

**BIBLE AND SWORD:
THE CAMERONIAN CONTRIBUTION TO FREEDOM OF
RELIGION.**

By

DAVID OSBORNE CHRISTIE.



**DISSERTATION PRESENTED FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF
THEOLOGY AT THE UNIVERSITY OF STELLENBOSCH.**

**Promoter:
PROFESSOR PIETER COERTZEN,
University of Stellenbosch.**

**Co-promoter:
PROFESSOR GRAHAM DUNCAN,
University of Pretoria.**

MARCH 2008

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, hereby declare that the work contained in this dissertation is my own original work and that I have not previously, in its entirety or in part, submitted it at any university for a degree.

Signature:

Date:

ABSTRACT

BIBLE AND SWORD: THE CAMERONIAN CONTRIBUTION TO FREEDOM OF RELIGION

Presented for the Degree of Doctor of Theology
of Stellenbosch University,
by D.O. Christie

During the 16th and 17th centuries, the Stewart rulers of Scotland and England endeavoured to enforce Royal Absolutism on both countries. This included ecclesiastical pressure on the Scottish Presbyterians, giving rise to a movement known as the Covenanters. One identifying aspect was their field-preachings, or Conventicles, held in secret, frequently on the moors. As persecution increased, worshippers took weapons to these Conventicles for self-defence in case of attack during the service.

Royal efforts to impose Episcopalianism on Scotland intensified after the Restoration of 1660 and were met with resistance. In 1666 open revolt broke out in The Pentland Rising, which was put down with great severity after the Covenanters were defeated at Rullion Green.

Open revolt broke out again in 1679, when some Covenanters defeated a small royalist force at Drumclog, but they were soundly defeated by the royal army at Bothwell Brig shortly afterwards. The Covenanters split into two factions, moderate and extreme; the extreme element becoming known as Cameronians after the martyred covenanting preacher Rev Richard Cameron, "The Lion of the Covenant."

The hypothesis researched was that; **The development and actions of the Cameronian movement made a significant contribution to Freedom of Religion in Scotland.** The hypothesis rests on whether Cameronian influence was significant, and to what degree.

Subsequent to Bothwell Brig, the Covenanting movement virtually collapsed in Scotland. The leaders fled to Holland and the common people who remained were severely persecuted. But by early 1680, two covenanting ministers, Richard Cameron and Donald Cargill, had returned from Holland to preach in the fields against Erastian limitations on *doctrine, worship, discipline, and church government*. They were hunted down and killed, but their followers (now called Cameronians) formed their own ecclesiastical polity known as the United Societies. This was a presbyterial Church, separate but not sundered from the Church of Scotland (The Kirk), which had by now largely accepted a considerable degree of Erastianism.

The Cameronians became a small but vociferous pressure group, not only persecuted, but denigrated by moderate Presbyterians. Throughout this period they ensured a considerable degree of freedom of religion for themselves, despite the ever intensifying persecution. Their stance was vindicated at the Glorious Revolution of 1688/9, one outcome being the raising of both a guard, and a regiment, of Cameronians, both of which enabled a period of comparative calm and safety to prevail, thus allowing Parliament and the General Assembly to finalise the Revolution Settlement for both Church and State, without any external threat from Jacobitism.

The Cameronian clergy then became reconciled with the Kirk in 1690, and brought two-thirds of the United Societies with them, thus ending their period of isolation, and once more presenting a (virtually) united Presbyterian front to the world. Rev Alexander Shields was critical to both the formation of the regiment and reconciliation with the Kirk.

The thesis demonstrates that the Cameronians made four significant contributions to freedom of religion in Scotland.

Firstly, they made a significant contribution to freedom of religion by their struggle to protect the right to retain their own freedom of doctrine, worship, discipline and church government, resisting every effort to remove these by force. In 1690 they secured these freedoms.

Secondly by their new-found military effectiveness, they secured a climate of comparative peace and stability in the latter half of 1689 and 1690, during which both Parliament and General Assembly were able to carry through vital legislation for Church and State, without any external threat.

