

## CHAPTER 10

### **Kenneth "Mor" Mackenzie, 3rd Earl of Seaforth, Chief 1651 - 1679**

Kenneth Mackenzie, 3rd Earl of Seaforth and 4th Lord Mackenzie of Kintail, succeeded as chief on the death of his father, who died in Holland in 1651. He was born at Brahan Castle in 1635. His upbringing is of particular interest. When he was a small child he was placed in the care of the Rev. Farquhar MacRae, the minister of Kintail and the constable of Eilean Donan Castle. The reverend gentleman maintained a seminary in his house in which the young Kenneth was educated along with the sons of neighbouring gentry. This lifestyle was particularly suitable for the heir to the Seaforth fortunes since he mixed with the local clans people and was compelled to use the local language. He grew up to be extremely fit and strong and his impressively tall stature gained him the name of Coinneach Mor (big Kenneth).

The royalist supporters found themselves in difficulty following King Charles' defeat by Cromwell at the Battle of Worcester in 1651. The youthful Kenneth himself was one of these dedicated royalists and even had a price on his head. Other Mackenzies were also supporters of the king. At the Battle of Worcester, Thomas Mackenzie of Pluscardine was one of the Colonels of foot for Inverness and Ross and Alexander "Cam" Mackenzie, the 4th son of Alexander Mackenzie, 5th of Gairloch, was also present. King Charles himself was forced to flee to France after he had first hidden in the famous oak tree. He remained on the continent until his restoration in 1660. It is believed that young Kenneth was taken prisoner at Worcester. If so, he escaped, because by 1652 he was a conspirator with other chiefs in plots to overthrow the Cromwell government in Scotland. The following year in Lewis, Kenneth started an uprising. Together with the Earl of Glencairn and Middleton they urged Charles II to return. Cromwell's men were sufficiently concerned to ask for reinforcements and ships to "make an example" of Seaforth. Kenneth started to gather his men and Cromwell offered a reward of two hundred pounds to anyone who would kill or capture Seaforth, whom he described as "one of the four principal contrivers of this rebellion."

Kenneth and the other royalists did not go so far as to risk an encounter with the Cromwellian army, but they were a nuisance and General Monck was sent north in June 1654 to Kintail and succeeded in defeating the royalists at Loch Garry. The leaders gave themselves up some time later and Kenneth, together with his kinsmen, Mackenzie of Coul and Mackenzie of Applecross, signed a treaty in January 1655 with Cromwell which allowed them to go free, subject to providing financial security. Meanwhile, just to show who was in charge, the lands of Kintail, Lochbroom, Strathgarve, Strathconan and Strathbran were burnt "as a lesson".

When Cromwell's Act of Grace and Pardon was enacted in 1654, an exception was made for the Mackenzie chief because of his support for Charles and his personal involvement in the rising with Glencairn and Middleton. Furthermore

the Seaforth estates were declared forfeited and no provision was made for Kenneth's wife and family. To be a royalist was to be the enemy of Cromwell and history has shown that to be Cromwell's enemy one could expect little or no quarter. However, in February 1655, articles of agreement between Kenneth and General Monck led to Kenneth serving a short spell of imprisonment in Inverness. Thereafter he lived quietly on his estates.

Following the relief afforded by the welcome death of Oliver Cromwell, King Charles II was reinstated as King of England in 1660, though he was, of course, already recognised as King of Scotland. It is said that on the Restoration, Charles returned from his exile on the continent “indolent, selfish, unfeeling, faithless, ungrateful and insensible to shame or reproach”. Although Kenneth did not habitually attend the royal court, at least the previous loyalty of the Mackenzies to the royal cause was recognised and this resulted in the forfeited Seaforth estates being restored. Kenneth throughout remained one of Charles' favourites.

Further evidence of the favour in which Kenneth was held by his king was demonstrated on April 23, 1662. On this day a Commission of the Sheriffship of Ross was granted to him. This was subsequently renewed to him and his eldest son, Kenneth Og, on July 31, 1675.

It was during the era of the third earl that the infamous Brahan Seer is said to have lived and declared his predictions of the expiry of the House of Seaforth, which subsequently proved to be uncannily accurate.

According to historians Duncan Warrand and Alexander Mackenzie, Kenneth was married in February 1658, to Isobel Mackenzie, the daughter of Sir John Mackenzie of Tarbat. The author of the Wardlaw MS objected strongly to this marriage.

“After all men's hopes of him debases himself, mean spirited to marry below himself, getting neither beauty, parts, portion, relation.”

It was clearly expected that as an earl and the chief of the clan Mackenzie he would marry the daughter of a wealthy landowner. Also, it was expected that his wife's family would be of equal station or better. Thus his spouse should have been the daughter of an earl or possibly a marquis or duke.

However, this marriage is disputed, for the late Roderick Grant Francis Mackenzie, Earl of Cromartie states in his book, *A Highland History*, that Kenneth married the daughter of Sir John Mackenzie's son, Sir George Mackenzie of Tarbat, who was to become shortly after, Viscount Tarbat and the 1st Earl of Cromartie. If this is correct, and of course we have no reason to doubt that it is, then Kenneth did not in fact marry below his station.

Nevertheless, the new Countess of Seaforth survived to a great age, outliving her husband by some thirty six years and dying in 1715.

Kenneth died at Chanonry on December, 1678. It is recorded that he had the

most remarkable funeral ever given; perhaps to any subject in Scotland.

Kenneth and Isobel had four sons and four daughters:-

1. Kenneth “Og” Mackenzie, 4th Earl of Seaforth and 5th Lord Mackenzie of Kintail.

2. John Mackenzie of Assynt. He had a son, Alexander, by Sibella, a daughter of Alexander Mackenzie, 3rd of Applecross. John's son Alexander had a son, Kenneth, who married his cousin, Frances, a daughter of Colonel Alexander Mackenzie of Conansbay, (see below).

3. Hugh Mackenzie. He died some time before 1694, presumably unmarried.

4. Colonel Alexander Mackenzie, designated of Assynt and Conansbay, ancestor of the later Mackenzies of Seaforth.

1. Margaret, wife of James Sutherland, 2nd Lord Duffus.

2. Anne. Died unmarried 1734, buried at the church of Holyrood-house near her mother.

3. Isobel, wife of 1. Roderick Macleod of Dunvegan, 1694. 2. Duncan Campbell, younger of Lochnell, 1708.

4. Mary, wife of Alexander Macdonell of Glengarry. Died 1726.

As has been seen, the Restoration of the monarchy brought great favour to the Mackenzies through the loyalty they had exhibited to their exiled king. Charles, meanwhile, had no interest in the Covenant which he had signed as a matter of convenience. He had the bishops reinstated and while some churches gave in to this change, other Covenanters held private church services. The king responded by imposing fines and sending in the dragoons. The result of this suppression of religious liberty merely led to hardened resistance.

### **Kenneth "Og" Mackenzie, 4th Earl of Seaforth and 1st Marquess of Seaforth. Chief 1679—1701**

Kenneth Og, 4th Earl of Seaforth and 5th Lord Mackenzie of Kintail was baptised at Kinghorn on December 8, 1661. He inherited his father's titles and clan chiefship on the death of his father in 1679, and was also served as heir male to his great-grandfather, Lord Mackenzie of Kintail in his lands situated in the lordship of Ardmeanach and Earldom of Ross. He became a Privy Councillor in November 1686, at which nomination he was described as a papist. The fact that Kenneth Og was a Roman Catholic seems to have been due to the fact that he married into a Catholic family. It is also maintained by some historians that it was King James himself who persuaded Kenneth to convert to Catholicism. Once he became a Catholic Kenneth was instrumental in getting his brothers, John MacKenzie of Assynt and Alexander Mackenzie to see the light also. This was to cause the Mackenzie clan much trouble, since the Catholics were a much repressed minority within England and parts of Scotland, which were for the most part, fiercely protestant countries.

He married Lady Frances Herbert, daughter of William, 1st Marquess of Powis. William was to be later created Marquess of Montgomery and Duke of Powis. However these "honours" were granted by King James VII after his abdication from the English throne.

King Charles II died in 1685 and was succeeded by his Roman Catholic brother, James VII and II. There was considerable discontent for, and resistance to, a Catholic monarchy and the solution to this state of affairs was found when William of Orange, himself a grandson of Charles I and who was married to King James' daughter, Mary, offered to take the throne and was supported by the large majority of the English politicians.

The ambitious William duly landed in England with an army and the unfortunate James, finding little support from his protestant subjects, fled to the continent in 1688 leaving the throne jointly to William of Orange and his wife Mary. Thus, for the only time in British history there were two monarchs ruling, William and Mary, and if that wasn't enough some of the population continued to support a third and rightful monarch, the Stuart King James VII and II, now in exile. The Catholic 4th Earl of Seaforth was one of those who continued this support for his Catholic king. Kenneth even accompanied James to Ireland in March 1689 and took part in the Battle of the Boyne and the siege of Londonderry in which James attempted to seize back his crown. But to no avail. These times still linger in the memories of the protestant and catholic Irish, and in the continuing civil war still being waged by the largely catholic Irish Republican Army. As has been incisively remarked, today's battles in Ireland involve much religion but very little Christianity. While the Irish troubles persist into the present day, the events of which we speak

were to create serious troubles in Scotland also. The removal of the rightful King James, a Stuart, was to lead to major upheavals and civil war in Britain well into the middle of the eighteenth century. The Jacobite rebellions! Jacobus being the Latin name for James.

The 1670s in Scotland were known as the Killing Time. Charles' government had been intent on stamping out the Covenanters many of whom were in the south west of Scotland. For this purpose the "Highland Host" was sent down and billeted among the Lowlanders in 1678. If the Lowlanders disliked the Highlanders, there was nothing done to improve that situation. The six thousand Highland Scots pillaged at will among their Lowland brethren and this time, to their unbelievable good fortune, with the blessings of the government! The presence of the Highlanders remained in the memory of the south and is part of the reason that such little support was to come from them during the subsequent attempts to reinstate the Stuarts during the Jacobite revolutions. This period was followed by the short reign of James VII and II with further upheavals, plots and executions. By 1689 William III and II and his protestant and Stuart wife Mary were the accepted monarchs of Scotland and once again Scotland was Presbyterian.

There were early signs of the major part the Highlands were to play in the Jacobite rebellions. From the ranks of Scotland's great leaders steps forward John Graham of Claverhouse. Graham was created Viscount Dundee by James VII & II and with a small body of men went to the Highlands to raise clans for the Stuart king in exile. "Bonnie Dundee", as he is fondly remembered in the stirring song, raised a Highland army, seized Blair Castle, while his supporter, the Duke of Gordon held Edinburgh Castle. In a letter to the Laird of Macleod, dated June 23, 1689, Dundee wrote, "My Lord Seaforth will be a few days from Ireland to raise his men for the King's service".

