, exiles, and prisoners of war were to be included in any peace terms. The garrison of Galway was given the option of staying in Galway or marching, with honours of war, to Limerick. Ginkel was heavily criticised by both parliaments, but Queen Mary, acting for her husband in Flanders, approved. Delay would mean another year of war:

> "*and then we know what will be the effect; for to be baffled now means another year, and there needs little explanation to know what force outwards is necessary to blockade twenty thousand men in a double city [Limerick]"*
>
> *W&P. p. 195*

The articles were signed on July 21st. D'Usson, shut out of the process, commented bitterly,

> *"he who today is ready to die rather than submit to the prince of Orange will tomorrow talk loudly about the need for a settlement"*
>
> *W&P, p. 235.*

To Hell or Connaught

The Williamites had now split the country in two. In the north, only Sligo and Balldearg's army remained a threat, and preparations were already afoot to deal with them. In the south, the Jacobites were confined to Limerick and Co Clare.

The redoubtable Teague O'Regan commanded at Sligo. Until the fall of Galway, the main threat had been from Ulster, from which a column under Colonel John Mitchelbourne, commander of the Erne front, had approached with a force of one and a half regiments of foot, 1 troop of Conygnham's Dragoons, 1 troop of Wynne's Dragoons, and a large body of militia.

But the Williamites would try negotiations first. After suffering light losses in June, when his scouts were surprised fishing in the Bundrowes, Mitchelbourne open correspondence with Sligo.

Things looked black for the Irish. The news of Aughrim was just part of the general picture. In an action at Ballysadare Bridge on July 23rd, O'Regan was nearly captured as his post was overrun. (Supposedly he escaped because the Williamite troopers did not think he looked like a commanding officer).

O'Regan was given a copy of the July 9th proclamation. It seemed fair enough to him, and it was agreed that he would surrender if not relieved in 10 days. He even allowed 40 Protestants to leave the town (useless mouths). On the 26th, with his forces beginning to invest Sligo, Mitchelbourne wrote again:

> *"Sir, You must needs be very sensible of your own weakness by the news you have of your army being totally beaten, how that they are not able to stand before us. So pray seriously consider it. I presume you have not yet seen the lords justices' proclamation which I enclosed send you. You have an opportunity to do yourself and your friends a kindness if you do but lay hold of this opportunity in treating with me as to the surrender of Sligo.*
>
> *I am, Sir, your humble servant,*
>
> *John Mitchelbourne.*
>
> *I thank you for your present of the cask of claret you sent me. Be pleased to accept of a bottle of usquebaugh [whiskey] and some good London snuff."*
>
> *W&P, p. 176.*

Mitchelbourne knew O'Reagan well enough, and the latter's second in command had served with him in the same regiment before the war. What Mitchelbourne did not know was that O'Regan was also in touch with Balldearg O'Donnell. He asked the latter to make a demonstration. O'Regan had agreed to surrender, effective August 15th. Before that date, Balldearg O'Donnell's men made an appearance, and Mitchelbourne retreated with egg on his face. The Gaelic chieftain's approach, by all the rules of siege warfare, allowed O'Regan to back out of his agreement to surrender (though the Williamites squealed "foul").

> *"The foolishness of Colonel Mitchelbourne before Sligo had encouraged that place to defend itself and O'Donnell to ply one of his Irish tricks instead of submitting as he intended"*
>
> *W&P, p. 238*

Mitchelbourne was ticked off and subordinated to the Earl of Granard (one of King James' original Protestant Irish generals who had changed sides) for the duration of the campaign.

However, Balldearg was already in correspondence with Baron Ginkel in hopes of being able to take his men over to Flanders as a brigade in William's service. He also wanted to recover his estates and title – the O'Donnells, remember, were the original Earls of Tyrconnel. But the negotiations were stuck. He hoped, by behaving threateningly, to show that his wishes should not be disregarded. Mitchelbourne was not privy to these negotiations.

Still the drama was not played out. O'Donnell now changed sides, leaguing with a column under Albert Conynghham that was approaching from the south while Mitchelbourne came down again from the north. They attacked Sligo, only to be repulsed with ignominy. Many of Balldearg's men were not happy with his sudden change of allegiance, and he had had to spend a lot of Williamite guineas to keep them loyal.

The Williamites had got as far as Collooney by September 4th. The next morning there was a thick fog, out of which suddenly emerged 700 Jacobites under Colonel Edward Scott, Sligo's deputy governor. Conyngham was slain when his horse bolted into the enemy ranks. Balldearg escaped with his skin but little else.

[Conyingham might have been spared, but he revealed his identity to the wrong man, who held a grudge: "Sir Halbert you are, and by this halbert you shall die." (W&P, p. 146).]

But Sligo was now properly invested. Balldearg was detached to take Ballymote. At Drumcliffe, only a half mile from Sligo, on September 10th, Mitchelbourne's column forced its way into the town on the 11th. O'Regan still held the Green Fort with 600 men and 16 guns.

Lord Granard arrived from the south on the 13th with 5,000 men. He also brought cannon. A battery was erected against the Green Fort the same day. Though these were only field pieces, Granard managed to bluff the defenders into thinking he had a siege train. They surrendered on September 14th, under the articles originally laid out by Mitchelbourne – full honours of war. The garrison was permitted to march for Limerick.

[The guns had been brought over the Curlews. General Douglas had been right. All the horses collapsed and the pieces had to be manhandled the rest of the way.]

[Full honours of war in this case amounted to the following: "with their arms and baggage, drums beating, colours flying, match lighted and bullets in their mouths." (W&P. pp. 178-179). The capture of Sligo was deemed important enough to rate its featuring on a commemorative coin along with Athlone and Galway.]

Second Limerick

> *"My opinion was always to finish the war by giving the Irish a free pardon, if it could be done soonest that way; for one summer's war costs the king more than all the forfeitures will amount to."*
>
> *Baron Ginkel*

King John's Castle, Limerick. from across the Shannon. Thomond Bridge is off camera to the left (note the road). In the foreground is the Treaty Stone, on which the final surrender is alleged to have been signed. The signing is not supposed to have taken place here, but in the castle, in the complex to the right of that red/brown building in the background. (Author's photo).

After Aughrim, Tyrconnel, his star once more in the ascendant, tried to obtain more French soldiers. He now advocated fighting on, though this was primarily because Sarsfield & Co. were for giving up. Passage to France was no longer an easy matter, and one of the two envoys, Lord Abercorn, was killed in a naval skirmish. Versailles could not spare troops, but did decide to send another large convoy to replace the equipment losses. The season was advanced, and it ought to be possible to keep the Williamites in Ireland for another year.

A review of the Jacobite Army was held in August. Tyrconnel had called a *levee en masse*. After Aughrim they had had 8,140 foot, 2,400 horse, and 2,360 dragoons. only half of the foot had weapons. Now there were 18,000 Foot, 3,000 Horse, and 2,500 Dragoons. Again, only half the foot were armed. Morale was very low. According to the French Commissary, Fumeron:

> *"If they hold out to October, as we are urging them to do so as to gain the winter, it is only in the hope that some have of getting help from France to enable them to drive out the enemy, and that others have that the king will send enough ships to bring them to France with their regiments; for without that I think that they will capitulate to Ginkel this winter, if fear does not make them do so sooner."*
>
> *W&P, pp. 240-241*

[It can be seen that the cavalry, composed of landowners and thus not so easily replaceable, nevertheless maintained its strength throughout the war.]

Most of the French believed the best thing would be to send the Irish out of the country and replace them with French regulars. The Jacobites were already "hitting on them" for money to pay the cavalry so it would not desert. The cavalry's price was 50,000 *livres*.

The problem was not so much the rank and file as the officers. One day they were up, the next they were down. Tyrconnel, by now very sick, yet hopeful the French could carry them through another year, drafted an Oath of Fidelity. No one was to bargain individually or surrender without King James' permission. Made with all the solemnity of the Roman Catholic rites, breaking this oath would result in excommunication. But it only bound them to fight until the spring.

Then, like a flash of lightning, it was suddenly revealed that the Luttrells were in correspondence with the enemy. Henry Luttrell was arrested by his erstwhile friend, Sarsfield, courtmartialed and imprisoned. He was not executed as the French desired, first because there were those who were opposed to his arrest, second, because Ginkel threatened to shoot some of his prisoners, and third, because it was the French who wanted him hanged.

It turns out that Luttrell had casually chatted with a Williamite officer escorting him on the road from Galway to Limerick, and the two had fallen to discussing the general situation. Luttrell made some comments that, taken out of context, were treasonous (they were dubious even in context).

That was the official line, and Luttrell was court-martialled for talking to the enemy. There was a deeper plot, however, implicating Luttrell's superior, General Sheldon. Letters were passing between the lines. One of them landed on Sarsfield's desk by accident and the fat was in the fire. Sheldon *et al* were offering to "expedite the surrender". Luttrell's reward was a pension of £500 from King Billy.

[Conspiracy theorists placed Sheldon's treachery as far back as Aughrim, or before. He was an English Catholic and a supporter of James II. The Luttrell family's lands were outside Dublin, which may be why that party was so eager to get the war over with.]

Though Sarsfield has always been labelled the leader of his own faction, there were many who believed he was too dumb. They claimed the Luttrells and Purcells ran the faction and used him as a figurehead. At least he was an honourable man. He displayed no hesitation in exposing Luttrell' s treachery.

[Luttrell did not escape "justice". In 1717 he was gunned down on his own doorstep. Up the Republic.]

A few days later, Tyrconnel suffered a massive stroke. He died amid rumours of poison (probably baseless) on August 14th. The news was speedily passed to King James, who appointed a commission of three lord justices, two of them English, to replace him. Though Tyrconnel had many enemies his passing was mourned by the moderates. With his death the tie with France and King James was severed.

[Tyrconnel was not poisoned deliberately, but he had been drinking ratafia, which is crushed peach stones in brandy, There is a high concentration of hydrogen cyanide in peach stones. So he may have poisoned himself.]

The Last Siege of Limerick

> *BEFORE Limerick, 29 Sept. 1691. 'My last was dated Sept. 23. I humbly report that those in the town began to capitulate that very evening, and a settlement was reached only today. The capitulation will be signed early tomorrow, and at the same time the town will be occupied. It is a very comprehensive capitulation, for they have made terms at the same time for County Kerry, as also for Claire and for the entire cavalry as well. The most important provision of the capitulation is that all who so desire will enjoy the benefit of the capitulation, and then whatever troops wish to go to France will be permitted to do so and will be taken across in English ships. So ends the Irish war. Our transports which were to have brought us to Flanders were already in readiness; now, however, they will be used to take the Irish to France, which must delay our arrival. With my next I shall send Your Majesty the complete state of your troops. Mortality has been very moderate this year and, thank God, we have few sick.'*
>
> *Letter of Duke of Württemburg to King Christian V of Denmark*

The siege of Limerick got off to a slow start. Ginkel's army took a month to move from Galway to the town, travelling securely by way of Banagher, over the Shannon to Birr, Nenagh, and so down to Co. Limerick. The baron hoped he could repeat the

negotiations at Galway and end the war without further bloodshed.

Of his generals, only Württemburg favoured a formal siege, but the Protestants bayed for a crushing victory. A blockade would only,

> *"induce the factious to hold out, reconcile their animosities and expect help from France; and before they can be starved out the year will be so far gone that it will be too late to send any of the forces hence to any part of the world."*
>
> *W&P, pp. 243-244*

And, they wanted the Catholics to understand they were a conquered people. King William chimed in, wanting his regiments to come to Flanders before the winter seas made travel difficult.

Nevertheless, Ginkel issued the *Declaration of Nenagh* on August 11th. This extended the July amnesty deadline by 10 days and offered employment for those in positions of authority who surrendered their charges. It received minimal response.

Bad weather also played a part. The artillery train took ages to arrive, so a formal siege was hardly a possibility throughout August. On the 25th, Ginkel brought his main force before the town, occupying Ireton's and Cromwell's Forts. The Jacobites remained within their walls. The wet weather made digging trenches a nightmare, and because the bog did not go away this time, the guns had to be sited further away. The Navy brought in a parcel of "super heavies". The cannonade began on September 8th, with 25 24-lbers and 18-lbers beating on the walls, field guns firing hot shot, and mortars lobbing bombs. The noise was "tremendous".