Thirdly, through the reconciliation of their clergy with the Kirk, the Cameronians were catalytic in the establishment of a [virtually] united Presbyterian front in Scotland,¹ thereby ensuring that the Kirk was strong enough to accept the existence of other denominations without feeling unduly threatened.

Fourthly, Rev Alexander Shields stands out as catalytic in the achievement of the Second and Third significant contributions. It can be argued that his behaviour, in itself, was a significant contribution to Freedom of Religion.

December 2007.

KEYWORDS

Cameronian(s)
Covenanters
Erastianism
Freedom of Religion
Kirk
Presbyterianism
Reconciliation
Revolution
Royal Absolutism
Scotland

¹ The Kirk's future problems came rather from within, with the First and Second Secessions of 1733 and 1761, which lie outside the scope of this dissertation. Most of the RPC joined the Free Church in 1876, and there was general re-unification in 1929, when most of the United Free Church joined the Kirk, (after Burleigh 1960).

OPSOMMING
DIE BYBEL EN DIE SWAARD:
DIE CAMERONIAANSE BYDRAE TOT GODSDIENSVRYHEID

Voorgelê vir die graad van Doktor in Teologie
aan die Universiteit Stellenbosch
deur D.O. Christie

Gedurende die 16de en 17de eeue het die Stewart heersers van Skotland en Engeland daarna gestreef om Koninklike Absolutisme op albei lande af te dwing. Dit het kerklike druk op die Skotse Presbiteriane ingesluit, wat tot 'n beweging genaamd die *Covenanters* aanleiding gegee het. Een identifiserende aspek was hul veldprediking, of geheime godsdienstige samekomste, dikwels in die heivelde van Skotland. Namate vervolging toegeneem het, het aanbidders wapens na hierdie geheime byeenkomste geneem vir selfverdediging indien hulle tydens die diens aangeval sou word.

Koninklike pogings om Episkopalisme op Skotland af te dwing het ná die Restourasie van 1660 toegeneem en is met weerstand begroet. In 1666 is daar openlik gerebelleer in die *Pentland opstand*, wat hewig onderdruk is nadat die *Covenanters* by *Rullion Green* verslaan is.

In 1679 het 'n openlike opstand weer uitgebreek toe sommige *Covenanters* 'n klein koningsgesinde mag by *Drumclog* verslaan het, maar kort daarna is hulle deeglik deur die koninklike weermag by *Bothwell Brig* verslaan. Die *Covenanters* het in twee faksies verdeel – gematigdes en ekstremiste - met die ekstremiste wat bekend geword het as die *Cameronians*, vernoem na die gemartelde *Covenanter* prediker, eerw. Richard Cameron, “Die Leeu van die Verbond.”

Die Hipotese van die navorsing was die volgende: **Die ontwikkeling en optrede van die Cameronian beweging was 'n betekenisvolle bydrae to Vryheid van Geloof in Skotland.** Die hipotese het gerus op die vraag of die Cameronian invloed betekenisvol was en indien wel tot watter mate.

Ná *Bothwell Brig* het die *Covenanter* beweging in Skotland feitlik in duie gestort. Die leiers het na Holland gevlug en dié mense wat agtergebly het, is wreed vervolgd. In 'n poging om die gematigdes te herenig, het die regering in Junie 1679 'n vergunning aangebied wat Presbiteriaanse predikante toegelaat het om hul gemeentes onder sekere beperkinge te bedien. Dit het 'n mate van sukses onder die gematigdes gehad.

Vroeg in 1680 het twee *Covenanter* predikers, Richard Cameron en Donald Cargill, uit Holland teruggekeer om in die veld teen Erastiaanse beperkinge op leerstellings, aanbidding, kerklike dissipline en regering te preek. Hulle is agtervolgd en doodgemaak, maar hul volgelinge (nou *Cameronians* genoem) het hul eie kerklike regeringsbestel gevorm, genaamd die Verenigde Verenigings. Hierdie was 'n Presbiteriaanse kerk, apart, maar nie afgesny van die Kerk van Skotland (die Kirk) nie, wat teen hierdie tyd reeds 'n aansienlike mate van Erastianisme aanvaar het.