The sympathies of the Mackenzie clan for the Jacobite cause were well recognized by the government through Seaforth's Catholic religion. General Mackay had 100 Mackays garrison Brahan Castle and 100 Rosses occupy Castle Leod to watch the movements of the Mackenzies. Another sycophantic supporter of James VII for his own ends was John Mackenzie of Tarbat. Many Highland clans became Jacobite for cynical motives and it was seldom for religious reasons they wanted James back on the throne of Scotland; the Highlands and Islands contained only an estimated 4000 catholics, a small minority of the population. Tarbat converted to Catholicism in November 1688 with the purpose of gaining the Isle of Lewis. His timing was not perfect, however, since James lost his throne later that month. A month before his death, Viscount Dundee wrote that "Tarbat is a great villain. Besides what he has done at Edinburgh he has endeavoured to seduce Lochiel, by offers of money, which is under his hand." It appears that Tarbat was not above playing on both sides.

Mackay, with 3000 troops, set north for Blair Castle to recover that strategically important base from Dundee. On the 27 July 1689, Mackay's men were

ensnared as they filed through the Pass of Killiecrankie. The battle that ensued resulted in the loss of 2000 men for Mackay and a heavy defeat. The Highlanders also lost 900 men but their biggest loss was Dundee himself, killed in the battle. Without their inspirational leader, John Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, the earliest of the Jacobite rebellions soon fizzled out. It would be several years before they revived again. Seaforth was still in Ireland and did not therefore personally take part in this famous battle.

In 1687, Kenneth had been created a Knight of the Thistle, an exclusive order of knighthood in Scotland equivalent to the Knights of the Garter in England. But now, in 1690, a protestant king and an anti-Catholic sentiment were in danger of isolating Seaforth. The Highlands however tended to be hostile to the government and General Mackay was obliged to try and prevent a general rising under Buchan who now stood for the exiled king. The following extract from Alexander Mackenzie's *History and Genealogies of the Mackenzies*, nicely describes Seaforth's position:

Mackay was within four hours' march of Inverness before Buchan knew of his approach, who was then at that place `waiting for the Earl of Seaforth's and other Highlanders whom he expected to join him in attacking the town.' Hearing of the proximity of the enemy, he at once retreated, crossed the River Ness, and retired along the north side of the Beaully Firth, eastward through the Black Isle. In this emergency, Seaforth, fearing the consequences to himself personally of the part he had acted throughout, sent two of his friends to Mackay with offers of submission and of whatever securities might be required for his good behaviour in future, informing him that although he was forced to appear on the side of King James, he never entertained any design of molesting the Government forces or of joining Buchan in his attack on Inverness. Mackay replied that he could accept no other security than the surrender of his Lordship's person, and conjured him to comply, as he valued his own safety and the preservation of his family and people, assuring him that in the case of surrender he should be detained in civil custody in Inverness, and treated with the respect due to his rank, until the will of the Government should be made known. Next day his mother, the Countess Dowager of Seaforth, and Sir Alexander Mackenzie of Coul, went and pleaded with Mackay for a mitigation of the terms proposed, but finding the General inflexible, they informed him that Seaforth would accede to any condition agreed upon between them. It was then stipulated that he should deliver himself up and be kept prisoner in Inverness, until the Privy Council decided as to his ultimate disposal. With the view of concealing the voluntary

submission of the Earl from his own clan and his other Jacobite friends, it was agreed that he should allow himself to be seized at one of his seats by a party of horse under Major Mackay, as if he were taken by surprise. He, however, disappointed the party sent out to take him, in excuse of which, his mother and he, in letters to Mackay, pleaded the delicate state of his health, which, it was urged, would suffer from imprisonment; and really few can blame him for unwillingness to place himself absolutely at the disposal of such a body as the Privy Council of Scotland then was - many of whom would not hesitate to sacrifice him, if by so doing they saw a chance of obtaining a share of his extensive estates.

General Mackay became so irritated at the deception practised upon him that he resolved to treat the Earl's vassals 'with all the rigour of military execution,' and sent him a message that if he did not surrender forthwith according to promise, he should at once carry out his instructions from the Privy Council, enter his country with fire and sword, and seize all property belonging to himself or to his vassals as lawful prize; and, lest Seaforth should suspect that he had no intention of executing his terrible threat, he immediately ordered three Dutch Regiments from Aberdeen to Inverness, and decided on leading a competent body of horse and foot in person from the garrison at Inverness, to take possession of Brahan Castle. He, at the same time, wrote instructing the Earl of Sutherland, Lord Reay (Clan MacKay), and the Laird of Balnagown (Clan Ross), to send 1000 of their men, under Major Wishart, an experienced officer acquainted with the country, to take up their quarters in the more remote districts of the Seaforth estates, should that extreme step become necessary. Having, however, a friendly disposition towards the followers of Seaforth, on account of their being "all Protestants and none of the most dangerous enemies", and being more anxious to get hold of the Earl's person than to ruin his friends, he caused information of his intentions to be sent to Seaforth's camp by some of his own party, as if from a feeling of friendship for him; the result being that, contrary to Mackay's expectations, Seaforth surrendered - thus relieving him from a disagreeable duty, - and he was committed a prisoner to the Castle of Inverness.

MacKay had not expected Seaforth to surrender so readily. This is evidenced in a letter he wrote to the Privy Council on Sept 1, 1690. "I believe it shall so fare with the Earl of Seaforth, that is, that he shall haply, submit, when his country is ruined and spoyled, which is in the character of a true Scotsman, wyse behinde the hand!" And that from a fellow Highlander!

In November 1690 Seaforth was transferred to Edinburgh Castle but was freed in January, 1692, subject to the condition he would not go beyond ten miles of Edinburgh. He failed to keep these conditions and was duly imprisoned once again and escaped. In May, 1692 he was apprehended once more and sent to Inverness Castle. He was eventually freed against security for his peaceable behaviour in 1697. The order for his release is recorded as follows:

William R., Right trusty and well beloved Councillors, &c., we greet you well. Whereas we are informed that Kenneth, Earl of Seaforth, did surrender himself prisoner to the commander of our garrison at Inverness, and has thrown himself on our Royal mercy; it is our will and pleasure, and we hereby authorise and require you to set the said Earl of Seaforth at liberty, upon his finding bail and security to live peaceably under our Government and to compear before you when called. And that you order our Advocate not to insist in the process of treason waged against him, until our further pleasure be known therein. For doing whereof this shall be your warrant, so we bid you heartily farewell. Given at our Court at Kensington, the first day of March 1696-7, and of our reign the eighth year. By his Majesty's command.

(signed) "Tullibardine"

In 1691, James VII in exile had created the Mackenzie chief Lord Fortrose and **Marquess of Seaforth**. Since James was no longer the de facto king at that time the title must be regarded as a Jacobite peerage. It was certainly the highest ranking dignity that any Mackenzie chief ever reached. In the times of which we speak, many Scots still refused to accept the fact that William of Orange was their rightful king. James VII was a Stuart king and was still living in France. It is said that when a toast was drunk to "the King", the Jacobites in the gathering would raise their glasses and slyly pass them over the jug of water on the table. This indicated that they were toasting the king "over the water", in other words, King James VII in France!

Kenneth, 4th Earl of Seaforth was to cause no more problems to the Government of King William, (Queen Mary had died in 1694). The remaining years of the Mackenzie chief's life were mainly spent in France while his finances were in a state of exhaustion from the troubles and his enforced absence. One Sir John Dempster of Pitliver obtained a decree from parliament for the recovery of a large sum of money lent to the Earl and his mother. He was unsuccessful in getting payment and the prospect of appearing on the Mackenzie clan estates to claim his money was not an attractive solution to this luckless gentleman.

Kenneth had to suffer for his adopted religion and spent much time in prison because of it and his support of James VII. He died in the country of his self-imposed exile at Paris around April 1701. His mother, the Dowager Countess, wrote of Forbes

of Culloden's "kyndness and friendship to my dearest sone that is gon, whose death is a very sad strok to me . . . he was the great joy of my lyf, and the suport of my age".<sup>1</sup>

Kenneth's wife, Frances, died in Paris also, on 16 December 1732.

Kenneth and Frances had a son and a daughter:

1. William Mackenzie, 5th Earl of Seaforth and 6th Lord Mackenzie of Kintail.

2. Mary, married firstly John Caryll, a Jacobite, 15 July 1712, son of John Caryll of Ladyholt, Sussex. Her husband died 6 April, 1718 and she married secondly, Francis Sempill, another Jacobite. Francis was the son of a Lord Robert Sempill, who was created a (Jacobite) peer of Scotland by James VIII & III some time after 1723 and he died in 1737. It therefore appears that Mary's husband may have been no less a person than the same Sempill, who according to Murray of Broughton, Secretary to Bonnie Prince Charlie, "was charged with the King's affairs at the French Court." This Sempill was in constant communication with King James, and lived in Paris. There are many letters preserved among the Stuart Papers at Windsor written by him to King James VII and to the King's secretary, Edgar. A number of these letters are published in Browne's, *History of the Highlands*. Francis Sempill died in 1748. Mary died 3 April 1740.

Coincidentally, there was another Lord Sempill, but the families may not have been closely connected. In fact Lord Hugh Sempill of this family was in charge of the left wing of the royal army at the battle of Culloden in 1746.

### **The Mackenzies of Cromartie**

By 1684, the main line of the Urquharts of Cromarty had died out. The barony was in the hands of a rapidly rising branch of the clan, the Mackenzies of Cromartie who descended from Sir Roderick Mackenzie, tutor of Kintail and the heiress of Macleod of Lewis. Sir Roderick had inherited Coigach through his wife and on part of the lands he had acquired from his father stood Castle Leod which dated back to the early 15th century. The castle is in Strathpeffer near the town of Dingwall and is the home of the present chief. Roderick also purchased lands at Tarbat and a grand house was built there, unfortunately, it no longer exists. From this

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<sup>1</sup>More Culloden Papers, vol 1, by Duncan Warrand

important branch of the Mackenzie family descend the present Earl of Cromartie and chief of the Clan Mackenzie, and his son Viscount Tarbat. This family acquired the town of Portmahomack and the name became changed to Castlehaven. However, present day maps now show the town by its old name of Portmahomack. The Earl of Cromartie's titles include Baron Castlehaven of Castlehaven.