So was the damage. A breach was made and fires broke out in the town, which suffered heavily. This time, Ginkel had tried siting a battery to the northeast, across the Abbey River, where it could hit English Town. The Jacobites countered by unmasking a battery of 8 guns on the flats on the northern tip of King's Island and sending a raiding party across the river to burn a pile of woolsacks that were to have been used to assist a river assault. The besiegers collected empty barrels to replace them, but in the end, Ginkel decided an attack across the Abbey would be too dangerous – King's Island was well defended with an additional palisade outside the town wall.

It was a week later, on the night of September 15/16, that the Williamites made a reconnaissance across the Shannon upriver from the town. The Shannon made a great loop at this point, and at the apex the Williamites built a pontoon bridge into Co. Clare. Hesitatingly, tentatively, with great caution, the Orangemen crept across, ready to dash back at the least sign of trouble.

Surprisingly, the nearest picquets of Jacobite dragoons, under Brigadier Clifford, made little resistance. In fact, they fled after making a demonstration. Clifford could have saved the town and given King William a respiratory attack. Instead, *again*, the Jacobite cavalry blew it. All the Horse, which had been grazing on the Co. Clare side of the Shannon, withdrew to Ennis, while the Foot and the Dragoons rushed for Thomond Bridge. Ginkel also blew it. He was too surprised to take advantage of the situation. He garrisoned the pontoon bridge with a battalion and pulled the rest of his forces back.

On the 16th, a new declaration extended the amnesty deadline by another 8 days; Ginkel tried to reassure the Jacobites that the Protestant parliament was not trying to sabotage the peace, but:

> *"if they should still continue obstinate and neglect to lay hold on this favour, which is the last that will be offered them, they must be answerable for the blood and destruction they draw upon themselves; for I hereby acquit myself before God an the world and wash my hands of it."*
>
> *W&P, p. 247.*

The End

Jacobite morale was very near a general collapse. The French officers believed the cavalry was gone for good – they had no communication with it. But Limerick might hold to the end of the season, if the French convoy arrived in time. For their part, the French had command of the sea, temporarily, some of their ships had even been spotted in the Shannon, long the preserve of a RN squadron, and they still believed succour would come.

Tyrconnel's last testament became public. In it he urged the Jacobites to surrender. The Church had agreed that this would not break the Oath of Fidelity, since it was a dying request. He made the assumption that James II would honour the peace. The lords justices (a parcel of despised Englishmen) were given ruling authority.

> *"that the King of France would send no more help, and that therefore the Irish had no alternative to making the best terms they could with the Prince of Orange."*
>
> *Boulger, p.259*

Tyrconnel claimed he had only spoken of continued resistance to avoid being done down by "the Desponders" among them. The French were merely using the Irish and would depart when their convoy arrived. The Jacobites now asked that the French immediately issue pay to the troops, which the officers did, mostly out of their own pockets.

The Williamites were not immune to black moods. Ginkel was sure he had run out of time. He had already begun to load his siege guns onto the ships. In his mind, only the Royal Navy could save him from having to come back next year by intercepting the French. Then the town would likely capitulate.

But a break was coming. First, the French convoy was late. The Royal Navy had nothing to do with this, their ships had been dispersed by the French Fleet. But the weather was bad, and internal policy wrangles further delayed matters. Admiral Château-Renault was ordered to sail on September 28 (already a month behind schedule) but had not loaded his ships even by then. They left Brest on October 3th – the day the peace treaty was signed.

[The French even captured two RN frigates, but these had to be handed back.]

Second, Ginkel bethought himself of one last play. He decided, despite his inferior forces, to fully invest Limerick, and crossed the Shannon on the 22nd of September. When the Jacobites in the redoubt that covered Thomond Bridge saw a large force approaching them from upriver on the Co. Clare side, they panicked. Ginkel's men assaulted the outwork and took it. The Jacobites fled along the narrow bridge only to find the gate shut against them. The French town major had ordered it closed.

> *"Before the killing was over they were laid in heaps upon the bridge higher than the ledges of it"*
>
> *W&P, p. 248.*

[Exactly why the gate – it was a tower and drawbridge affair on the town side of the Shannon – was shut was never fully known. The Frenchman was mortally wounded soon after.]

The next day a council of war was called. The French and Irish accounts of the proceedings are exactly the same, except for the cover page:

Irish: "*The reasons the French generals gave Major-General Wauchope and Lord Lucan for the capitulation*".

French: "*Motives that led the Irish to capitulate, the general officers being assembled in council of war*".

The "Irish reasons" were as follows: no provender and no sign of the French – and even if the French did arrive, Williamite batteries on the Shannon and Williamite ships in the estuary would deny them access.

The same evening, Sarsfield and General Wauchope went to the Williamite camp to ask for a ceasefire. The war was over.

Extract from the journal of the Duke of Württemburg to King Christian V of Denmark

(quoted from *DF*, pp. 130-135)

25 AUG. 1691. 'We advanced before the town with the army, which then had a strength of 32 battalions and [5-6,000 cavalry and dragoons. 1,200 men from the right and left wings formed the advance guard, followed by the cavalry. At the same time an attempt was made to attack the earthworks thrown up on the heights occupied by the enemy. However, on our approach he abandoned them without any particular resistance, and we then occupied them.'

26 Aug. 'Work on our side was begun on making a line of contravallation, a musket shot from the enemy's counterscarp. We continued the work that night and for four days more, and during that time lost over 100 men, including Col. Donop of the cavalry.'

3 I Aug. to 2 Sept. 'Two batteries were prepared on the left flank, one of nine and the other of ten guns, and also a sunken battery, in which stood eight mortars.'

3 Sept. 'We began throwing bombs from the sunken battery and firing from one battery at their bridge on the far side which crosses the Schanon [sic] from the town [Thomond Bridge]. The bombs, however, were not very effective, as very few burst. The guns also did not quite reach the bridge and so little damage was done to it. Some of the bombs fell right over the town, as it is long in one direction and very narrow; it has no more than two streets throughout its length. Accordingly on our side a position a quarter of a mile to the right was considered more suitable from which to bombard and cannonade the two towns, because opinions with regard to a formal siege and assault were very much divided.'

4- to 6 Sept. 'Accordingly two batteries, one of 16 24-pounders and one of five 18-pounders, were prepared at that point, some redoubts were thrown up, and a line drawn as far as the river.'

7 and 8 Sept. 'A position was occupied down at the river in front of the island, so as to be able to put about 100 men on it.'

9 and 10 Sept. 'Two mortars were brought up on the Montpagnon and another battery set up of eight 18-pounders, from which to cannonade the Irish town and harass their batteries. On our side there were two objectives, that is, in case it should be possible to make a practicable breach in the town wall (which according to deserters' reports was weakest opposite the island), and to lay a pontoon bridge, either to storm the town or at least to take up a position on the island. By this time the guns had done a fair amount of damage to the wall and made a large breach. However, as the time of spring tides had come (so that within six days almost the whole island would be under water) we had to abandon our positions near the water on this side. The guns and mortars were then directed only against the houses and the English town and destroyed more than half of it, but only once set it on fire, which spread to their magazine of brandy, bread and flour.'

12 to 14- Sept. 'Bombardment and firing of red-hot shot went on day and night and should have set their powder magazine ablaze, but it would not catch fire. Accordingly, after various proposals had been made, it was finally decided unanimously to attempt to lay the bridge across the Schanon and, if that was possible, to cross with all speed with some battalions of foot and all the cavalry, and either fall on or cut off from the town the enemy cavalry, which was posted only three miles from the town-not all together, but encamped one regiment here and another there. According to deserters' statements they never had their horses at the hitching-posts, but always loose at grass.'

15 Sept. '200 grenadiers were detailed at night and put across on to a little island (lying only 4-5 paces from the far shore), together with a colonel, a lieutenant-colonel, a major, eight captains and 4-00 musketeers. For the work [of entrenchment] there were a colonel, a lieutenant-colonel, a major, twelve captains and 600 men. Then four battalions and all the cavalry were brought to the appointed place, and this evening also everything required for the bridge along with the chevaux-de-frise.'

16 Sept. 'After midnight work was begun on the bridge to the island on which the grenadiers were lying. All this proceeded as quietly as possible, and that night there was no sign of the enemy at all until towards dawn, when his patrols fired a few shots; but immediately afterwards all was quiet again. About 6.30 a.m. the bridge was ready to the island on which, as has been said, our grenadiers lay waiting. From this island there was a ford two and a half feet deep. The enemy encamped with three regiments of foot on the right a cannon-shot from our bridge at a defile, and as his patrols gave the alarm he formed up. On our left, somewhat further away than the infantry, were two regiments of dragoons encamped behind the hedges. They also assembled hurriedly, though only on foot, and began to advance against us with the infantry. But by their poor performance in marching and counter-marching enough time was gained on our side to bring over the detachment of infantry and a good part of the cavalry and dragoons. Our dragoons advanced on the right, chased the enemy from the hedges and bushes, and took up their position there dismounted. As soon as we thought ourselves strong enough to make headway against the enemy, we made our men advance. When the enemy, who had taken up a position in the ditches behind the embankments, noticed our approach, he began to run and his infantry withdrew to the rear into the marsh in complete confusion; his dragoons withdrew to the left into their camp. Our dragoons and cavalry pursued them, as far as the marshy nature of the ground would permit. Some of the enemy were cut down and a lieutenant-colonel with some troopers were taken prisoner. Our men took up a position on the high ground; meanwhile our left wing advanced along the Schanon, together with a number of squadrons of dragoons. The enemy dragoons were not given enough time to saddle their horses, but they jumped on them bareback and galloped off. So the enemy camp of two regiments, with a standard, many saddles, tents, some arms and other trifles which happened to be in the camp, became the booty of our men. The enemy cavalry could see all this and 'gained sufficient time to mount their horses, though not without confusion. Our corps, which had advanced from the town as far 'as their camp, had in the meantime got as far as the [enemy] camp. On this the enemy made as if to attack us, and thus gained enough time to strike his camp and rally to him all the scattered cavalry. On our side orders were given to advance by two routes and so far as possible to engage the enemy with the advance guard. The roads, however, were so deep [in mud] that it was impossible to continue the pursuit and get at the enemy and thus come to any definite action on this occasion, particularly because the enemy on the right had withdrawn right into the mountains. Towards midday our men came back, and in the meantime the Brandenburg regiment had posted a captain and 50 men on a causeway leading to the town, and had taken from the enemy two metal guns of 2 to 3 lbs. which he had left down by the water. Not far from that point there was a tower in the middle of the Schanon. The enemy held it with 16 men and the island nearby with 40 dragoons, all of whom surrendered at discretion after some of our men had gone across to them through the water. Our men occupied the positions and later marched back again over the bridge, except for the Brandenburg regiment which remained there until nightfall. Since to get to the bridge it was necessary to cross two stretches of water, and as various difficulties arose at this point, it was decided to take up the bridge. This day Lord Lisborn [Lisburn] was shot dead by a cannon-ball in his bed, which he had taken into the trenches as he wanted to supervise operations.'

17 Sept. 'The bridge was brought down opposite the island which had been taken, and laid again there. From the other side of the island a plank bridge on barrels was laid to the firm ground. Meanwhile the enemy cavalry marched some miles round and again took up a position beside the town, on the other side of the island on which the English town lies. On our side all eventualities were thoroughly considered and it was decided that here too the crossing from the island was too difficult for the cavalry.'

19 Sept. 'It was resolved to take up the bridge again and bring it a little way upstream and provide a redoubt on the other side.'

20 Sept. 'As the enemy became aware of this his cavalry struck camp on Sunday and marched to Sixmilebridge. So on our side the further decision was taken to cross with the cavalry and ten battalions and to try, cost what it might, to drive the enemy into the town or force him to give battle. However, as it was quite certain that, because of our army being divided, a sortie must be expected on this side, 22 battalions and 5,000 cavalry were to remain there.'

21 Sept. 'When the enemy had again broken camp, a council of war was held and orders given that the troops detailed should march across at 6 a.m.'