Die Cameroniane het 'n klein maar duidelike drukgroep geword. Gematigde Presbiteriane het hulle nie alleen vervolgd nie, maar ook verguis. Dwarsdeur hierdie tydperk het hulle 'n aansienlike mate van vryheid van geloof vir hulleself verseker ten spyte van die vervolging wat steeds toegeneem het. Hulle standpunt is egter ten tyde van die Glorieryke Revolusie (Glorious Revolution) van 1688/9 bevestig. Een gevolg was die totstandkoming van 'n militêre Wag en ook 'n Cameronian Regiment. Beide het 'n tydperk van redelike kalmte en veiligheid teweeggebring. Dit het aan die Parlement en Algemene Vergadering die geleentheid gebied om 'n Skikking vir beide die Kerk en die Staat te weeg te bring sonder enige eksterne bedreiging deur die Jakobiste.

In 1690 is die Cameronian leraars met die Kerk (Kirk) versoen terwyl hulle twee-derdes van die Verenigde Verenigings (United Societies) saam met hulle gebring het. Op dié wyse is hul tydperk van isolasie beëindig en vertoon hulle weereens 'n (feitlike)verenigde Presbiteriaanse front aan die wêreld. Die

rol van Ds Alexander Shields was deurslaggewend vir die totstandkoming van die regiment sowel as die versoeking met die Kerk.

Die proefskrif toon aan dat die Cameroniane vier betekenisvolle bydraes tot die vryheid van geloof in Skotland gemaak het.

Eerstens het hulle 'n betekenisvolle bydrae tot vryheid van godsdienst gemaak deur hul stryd om die reg om hul eie vryheid van leer, aanbidding, dissipline en kerkbestuur te behou, terwyl hulle elke poging om dit met dwang van hulle te ontnem, teengestaan het. In 1690 het hulle hierdie vryhede regtens verkry.

Tweedens, deur hul nuut-gevonde militêre doeltreffendheid, het hulle 'n klimaat van redelike vrede en stabiliteit in die laaste helfte van 1689 en 1690 verseker. Gedurende dié tyd kon sowel die Parlement as die Algemene Vergadering lewensbelangrike wetgewing vir die Kerk en Staat instel sonder enige eksterne bedreiging.

Derdens, deur die versoening van hulle leraars met die Kerk, was die Cameronians katalities in die totstandkoming van 'n (feitlike) verenigde Presbiteriaanse front in Skotland,¹ Dit het die Kirk van genoegsame krag verseker om die bestaan van ander denominasies te aanvaar sonder om self bedreigd te voel.

Vierdens, Ds Alexander Shields blink uit as katalis in die verkryging van die Tweede en Derde betekenisvolle bydraes. Dit kan betoog word dat sy gedrag assodanig 'n beduidende bydrae tot die Vryheid van Geloof was.

Desember 2007.

¹ Die Kerk se toekomstige probleme het eerder van binne gekom, met die Eerste en Tweede Afstigings van 1733 en 1761, wat buite die bestek van hierdie tesis is. Meeste van die RPC het by die Vrye Kerk aangesluit in 1876, en in 1929 was daar 'n algemene hereniging toe die meeste van die Verenigde Vrye Kerk by die Kerk(Kirk) aangesluit het (na Burleigh 1960).

SLEUTELWOORDE

Cameronia(a)n-(se)

Covenanters

Erastianisme

Kirk

Koninklike Absolutisme

Presbiterianisme

Revolusie

Skotland

Versoening

Vryheid van Geloof

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Many people have assisted me with this dissertation. My promoter, Professor Pieter Coertzen, has taken endless pains to keep me on the right track, and has laboured ceaselessly to identify key features. Professor Graham Duncan, my co-promoter, has also been a great help by answering vital questions at critical times. Both have encouraged me greatly.