### **Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh 1636 - 1691**

It is timely to take a look at one of the most famous members of the Mackenzie family to make his name in history. Sir George, became known by the unattractive epithet "bluidy Mackenzie". This was because of his very able and spirited prosecutions of the Scottish Covenanters during the period of their persecution. He was the King's Advocate for Scotland. So prominent was his reputation that it was considered a test of courage in the last century, for the youth of Edinburgh to enter Greyfriars Churchyard, where Mackenzie was buried, and challenge his ghost with the couplet:

Lift the sneck and draw the bar,  
Bluidy Mackingie, come oot if ye dar'.

However, so few dared risk the consequences, that it was said that the safest hiding place for a criminal on the run in Edinburgh was Mackenzie's vault in Greyfriars.

He was the son of Simon Mackenzie of Lochslin who was, in turn, brother to George Mackenzie, 2nd Earl of Seaforth. He was born in Dundee in 1636 and studied Greek and philosophy at St. Andrew's and Edinburgh Universities. He then went to Bourges in France to study civil law and returned to Edinburgh in 1659 where he was called to the bar. He made an incredibly rapid rise to eminence in the legal profession while pursuing his literary interests.

He came to national prominence in 1661, at the age of 25 for his defence of the Marquis of Argyll at his treason trial. Nevertheless, the unfortunate Argyll still lost his head, despite the fine defence put forward by his young lawyer. Argyll's proven affiliations with the late and unloved Oliver Cromwell was the cause of his doom.

Shortly afterwards he was appointed a justice-depute and later a criminal court judge. By the age of 35 he was the member of parliament for Ross-shire and was active in advising against a too hasty decision on the proposed act for incorporating the union between England and Scotland.

The merit of his legal advice and service to the Scottish parliament was appreciated and by 1677 he had already been knighted and was now the King's Advocate and a Privy Councillor. On his accession to his new office he discovered

the gaols full of untried prisoners. Many of these he had released. But as far as the imprisoned Covenanters were concerned he pursued these ruthlessly. These were the religious extremists and fanatics who had led Scotland down a destructive path of civil war, of war against the king and of war against the English. It was these people he helped to eliminate.

The chronicler and Presbyterian divine, Wodrow, who was certainly no natural supporter of Mackenzie, or his acts against the Covenanters, says of him:

“Sir George Mackenzie was a very great instrument in the after severities against Presbyterians, and was scarce ever guilty of moderating any harsh proceeding against them in the eyes of the prelates themselves.”

There are a couple of stories about Sir George which are worth repetition as they add some elements to the worthy man's character. The first story is about the time when he was called upon at his home in Rosehaugh by a poor widow. This old lady sought the lawyer's advice about her croft. Although she had a lease to this small property she had been threatened with eviction, despite the fact there were some years still to run under the terms of the lease. Sir George quickly examined the lease and spotted a flaw in the wording, the effect of which was to put the old lady's lease in jeopardy. Sir George advised her that she would certainly lose the case if she contested it and advised her to vacate the croft. The old lady was so distressed at this revelation that Sir George asked her to call upon him the next day when he would examine the situation more carefully.

Sir George had a clerk, who slept in the same room as his master and he was surprised in the night to see Sir George get out of bed, light a candle and go to his desk and commence writing, all the while being totally asleep! After writing several pages, he locked the papers in his desk, put out the candle and retired to his bed, still asleep.

The following morning at breakfast he remarked to his clerk that he had had a very strange dream involving the widow's croft and in his dream he had resolved the matter in favour of the lady. However, he was unable to remember how that resolution had presented itself. The clerk, requesting the keys to the desk, went to the desk and extracted the papers he had seen Sir George writing during the night. He showed them to Sir George and asked, "Is that like your dream?" Sir George examined the papers for a while and expressed his surprise, "Dear me, this is singular; this is my very dream!" The clerk then told Sir George what he had seen the night before, much to his amazement.

The case he had written was, as it turned out watertight and the poor widow was able to hold on to "her wee bit croftie."

The second tale about Sir George is no less remarkable. Although, of course, he had a fine estate at Rosehaugh, deep in Mackenzie territory, like other

professional men in Scotland, he also had a residence in Edinburgh and it was his practice before dining to take a walk for about half-an-hour or so. One of the places which he favoured for this stroll was Leith Walk, which in those days was a quiet and solitary place. One evening while taking his pre-dinner amble, he was stopped by an elderly gentleman, who, without either introduction or apology, immediately made demands on Sir George as follows:

"There is a very important case to come on in London fourteen days hence, at which your presence will be required. It is a case of heirship to a very extensive estate in the neighbourhood of London, and a pretended claimant is doing his utmost to disinherit the real heir, on the grounds of his inability to produce proper evidence of his title to the estate. It is necessary that you be there on the day mentioned. In one of the attics of the mansion-house on the estate, there is an old oak chest with two bottoms. Between these you will find the necessary titles written on parchment."

So saying the old man quickly departed, leaving Sir George bewildered and speechless. After a while he thought no more about the matter. On the following day, however, while he was walking, once again before taking his evening meal, the same gentleman appeared. Once again, without introduction or greeting, he immediately urged him not to delay but to go to London. He also assured Sir George that he would be amply rewarded for his trouble. The gentleman quickly departed and Sir George paid no great attention to the matter.

On the third evening, he once more met the old gentleman, who this time pleaded with him not to lose another day but depart for London, otherwise the case would be lost.

The most unusual circumstances of these meetings piqued Sir George's curiosity. He therefore decided that he would in fact journey to London which he did the following day on horseback. On his arrival he made his way to the mansion-house which had been described by the old gentleman. There he discovered two men engaged in earnest conversation. One of these men was one of the claimants to the property and the other a celebrated London barrister to whom he introduced himself as the principal law officer for the Crown of Scotland. The London barrister was not pleased to meet Sir George and assumed he had come to "take the bread out of his mouth." He spoke in a surly manner and made rude remarks about the Scots and Scotland. Sir George replied "that lame and ignorant as his 'learned friend' took the Scots to be, yet in law, as well as in other respects, they would effect what would defy him and all his London clique."

The conversation was in danger of becoming even more disagreeable, except that the other gentleman ended it by taking Sir George into the house. The drawing-room was filled with many beautiful drawings and paintings and one of the portraits attracted Sir George's attention and he asked whose loikeness it was. The gentleman replied that it was a portrait of his great great grandfather. "My goodness," said Sir George, "That is the very man who spoke to me three times in Leith Walk, and at whose urgent request I came here."

Sir George then requested that he be shown to the attic. This was agreed and there they found a number of old documents, which, after examination were shown to be of no use in the matter of the case of the heirship. Sir George then remembered the old gentleman's remark about the trunk with two bottoms and looking around the attic he spotted an old trunk lying in a corner. He gave the ancient old trunk a good hearty kick. The bottom fell out releasing a quantity of chaff, amongst which were the original papers relating to the titles to the estate.

The next day, Sir George appeared in Court just as the case was about to commence. He approached the eminent barrister who had made the rude remarks about Scotland and he was acting on behalf of the pretended claimant to the estate. Sir George asked him, "Well, Sir, what will I give you to abandon this action?" He replied, "No sum, nor any consideration whatever, would induce me to give it up!" Sir George drew a snuff-box from his pocket and taking a pinch of snuff, quietly said the illustrious lawyer, "Well Sir, I will not even hazard a pinch on it."

The case proceeded and in answer to the claimant's lawyer's presentation, Sir George gave a most eloquent speech in which he exposed the means adopted to deprive his client of his birthright and closed the case by presenting the documents of title, which decided the action in favour of his client. Taking his young client's arm he turned to his "learned friend" and said, "You see now what a Scotsman can do and I must tell you that I wish a countryman anything but a London barrister."

Sir George was well paid for his trouble and returned to Edinburgh. But he never ever saw the old gentleman again!<sup>2</sup>

So much for "Bloody Mackenzie." Since the word "bloody" tended to be an all-embracing epithet used by the extremist Covenanters against any who opposed them, perhaps Sir George Mackenzie was not as black as he was painted. In fact there was another "bluidy Mackenzie" who, coincidentally, had the same name, Sir George Mackenzie of Tarbat; later to become Viscount Tarbat and the first Earl of Cromartie. These two Georges are often confused with one another, since when the persecution of the Covenanters was at its peak, one presided as Lord Justice-General, while the other was head of the Bar as King's Advocate. Tarbat was also an accomplished lawyer and has been described as "one of the most extraordinary men that Scotland has produced." However he was politically sensitive and his scheming led one satirist to write:

"Some do compare him to an eel;

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<sup>2</sup> This curious story is used in Chapter 9 of Sir Walter Scott's book, *The Antiquary*, when Oldbuck describes the antics of a ghost. Scott provides an endnote explaining that his story is based upon an actual case said to have occurred around 1760. The case is not that of Mackenzie and the stranger appears in a dream. Otherwise the situations are remarkably similar.

Should mortal men be made of steel?"

However, neither of these men were the monsters of cruelty they were made out to be. Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh was considered by some in a much kinder light. Lord Fountainhall, a moderate in both politics and religion described him as "the brightest man in the nation." Bonnie Dundee wrote of him in 1689,

"the advocate is gone to England, a very honest man, firm beyond belief."

That he prosecuted the Covenanters is in no doubt, after all that was his job. He happened to regard them as rebellious subjects, but he did not persecute them for their religious convictions. In one of his books he writes:

My heart bleeds when I consider how scaffolds were dyed with blood  
and the fields covered with the carcasses of murdered Christians.

It was only the extremists that he sent to the scaffold. To the merely rebellious they suffered the merciful and lighter sentence of the thumbscrew or the "boots" - the ingenious method of torture in Scotland which was effective in extracting information.

If Sir George was aware that he was known as "bluidy Mackenzie" it is certain he did not care.

### **William Mackenzie, 5th Earl of Seaforth and 6th Lord Mackenzie of Kintail, Chief 1701—1740.**

William Mackenzie succeeded his father as Chief of the Clan Mackenzie and as the 5th Earl of Seaforth and the 6th Lord Mackenzie of Kintail in 1701. As the son of Catholic parents, he was to choose the cause of the exiled house of Stuart and to play a prominent role in the Jacobite rebellions of 1715 and 1719. He was, after all, a marquis in the Jacobite peerage. James VII & II died in 1701. His son became the Jacobite King James VIII & III, otherwise known as the Old Pretender or, the Chevalier.

William was still a child on his "succession" in 1701 and at first it was proposed by his grandmother, the old Countess of Seaforth that he should be put under the care of Duncan Forbes of Culloden. But William's strong willed Catholic mother, Frances, had other plans and insisted that Culloden not meddle with her son. She won that battle with her mother-in-law and William was spirited out of Scotland to France to be "popishly bred". And there he stayed until his return to Scotland in 1713.