22 Sept. 'This was done, and the right wing had the advanced guard. The cavalry had to make a wide detour to the bridge on account of the deep marshes. So it was as late as 3 p.m. before all the men could reach the high ground in front of the town bridge. The enemy had taken up his position there with four battalions and about 100 dismounted dragoons. On our side 600 foot and some mounted troops were detailed to take possession of the enemy's position and make a lodgment in it, which took

place without any particular resistance. The enemy withdrew back again to the bridge, but the generals called out from the town that he should again advance against us. As soon as the enemy made to attack our detachment of 600 men, the town gate on the bridge was barred. Our men at once attacked the enemy; our men were supported by Col. Tiffin's battalion, and in case of need were to be reinforced by Brigadier the Prince of Darmstadt and the Brandenburg battalion. Things went so far that our men came to hand-to-hand fighting with the enemy, who wanted to take up a position on the bridge. Since, as already mentioned, the gate on the bridge was barred so that the enemy's men could neither get into the town nor come back again over the bridge, the result of the action was that not a man of the enemy got away. 200-300 were cut down on the bridge and many chased into the water; some retired into a mill, who would not surrender except as prisoners of war, and our men occupied the post, which lies 20 paces from the bridge. Of prisoners we took on this occasion one colonel, two lieutenant-colonels, 14 captains, three lieutenants, one ensign, 128 common soldiers, together with six flags. According to the enemy's own statement they lost over 600 men in this action. Under the heavy fire which the enemy kept up with muskets and cannon from the town, the dead and wounded on our side, together with those who were injured in making the communication works during the night, are about 300, including two captains and one ensign. Of the Danes there were Capt. Petersen and Lt. Donop with 15 common soldiers of the Queen's battalion and six common soldiers of Prince George's regiment, mostly mortally wounded; the officers with a very large number of common soldiers were shot from a tower on the bridge in the completely exposed position they had taken up. Meanwhile on this side of the town all were on the alert and sufficiently good dispositions were made to meet the enemy if he should make a sortie.'

23 Sept. 'Two enemy officers came out of the redoubt in front of the Dublin gate on this side, giving at the same time a signal to our post with a white cloth. So one of our men was sent to them to find out what they wanted. They explained to him that their generals, that is to say Wacop [Wauchope] and Sarsfeld [Sarsfield], wished to speak with ours, that is Lt.-Gen. Gravemoer [s'Gravemœr] and Maj.-Gen. Ruvigny. But when they were informed that they were not encamped on this side but on the other, they went back again into the town. Then Wacop and Sarsfeld showed themselves on the other side towards the land and spoke to our people. Not long afterwards a truce was made for three days, and it was notified on this side also, and orders were given that about midnight all firing from cannon and muskets should cease until further orders. Some officers were also sent out of the town to the enemy cavalry, who since our crossing were so scattered and dispersed that no more than 1,500 men remained together. They were to bring what was proposed to the knowledge of Gen. Shelton [Sheldon], and also to make it known that it was not intended to do anything with regard to the capitulation without the previous knowledge of the cavalry; accordingly Shelton, as commander of the cavalry, might come into the town.'

The signing of the treaty. The seated figure is General Ginkel. (Author's photo)

Finale

"Thus was Ireland, after an obstinate resistance in three years' campaigns, by the power and riches of England arid the revolt of almost all its own Protestant subjects, torn from its natural Sovereign, who though he was divested of the country, he was not wholly deprived of the profits, for the greatest part of those who were then in arms for defence of his right, not content with the service already rendered, got leave (as was sayd) to come and loos their lives after having lost their estates in defence of his title, and brought by that means such a body of men into France as by their generous comportment in accepting the pay of the country, instead of that which is usually allowed there to strangers, and their inimitable valour and service during the whole cours of the war, might justly make their Prince pass for an Ally rather than a Pentioner or burthen to his Most Christian Majesty, whose pay indeed they received, but acted by the King their Master's Commission."

(James Stuart's Memoirs, quoted in Boulger, p.282).

Ginkel gave the Jacobites a truce when it became clear they truly wanted to capitulate. He was happy to do so. The Williamites were also at the end of their rope. As far as the King was concerned, another year in Ireland was unacceptable.

The terms of the capitulation were likely to take some time. The military articles were not a problem, as Ginkel had full authority here, but this was not the surrender of a single fortress, but of an entire nation. Sarsfield, once the man most earnest for war, was the chief negotiator.

"[The] sudden prodigious change of Sarsfield who now appeared the most active of all commanders to forward the treaty, representing that provisions were giving out and that there was no hope for any terms after that… His authority made the Irish agree with much reluctancy. Sarsfield, who was believed to be the last man to harken to a treaty, was now the most earnest to push it on – a mystery which requires some further time to unravel".

W&P. p.211

At bottom, the cavalryman wanted to enter French service. During the negotiations, he first asked for an estate from King William, "for services rendered". When this was refused, he pressed for a guarantee that all who wanted to leave would be given passage to France. On top of that, he also secured the profits on a return journey for 300 tons of cargo.

[His troops would be sent first, then the cargo shipped. Then, if he still had no estate, he would go himself to France. Apparently he shipped several cargos. Customs, who gleefully impounded the "rebel" stores, was most annoyed to be told, more than once, to release them.]

The treaty as arranged so far only applied to Limerick. It could be extended to the other fortifications without much legal difficulty, since Ginkel was responsible for the entire war zone. The trouble began when the Jacobites attempted to extend the terms to cover POWs, the families of the combatants, and combatants who were not currently in Ireland. They also asked for a general indemnity and restoration of estates, plus freedom of worship and the removal of discriminatory laws against Catholics. The Jacobite Army was to transfer to William's service, and fight where he pleased, even against France. These articles must be ratified by Parliament so they could not be overthrown.

The latter terms were not pie in the sky. The Jacobites could have offered (at least in theory) to fight on. The generals believed they could last two months, even without French aid. William would not want that. But Ginkel did not have the authority to settle civil matters. He could only pass on the request to Dublin. From there came a set of twelve counterproposals, solely on behalf of those still in arms. The general civilian population was not to be included.

To his credit, Sarsfield demanded that the general population be included in the articles. Dublin reluctantly agreed – they were under pressure from William to get it over with – but the wording was left hazy. This led to the famous Missing Clause, which was mysteriously deleted while the lord justices were examining the final document. The Missing Clause gave opportunity for endless litigation. Its main effect was to create bad blood between the two sides, as the Protestants claimed the Catholics were trying to make additions to the treaty, while the latter charged the former had deliberately omitted it.

There was also Browne's Clause. Browne was the owner of an ironworks who had had his material confiscated after it had been pledged to a number of Protestants as payment for debts. In order to pay these debts, he was allowed to collect a charge on each restored estate. This clause generated reams of paper. Act of Parliament were even issued over it.

The Treaty of Limerick was signed on October 3rd, 1691. It consisted of 13 civil articles, all to be implemented within eight months. (There were also 29 military articles, but these lost their validity as soon as they had been implemented). Both sides thought the treaty favoured the other too much.

Hard fate still attends our Irish war,
The conquerors lose, the conquered gainers are;
Their pen's the symbol of our sword's defeat,
We fight like heroes but like fools we treat".

"A smart poem on the generous articles of Limerick and Galway", W&P p. 212.

William was now free to campaign in Flanders, though his troops would barely be ready in time. A proportion of them had to remain in Ireland in any case.

The Verdict

The *Cogadh an Dá Rí* as a whole is not well known. The Battle of the Boyne, however, is still famous. *That*, is for propaganda reasons, of course. In 1923 the IRA blew up the grotesque monument to the Protestant Ascendancy that had stood near the battlefield since 1736 (whatever one's politics, the obelisk *was* artistically tacky). But what impact did the war really have?

The international aspects were important at the time, and some continued to influence European affairs for decades. Immediately, the conflict tied down large numbers of King William's troops for a three year period, giving the French an easier time of it on their eastern front. However, in hindsight they did not make the best use of this "gift".

The only event of European stature was the Battle of the Boyne, which was hailed as a great victory for the Grand Alliance. But, since the war went on for another campaigning season, it proved of less advantage than originally hoped.

The most lasting effect was France's acquisition of the Stuart family, especially the heir, later to be known as the Old Pretender. Seen in that light, however, the Irish war becomes merely an episode in British politics, just as it was an episode in the War of the Grand Alliance. But from the perspective of domestic politics, the affair's impact was very great.

The Glorious Revolution, which completely changed the nature of monarchical government in Britain and introduced formalised party politics to the process, was guaranteed by the Williamite victory in Ireland. King James, if he had been restored, might have had to make concessions similar to those made by William and Mary, but it is unlikely. He might have purged his enemies, or he might have stalked off the stage in disgust, bringing Anne to the throne, but such ideas are only speculation. The war's impact was thus great, but it did not cause the changes, only support them.

In a similar manner, the war by itself did not cause the centuries-long conflict between England and Ireland. Nor did it cause the immediate subjection of the Catholic population. The first problem had been around for a very long time, while the Catholics' situation – well, the Old English's situation, anyway – was actually improved, on paper.

On the historical scales, the Treaty of Limerick had little effect, however. As regards real estate, King William was initially persuaded to be lenient and the courts favoured the Jacobites. But many of the treaty's articles were altered or ignored, especially after the Irish Brigade appeared in arms in Flanders. William came to feel that the Protestant Ascendancy was the only way to protect his back. In the case of the right to bear arms, the Penal Laws actually broke this treaty.

Protestant anger led to the treaty not appearing as a bill until 1697, by which point much mischief had been done to it. That was after the Peace of Ryswick, that William felt he could begin to reap the fruits of his victory.

The *Cogadh an Dá Rí* threatened to reverse the Protestant Ascendancy, but ultimately reinforced it instead, leading to a situation where the euphoric victors were able to place their enemies in bonds that could only be broken by renewed violence.

Of those involved in this war responsible for the centuries of sectarian conflict that followed, it is the Two Kings who must shoulder the greatest blame: William, and… Louis XIV.

James II is accused of involving the Irish in his problems and then "bailing", but he only went to Ireland as an obligation to King Louis. Alone of the three, and despite his antipathy toward the Irish, James felt some degree of moral obligation to the inhabitants of what had been his kingdoms. He did not want another civil war. Culpability can be pinned to him for agreeing to go, but it is difficult to see how he could have refused, even if his spirit had not been shattered.

The other two monarchs chose to fight a proxy war in Ireland, and for what? After nine years, the War of the Grand Alliance ended where it began, in a *status quo ante bellum* – apart from the dead. The problems it addressed could have been solved diplomatically.

In bringing war to Ireland, William and Louis opened the gates of Hell in that green land and wedged them ajar when they left. And the people there are still dodging chunks of brimstone.

Postscript

Nevertheless, I think that Mr. Kurtz is a remarkable man.

J. Conrad, Heart of Darkness

King James died of a brain haemorrhage in 1701, in exile at the palace of St. Germain outside Paris. Though he remained King Louis' friend for life, his presence became a political embarrassment. His last years were spent as a religious penitent. In 1734 he was considered for canonisation, but the matter did not proceed. Buried in Paris, his tomb was destroyed during the Revolution and his ashes scattered.

King William died in 1702 of pneumonia, a complication of a broken collarbone suffered when his horse stumbled in a mole hole. A favourite Jacobite toast was to "*the little gentleman in the black velvet waistcoat*". Mary had died some years before. His contribution to English history was vital, but he himself was only the agent of change, not the initiator. William's death closed the office of Staadtholder, because the Provinces voted to suspend it. He was also the last true Prince of Orange, though the title continued through various family connections. The Principality itself was ceded to Louis XIV.

King Louis died of gangrene in 1715, just before his 77th birthday. He had reigned for 72 years and earned the reputation of being the greatest monarch since Charlemagne. But he watched his entire family die of smallpox, leaving only a 5-year-old great grandson to inherit the mightiest realm in Europe, and his wars permanently crippled the French economy.

I depart, but the State shall always remain.

Louis XIV

Footnote – Na Géanna Fiáine

(The Wild Geese)

The Flight of the Wild Geese

The French convoy, the largest yet sent, arrived in the Shannon on October 20th, 1691, anchoring at Scattery Island. Once they had unloaded their stores, they immediately began taking on Irish soldiers. Limerick was to remain under Jacobite control until November 1st. After that date, Sarsfield's volunteers would march to Cork, where they would board 70 more Williamite vessels on December 22nd.