One year after the death of the fourth Earl of Seaforth, the protestant King William also died as result of a fall from his horse which tripped on a mole hill. The Jacobites were delighted with this development and they toasted the mole which was the cause of the accident as the “little gentleman in black velvet”. William was succeeded by another protestant daughter of James VII & II, Queen Anne, who was to prove to be the last of the Stuart monarchs. It was during Queen Anne's twelve year reign that the Act of Union of 1707 came into force. By this important act, England and Scotland became united as Great Britain, with its own flag, the Union Jack. But there were people in both England and Scotland opposed to this merger of their nations.

Another political act which was to have important consequences for the Jacobite cause was the English Act of Settlement passed in 1701 to determine who should succeed to the throne on the death of King William and later Queen Anne. This Act of Settlement determined that the Electress Sophia and the German House of Hanover were next in line. Conveniently, the Catholic James, “the Old Pretender”, and son of James VII & II, was left out of consideration. Although Queen Anne was pregnant eighteen times, only one child survived infancy and he died in 1700. Meanwhile Scotland had made no decision on who should become their sovereign. The Pretender watched these proceedings with interest. Some Scots already regarded him and spoke of him as King James, indeed the French King Louis recognized him as King James VIII of Scotland and III of England.

In July 1713, William, 5th Earl of Seaforth returned from Catholic France a determined Jacobite. On August 1st, 1714, Queen Anne died and the German, King George I, of the house of Hanover, arrived in England in September as Britain's new king. Although George was, in fact, a great grandson of James VI & I, he was still seen as a usurper to the throne by the Jacobites who now saw no reason why King James VIII & III should not now return as their lawful sovereign. There were Jacobite supporters in both England and Scotland, though the English Jacobites tended to be Catholics while the Scottish Jacobites were both Catholics and nationalists. In Scotland many clans were Whigs politically and thereby supporters of King George. Others were fervent Jacobites. The seeds of civil war had been planted and were now about to flourish. James made a declaration on October 15th as follows: “We have beheld a Foreign Family, Aliens to our Country, distant in Blood and strangers even to our Language, ascend the throne.” This seemed to have little effect, at least at first.

On George's arrival in England he went out of his way to ignore the Tories and snub the Scottish nobles who had come to meet him. Among these was the Earl of Mar, Secretary of State. George went further, later demanding he return his Seals of office as Secretary of State for Scotland which were passed to the Duke of Montrose. This action pushed the Earl of Mar into the Jacobite camp and he became its leader. He was also the cousin of the Earl of Cromartie.

On August 19th, 1715, the Earl of Mar, one time supporter of the Act of

Union, sent letters to all of the known principal Jacobites inviting them to attend a grand hunting match at Braemar on the 27th of the same month. The Earl of Seaforth was among those who attended this gathering, the real purpose of which had little to do with hunting. The other Jacobite nobles in attendance included the Marquis of Huntly, eldest son of the Duke of Gordon, the Marquis of Tullibardine, eldest son of the Duke of Atholl, the Earl Marischal, the Earls of Nithsdale, Traquair, Errol, Southesk, Carnwarth and Linlithgow, the Viscounts Kilsyth, Kenmure, Kingston and Stormont, Lords Rollo, Duffus, Drummond, Strathallan, Ogilvie and Nairne plus other gentlemen of influence in the Highlands including General Hamilton, General Gordon, Macdonell of Glengarry and Campbell of Glendaruel.

The Earl of Mar produced a commission from James appointing him as Lieutenant-General and Commander of the Jacobite forces in Scotland. He made a stirring speech to the assembled gathering in which he said he was supplied with money sufficient to pay forces raised to join his standard and establish the Chevalier on the throne of Scotland. The Old Pretender was frequently referred to as the Chevalier. Each member in the assembly then took an oath of loyalty to the Earl of Mar as the representative of James VIII and III and promised to raise their men and to join Mar when they were so commanded by him.

On September 3rd, the Earl of Mar summoned his adherents to meet with him at Aboyne. Three days later the royal standard of King James VIII & III was raised at Braemar Castle and with that act rebellion had commenced. It is said that just three days later, Mar, in the presence of 2000 troops, raised the royal standard once again, but this time the ball on top of the flagpole fell off. This was seen by the Highlanders present as a very bad omen and cast a gloom over the proceedings. An old Jacobite song describes this event:

But when our standard was set up,  
So fierce the wind did blow, Willie,  
The golden knop from down the top  
Unto the ground did fa', Willie,  
The second-sighted Sandy said  
We'll do nae gude at a', Willie,  
While pipers played frae right to left,  
Fy, furich Whigs awa, Willie,  
Up and waur them a', Willie,  
Up and waur them a', Willie,  
Up and sell your sour milk,  
And dance, and ding them a', Willie.

The Earl of Seaforth was late in joining Mar since he was tied down at home by the surrounding Whig clans. Colonel Sir Hector Munro, who had a fine military reputation in Queen Anne's wars, raised the Munros and the Rosses, totalling 600

men, for King George and encamped them at Alness to oppose Seaforth's Mackenzies. These were later joined by the Earl of Sutherland's men and those of Lord Reay adding another 600 armed supporters for the Government.

Seaforth was next joined with 700 Macdonalds and others, which, together with his own clan, amounted to 3000 men. With this superior army he attacked the Earl of Sutherland who fled to Bonar-Bridge where his forces dispersed. A party of Grants on their way to support Sutherland, hearing of the flight of their allies, prudently decided to return from whence they came. Young Seaforth now levied considerable fines on the neighbouring Munros for their audacity in seeking to oppose him.

A party of Frasers also joined the rebellion under the command of Mackenzie of Fraserdale. He had assumed the chiefship of the clan Fraser since he was married to the daughter of the old chief. However, when Lord Lovat arrived on the scene he commanded the Frasers to withdraw from the rising which they did, leaving Fraserdale on his own.

Seaforth eventually met up with Mar and they marched south, leaving behind Mackenzie of Coul and Mackenzie of Gruinard to hold Inverness for the Jacobites. Mar captured Perth and made it his headquarters. He had almost 9,000 men under arms, and in England other Jacobites were raising forces. Unfortunately Mar was not a leader in the image of Dundee. He was frequently unable to make up his mind what to do and often did nothing. When he did make a decision he was prone to change his mind. Thus he acquired the derisory epithet of "Bobbing John".

The Jacobite army under Mar eventually met the much smaller government army, commanded by the Duke of Argyll at Sheriffmuir. The right flank of Mar's forces, which included Seaforth's men, won the battle against the left flank of Argyll's, while the right flank of Argyll's won the struggle against Mar's left. This indecisive result led to Mar's Highlanders drifting back to their homes and the rebellion was over. On the 22nd of December the Old Pretender landed in Scotland. But he was too late!

It is conceivable that had James been a natural leader he could have gathered together sufficient support to have recovered the throne. But, unfortunately, he was not only not a good leader, he was a lugubrious, dismal and uninspiring man as the following contemporary account shows:

...and yet I must not conceal that when we saw the person who we called our King, we found ourselves not at all animated by his presence, and if he was disappointed in us, we were tenfold more so in him; we saw nothing in him that looked like spirit; he never appeared with cheerfulness and vigour to animate us: our men began to despise him; some asked if he could speak; his countenance looked extremely heavy; he cared not to come abroad among us soldiers, or to see us handle our arms or do our exercise; some said the

circumstances he found us in dejected him. I am sure the figure he made dejected us, and had he sent us but 5000 men of good troops and never come among us, we had done other things than we have now done.

James returned to France in the following February and never came back to Scotland again. It was left to his son, Bonnie Prince Charlie to try his hand to regain the throne for his father thirty years later.

The MacKenzies suffered many casualties at Sheriffmuir. Four of Seaforth's followers so distinguished themselves that a Gaelic poem was composed to commemorate their valiant deeds and deaths in the battle. The four became known as "the four Johns of Scotland." They were John Mackenzie of Hilton, who commanded a company of Mackenzies, John Mackenzie of Applecross, John MacRae of Conchra and John Murchison of Achtertyre.

Prior to the Battle of Sheriffmuir, Eilean Donan Castle fell into the hands of the king's soldiers. A local tenant approached the new governor of the castle and asked for the help of the garrison in cutting his corn, as the weather appeared threatening and starvation would result if the harvest was not gathered. The governor agreed to this reasonable request and instructed the garrison to help the tenant. When the soldiers returned from the fields, they realised they had been the victims of a deception, for the men of Kintail had taken possession of the castle and were armed and dancing on the roof, "just as they were setting out for the Battle of Sheriffmuir where this resolute band was cut to pieces."<sup>3</sup>

Sir John Mackenzie of Coul and George Mackenzie of Gruinard, meanwhile, continued to hold Inverness. They were awaiting the arrival of Macdonald of Keppoch who was marching to support them. Lord Lovat, the Fraser chief intervened on behalf of the government forces, despite his supposed support of the Jacobite cause, and Keppoch was obliged to retreat. The position became hopeless for the outnumbered defenders of Inverness. Coul decided to escape with his men, leaving the turncoat Lovat to enter Inverness unopposed. Seaforth returned from the south and tried to raise his men at Brahan. But he found strong opposition from the other local clans including the Earl of Sutherland, Lord Reay's Mackays, the Munros, the Rosses, Forbes of Culloden's men, as well as the Frasers.

Seaforth made his way to Lewis and raised his men there, placing them under the command of Brigadier Campbell of Ormundel, an officer who had served in the army of the Russian Tsar. The government's General Cadogan, hearing of this development, sent a force to Lewis to meet this new resistance. Seaforth escaped to Ross-shire and the Mackenzies, abandoned by their chief, likewise deserted

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<sup>3</sup> Old Statistical Account of Kintail, 1792

Campbell, who was captured. Days later, ships arrived from France with supplies for the Jacobites. But it was to be a frequent story, the promised assistance by foreign allies came too late or, was too little. The failure of Sheriffmuir to produce a decided victory had taken the wind out of the revolutionary sails. Seaforth gave up the struggle and followed James to France. In May 1716 an Act of attainder was passed against the Earl of Seaforth and the other Jacobites. The Seaforth estates were forfeited, though, as will be seen, in practice it was difficult for the government to put the forfeiture into effect. It was not until 1719 that Seaforth was again instrumental in attempting another Jacobite uprising.