[Initially Ginkel offered 50 vessels, of 200 tines each, with 2 men-o-war for the officers. D'Usson went bond for the lot, meaning he would have had to return to Ireland as a hostage if the ships had been confiscated or lost.]

At Cork occurred an incident which gave rise to a famous lament: the abandoning of the women and children. Irish armies were notorious for the size of their camp following. At Cork, the menfolk were rowed out to the transports, and then the transports hoisted sail and left. The Williamites have been steadily cursed for this perfidy, but the reality is somewhat smaller than the myth.

It was either Sarsfield's fault or the commodore's. Something to do with the shipping tables, or the tides. During the peace negotiations, Sarsfield had insisted that the soldiers' families be shipped with them and Ginkel agreed to this. At Limerick, there was no problem. But at Cork, there was a mad rush for the boats and much confusion, and the families were abandoned on the shore. They were only a fraction of the total, however. Less than 2,000 men sailed from Cork.

In all, some 12-13,000 Jacobite troops went to France, excluding the original Mountcashel Brigade. There was no work to be had in southern Ireland, and the men of Connaught and Munster were banned from traveling to Ulster to find it. Initially, the émigrés were treated as soldiers in King James' Army, paid by France, but at the Peace of Ryswick in 1697, the Irish formally joined the French Army.

Those Irish who agreed to enter William's service did not do so well. Balldearg O'Donnell did not get his brigade. Instead he got a pension and retired to Spain. 18 regiments went over to William, but they were all disbanded in 1692. That same year, James' Army was poised to invade England, and they were deemed a security risk. Roughly 5,000 men chose to serve under the notorious cavalry generals Luttrell, Purcell, and Clifford, but most deserted once they were out of Ireland. Lord Iveagh was given permission to take volunteers – 1,400 in all – to the Emperor. They perished to a man in the Balkans.

[It was not only the rank and file who broke bond. Lord Clancarty, imprisoned in the Tower, escaped with the help of his father-in-law, William's Secretary of State, Lord Sunderland!]

The invasion of England never happened. Angered at his generals failure in 1691, Louis, now personally directing affairs since Louvois was dead, assembled James' "army" at Boulogne. But the French Fleet suffered defeat at La Hogue that summer, so in 1693 the Irish went on to fight with distinction at the first of many battles to come – Steenkirk (Landen), in which many of the protagonists of the Irish War were slain, most notably generals Mountjoy and Sarsfield. More would die the following year at Marsaglia.

The Irish Brigade

France's Irish Brigade was not the first such body. The Spanish had an Irish regiment a full century older. This had been a unit raised to fight for England. Its commander changed sides during the Elizabethan war with Spain. In 1607, the Flight of the Earls led to the reformation of this unit. Spain continued to have an Irish brigade until the end of the Napoleonic Wars.

Mountcashel's brigade and the Wild Geese were originally separate bodies. Mountcashel had 3 regiments (Mountcashel's, O'Brien's, and Dillon's), in French pay. As noted above, the exiles of 1691 served James II, though paid by France, and constituted a considerable force: 13 regiments of foot, 2 of horse (plus 2 troops of Horse Guards), and 3 independent companies. With the failure of the 1692 invasion scheme, these men were incorporated in the French Army, deserted to Spanish service, or took to the highways.

At the end of the War of the Grand Alliance Mountcashel's Brigade was overhauled and expanded to 5 regiments (Galmoy's, Bourke's, Berwick's, Dorrington's, & Albermarle's Foot, and Sheldon's – later FitzJames' – Horse. A sixth infantry regiment (Lally's) was added in 1744.

Irish recruitment dried up after 1745. Before then, the Irish authorities winked at it, since it drained potential troublemakers out of the country, but the presence of the Irish Picquets in Scotland during the Jacobite Rising scared them. The units' officers remained Irish, but only a few volunteers or deserters came from the homeland. France's Irish Brigade disappeared with the other foreign units during the Revolution.

The Irish served in many other armies as well: the Empire, Sweden (under Gustavus Adolphus), Italy (the Spanish Army of Milan, the Neapolitan Army, the Venetian Army), and later, for the Papacy, Brazil, Mexico, and the USA. Some exiles rose high in the service, especially the Lacys (Austria and Russia) and Brownes (Austria and Spain). As early as the middle of the 18th Century, it was estimated that some 120,000 Irishmen had died in the service of foreign states.

The Army of the Stuarts, too, was predominantly Irish, but under the new régime England did not recruit Catholic Irish until the 1790s; then she did so with a vengeance. By 1830, over 40% of the manpower in the British Army was Irish, by 1860, perhaps 60%. Britain still has 2 Irish regiments: the Irish Guards and the Royal Irish Regiment. The latter fought on the Williamite side during the *Cogadh an Dá Rí.*

COMBAT AT THE END OF THE 17TH CENTURY

Author's photo

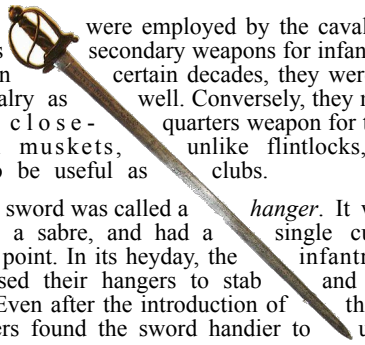
The end of the 17th Century was a time of ferment and experimentation in military affairs. New technologies were being developed, armies were growing in size, and constant warfare ensured that developments would not simply be shelved.

Of course, there was a great deal of inertia. One becomes use to a certain way of doing things, and many of the practices of the Thirty Years War and English Civil War were still applied. Besides, new technology is expensive, especially when a colonel has to pay for it out of his own pocket.

Weaponry

For all of the 17th Century, the three primary weapons in use in Western Europe, excluding artillery, were the sword, the pike, and the black-powder musket or its pistol equivalent. In Eastern Europe they continued to use the lance, and even the bow. All peasant armies might employ makeshift polearms, and there were speciality weapons such as blunderbusses, hunting rifles, and grenades, but the bulk of a State's armed forces would be equipped with the first three weapons. They were cheap to manufacture, and reasonably easy to use.

The Sword



Swords were employed by the cavalry, but also served as secondary weapons for infantry. In some armies and in certain decades, they were secondary for the cavalry as well. Conversely, they might be the primary close-quarters weapon for the infantry: matchlock muskets, unlike flintlocks, were too unwieldy to be useful as clubs.

The infantry sword was called a *hanger*. It was slightly curved, like a sabre, and had a single cutting edge and a sharp point. In its heyday, the infantry, lacking bayonets, used their hangers to stab and slash their opponents. Even after the introduction of the bayonet, many soldiers found the sword handier to use.

Debates raged over the best type of cavalry sword. Dragoons, being mounted infantry in this period, usually carried hangers, but by the end of the century were switching to heavier cavalry swords. There were few light horsemen, but they uniformly employed the *sabre*, a curved, cutting blade that could be slashed about in a mêlée. Cuirassiers, or heavy cavalry, generally preferred the *straight sword*, useless for slashing, but lethal when poking other men in armour, and heavy enough to bash an opponent. The straight sword was usually, in the final approach of a charge, held straight out in front, giving it a much greater reach than the sabre.

The Pike

The pike emerged from the late Renaissance as the premiere infantry weapon. In the hands of the Swiss cantons and the Dutch city states, it had brought down the Medieval knight. But the spread of effective, affordable firearms meant that by 1600, only about one in three infantrymen still used the pike. It was still an essential weapon, however. Not only could it repel a cavalry charge, but it was critical for breaking the opposing infantry line.

Pikes were issued to the largest and strongest men; it was a prestige weapon. The weapon itself was merely a long wooden shaft with a metal tip, but much science and engineering had gone into achieving optimal characteristics. Most pikes were 18' long, but could be as short as 10' or as long as 21'. The spearpoint was either of iron or steel. A true pike had only a long, tapering, round, triangular, or four-side point, but some versions included hooks or blades (these are generally classed by other names, such as *halberd*, and tended to be shorter weapons).

The shaft was both strong and flexible, usually made of seasoned ash or oak, the wood tapering toward the point to prevent sagging; the join with the tip was often reinforced with metal bands. These prevented an enemy from lopping the end off. The blunt end was cut so as to allow the wielder to plant it firmly in the ground.

Pikes were primarily used by large bodies of men in square or oblong formation, like a moving forest, but in the hands of an expert, they could be used in one-on-one combat.

The Matchlock Musket

By 1600, two out of every three infantrymen were equipped with muskets. The Turkish Janissaries were the first European force to be equipped with such weapons *en masse*. At first heavy, clumsy, and prone to malfunction, as the decades passed, the weapon improved to the point that although relatively complex, it could be mastered easily, requiring much less training than a sword or pike.

All firearms consist of a metal tube, mounted on a stock for ease of handling, out of which a lump of metal is discharged by a chemical explosion. The name matchlock refers to the firing mechanism. The very first firearms were more like "hand cannon", with a simple touchhole into which one inserted a lit match whilst trying to keep the barrel pointed at the enemy. Gunpowder in the tube would ignite, and burn so rapidly that an explosion was generated, propelling a ball of lead out the other end. Later, a *flash pan*, which held the ignition powder, made the process easier. But the matchlock mechanised the process.

With the matchlock, a piece of *slow match* – chemically treated rope that would burn continuously for a long time – was clipped into a *serpentine*, or cock. After locking the cock in an upright position, securing the match to it, and pouring a little gunpowder in the pan, one simply pulled another lever, or later on, a trigger, and the cock was released, falling backward (not forward as with a flintlock or percussion hammer) to touch the pan with the end of the slow match. If one had remembered to have poured more powder down the barrel, followed by the lump of lead, and tamped it down with a rod designed for the purpose, and if the powder was not wet, and if the powder in the pan had trickled into the touchhole properly, there would be a loud bang and the lump of lead would fly out of the correct end of the tube. Since the matchlock allowed one to hold the weapon with both hands, there was a good chance the ball might actually fly in the intended direction. Very importantly, after the trigger was released, the cock would rise again, allowing the match to clear the pan so it could be wiped out and recharged.

Inaccuracy aside, there were some other issues. With the early matchlocks, one had to gauge the amount of powder required. Too much powder in a well worn barrel and someone would lose

an eye, or worse. Pre-packaged charges of powder and even powder-with-ball were rapidly developed.

These charges were carried on a bandolier which was slung across the shoulder; typically, a musketeer would have 8 charges, which was the most he would be expected to fire in a single battle. Extra charges might be issued or brought up and stockpiled behind the lines if the commander felt it necessary. Traditionally, the English are reputed to have carried 12 charges – the Twelve Apostles – while the Dutch apparently carried 15. Toward the end of the century, cartridge boxes and satchels were introduced to replace the bandolier.

Failure to blow off excess powder from the pan could not only result in a burnt face, but the flash might ignite someone else's powder. Also, the pan was always open, so that a strong wind, or even light rain, could turn the matchlock into an expensive walking stick. Also, the weapon could not be loaded properly except from a standing position.

Weight was also a problem. The matchlock weighed around 20lbs, sometimes more, and was 5' long. As the author can attest, it is hard to fire a 20-lb weapon (*or in his case a 15-lb Minimi*) from the shoulder without benefit of a sling. Matchlocks did not have slings, and were fired with the stock tucked under the arm. The heavier versions, though claiming greater stopping power, also had to have a separate wooden bipod or "fork" to rest them on.

This meant that the matchlock was not capable of truly "aimed" fire. It had to be discharged in company with a lot of other muskets, all pointing in the same vague direction. Lethal range of a bullet might be 250 yards, but effective range was more like 60 yards, and even then a soldier was deemed unlucky if he was hit. Most musketeers were so focused on getting their weapons to fire on time without killing themselves or earning extra duties from the sergeant that they paid no attention to the target. Musketeers typically opened fire only at a distance of 30-50 paces (75'-125').

[A standard pace is 2.5 feet, though for marching purposes this was often set at 2 feet, with a short pace even less than that.]

The slow match was the other issue. First, because a battle might last several hours, even though few rounds would be fired, the musketeer was required to carry rather a lot of match. To heighten the odds of his being able to fire when the time came, both ends of the match were kept lit. (*The cost of keeping a single sentry on duty all night was a mile of slow match per year*). Put those two facts together with the fact that the musketeer would be standing next to other musketeers, all of them wrapped up in slow match and charges of gunpowder, and the rest may be left to the imagination. Death due to having one's chest explode was common enough for it to be dealt with in the regulations.