### **THE JACOBITE ATTEMPT OF 1719**

In November 1890 the British Museum obtained a book of letters of the second Duke of Ormonde, which were written between November 14th 1718 and September 27th 1719. Most of the letters were written to Cardinal Alberoni or Prince James Francis Edward Stuart, otherwise known to history as the Old Pretender, or to the Jacobites as King James the VIII of Scotland and III of England. The contents of these letters related to the projected invasion of Britain in 1719 on behalf of the exiled Stuarts, which eventually led to a landing in the West Highlands. The result was the ill-fated Battle of Glenshiel.

As a consequence of the finding of these papers, the Scottish History Society produced them and updated the account of the abortive 1719 uprising in a book for their members in December 1895, entitled *The Jacobite Attempt of 1719*. This attempt is a most important one from a Mackenzie perspective, as the clan chief, William Mackenzie, the 5th Earl of Seaforth, was one of the principal leaders of this uprising in Scotland. It led to his exile. It also resulted in the destruction of the Mackenzie's historical stronghold, Eilean Donan Castle and it was the main reason that the Mackenzie clan played such a minor role in the '45 rebellion, twenty-six years later.

Among the almost 300 letters and papers reproduced by the Scottish History Society, there is only one from the Earl of Seaforth himself, and a mighty strange letter it is, written as it was only two months after the Battle of Glenshiel.

The history of the 1719 uprising started far from the Highlands of Scotland and was immersed in the complexities of European politics.

James Butler, Duke of Ormonde had been Captain General in the English army, in succession to the famous Duke of Marlborough. He went on to become one of the leaders of the Tory party in England. Ormonde became deeply implicated in the plot to bring over James Stuart from France following the death of James' sister, Queen Anne in 1714. Queen Anne was the last surviving Stuart sovereign, except for the ambitions of Catholic James. Ormonde rightly felt that James was the legitimate heir to the throne as the son of his father James VII and II, who was forced to abdicate his throne because of his Roman Catholic religion in 1688 in favour of the

joint sovereigns, William of Orange and his wife, Queen Mary. Mary was not only the wife of William of Orange but also the daughter of James VII and II. There is no question that in accordance with the rules of inheritance, James VIII and III was the legitimate king of both England and Scotland. It must be said, however, that James could have made his path to the throne a less difficult one had he been prepared to renounce his Roman Catholic religion and to have made a statement to that effect. But James was not prepared to depart from his religious beliefs and an antagonistic Britain were not overly sympathetic to him because of his dogmatism. Thus politics came into play and the German, King George I was placed on the throne of Britain. Outraged Scots rallied to the cause of the Jacobite rebellion of 1715 which fizzled out following the indecisive battle at Sheriffmuir.

A further complication to the attempt to put the Stuarts back on the throne was that in 1707, an Act of Union brought England and Scotland together as a single country, Great Britain. The Union was disliked by many on both sides of the border and did little, initially, to remove the dislike that the English and Scots had for each other. Some Scots hoped that a Stuart monarch would renounce the Act of Union and make Scotland an independent nation once more. Whatever their respective motives, the plotters plotted and Britain became a place of intrigue, a place full of spies and secret agents, with government informers everywhere seeking to find out what was going on. Most of the intrigues took place in Europe with or without the support of foreign princes or prime ministers, each of whom had their own secret political reasons for supporting or not supporting the Jacobite cause. Many promises were made and broken and the history of the Jacobite rebellions is filled with outrageous promises of huge armies, massive arms shipments and boat loads of gold to finance risings in both England and Scotland. And constantly the promises were not fulfilled. Sometimes these were due to a change of political fortune, sometimes an assassination, sometimes bad weather, but always, bad luck! Against this background we have the Jacobites divided amongst themselves and often having personal motives in opposition to the general good. The English Jacobites, for their part, simply failed to produce the necessary numbers of men to make the uprisings succeed and the Scottish Jacobites also had to fight clans and countrymen loyal to the House of Hanover. A sorry catalogue of missed opportunities for a cause which could have been won with better planning, better leadership and better co-operation.

Once it was discovered that Ormonde was implicated in the plot to re-establish the Stuarts, a move was immediately made to impeach him. He fled to France in August, 1715 and worked for the Jacobite cause from that base. King Louis XIV, the Catholic monarch of a powerful country, had been supportive towards James, whose exiled court was domiciled in France. Unfortunately, Louis died in September, 1715 and French politics changed in favour of friendship with England. James was forced to leave France after his return from Scotland following the ill-fated uprising in 1715, and he moved to the Papal dominions, where he remained for the rest of his life.

The Jacobites plotted other attempts to unseat King George from the throne and sought the help of Sweden, who promised to land 12,000 Swedish troops in Scotland in support of a Jacobite uprising in England. King Charles XII of Sweden was to lead his troops in person and substantial financial support was to be forthcoming from Cardinal Alberoni and Spain. The attempt came to nought when secret papers were seized which disclosed the intrigue and effectively ended that initiative.

The next scheme involved a proposed marriage between James and one of the daughters or nieces of Tsar Peter to gain thereby Russian support against King George. Ormonde failed in this attempt, though the Earl of Mar was able to announce that a bride had been found for the Jacobite King James in the person of Princess Maria Clementina Sobieski, a granddaughter of the King of Poland.

The Jacobites continued their plotting and discovered a strong ally in Spain, in the guise of Cardinal Giulio Alberoni, who had become the absolute master of Spain and was now having problems with the English navy, under Sir George Byng. Byng was under orders to protect Italy from attack by Spain. Byng completely destroyed the Spanish fleet, much to the great fury of Alberoni who decided to hit back at the British via military support for the exiled House of Stuart, and the further plan was that Ormonde, with his military reputation and personal popularity in England was the man to lead such an expedition. Ormonde's letters commence at this point, from November 4, 1718. Ormonde met with Alberoni in Madrid and the plans for an expedition were discussed and relayed to James. These plans included sending many thousands of Spanish and Swedish troops plus enormous numbers of muskets to arm the English Jacobites, with landings in the west of England and also the Highlands of Scotland where the Jacobite support was strongest.

Two things happened to put a dent in these plans. First the political involvement of Spain in France's affairs led to France declaring war on Spain on 9th January, 1719. With Spain now at war with England, Italy and France, Alberoni was very restricted in the amount of support he could now give to the Jacobite adventure. The second setback was the assassination of Charles XII of Sweden. He had been a strong opponent of King George I and his death now led to a change of policy in Sweden's previously hostile attitude to Britain.

Ormonde next invited George Keith, the 10th Earl Marischal to join the cause and he agreed to do so and was accompanied by his younger brother, James Keith, who was to go on to achieve fame as a Field Marshal in later years. The Earl Marischal was provided with two frigates and two thousand muskets plus a supply of money and ammunition. In addition a small body of Spanish troops were sent with the Earl to Scotland, where it was expected that the Highlanders would flock to the standard of King James VIII & III. The Earl Marischal set sail on 8th March 1719 with letters from the Duke of Ormonde to the Duke of Gordon, Glengarry, Maclean of Brolas and Donald Macdonald of Benbecula, the cousin of Clanranald.

The main force was to go with Ormonde and he waited for the fleet of five

warships and 22 other ships with 5000 troops and arms for 30,000 more. This fleet left Cadiz on 7th March. But the government in England had plenty of warning from its informers that such an invasion was being attempted and put out a price of £5,000 for the capture of Ormonde.

Unfortunately for Ormonde, he waited in vain for the fleet and the troops, since terrible storms scattered the fleet and caused the loss of many lives. An attempt to send a further fleet was abandoned and all hopes for a successful rising now rested with the Earl Marischal and his tiny invasion force, now making its way to Scotland.

The Earl Marischal's Spanish force comprised a total of 307 men which included 18 officers. Young James Keith was despatched to France, now an enemy country, to advise the Jacobites there of the intended expedition. At Bordeaux he met with General Gordon, Brigadier Campbell and some others to whom he gave money so that they could hire ships to get to Scotland. At Orleans he met with the Marquis of Tullibardine and they travelled together to Paris.

It was in Paris that Keith and Tullibardine met up with the Marquis of Seaforth, (he had been made a Marquis by James in the Jacobite peerage), and Seaforth brought with him a brother of Lord Duffus. Shortly afterwards they were joined by Campbell of Glendaruel. Keith reports:

I told them the reason of my coming, and showed them the short credentials I had brought from the Duke of Ormonde. Glendaruel smiled at reading them, and told me that the billet wou'd have been of little weight with them, had they not been already advertised by the Duke of Marr to obey what orders the Duke of Ormonde should send. This plainly let me see that we had two factions amongst us, and which proved the occasion of our speedy ruin when we landed in Scotland.<sup>4</sup>

Glendaruel was secretly anxious to gain a commission for Tullibardine as the commander in chief of the forces, since he felt comfortable that he could direct the easy going Tullibardine for his own ends. On the other hand, Glendaruel was not on good terms with General Gordon and wished to ensure that the military control did not fall into his hands. Thus underlying politics were being played in a game in which the Scots were required to work together if they were to stand any chance of success whatsoever, in the light of the enormous odds against them.

This mixed party left Havre on 19th March in a small barque, the *Fidele*. They arrived in Mackenzie territory on the Isle of Lewis, just narrowly avoiding capture by the British fleet which was on the alert, having received intelligence of the proposed uprising.

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<sup>4</sup>From "The Jacobites and the Union" by Charles Sanford Terry, 1922

The Earl Marischal was already in Lewis and his two frigates were at anchor in Stornoway. Tullibardine had in fact received his commission from General Arthur Dillon who was at James' court at St Germain. However, Tullibardine did not advise the Earl Marischal of this commission and, as the Earl was the senior major-general present, he took command accordingly. A council of war was held at which the Earl Marischal expressed the need to land on the mainland of Scotland and make a dash to Inverness, where they would seize the garrison. Tullibardine advised against this saying that they should remain in Lewis and wait for Ormonde to arrive with his forces in England. It was decided to head for the mainland.

The next day Tullibardine requested a meeting of the council of war at which he made a speech, "which nobody understood but himself" and produced his commission appointing him as Lieutenant-General of James' forces in Scotland. Marischal accordingly resigned command, except for the ships, which had been committed to him personally by Alberoni. Once again Tullibardine and Glendaruel stressed the need to remain in Lewis, but others protested so strongly that the Earl Marischal's views prevailed and they set sail from Lewis on April 4th with the intention of landing in Kintail, which was considered safe, as it was also Seaforth's property. Bad winds prevented them from reaching Kintail so they disembarked in Gairloch, which was loyal Mackenzie territory.

Seaforth himself was very wary of the proposed rising in Scotland. He was of the strong belief that until there was evidence of strong support with Ormonde landing in England with his army, the Highlanders would not wish to risk all so soon after the last abortive attempt of 1715. However despite these grave misgivings Seaforth "with the greatest difficulty ...was persuaded to move." Lord Seaforth declared that his mind was still the same as it had been when they were in Lewis:

...thinking it folly and distraction to stir without a landing in England, and the Gentlemen of his name agreed that all their endeavours would be to no purpose for men could not be brought in earnest to the field before that time...

Glendaruel was despatched from Gairloch with messages to the Highland chiefs announcing the arrival of the expedition. The ships left Gairloch on the 6th but continuous storms drove them all the way back to Lewis and it was not until April 13th that they landed on the shores of Loch Alsh.

The next day Glendaruel returned with the response from the Highlanders that they were ready to rise in support of King James as soon as they had confirmation of Ormonde's landing in England. Lockhart of Carnwath sent a note to the Earl Marischal with his views on what ought to be done:

...it is thought proper that the Earl Marischal should publish a manifesto, in which, after having enumerated the many grievances

attending the Union, such as the decay of trade, and the violation of the Scots' liberties and civil rights, etc, he should declare that it is the King's (James VIII) intention to restore his Scots' subjects to their ancient rights and independent state. And that he himself and those with him appear in arms as well to redeem the nation as restore the King, and that he does thereby invite all his fellow subjects to contribute towards so just, honourable, and necessary an undertaking. And in this manifesto, assurance should be given that a Scots Parliament will be invited to meet as soon as the posture of affairs will allow the same to assemble, that such laws may be therein made and passed as shall be judged necessary for settling the peace and tranquillity of the nation and securing the liberties and religion of the same...

The Marquis of Seaforth undertook to raise 500 men from his Mackenzie clan to support the Spanish contingent on the understanding from Tullibardine that he would write and obtain the support of Clanranald and Lochiel. Arguments continued among the Jacobite leaders as to their course of action with Tullibardine and Glendaruel still counselling delay. On the 20th April, Clanranald and Lochiel arrived.

Then came the news of Ormonde's plight with his fleet. Tullibardine was all for taking the next boat back to Spain, but the Earl Marischal would not hear of such a thing and he threatened to burn the ships. In fact he sent the two frigates back to Spain and they just missed being captured by a strong British squadron of five warships. One of the reasons that the Earl Marischal took this action was that he was suspicious of Tullibardine's caution; he believed that it was his intention to embark the force and return with them back to Spain. The despatch of the frigates removed this option. In fact not only Tullibardine, but the Spanish Colonel, when he saw how few Highlanders had joined the cause was also ready to return to Spain with his force until he was prevailed upon to stay. With the frigates gone, there was now no retreat.

The Jacobite leaders made Eilean Donan Castle their base. This castle, the ancient stronghold of the Mackenzie clan was used as the storehouse of ammunition and supplies and these were guarded by about 40 of the Spaniards.

On May 10th, three British warships under the command of Captain Boyle came up the loch to Eilean Donan and demanded that the castle surrender. One of the Spanish soldiers deserted and informed Boyle's men that the Spanish lieutenant in charge of the garrison was prepared to deliver up the castle. Captain Boyle's despatch elaborates:

At nine in the morning, I sent my Lieutanant towards the Fort with a Flag of Truce to demand them to surrender; but they firing at the Boat, he return'd. About Four in the Afternoon, a Deserter wav'd to us from the Side of the Camp, who, being brought off, inform'd us that

the Camp was of about 4700 Men and daily increasing. At eight in the Evening we brought our Ships to play upon the Castle with a great Fire, under the Cover of which I detach'd two Boats mann'd and arm'd, under the Command of two Lieutenants, who, landing at the Foot of the Castle, attack'd and took it after a small Resistance. Thinking it proper (as the Camp lay within two Miles) to blow the place up, I sent Captain Herdman of the *Enterprize* on that Service, who perform'd it effectually, after having first sent off the Prisoners, with 343 Barrels of Powder, 52 Barrels of Musket-Shot, 200 Weight each, and some Bags of Meal.

Eilean Donan had seen much action in its long history as the stronghold of the Mackenzies of Kintail, but modern warships and artillery fire were too much for this otherwise impregnable fortress. The small Spanish garrison surrendered without a fight and were taken prisoner. The buildings in which the provisions had been stored were set on fire and the ancient Eilean Donan castle was blown up, ending 500 years of history. The ruined shell of the castle stood solitary and proud for almost 200 years before it was rebuilt at the end of the 19th century by its new Macrae owner.

The Jacobites were in a sorry state with no base and limited supplies. The failure of Ormonde heavily restricted the ability to raise the necessary numbers of men in England and Scotland. At this point Tullibardine decided to do what he should have done in the first place, raise men for the cause from the Highland clans. Keith says that "not above a thousand men appeared, and even those seemed not very fond of the enterprise." Tullibardine's younger brother, Lord George Murray arrived with a force of men from Perthshire. Murray was to become famous as the leader of the Jacobite forces during the '45 rebellion and was arguably one of the greatest military leader to come out of Scotland. Another famous figure, Rob Roy, arrived with men from Stirlingshire and Argyllshire. On June 5th, Lochiel arrived with 150 of his clan and two days later, Seaforth turned up with the 500 men he had promised from the Mackenzie clan and their supporters. The next day Rob Roy's son brought another 80 volunteers.

Meanwhile delays had ended the plans to seize Inverness as the garrison had been substantially reinforced. General Wightman, who had been one of the commanders of Argyll's troops at Sheriffmuir, marched from Inverness with a strong force of about 850 infantry, 120 dragoons and 130 Highlanders and proceeded to make his way across the Highlands to Kintail. The Jacobites decided to await the force at Glenshiel, a grand and desolate glen. This area is typical Highland terrain and if the Highlanders were to fight, then this ground would suit them best with its hills, gorges and steep declivities.

On the 9th June Lord George Murray, who commanded the outposts, reported that the enemy were encamped four or five miles off, near Loch Clunie. Next morning they struck camp and made their way towards Glenshiel. As they

advanced, Murray and his men moved back, maintaining a distance of about half a mile.

At two o'clock in the afternoon the two armies came in sight of each other and Wightman halted and deployed his men for an attack. The Jacobites had built some fortifications including a barricade thrown across the road and along the face of the hill on the north side of the river there were entrenchments. At this point the main body of the Jacobite army was posted and this included about two hundred of the Spanish troops, Lochiel and his 150 men, 40 of Rob Roy's men, 50 McKinnons and two hundred of Lord Seaforth's Mackenzies, under the command of Sir John Mackenzie of Coul. One of the officers in command was John Mackenzie of Avoch. There were in addition about 179 others, the majority of whom were probably Glengarry's men.

Lord Seaforth himself was positioned on the extreme left high up on the side of a hill with two hundred of his best Mackenzie clansmen. On the right 150 men were under the leadership of Lord George Murray, while the centre was commanded by the Marquis of Tullibardine, accompanied by Glendaruel. Brigadier McIntosh of Borlum was with the Spaniards and the Earl Marischal and Brigadier Campbell were with Seaforth's men.

Wightman's force consisted of British and Dutch troops with some support from Highlanders loyal to the Hanoverians. These included 80 Munros under Captain George Munro of Culcairn, the younger brother of the Munro clan chief, Sir Robert Munro of Foulis. Culcairn was to be severely wounded in the action which followed. One official report gave the Jacobite force at 1640 Highlanders and 300 Spaniards, while General Wightman's force totalled 1106 men including 136 Highlanders as well as four mortars for throwing grenades.

The battle commenced between five and six o'clock at which time the left wing of Wightman's army moved against Lord George Murray's position on the south side of the river. The position was first shelled by a mortar battery and then attacked by a number of troops, including the Munros. This attack was repulsed but a second attack drove back Murray's men. Wightman's right now moved up the hill to attack the Jacobite left commanded by Lord Seaforth. He was strongly positioned behind some large rocks and soon received support from Sir John Mackenzie of Coul, together with the remainder of the Mackenzies. Seaforth was still feeling the pressure of the attack and called for more support. Rob Roy and his men set off to join the Mackenzies, but the support did not reach them in time and most of them gave way under the pressure of the attack, while Lord Seaforth himself was badly wounded. Rob Roy's men next gave way and retired up the mountain where they were followed by the Glengarry men and others.

Wightman's army directed their attention to the centre and the Spaniards held out well, but finding themselves deserted by the Highlanders they too retired up the mountain side away from harm's way. The whole of the Jacobite army under Tullibardine was now in retreat and the Hanoverians pursued their enemy over the

hills until it was dark.

The English losses were 21 men killed and 121 wounded. Despite the sorry result for the Jacobites, it is not believed that the Highlanders suffered any worse losses than those of the government. Lord George Murray was wounded as was Lord Seaforth. One report states that only ten Jacobites were killed or wounded.

The Jacobite leaders gathered the next day to determine their next move. The fact that they were without ammunition and supplies they had no confidence to try again and it was decided that the Spanish troops should surrender as prisoners of war, while the Highlanders, who would be tried and executed as traitors, if caught, should escape among the mountains and find their own safety.

A price was put on the heads of Lord Seaforth, the Marquis of Tullibardine and the Earl Marischal of £2,000, a great deal of money in those days. The leaders successfully managed to escape to the continent and some of them were to try again 26 years later, during the '45 rebellion.

The Mackenzies were without their chief and suffered greatly when Wightman wrote to say he was:

taking a tour through all the difficult parts of Seaforth's country to terrify the Rebels by burning the houses of the guilty and preserving those of the Honest.

A little later on June 30th he wrote:

I have used all possible means to put a Dread upon those who have been more immediately concerned in this late unnatural Rebellion, and by all just accounts am assured the Rebels are totally disperst.

There were 274 Spanish prisoners taken and they were sent to Edinburgh and were ultimately returned to their country in the following October.

The Pretender, James, and the Duke of Ormonde remained in Spain hoping to renew their attempt at a later date. Alberoni also had ambitions to support a further invasion but he had lost credibility and it was reported that the Spanish people just laughed at his project. Quite apart from that his hands were very full with affairs at home and only the Jacobites had "faith enough to believe every thing that makes for them, let it be ever so impossible." Alberoni fell from power in the December of 1719.

Of Ormonde, nothing more was heard. He lived for many years but took no more part in politics, and when he was seen by Lady Montagu in 1743 she said, "To say the truth, nobody can be more insignificant."

Tullibardine was the man who unfurled Prince Charles' standard at Glenfinnan in 1745, dying the following year a prisoner in the Tower of London.

Lord Seaforth managed to make his peace with King George and was able to

return home to play no further part in the Jacobite cause. It was left to his kinsman, George Mackenzie, 3rd Earl of Cromartie, to lead the Mackenzie clan for the Jacobites in 1745, by which time Seaforth was dead.