The Pistol & Carbine

The cavalry carried and employed firearms as a matter of course. Matchlocks were not practical on horseback, so a wheel-lock musket (or the short barrelled version called a carbine) and wheel-lock pistols were used. Wheel-locks were more expensive, but more reliable. These weapons, like the matchlocks, were smoothbore, not rifled – rifled wheel-locks existed, but they were handcrafted by master gunsmiths for the benefit of those who could afford them.

[Dragoons began by carrying matchlocks, even pikes in some cases, but switched to the wheel-lock and then the flintlock.]

A wheel-lock functioned a little like a cigarette lighter, though it was more complex. The chief components were the *dog* and the *wheel*. Like a matchlock's cock, the dog (named from that portion of the serpentine that secured the igniter) held the ignition material, in this case a piece of iron pyrite, in a vice grip. The dog had two positions: safe, or forward, and operating, or backwards – like the matchlock, the wheel-lock mechanism struck toward the operator to fire.

[Flint, by the way, was too hard to be used in a wheel-lock. Over time it would damage the wheel.]

The wheel was so constructed that its upper portion protruded through the bottom of the flash pan. Grooves on it provided a friction surface for the pyrite. The wheel was attached to a shaft running perpendicular to the weapon that projected out on one end, so that it could be tightened with a spanner; the other end was buried in the lock-plate that secured the whole mechanism, and had a cam forged to it. One end of a short chain was fixed to the cam. The other end of the chain was held in a groove at the end of a heavy v-spring – the *mainspring*.

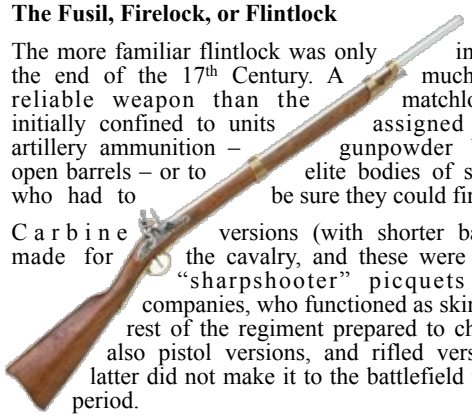
The flash pan had a cover. Though it could be manipulated by hand (for priming purposes), it was also connected to the cam on the wheel shaft, so that it would automatically open during firing. The mechanism also employed a trigger and trigger sear, which was used to secure or release the wheel. Once the wheel was released, all the other components also functioned.

The firer first made the dog safe, then loaded the weapon. He used a spanner to tighten the wheel to a position where it was locked by the trigger sear. Then the pan was primed and closed and the dog cocked so that the pyrite rested on the pan cover, with the dog under tension. Usually, the weapon was held vertical or at a high angle during these operations, to help prevent any powder spillage from contaminating the mechanism.

When the trigger was pulled, the trigger sear disengaged from the wheel and the mainspring pulled on the chain, rotating the wheel shaft at high speed. At the same time, the pan cover slid open and the pyrite was free to connect with the wheel, which was already rotating by that time, thus preventing a jam. The rotation of the wheel against the pyrite produced sparks, which ignited the powder in the pan and fired the pistol. The whole process took about a minute.

While more efficient and safer to use than the matchlock, and less subject to the weather (a loaded pistol could be held under one's coat), the wheel-lock was relatively expensive, and too complex to be mass produced, meaning that only the wealthy cavalry units could afford them. Many such weapons were probably personal, not government issue.

The Fusil, Firelock, or Flintlock



The more familiar flintlock was only introduced toward the end of the 17th Century. A much safer and more reliable weapon than the matchlock, its use was initially confined to units assigned to protect the artillery ammunition – gunpowder being stored in open barrels – or to elite bodies of security personnel who had to be sure they could fire on cue.

Carbine versions (with shorter barrels) were also made for the cavalry, and these were issued to special "sharpshooter" picquets or carabineer companies, who functioned as skirmishers while the rest of the regiment prepared to charge. There were also pistol versions, and rifled versions, though the latter did not make it to the battlefield until a much later period.

The names fusil, firelock, and flintlock refer to the same weapon. In the 1640s-1650s, the term firelock was used, to contrast it with the matchlock. The *snaphaunce* used a similar mechanism, but was less elegant in design and was phased out without becoming "standard issue"; the flintlock incorporated its best features. The term *fusil* usually refers to a lighter flintlock. Later, "fusilier" came to mean line infantry in many armies, but initially it meant a unit equipped with firelocks. The earliest flintlock was produced for King Louis XIII in 1610; it was an amalgam of various features of other firearms.

Although easier to master than the matchlock (there were about a third less movements involved in the drill manual), the cost of replacing thousands of matchlocks with thousands of flintlocks mean that it was introduced slowly. Only small and rich armies, like the Dutch, or armies that disbanded during peacetime, like the English, could afford to completely swap their inventory. Most armies did not universally adopt them until the early 18th Century.

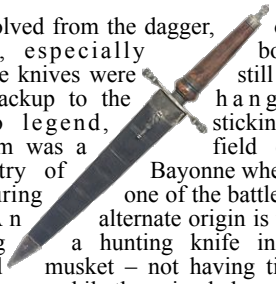
The flintlock mechanism consisted of a cock holding a piece of flint. The weapon was "safe" when the cock was rotated to "half-

cock"; a sear then secured it from falling. When this had been done, the weapon could be loaded. (Breechloading designs existed, but military issue weapons were muzzleloaders). The flash pan was then primed. Like the wheel-lock, it had a cover.

To fire, the soldier rotated the cock to "full", releasing the safety sear; in this position the cock was instead engaged by the trigger sear. By pulling the trigger, the cock was released so that the the flint would strike the *frissen*. This was a piece of steel on the lid of the flash pan. When struck, it opened the lid, and simultaneously, sparks cascaded onto the exposed powder in the pan, causing ignition of the main charge. Unlike the matchlock, the flintlock's cock fell forward in the familiar manner of modern hammers.

The flintlock remained the standard infantry weapon for 200 years, until well after the invention of the percussion cap in 1807, long enough for its use to imprint itself on military habits, drills, and language.

The Bayonet



The bayonet evolved from the dagger, or long knife, that soldiers, especially bowmen, wore on their belts. These knives were still carried by foot soldiers as a backup to the hanger or pike. According to legend, sticking a knife on the end of a firearm was a field expedient made by the peasantry of Bayonne when they ran out of ammunition during one of the battles of the mid-17th Century. An alternate origin is the boar hunter's habit of sticking a hunting knife in the end of a discharged musket – not having time to reload or switch to a boar spear while the animal charged.

General Martinet – *that* Martinet – is credited with making he bayonet a battlefield weapon, and the French were the first to make habitual use of it, during the 1660s. There were two advantages to the bayonet, particularly in the early days, when they were of the "plug" variety that had to be inserted into a barrel. First, it allowed the musketeer to a) defend himself against cavalry without having to run and hide in the pike "thicket", and b) it allowed him to join the pikemen in hand to hand combat.

Second, by plugging the musket barrel, it prevented the soldier from nervously discharging his weapon as his battalion closed with the enemy – very frequently, an advancing battalion would come under enemy fire, and not wishing to go any further, some men would start firing without orders. By firing they showed they were "not cowards", but at the same time they were "too busy" to move any closer. Some commanders recommended that troops should not fire at all, but engage the enemy with plug bayonets already fixed.

[For the Russians, this remained the case even after the introduction of the socket bayonet. Russian webbing did not include a bayonet scabbard.]

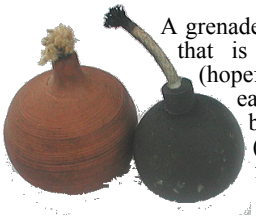
The earliest bayonets were the "plug" variety. The knife, perhaps 17" long, was given a round handle that fitted the musket barrel. The blade, usually triangular, was in line with the barrel. The earliest record of bayonet issue was to the French Fusilier Regiment in 1671. The English issued them to a dragoon regiment in 1672, and then to the Royal Fusiliers in 1685. The weapon lent itself to the firelock used by the fusilier units but was not so handy for a matchlock man. Dragoons used them when fighting dismounted, because they had to function at a distance from the main mass of infantry.

The first socket bayonet appeared in 1678, in France – actually a "ring" bayonet. The rings slid over the barrel, and the blade was offset so that the musket could still fire. General MacKay received independent credit for the same design after his plug-bayonet equipped forces were defeated by a Highland Charge in 1689. Later model bayonets included a catch or lock that prevented the blade from falling off. These are true socket bayonets. Bayonets in this period did not have grips for the soldier to use them independently, though in a mêlée, anything went.

A 17" bayonet gave the musketeer the same reach as a spearman, but the combination was much heavier than a spear. The blade was not hardened, as a bent blade was easier to fix than a broken one. The triangular blade was not intended to "create fearsome wounds", but gave a good balance of flexibility and structural stability.

It was not until 1697, when the Peace of Ryswick permitted the Powers to spend money on new technology, that the pike was fully abolished and replaced by the socket bayonet. Even then, diehard reactionaries resisted their introduction to the Line.

The Grenade



A grenade is a handheld bomb with a detonator that is to be thrown so that it explodes (hopefully) within a group of the enemy. The earliest hand bombs were not Chinese, but Byzantine, and contained Greek Fire (napalm). The Chinese developed the first gunpowder bombs. These early grenades used glass or ceramic containers; the Chinese graduated to metal. Cast iron bombs appeared in Europe in the 15th Century. These weapons were rather large, more suitable for throwing down from a wall.

The first true grenades appeared in the mid-17th Century. There are rumours of their use during the English Civil War in 1643. The name "grenade" was first used during the Glorious Revolution, when the Williamites employed them against the Scottish Highlanders at Killiecrankie (1689).

These weapons were cricketball-sized iron spheres filled with gunpowder. A piece of match was inserted into a vent in the ball. When the match burned down, the grenade would explode. Shrapnel effects were minimal by today's standards, but their psychological effects (and concussive effects) were quite good.

Used more frequently than the history books indicate, grenades were carried in satchels by handpicked soldiers called grenadiers. These were the most courageous and enterprising men in the regiment, who would be used as shock troops, or, since they were also equipped with muskets, could function as a local reserve, or as skirmishers.

Body Armour

Body armour was gradually phased out during the 17th Century. With the increasing lethality of firearms, its expense became harder to justify, though there were exceptions.

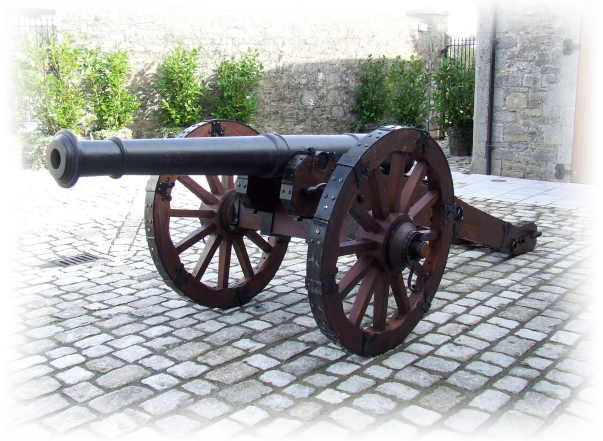
There were basically two kinds of armour in use: the *cuirass*, and *three-quarters armour*. The cuirass was – or "could be", since it was sometimes discarded – worn both by pikemen and the heavy cavalry. A full cuirass included a back plate as well as a chest plate, and gave full protection to the torso. Sometimes a gorget was worn to protect the neck. Pikemen and cavalrymen would also wear stiff leather coats and gloves. Pikemen also worn the morion, an open helmet. This could sometimes have a nose and/or cheek guards, and usually had a wide brim.

Three-quarter armour (like that worn by Haselrigg's Lobsters in the English Civil War) is defined as plate armour that leaves the legs exposed below the knees. The arms and thigh pieces are articulated, with overlapping plates. The back and breastplates are like those of a plain cuirass, except that additional shoulder pieces cover the joins with the arms. The head is usually protected with a full helmet, including gorget and faceplate – either a grille or a sheet with eyeholes. Originally this armour was worn by the *chevaux-légèr*, or "lightly" armoured heavy

cavalry, as distinguished from the *gendarmes* or true mounted men at arms who wore full plate armour like the Medieval knights.