Only the two Keiths went on to lead successful and prestigious careers, although Lord George Murray came close to great fame in 1745 by almost leading the Jacobite forces to victory, marching the Highland troops through England all the way to Derby.

The year following the abortive rising at Glenshiel, James and his wife Clementina had a son, Bonnie Prince Charlie. He it was who would lead the next, and last, Jacobite uprising of 1745.

But back once more to William Mackenzie, 5th Earl of Seaforth. He had been attainted for his part in the 1715 rebellion so he was asking for serious trouble for the leading role he played in the 1719 uprising. The mass of letters and papers from Ormonde to Alberoni and James make little reference to Seaforth. But it was Seaforth and his Mackenzie clan who provided almost one half of the Jacobite forces, while the leaders argued and politicked and wrecked any chance of winning a difficult campaign. Seaforth wrote a letter to James on August 10th 1719, just two months after the disaster at Glenshiel. His letter tells us little, except that from the tone one gathers that Seaforth was unhappy that he was not in James' confidence despite the fact he had risked all for his King, and that there were unnamed persons responsible for the poor support of James' cause. Let Seaforth have the last word:

The Earl of Seaforth to James VIII & III Aug 10th 1719

Sir - Your Majesty's I received by Captain Barkley, and am most sensible of the regard and kindness, you are pleased to honour me with. I read the two letters of May 1st and June 9th you ordered to be communicated to me, and regret from the bottom of my heart the unlucky situation of circumstances, not upon mine, but upon your Majesty's account.

I will not pretend, Sir, to give you a detail of things here, since you have not honoured me with the trust of any, only to assure your Majesty that as there were no men engaged in the late action of Glenshiel but mine, and those but few (though a great many standing by) so there are none more ready on all occasions to show their zeal for your service, when opportunity offers.

I am sorry that I am forced to acquaint your Majesty that your affairs here are brought to so low an ebb (by whose fault I wont say) that there nothing remains but everyone to shift for himself, and that by the advice of him you honour with your commands, I still made it my study (upon which account I suffer most of any) to serve your Majesty to the utmost of my power, and though I be once more

obliged to leave my native country, as in all probability I must, to wander abroad, in whatever place fortune alots my abode, I shall always beg leave to subscribe myself, with the profoundest regret,

Sir,

Your Majesty's most dutiful subject  
and most obedient humble servant,

SEAFORT.

Thus the proud Clan of the Mackenzies had reached its nadir. General Wade reporting on the condition of the people in 1725 stated, that whereas the Seaforth tenants had been the richest in the Highlands, they were now reduced to poverty through the neglect of their lands and crops through taking up arms. Their state of misery in 1719 was compounded by the destruction caused by the soldiers. There had been efforts previously to try and disarm the Highlands. For example, in 1716 an act was passed by parliament for the disarming of Highlanders. But despite these efforts, most of the Jacobite clans were as well armed as ever and a trade in arms took place between the clans and Holland and other continental countries.

A more determined effort was made in 1725 following the Disarming Act to try and forcibly pacify the rebellious clans. This time General Wade was given the responsibility and he arrived in Inverness in August 1725.

The following report included in *Letters from a Gentleman in the North of Scotland*, lists the clans who took part in the 1715 rebellion and sheds light on the relative strength of the Mackenzie clan:

The underwritten Clans or Tribes were engaged in the late Rebellion: most of them are armed, and commit depredations.

The M'Kenzies, and the small Clans, viz. The M'Ra's, the M'Lennans, Murchiesons, and the M'Leods of North Assint, and M'Leys inhabiting the Countries belonging to the late Lord Seaforth; and all the Gentlemen and others of the name of M'Kenzie in the Main Land, and Isle of Lewis, in Ross, and Sutherland, shires; the M'Leods and others of Glenelg in the Isle of Skey, and the Harries in the shire of Inverness; the M'Donalds and others of Slate or Skey and North Uist in the shire of Inverness. The M'Donalds and others of Glengary, Obertaff, or Knoidart, in Inverness shire; the M'Donalds and others of Muidart, Arrisack, Muick, Canna, South Uist, in Inverness and Argyle shires. The Camerons of Lochiel in Inverness shire; the Camerons of Ardnamurchan, Swynard and Morvine, in Argyle shire; and the other small tribes in these countries; the M'Donalds of Keppoch, and others in that part of Lochaber belonging to M'Kintosh of Borlum in Inverness shire; the Stewarts of Appin and others in that Country in Argyle shire; the M'Leans in

Mull, Rum, Coll, Morvine, Ardnamurchan and Swinard, in Argyle shire.

The several Clans in that part of Lochaber belonging to the Duke of Gordon in Inverness shire; and those in Murray and Banf shires.

The M'Neils of Barray in Argyle shire; The M'Kintoshes and other tribes of that name in Inverness shire; the Robertsons belonging to Strowan in Perth-shire.

The underwritten Clans belong to Superiors well affected to His Majesty.

The Duke of Argyle	4,000
Lord Sutherland and Stathnaver	1,000
Lord Lovat (Frasers)	800
The Grants	800
The Rosses and Monroes	700
Forbes of Cullodin	200
Rose of Kilraick	300
Sir Archibald Campbell of Clunes	200
	8,000

The two Clans underwritten for the most part went in the Rebellion in 1715, without their Superiors:

The Athol Men	2,000
The Braidalbin Men	1,000
	3,000

The Clans underwritten were in the late Rebellion, and supposed still to be disaffected to His Majesty's Government.

The Islands and Clans of the late Lord Seaforth

	3,000
M'Donalds of Slate	1,000
M'Donalds of Glengary	800
M'Donalds of Mourdairt	800
M'Donalds of Keppoch	220
Lochiel Camerons	800
The M'Leods in all	1,000
Duke of Gordon's followers	1,000
Stewarts of Appin	400
Robertsons of Strowan	800
M'Kintoshes and Farquharsons	800

M`Euens in the Isle of Skey	150
The Chisolms of Strathglass	150
The M`Farsons	220
In all	<hr/> 11,140

General Wade made his way to Brahan Castle and called upon the Mackenzies to deliver their weapons. He persuaded the representatives of the Clan that if they would willingly give up their arms he would make representations to parliament to obtain remissions for the Clan Chief and his followers. To a large extent the procedure was a sham since the weapons handed in were largely old and worthless.

The process of the submission of the Mackenzie clan and the surrendering of their arms was reported to the Government by General Wade. His report makes interesting reading:

The Laird of the Mackenzies, and other chiefs of the clans and tribes, tenants to the late Earl of Seaforth, came to me in a body, to the number of about fifty, and assured me that both they and their followers were ready to pay a dutiful obedience to your Majesty's commands, by a peaceful surrender of their arms; and if your Majesty would be graciously pleased to procure them an indemnity for the rents that had been misplaced for the time past, they would for the future become faithful subjects to your Majesty, and pay them to your Majesty's receiver for the use of the public. I assured them of your Majesty's gracious intentions towards them, and that they might rely on your Majesty's bounty and clemency, provided they would merit it by their future good conduct and peaceable behaviour; that I had by your Majesty's commands to send the first summons to the country they inhabited; which would soon give them an opportunity of showing the sincerity of their promises, and of having the merit to set the example to the rest of the Highlands, who in their turns were to be summoned to deliver up their arms, pursuant to the Disarming Act; that they might choose the place they themselves thought most convenient to surrender their arms; and that I would answer, that neither their persons nor their property should be molested by your Majesty's troops. They desired they might be permitted to deliver up their arms at the Castle of Brahan, the principal seat of their late superior, who, they said, had promoted and encouraged them to this their submission; but begged that none of the Highland companies might be present; for, as they had always been reputed the bravest, as well as the most numerous of the northern clans, they thought it more consistent with their honour to resign their arms to your Majesty's

veteran troops; to which I readily consented.

Summonses were accordingly sent to the several clans and tribes, the inhabitants of 18 parishes, who were vassals or tenants of the late Earl of Seaforth, to bring or send in all their arms and warlike weapons to the Castle of Brahan, on or before the 28th of August.

On the 25th of August I went to the Castle of Brahan with a detachment of 200 of the regular troops, and was met there by chiefs of the several clans and tribes, who assured me they had used their utmost diligence in collecting all the arms they were possessed of, which should be brought thither on the Saturday following, pursuant to the summons they had received; and telling me they were apprehensive of insults or depredations from the neighbouring clans of the Camerons and others, who still continued in possession of their arms. Parties of Highland companies were ordered to guard the passes leading to their country; which parties continued there for their protection, till the clans in that neighbourhood were summoned, and had surrendered their arms.

On the day appointed the several clans and tribes assembled in the adjacent villages, and marched in good order through the great avenue that leads to the Castle; and one after the other laid down their arms in the courtyard in great quiet and decency, amounting to 784 of the several species mentioned in the Act of Parliament.

The solemnity with which this was performed had undoubtedly a great influence over the rest of the Highland clans; and disposed them to pay that obedience to your Majesty's commands, by a peaceable surrender of their arms, which they had never done to any of your royal predecessors, or in compliance with any law either before or since the Union.

General Wade refers in this report to the rents from the Seaforth estates which were "misplaced". One of the more interesting stories of how these rents came to be misplaced is a remarkable narrative of the loyalty that the Earl of Seaforth's tenants had to the Mackenzie Clan Chief. The hero of the story is one Donald Murchison, who was the estate factor of the Earl of Seaforth and whose duties involved the collection of rents from the numerous tenants of his Lordship across Ross and Cromarty. This story is told in Alexander MacKenzie's history, which is reproduced here:

"The following account of Donald Murchison's proceedings and of Seaforth's vassals during his exile in France is abridged from

an interesting and valuable work.<sup>5</sup> It brings out in a prominent light the state of the Highlands and the futility of the power of the Government during that period in the North. As regards several of the forfeited estates which lay in inaccessible situations in the Highlands, the commissioners had up to this time been entirely baffled, never having been able even to get them surveyed. This was so in a very special manner in the case of the immense territory of the Earl of Seaforth, extending from Brahan Castle, near Dingwall in the east, across to Kintail in the west, as well as in the large island of the Lewis. The districts of Lochalsh and Kintail, on the west coast, the scene of the Spanish invasion of 1719, were peculiarly difficult of access, there being no approach from the south, east, or north, except by narrow and difficult paths, while the western access was only assailable by a naval force. To all appearance this tract of ground, the seat of many comparatively opulent tacksmen and cattle farmers, was as much beyond the control of the six commissioners assembled at their office in Edinburgh, as if it had been amongst the mountains of Tibet or upon the shores of Madagascar.