Though both types of armour were proof against pistol and occasionally musket balls, and gave good protection against edged weapons, due to their cost, and the increase in the amount of firepower available, by the end of the 17th Century, three-quarter armour had been completely phased out and the plain cuirass was often limited to just the breastplate; pikemen usually wore only the buff coat of leather, and a helmet. Cavalrymen rarely wore helmets, only steel "secrets" under their hats. However, old suits were still available in the armouries, and on at least one occasion – the siege of Athlone in 1691 – a body of grenadiers went into action wearing three-quarter armour, probably to protect them from the blast of their own weapons.

Artillery



Author's photo.

17th Century artillery was smoothbore and muzzleloading. Most pieces were designated *cannon*, which implied a wheeled carriage; *bombards* by contrast were immobile once emplaced. Cannon might be of brass or iron. Brass was lighter, but iron was stronger, and that meant the size of the gun could be reduced.

Cannon fired at a low trajectory, and used solid shot – generally lead or iron balls. As early as the 17th Century, powder and shot could be combined in one cartridge.

Although mounted on wooden carriages, the whole combination was still so heavy that cannon tended to remain in place for the duration of a battle.

Guns were classified (by Turenne) as:

Cannon Royal (64-lb shot)
Whole cannon (48-lb shot): ROF 8 rounds per hour
Demi-cannon (24-lb shot: ROF 10 rounds per hour
Quarter-cannon or Culverin (12-lb shot): ROF 12 rounds per hour
Saker or demi-Culverin (6-lb shot)
Field piece or Falcon (3-lb shot): ROF 15 rounds per hour
Minion (4-lb shot)
Falconet/Robinet (c.1-lb shot): the difference is in calibre

The low rate of fire had more to do with the risk of bursting the barrel than ammunition or crew limitations. A 48-lber weighed 6000 lbs, and over a period of 12 hours consumed 3,600 lbs of shot and 2,400 lbs of powder. The entire "weapon system" required a team of 44 horses. Big guns were not cheap.

The French favoured the lighter "Swedish" designs introduced by Gustavus Adolphus, of 3- 4- and 6-lb. Sometimes called leather guns, these had thin copper tubes, wrapped in rope, and covered in leather. Though light, they had a flaw – the material insulated the barrel so that after only a few rounds it was red hot and would either burst or deform. A lasting contribution of the Swedes, from early in the century, was the bronze 3-lber regimental gun, which had a rate of fire three times that of the musket of the same period.

Mortars, which were squat, urn-shaped objects, lobbed hollow bombs at high trajectory. These could be filled with incendiaries, in which case they were called carcasses. Mortar bombs in this era had fuses of slow match; occasionally, a spry soldier could pluck out the fuse after the bomb had landed, rendering it inert.

Author's photo.

Howitzers were guns adapted to fire shells at a moderately high trajectory. They were not new, though not as common as cannon, and were originally intended to be used against massed targets and cavalry. The Swedes "reintroduced" them as siege weapons firing cast iron shells. They differed from mortars in that a) they were more mobile, and b) they could fire at a variety of angles; mortars were limited in that regard.

There were also esoteric multi-barrelled weapons, such as *organ guns* or *ribaulds*, not much seen on the conventional battlefield. They had been phased out by the end of the 16th Century but could be dug out of a castle's vaults for use during a siege.

Tactics

Battlefield tactics in the 17th Century were not as simplistic as period accounts would indicate. Nosworthy (*Anatomy of Victory*) points out that the recorders saw no need to explain details that all military men would have been familiar with.

The tactics of any period are crafted to maximise the potential of the weapons systems available; sometimes the regulations are laid down on expectations rather than reality, but in that case the rules are thrown out after a lost battle or two, and rewritten.

Four general points should be kept in mind. First, units marched in column while *enroute*, but deployed into line well before contacting the enemy. Unless the army was very large, only one route would be followed. There would be an advance guard of mixed cavalry and infantry, with light guns, and with parties of pioneers and road gangs to clear obstructions and make the route passable for the artillery. Behind the main body would march the rear guard, again, a mixed force.

In close terrain the cavalry marched surrounded by infantry, who were better able to respond to ambushes; if the terrain was open, the cavalry could march parallel, but even then was protected by bodies of foot. The baggage and guns either came between the main body and rearguard, or marched behind all, depending on the security situation and the need for the *train* to keep pace.

Second, daily route marches were short. Because the whole army followed the same path, the last units to leave the old camp would often do so as the first units were establishing the next camp. 17th Century armies were like nomadic towns. An army usually established a fortified camp at the end of each day's march. Though not up to Roman standards, it would be laid out in rough battle order and secured with detachments of artillery and infantry vedettes. Cavalry vedettes would be posted farther out.

Other cavalry would go on reconnaissance. Parties would issue forth looking for provender for the men and forage for the horses.

The numerous civilians that followed the camp would set up shop. A fair-like atmosphere would develop. Next morning, assuming the march was to continue, everything would have to be torn down. The advance guard would already be on the road before dawn, headed for the next camp ground, which had already been identified by survey engineers operating far out in front.

Third, combat only occurred when both sides desired it. Opposing forces might spend days facing each other; the *Comte de* Gramont records riding over to the enemy camp to visit a large number of friends (this was during the war between Turenne and Condé). Or, the other side might shuffle on down the road as soon as the enemy's camp was established, and this routine might be followed day after day. Eventually, a retreating side would run out of room, or would receive reinforcements or news that would change the balance, and offer battle.

Fourth, units in this period were not as compact as they would become. Not only was all that loose gunpowder dangerous, but the men did not march in step, only at the same length and speed of pace. Units marched in open order to manoeuvre and close order (but only relatively close order) to fight. Changing the spacing in a unit imposed delays. Moreover, the position of the various elements within a unit was precisely defined; battalions could not turn on a dime. Defiles (narrow gaps through a variety of terrain) were difficult to negotiate and often involved some complex readjustments; usually, one unit had to pass through and deploy to cover the rest. When entering the battlefield, a large army would do so in several columns, each heading for a pre-assigned spot. All in all, deploying for battle and closing with the enemy was a lengthy business.

Cavalry

Throughout the century, cavalry remained the battle-winning combat arm, despite chivalry's earlier fall at the hands of the pikeman.

At the start of the century, the cavalry was deployed on the ends, or wings of the battle line. Already divided into *horse* and *dragoons*, with a smattering of *carabiniers* and *Croats* (irregulars), the formations used in the early part of the century were deep – between 6 and 10 ranks. This was to add "weight" and momentum, and to ensure at least some ranks were able to respond to the enemy.

The lance had been discarded in favour of firearms and sword, and the drill used by formations of heavy horse was the caracole, essentially a cavalry version of the musketeers' "dance". After manoeuvring for advantage, and hopefully drawing the enemy's fire – the opponent nearly always being similarly-armed cavalry, in the first contact – a given regiment, acting in concert with others, all down the line, would close to between 20 and 50 paces (50' to 125') of the enemy.

["Line" is not meant to imply an unbroken front. In this period, wide gaps remained between regiments, to ensure room to manoeuvre. If there was concern that an enemy might penetrate the line, the second line would be drawn up close to the first.]

[For those unsure of distances, telephone poles are usually 125' apart, at least in urban locations.]

The first rank would fire its pistols or carbine, turn, and ride to the rear of the formation, reloading as it did so. The formation would slowly advance at the same time, to maintain the range, and the second rank would fire. And so on. Alternatively, if the regiment had managed to offset itself from the enemy's center, the first rank might turn and file off in front of the opposing force, fire, then return to the back of its regiment.

Eventually, it was hoped that the opposing formation would become disordered, allowing the regiment to charge with the sword, at a slow trot. This would be particularly effective if the second form of caracole was used, since the charging regiment would already be on the enemy's flank. A disordered enemy would probably retire before this happened, but if not, was likely to suffer heavier casualties. In the mêlée, it all came down to individual horsemanship and swordsmanship.

The same routine applied when engaging infantry. Normally the horse would not think of dealing with the foot until the opposing cavalry was driven off. In the early days, most of infantry was equipped with pikes, making them impossible to charge unless first broken with fire (though sometimes accidents could "break the square" – apparently, a horse struck in the chest often becomes furious and will charge forward, which might create an opening).

Experimentation by the Swedes during the Thirty Years War led to smaller formations, allowing greater manoeuvrability. Cavalry formations were reduced to three ranks and their fronts extended. Gustavus Adolphus is also famous for introducing the gallop to the charge process. He borrowed this tactic from the Poles, who still used the lance. Unable to increase the weight of their cavalry, the Swedes reduced it by discarding armour and increasing their speed. They used mixed formations of cavalry and infantry, allowing mutual support; with infantry support, it was possible for the cavalry to dispense with the caracole entirely and attack the flanks of a body of pikemen that had been disrupted by an infantry assault.

Versus enemy cavalry, in a mêlée brought about by a slow charge – at the trot – the opponents would wind up fighting individual combats. At higher speeds, the two sides would pass through each other; the faster party would have the upper hand in this sort of "tourney". But a further development was the drawing together of the regiment, and here, greater speed meant a greater impact, especially against a formation that was still deployed with wider intervals (as when using the caracole). This was the advantage the Swedes had over the Imperials.

There were variations. Sometimes, 4 ranks were used, with the fourth acting as a reserve. Sometimes, the first rank fired its pistols before charging home, but this meant a very short charge, since the regiment would have to trot forward, slow to a stop, fire, then advance again. Some armies had difficulty controlling the charge. The French, for example, did not seem capable of ensuring an even front at the gallop, so their charges were either at the trot, or made with wild abandon, depending on the whim of the commander. The Imperials, used to fighting the Turks, preferred a very tight line and a slow, controlled advance, and relied on firepower, which the Turks did not like. Man for man, the Turks were superior horsemen, but they could not deal with volley fire.

By the 1680s, the proportion of pikes to muskets in a foot regiment was very low. Such units had by now adopted a linear, 6-rank formation, or even fewer ranks, with the muskets on either wing and the pikes in the center, but there were insufficient numbers of the latter to protect the musketeers, who usually lacked bayonets. Against these formations even a frontal cavalry charge could be effective. The infantry's rate of fire was low, and they often fired too soon. If the cavalry could ignore the first volley, a rapid charge would overturn the wings of an infantry regiment, making the small knot of pikemen easy prey. (A cavalry regiment would simultaneously charge the pikes, too, to keep them pinned).

Throughout the period, dragoons generally functioned as mounted infantry. Because of their mobility, they were used to establish musketry screens on the far flanks, or to accompany the horse as an additional source of firepower. By the end of the century, however, dragoons were employed more frequently in the mounted role, occupying the second line and exploiting any breakthrough made by the horse.

Croats (and later Hussars) had a limited role on the battlefield. Their main function was reconnaissance and pursuit.

Carabiniers functioned as sharpshooters. Usually, each horse regiment had a picquet of them, deployed on one of the flanks. From here the men would snipe at enemy officers and try to disorder the enemy formation as their regiment approached.

In the *Cogadh an Dá Rí*, there were horse and dragoons, and mounted irregulars who could function as either, or as raiders. Each side also had a guard horse grenadier troop of about 100 men. These were equipped as dragoons, with satchels of grenades, and were used in the assault. At Rosnaree, the Williamite grenadiers charged mounted in a single body; at

Oldbridge, their Jacobite counterparts likewise charged on horseback, but apparently attached to their parent Life Guard troops. From the accounts, the dragoons of both sides regularly fought dismounted as "commanded muskets" or skirmishers, but on occasion participated in the mounted charge, as at Rosnaree and Oldbridge.

The Irish had the advantage of better horses and better horsemen – most were gentlemen volunteers who provided their own mounts. But one of the chargers who fought at the Boyne and survived was a Williamite: the famous *Byerley Turk*. An Arabian, despite his name, he was taken at the siege of Vienna in 1683, acquired by King James' agents, then sold to Colonel Byerley in 1688. The latter served King William at the Boyne and Limerick, as colonel of Byerley's Regiment of Horse (later the 6th Dragoon Guards). The Byerley Turk is famed as the earliest of the three "founding fathers" of thoroughbred racing.