"For several years after the insurrection, the rents of this district were collected, without the slightest difficulty, for the benefit of the exiled Earl, and regularly transmitted to him. At one time a large sum was sent to him in Spain. The chief agent in the business was Donald Murchison, descendant of a line of faithful adherents of the "High Chief of Kintail". Some of the later generations of the family had been entrusted with the keeping of Eilean Donan Castle, a stronghold dear to the modern artist as a picturesque ruin, but formerly of serious importance as commanding a central point from which radiate Loch Alsh and Loch Duich, in the midst of the best part of the Mackenzie country. Donald was a man worthy of a more prominent place in his country's annals than he has yet attained; he acted under a sense of right which, though unfortunately defiant of Acts of Parliament, was still a very pure sense of right; and in the remarkable actions which he performed he looked solely to the good of those towards whom he had a feeling of duty. A more disinterested hero - and he was one - never lived."

"In bold and avowed insubordination to the Government of George the First, Mackenzie's tenants continued for ten years to pay their rents to Donald Murchison, setting at nought all fear of ever being compelled to repeat the payment to the commissioners."

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<sup>5</sup>Chambers' Domestic Annals of Scotland.

In 1720 the King's men made an effort to exercise their rights to the rents of the Mackenzie Chief's lands. Two brave men were found willing to attempt the task. They were William Ross of Easterfean and Robert Ross, a bailie from Tain. The Ross Clan were close neighbours and to a large degree historical adversaries. It is not difficult to imagine the Mackenzie Clan's reactions to the Ross men's audacity to try to exercise these rights, even though they did have the power of the King and parliament behind them. Some Lochcarron men were heard to mutter ominously that the two factors would get nothing but "leaden coin" from the Seaforth tenants, in other words, musket shot!

Murchison, meanwhile, acting for the Clan Chief, collected the rents due, using part of the funds to maintain a small army of sixty men to resist any attempt by the King's men to collect rents from the tenants. He used this force with some effect when he intercepted a party of excisemen passing near Dingwall with a quantity of *aqua vitae* which he helpfully removed from them, allowing them to continue their journey without this burden. The unappreciative excisemen reported this matter to the Board of Excise, but it appears that nobody felt compelled to do much about it.

In February, 1721, the two Rosses sent some of their officers into the western district to try and persuade the tenants to exercise good sense. If they were prepared to submit to the authority of the King, then they would be assured of proper treatment by the King's men. This very reasonable approach got short shrift however. The ungrateful tenants seized the officers, robbed them of their official papers, money and arms and sent them on their way after first producing their solemn assurance they would not renew their mission.

The outraged Rosses were swift to act in support of their official authority. They appointed a constable to proceed into Lochalsh, together with a military party from Bernara Barracks in Glenelg to take into custody the wicked men who had acted so ungratefully. A secret night march across the Highlands resulted in the capture of two men. But the alarm was given, the two men escaped and fired on their captors from a hill. They then set a bonfire as a signal which was passed through Kintail and Lochalsh. The armed force, recognizing they were discovered, beat a hasty retreat back to where they started.

Other ineffective efforts were made to exercise authority, but to no avail. Finally the two factors decided to force the issue and resolve matters once and for all. Setting off from Inverness with some thirty armed soldiers in addition to an armed body of servants and followers, they moved across the Highlands, picking up a further fifty troops from Bernera Barracks. Confidently they moved towards Kintail having been told that there would be no resistance from the Kintail men. Word soon reached the two Rosses, however, that their trust in a peaceful encounter was inappropriate. The fact is, that Donald Murchison had assembled his own band of Mackenzies, plus some further Mackenzies from Lewis under Seaforth's cousin, Mackenzie of Kildun. Further bands of armed men from the Camerons, Glengarry

and Glenmoriston comprised a total of three hundred and fifty determined and sullen warriors ready to resist, and reportedly armed with Spanish long rifles.

As the government force moved in towards Kintail they were surprised by an outbreak of shooting from rising ground on their right. The first casualty was Ross of Easterfean himself who was wounded but continued to give orders to his troops to advance and clear the ground of lurking clansmen. They had some success in this respect and were able to proceed to a narrow gorge in Kintail which led into Loch Affric. In this ideal ambush territory lay Murchison and his men.

The resulting ambush caused considerable confusion among Ross's men. They did their best to fight off the concealed attackers. Walter Ross, the son of Ross of Easterfean was badly wounded and another casualty was Bailie Ross's son who was also wounded. Both of the wounded young men were taken prisoner together with Bailie Ross's servant. Easterfean's son died of his wounds the next day.

Realising that they were severely outmanned and outgunned Easterfean made contact with his enemy and met with Donald Murchison himself. Murchison was a tough negotiator but finally agreed to let Ross of Easterfean and his men go, after first taking his papers and getting his covenant under a penalty of five hundred pounds not to officiate in Murchison's territory, being the lands forfeited by the Earl of Seaforth. Donald's men conducted Easterfean's men safely out of the protected territory. Murchison let it be known that should any stranger enter Kintail and call himself a factor for the lands, that man would be killed by any one of sixteen persons who had sworn to take such meritorious action even though they might be hacked to pieces for it.

The young Walter Ross was buried at Beaully and thus ended the abortive action to seize the Seaforth estates against the wishes of the local clanspeople.

A second attempt was made to possess the Seaforth estates for the government. This time it was decided to avoid going via the previous route where there were opportunities for ambush. This time the route would be by way of Dingwall, Strathgarve and Loch Carron which was longer but easier. A Captain McNeill accordingly set off with one hundred and sixty troops. Donald Murchison advanced to the top of Mam Attadale, by a high pass from Loch Carron to the head of Loch Long, separating Lochalsh from Kintail. His relative, Kenneth Murchison and a dozen heavily armed volunteers advanced to an ambush point in the defiles of Coille Bhan (White Wood). The Captain and his men moved cautiously forward into this dangerous area where they were fired upon by the ambushers. The red-coats fought back strongly and made some headway causing the ambushers to retreat. However Captain McNeill and some of his men were wounded and one of his grenadiers was killed. News then reached McNeill that a large party of Mackenzies was waiting for him in the mountain pass of Attadale and he believed that there was a scheme to draw him into a fatal ambush. Discretion being the better part of valour and taking into account his wounded condition, McNeill decided to withdraw back to Inverness.

The Mackenzies under Donald Murchison were much elated to learn that their thirteen guns had held at bay and driven off one hundred and sixty red-coats.

That was the last attempt to seize the Seaforth lands by way of an armed force.

Murchison, meanwhile, continued to collect the Earl's rents and send them to him in France. He is reported to have gone to Edinburgh in a public manner with eight hundred pounds of rents in his possession, to have been received as a gentleman and to have been unmolested despite the fact that his actions were well known to the population. This caused General Wade to remark ruefully to the King;

“I cannot omit observing to your Majesty that this national tenderness the subjects of North Britain have one for the other is a great encouragement for rebels and attainted persons to return home from their banishment.”

The Commissioners on the forfeited estates concluded their report in 1725 by stating that they had been unable to sell the estates of William, Earl of Seaforth as they had not been able to obtain possession of the properties and consequently convey them to a purchaser.

King George I died in 1726 but before he died he pardoned the attainted Earl of Seaforth who returned to Scotland a free man, though without his properties he was in tightened circumstances. His financial state caused him to write to Sir Robert Walpole who advised him to write to the King. The King was not in the giving vein which caused the Earl of Seaforth to remark that “I could not forbear making appear how ill I was used.” This must seem a strange comment given the fact that Seaforth had played an active role in a conspiracy to deprive the House of Hanover of the crown!

As for Donald Murchison, his heroic story ends sadly. When the Earl of Seaforth took possession once again of his properties in the Highlands, preserved for him by the factor, Donald Murchison, he turned his back on him. His reward for his loyalty was a small farm paying no more than sixty pounds a year. A poor reward for unexampled protective zealousness, risking his own life in the process. It is said that Murchison, upset by this derisory offer, declined it and moved near Conon where he died, it is said, of a broken heart. Seaforth visited him on his death-bed and asked him how he was. The dying man replied “Just as you will be in a short time.” He then turned his back on the Earl and concluded their relationship.

Not everyone regarded Murchison as a high-minded patriot and gentleman. One of his whig opponents produced the following verse in which he is referred to as Daniel Murchison:-

Keppoch, Rob Roy, and Daniel Murchison,  
Cadets are servants to some chief of clan,

From theft and robberies scarce did ever cease,  
Yet 'scaped the halter each, and died in peace.  
This last his exiled master's rents collected,  
Nor unto king and law would be subjected.  
Though veteran troops upon the confines lay,  
Sufficient to make lord and tribe a prey,  
Yet passes strong through which no roads were cut,  
Safe-guarded Seaforth's clan, each in his hut.  
Thus in strongholds the rogue securely lay,  
Neither could they by force be driven away,  
Till his attained lord and chief of late  
By ways and means repurchased his estate.

We do not know why Murchison was so ill-used by Seaforth. Perhaps Murchison's methods of shooting at government troops caused embarrassment to Seaforth's attempts to make peace with the government and recover his estates. In fact, he was not successful in this regard and the Seaforth lands did not return to the family until 1741 when they were purchased from the Commissioners of the Forfeited Estates for £25,109 by the Earl's son. Perhaps also Seaforth did not care for Murchison using the rents to finance a private army. Whatever the reasons Seaforth had for his apparent lack of gratitude to Murchison, they died with the Earl.

William lived the latter part of his life on the Isle of Lewis, where he died on the 8th January, 1740. He married on 22 April, 1715, to Mary, daughter and heiress of Nicholas Kennet of Coxhow, Northumberland. She died in France in August, 1739, while on her way to Scotland. They had three sons and a daughter:

1. Kenneth Mackenzie. Except for the attainder, he would have been the 6th Earl of Seaforth and 7th Lord of Kintail. He took the courtesy title and was known as, Lord Fortrose.

2. Ranald Mackenzie. Born around 1725, he was entered in the Scots College at Douai, aged seven, on 11, October, 1732. He died unmarried.

3. Nicholas Mackenzie. Born circa 1728, he was also entered in the Scots College at Douai in December, 1735, at the age of seven and a half. He later went to Paris to study law. He died in 1774 as a result of a skating accident when he fell through the ice and was drowned. He was unmarried.

1. Frances Mackenzie. She was a celebrated beauty in her day and was married in Edinburgh in 1744 to the Hon. John Gordon of

Kenmure. But for the attainder, by which his father was executed in 1715, he would have succeeded as Viscount Kenmure.