Infantry

In the 17th Century, the foot, despite its power over cavalry, and its greater quantity (usually 2-3 parts foot to 1 part cavalry) was not the decisive arm. That role was still claimed by *l'arme blanche*. The infantry was an essential component of victory, nonetheless.

Throughout the century, the foot was divided into musketeers and pikemen. Every battalion (*tercio* in the early days) had a mix of these. At the start of the century the ratio was usually 3 pikes to 1 musketeer. By the end, it had switched to 1:5, and only a few years later, the pike disappeared entirely from Western armies.

Early formations – the *tercios* – were very large, square or deep oblong formations of pikemen, who wore three-quarter armour in a combination of metal and leather. At each corner of the square was a knot of musketeers, armoured only with leather jackets. These were useful for harassing and disordering enemy infantry or cavalry. The pike formation was loose enough that when threatened, the musketeers could hide inside it.

As the century progressed, the *tercio* flattened out to a six-rank line, much smaller in size, called a battalion. The men could now be ordered in a couple of ways. Usually, the musketeers operated on the wings with the pikes in the center. The battalion was divided into 3 equal parts. Alternatively, as the ratio of pikes to muskets dropped, the pikemen could be placed on the wings, lined up at the back, or inserted down the central rank, like a spine.

No longer capable of defending itself against cavalry – and especially vulnerable after the ratio dropped to 1:5 – the foot found safety in numbers. Battalions were arranged in 2 or 3 lines, with comparatively large gaps between the units (usually a little wider than the battalion's frontage), but not wide enough to be exploited, so long as the a side's own cavalry kept the enemy's busy; only after one side's cavalry left the field was the foot in danger. Gustavus Adolphus' use of mixed cavalry and infantry formations worked for a time, but once the infantry line was reasonably "solid", intermixing weapons systems that functioned at different speeds lost its practicality.

An infantry battalion engaged the opposing infantry line by both fire and shock. Even though the number of muskets increased steadily, for most armies, shock was always considered to be the primary means of overthrowing the enemy.

The battalion would deploy from march column into line well away from the enemy. Once the entire army was formed up – a process that took hours – the battalion would advance in company with its fellows. Though the unit was not marching in cadence, or tightly packed, even minor obstructions such as a ditch or boulder would impose delays, since the lines would have to be dressed each time an obstacle was cleared (and even after a certain length of time, since the men would not always march at exactly the same length of pace). Closer to the enemy, the battalion would adopt close order, making manoeuvre even harder.

Once within fighting range, theories, doctrines, and habits varied. Though they had a range of 250 yards or more, muskets were not much use at over 60 yards, even using a mass volley – what with having to fire with the weapon tucked under the shoulder, having to wrestle with coils of slow match, and not being able to see, thanks to the thick, choking smoke.

Usually, the battalion halted at about 50 paces (125') from the enemy and commenced to fire volleys by rank. When using the matchlock, the caracole was favoured: the front rank would fire and walk to the back of the battalion, while the new front rank advanced a few paces and fired in turn. By not advancing, a retrograde motion could be obtained, while by advancing a little further each time, the battalion could gradually approach the enemy.

At some point, the commander would decide the enemy was sufficiently disordered, and order the battalion to advance to contact – the Push of Pike. If the enemy was not intimidated into running away, the fight turned into a rugby scrum. Though equipped with swords, the musketeers often clubbed their muskets; the pikemen had swords as well. If hard pressed, a battalion could call on units in the second line, no more than 300 paces (750') away, which would move into the gaps on either side of it.

Usually, however, one side would shrink from the contest and either back away or run. Pursuit was left to the cavalry. The infantry would be ordered to occupy any ground of special advantage and hold it. If the enemy's line was pierced, the battalions were flexible enough that detachments could be sent to engage adjacent enemy units in the flank.

In close terrain, files of musketeers were detached and advanced to act as skirmishers, trading places as they needed to reload.

By the 1690s, this classic method had undergone much experimentation and revision, and was still in a state of flux. Paper cartridges had been introduced, improving both speed and accuracy. Flintlocks were beginning to be mass produced, again improving safety, speed, and accuracy.

The flintlock doubled the rate of fire from 1 round per minute to 2. The higher rate of fire led to the adoption of the 4- and 3-rank line, where all ranks could fire in succession without trading places (in a 4-rank line, the last rank was usually held in reserve for emergencies.

The Dutch, and (after the 1680s) the English, began to use platoon firing, which, in theory, allowed a continuous discharge (in practice, the men would stop listening to orders and have to be halted periodically. Though this could be done with matchlocks, it was far more effective once the flintlock was in widespread use.

The French retained the method of firing by whole ranks. Indeed, for many years, they had the front rank fire first, then crouch down for the second rank to fire. This meant that the entire unit would be unloaded for a period of time. Even after reversing the process, fire by ranks was less effective. Though a good crashing volley could intimidate, an experienced enemy would know that

nine times out of ten it would come too soon: by pressing on, they could close with the French before they had time to fire another.

With fire by platoons, the battalion was divided into 12 equal parts. From one end to another, every third part would fire at the same time, guaranteeing continuous fire. Usually, fire would be opened within 50 paces, after the enemy had discharged his first <ineffective> volley. If the enemy showed no signs of weakening, the battalion would advance to 30 paces or so and begin again.

The premiere tactical question of the 1680s and 1690s revolved around the pike. In most battalions, there were no longer enough of them to defend against cavalry or to overcome the enemy infantry. Ultimately, the solution was the socket bayonet, but in the interim, other expedients were tried.

Eastern Europe had long been familiar with the *chevaux-de-frise*: blocks of wood set with spears, and these could be segmented and carried into action as "barbed wire". Unfortunately, a unit could not advance once it was hunkered down behind it. All the opposing cavalry had to do was remain "in the offing".

The plug bayonet, too, though a better option, was purely defensive. To be used in the attack, the bayonet would have to be constantly inserted and removed as the need alternately arose for firing or poking – remembering, too, that the matchlock man also had to fumble with his match and cartridges.

The Dutch, who had an extremely low proportion of pikes, tried deploying them in a block, as a reserve behind the line of musketeers. If cavalry threatened, they could hurry to where they were needed and spread out.

Most armies employed grenadier detachments, either a few files, or whole companies. In action, they would be grouped on the right of their battalion (the French were also beginning to experiment with a matching picquet on the left that would ultimately become the *voltigeurs*). In a field battle, the grenadiers might only act as skirmishers, but they could also be used to winkle the enemy out of strongpoints, and in a siege they would be used as shock troops.

During the *Cogadh an Dá Rí*, the Jacobite foot are famous for having to make do with farm implements, but this is a myth. At Dundalk in 1689, most of the men were equipped with specially made scythed polearms – actually quite effective weapons – but after that, the number of firearms rose rapidly. Ironically, due to the resources available, most of the weapons manufactured in-country were flintlocks, while the French delivered thousands of (admittedly decrepit) matchlocks. At least two regiments were designated "fusiliers", meaning (in theory) that they carried flintlocks). The main supply weakness of the Irish foot was its habit of throwing its weapons away in defeat.

Very little detail is available regarding the Jacobite methods of fighting. Obviously, the French brigade would use French drills.. Probably, units with French advisors or officers would do the same. At the Boyne, most regiments were not well trained, but at Oldbridge, they engaged the advancing Williamites with volley fire by ranks. At Aughrim, the regiments detached "commanded muskets" – files of skirmishers – to fight along the hedgerows. The Irish were generally assumed to prefer fighting from cover, and it is likely that they were very effective as skirmishers.

The Irish also liked to fight hand-to-hand. The Confederates perfected what would become known as the Highland Charge, where one volley was fired, the men threw themselves down to avoid the enemy's counter-fire, and then rushed them. Such a tactic was less effective now that the rate of fire had increased, and not at all effective against platoon fire, but fierce close combats occurred at the Boyne and Aughrim, as well as during the sieges of Limerick, Cork, and Athlone. The Highlanders successfully conducted a charge at Killiekrankie, because General Mackay's men had stopped their own muskets with plug bayonets.

King William's motley crew included English units as untrained as their enemies (incidentally containing a high proportion of Irish), Ulster units *ditto*, Huguenot regiments lacking both pikes and bayonets, Danes with *chevaux-de-frise*, and probably flintlocks, and Dutch units equipped with flintlocks, matchlocks, bayonets, and *chevaux-de-frise*.

The English employed a mix of tactics, including both the 6- and 3-rank line, volleys by rank, volleys by platoon, and perhaps the caracole. The Huguenots probably employed French drills, since the officers were French émigrés. The Danish infantry were accounted some of the best troops in Europe, and probably used the latest tactics.

The Dutch, and presumably the English regiments in Dutch pay, used platoon fire. During the infantry fight at Oldbridge, it was this tactic, easily employed even among the buildings, that was responsible for driving off the enemy. Also at the Boyne, the Dutch Blue Guards repelled a cavalry charge while deployed in line. Although the line was technically broken, the unit formed hollow square and blasted the Jacobites with platoon fire. Conversely the Huguenots, lacking any defensive weapons, and still deploying out of the river, were torn apart. The Danes hid behind their *chevaux-de-frise*, but were aided by a mass of Williamite cavalry that was able to cross the river thanks to their presence in the bridgehead.

Artillery

Artillery fire on the battlefield was mainly psychological in its effect. That said, round, or solid shot, could be very effective against massed targets, so the presence of artillery forced the enemy to deploy into line farther away. Grapeshot (large balls) and canister (small balls) was in use, but would be reserved for very close ranges, since the gunners usually had time for only one such round. Battalion guns, sighted in the intervals between the regiments, often fired grape. The French general, St. Ruhe, was decapitated by a chain-shot (two balls linked by a chain, that whirled through the air).

Even the smallest calibre guns were too heavy to be moved easily. Usually, once deployed, a battery would remain in its location for the duration of the battle. If the army was advancing, this meant that the attacking artillery was limited to conducting a preliminary bombardment, lasting perhaps 1-2 hours. Usually the enemy was at long range and the fire was ineffective.

Typically, 6-lbers were the heaviest field pieces. All larger guns were reserved for siege work. Naturally, there were exceptions. A standard deployment would be a central battery, with a battery on each flank. The heaviest pieces were in the center. All would be deployed in advance of the first line. Alternatively, the flank batteries could be deployed between the first and second lines. When battalion guns (up to 3-lbers) were used, they would be deployed in the intervals between the battalions, in pairs, and slightly in front of the line. These would advance with the infantry, usually manhandled, or "prolonged".

In a siege, one of the first tasks would be the siting and digging of "batteries". Wicker baskets filled with earth would conceal the work from enemy fire, and once the guns were emplaced, the battery would be "unmasked" and commence firing. Multiple batteries would concentrate their fire on a section of wall, hoping to create a breach wide enough for the infantry to get through. Mortars and howitzers bombarded the interior of the fortification, damaging buildings, starting fires, and, if lucky, blowing up the odd magazine.

In the War of the Two Kings, there are references to battalion guns; the Danes protected the crossing at Mill Ford with a pair. However, most of the artillery action involved larger pieces – though there was quite a mix of types. At both the Boyne and Aughrim, the Williamites were able to maintain their fire much longer than usual by firing over their own troops; at the Boyne, they were firing down on the enemy, while at Aughrim, they were firing up.

Most of the gunners' work, however, took place during the sieges. Even a few mortars were sufficient to demolish the interiors of Derry, Athlone, and Limerick. At Athlone, Cork, and Limerick, massive firepower was brought to bear on the walls,

but even against such poor defensive works, it took days to establish "practicable" breaches.

Though the infantry would be responsible for taking a town, it was the effectiveness of the guns that usually determined whether the place would surrender; it was a well established custom to call it quits as soon as the breach had been made. On the other hand, if the guns failed, or ran out of ammunition, a besieging commander would usually lift the siege, since he could not hope to take the place without artillery.

Rapparees

"Rapparees are in so great a number that we can neither find forage nor cover, which hinders much our march… we must see what we can do against the rapparees who will ravage us if they be not timely prevented… one must begin early and think what we are to do against the rapparees who will do us much damage."

General Ginkel, quoted in JI, pp.199-200

Irish guerrilla fighters were known as *rapparees*, from the Irish for "half-pike": *rapaire*. German mercenaries serving in Ireland called them *snaphaunces* – on the Continent, they were likewise known by the weapons they carried.

Rapparees both were and were not a phenomenon of the War of the Two Kings. "Wood kernes", "tories", and highwaymen, often of the Old English or Gaelic gentry, had plagued Ireland ever since foreigners had kicked them off their lands. The war gave these individuals and bands the opportunity to expand their endeavours.

On the other hand, thousands of men became rapparees because of the war. In some cases, they were refugees. In others, they were merely plunderers who followed the armies and looted the dead and dying – even during battle. But a great many were men who had gone to Dublin and the camp at Curragh hoping to join Tyrconnel's new Irish Army and been turned away. King James explicitly gave these men permission to fight the Williamites however they pleased.

Thus, many of the rapparees were organised guerrilla bands, armed with captured weapons and paid by the proceeds from robbery of the opposing faction:

"Such of the Irish as are not of the army but the country-people armed in a kind of hostile manner with half-pikes and skeins and some with scythes or muskets."

George Storey, quoted in JI, p.198

In Ulster, the Protestants faced a similar situation, with soldiers expelled from the pre-war Army, and only a relative few being enrolled in the new Protestant regiments. The rest formed militia bands, or associations and waged war like their Catholic counterparts.

They did not all use half-pikes. Many were armed with muskets. They also employed tactics familiar to those who have fought in more modern insurgencies: extorting money, supplies, and silence from the local population; kidnapping local notables; setting ambushes along the roads; raiding depôts; murdering stragglers and enemy sympathisers; hiding their weapons in bog holes by day and appearing as "simple farmers", then assembling by night to burn down some Whig landlord's home.

"The insolences committed by this sort of people, commonly called Rapparees, were such that having over stocked themselves with other men's cattle they destroyed millions throughout the kingdom only for their hides or tallow, and sometimes only to exercise their malice, leaving the carcasses to. rot in the fields."

Journal, p. 62

Their efforts were as fruitful as those of later guerrilla fighters. Thousands of Williamite troops were tied down fighting the insurgency. Though most were militia, they had to be paid, equipped, and their families protected against reprisal.

"CAHIR, 18 Sept. 1690. A party from Gravemoer's 1,200 horse, numbering 50 dragoons and 100 cavalry commanded by a major named Viettinghoff, have been in action against 4,000 rapparees, who in Danish are called Snaphaner. This party, who are Catholics, came together and plundered a lot of Protestants who wished to come under King William's protection. He was so lucky as to cut down more than 500 of them, among whom are said to be many landed gentlemen."

Danish Correspondence, p.78

The solutions tried by the Williamites are also familiar: cordon and sweep operations; a system of "watches" in the towns, networks of paid informers; contra-guerrillas (from Ulster); reprisals (ordering all priests out of a county in which more than 10 rapparees were operating); "hearts and minds" programs, though some of these were vindictive – Catholics civilians were made to pay for damage done to Protestants.

As in many other insurgencies, some of the bands decided their own people were also a legitimate target – which cost them support. After the war, many were allowed to enlist, to get them out of the country, and given amnesty for turning in their weapons, but many also decided to continue living by their wits and their swords. Other former rapparees were employed to hunt them down.

Galloping Hogan, probably the most famous rapparee, is a classic case. A noted gentleman turned highwayman from Co. Limerick, he guided Patrick Sarsfield's men on their Ballyneety Raid. At war's end, he applied for amnesty and was employed in tracking down others of his ilk, but was eventually murdered in reprisal.

[Alternatively, he is said to have gone with the Wild Geese and ended as a senior commander in the Portuguese Army.]

The Red Rapparee

My spurs are rusted, my coat is rent, my plume is damp with rain,
And the thistledown and the barleybeard are thick on my horse's mane.
But my rifle's as bright as my sweetheart's eyes; my arm is strong and free,
What care have I for your king or laws? I'm an outlawed rapparee.

Lift your glasses, friends, with mine and give your hand to me
I'm England's foe, I'm Ireland's friend, I'm an outlawed rapparee

The mountain cavern is my home, high up in the crystal air
And my bed of limestone ironribbed and the brown heath smelling fair,
Let George or William only send his troops to burn or loot,
We'll meet them up on equal ground and we'll fight them foot to foot.

Lift your glasses, friends, with mine and give your hand to me
I'm England's foe, I'm Ireland's friend, I'm an outlawed rapparee

Hunted from out our father's home, pursued by steel and shot,
A bloody warfare we must wage, or the gibbet be our lot.
Hurrah! this war is welcome work, the hunted outlaw knows,
He steps unto his country's love o'er the corpses of his foes.

Lift your glasses, friends, with mine and give your hand to me
I'm England's foe, I'm Ireland's friend, I'm an outlawed rapparee

old Clancy Brothers song

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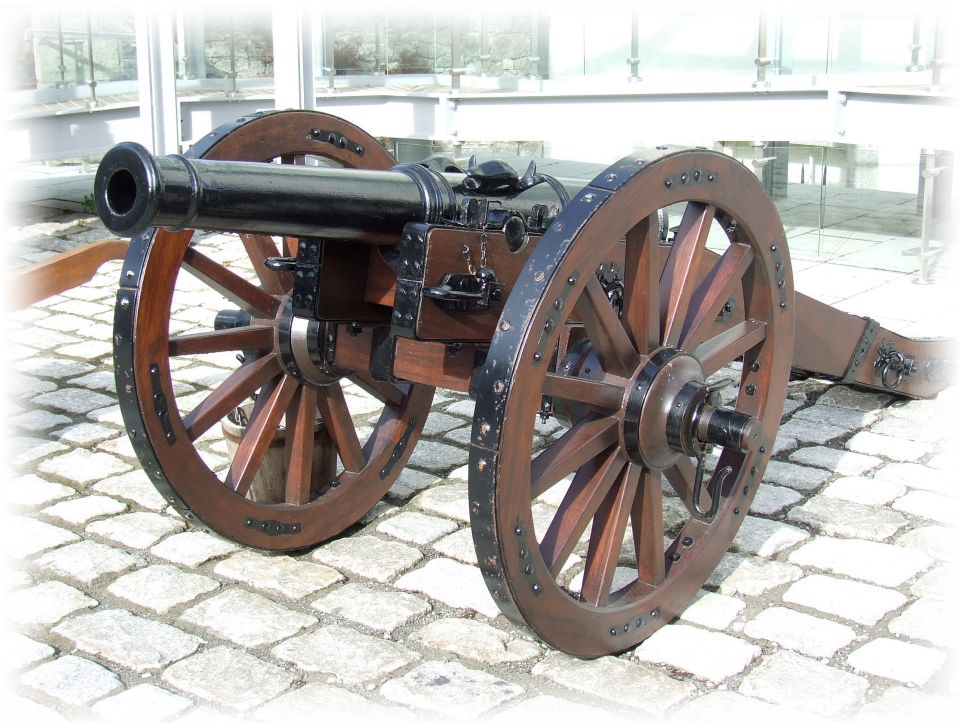

Author's photo

Annex
Notes to the Orders of Battle

For use with the attached OOBs and Maps

The Jacobites

Establishing an accurate order of battle for the Jacobite forces is difficult. Many units were ephemeral. In some cases, detachments have been confounded with full regiments. The plethora of identical last names has led to incorrect placement. After the Boyne, though as many regiments as possible were retained (to give employment to the officers), most were "converged" by threes and fours into battalions. Little attention was paid by the victorious Williamite chroniclers, who lumped "the Enemy" together as a shapeless (and thus dehumanised) mass.

Pre-War

There are two pre-war Irish armies. The first, formed under Charles II, was essentially destroyed. The second was reconstituted by Tyrconnel and then greatly augmented as the war began. The "core" units of the second army contained much of the personnel from the first army. Charles II's Irish Army, as of 1684, consisted of 1 troop of Horse Guard, the Regiment of Guards in the Kingdom of Ireland, 24 troops of horse, & 75 companies of foot: total 1,400 horse & 6,400 foot in 3 horse regiments and 8 foot regiments; plus grenadiers, including the Horse Grenadier Guards. Money was set aside for dragoons & artillery. Tyrconnel replaced 300 officers and 4,000 men with Catholics. During 1688 the units sent to England were disbanded except for Forbes' (later the 18th Royal Irish; see Williamite OOB) which went on the Williamite establishment. However, the bulk of the men returned as cadres for the reconstituted army. As of May 1689 there were 7 regiments of horse, 7 of dragoons, 25 of foot, plus 2 battalions of foot guards and the troop of Horse Grenadier Guards. By November, there were 8 regiments of horse and 8 of dragoons, and 44 regiments of foot. The Protestant elements had been completely weeded out by this time.

Apart from the 7 battalions of French and the artillery, Louvois also sent pioneers (probably, as in later decades, attached to the artillery). James II had a company of 100 Franco-Swiss as ceremonial bodyguards, who were apparently present at the Boyne. A deal was in the wind to obtain two 2-battalion regiments of Swiss (2,400 men each), but this must have fallen through.

Forces Sent to Scotland

King James promised the Scots 5,000 men, later scaled back to 2,000. Apart from these facts, the sources differ. It is agreed that half of Purcell's Dragoons – or perhaps all; 3-400 men – were sent under the Scot Brigadier Cannon. Some sources claim a Cannon's Regiment of Foot. SOme sources claim up to 2,000 Foot were sent, all of whom perished. However, the weight of evidence suggests that only Purcell's were sent, and later returned, at least in part. There is a Purcell's Foot, with a different commander, that might possibly be the same unit dismounted and undergoing reconstitution. There was a Cannon's Foot, but it was one of the pre-war regiments of Charles II's Irish Army.

The Boyne

Most sources use the Cookstown Review, made a week before, as the basis for the Jacobite OOB. However, the listings are inaccurate. A handful of regiments are known to have been elsewhere on the day of battle (Creagh's for instance was in Dublin), and it is possible that as they fell back the Jacobites picked up additional forces. The Williamites estimated 45 regiments from what they could see, but this may or may not include the cavalry, and they surmised more regiments in Drogheda (which had 3 plus 300 men in 12 detachments) and others hidden by the ground. Most historians reckon on 24 Irish foot regiments, in 32 battalions, with 7 additional battalions of French. This includes Drogheda (3 bns) and the *corps de reserve*. This suggests 18 battalions in the 1st line and 17 in the 2nd.

Balldearg O'Donnell

Balldearg had his own "Army of Connaught" consisting of 13 "regiments" or "battalions" and 1 regiment of horse. Some sources say 8 regiments, which might imply some 2-battalion units to make up 13 battalions in all. 8 (or 5 in the latter case) regiments were taken over by the Jacobites. Probably these were disbanded and the men used elsewhere, but the OOB lists a couple of possible units – "BDO".

Aughrim

No detailed deployment exists for the Jacobite deployment at Aughrim, other than the fact that they were arranged in two lines with the cavalry on the wings, but it appears that there were 32 "battalions" present, out of a total of 37 in the Army's OOB. Of the Dragoons, 4 regiments were brigaded under H. Luttrell on the Left & 3 were brigaded on the Right. Each flank had 4 regiments of Horse (Sheldon, left; Sarsfield right), and Galmoy's was in reserve. No Foot regiments were in the reserve. The units listed as detachments were located at Aughrim village.

After Aughrim, regiments went to Limerick (foot) & Co. Clare (cavalry) unless otherwise noted on the OOB. After the fall of Galway, those regiments also went to Limerick under the Honours of War.

Sligo

Sligo's garrison remained roughly constant at 3,000 men – possibly 6 regiments with militia.

The Williamites

The Williamites need no explanatory notes. Their army is far better documented. The Williamite OOB includes a Fates column listing the fate of the regiments, postwar.

Williamite resources included a pontoon train, and a set of made to order tin boats for use on the lakes and rivers.

Codes

Codes are: O.A. = Old Army; either pre-war or coming from Holland. arr. = arrived. r. = raised. disb. = disbanded. det = detachment. 1L, 2L = first/second line. RW/LW = right/left wing. OB (under Boyne column) = Oldbridge. Sch. j. (under Boyne column) = Schomberg junior, i.e. Meinhard's attack.

Maps

Regarding the Aughrim maps, it is possible the Williamite guns that were advanced on the right (2 batteries) where placed further along the causeway, on the knoll closer to the castle. Also, the attack on the left may have been supported by artillery, but these would be battalion pieces.