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Terry Mackenzie, curator of Low Parks Museum, Hamilton, which houses the Cameronian Regimental Museum has been wonderfully supportive with suggestions and information. Ian Martin, historian of the Kings Own Scottish Borderers (KOSB) helped with significant insights into the events of 1689 affecting both Cameronians and KOSB, and Rev A Sinclair Horne of the Magdalen Chapel, Edinburgh provided some fascinating insights into Covenanting times.

Several academics helped me identify key aspects of Cameronian development, and provided me with themes to follow up. These include; Prof Jane Dawson, Edinburgh University; Dr Karin Bowie, Glasgow University, who showed real interest and knowledge in the subject; Dr John Young, Strathclyde University, who provided deep insight into the modern “spin” on the Cameronians; and Dr Willem van Asselt, Utrecht University. Mark Jardine was an enormous help, not only with his knowledge of Covenanting times, but

with his biographical detail on the Muster Rolls of the Cameronian Regiment 1689, and his indexing of the Laing Manuscripts, whilst Alasdair Raffe provided unpublished information on the immediate post-Revolution period. The Rev Gerald Dunne of St Joseph's College, London, kindly translated Cleland's thesis from the Latin.

I owe a most particular debt of gratitude to Maurice Grant, recent biographer of The Revs Richard Cameron and Donald Cargill. His knowledge and understanding of the Cameronians can best be described as encyclopaedic. He has been kind enough to comment on this work on an ongoing basis. This has been a difficult subject to research from a South African base, and to have advice and assistance from someone with such a deep understanding of the subject has been of inestimable help, even to the extent of him spending considerable time in the National Library of Scotland, searching through the *Records of the Scottish Church History Society*.

I have been helped and encouraged greatly by many of my old comrades-in-arms from The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles). There are too many to mention them all, but I would particularly thank; Peter Gordon Smith for the map, Ian Farquharson for patiently putting my feet on the bottom rung of the Internet ladder, Michael Sixsmith for his research into guerrilla warfare, Donald Cameron for his spiritual input, and Hugh Mackay for his wide ranging support as "father" of the Regiment. Thanks also to all who put up patiently with my discussions, and for their insightful comments.

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PREFACE

“Cameronians, this is a grievous day for you.... We may well say that it is a grievous day for Scotland, seeing that your roots have been so closely intertwined with the history of church and state in this land.” Thus Rev Dr Donald MacDonald opened his address at the disbandment of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), on 14 March 1968.

When I joined The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in the 1950s, it was drilled into me, that the Cameronians had brought religious freedom to Scotland, virtually single-handed. As I started to read other commentaries on the subject, I was surprised to discover that there were some authors who considered the Cameronian input as almost irrelevant.

Since no serious effort has yet been undertaken to make a critical history and analysis of the entire period of the Cameronian contribution to religious freedom, I resolved to research the question, seeking to arrive at an objective conclusion about what really happened. In this process, many facts which have been uncritically accepted for more than 300 years, have been re-examined, and a new interpretation has been offered. Also some myths, long part of Cameronian lore, have been exploded. The current relevance of this dissertation for the present time may be indicated by the fact that, of the recently voted top ten themes of Scottish history, five are touched upon here.¹

Some of the findings are quite radical, and may cause some upset in certain ecclesiastical and historical quarters, but, in my opinion, the evidence upholds the conclusions. As might have been expected, the truth lies somewhere between two extremes.

¹ The themes, which topped a public poll in 2006 (news.bbc.co.uk 19 July 2007), to find the top 10 of Scottish history were: *The Wars of Independence (c1297 –1314); *The Declaration of Arbroath (1320); Medicine; James Clerk Maxwell; *Robert Burns; *The Reformation; James Watt; The Enlightenment; *Covenanters; The Clearances. Those asterisked are mentioned in this dissertation.

The Cameronians were ordinary people, who behaved in an extraordinary way. They did indeed affect the course of religious history in Scotland. This is their story.

David Christie

Villiersdorp, South Africa

November 2007

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE RESEARCH: Two kingdoms in Scotland

'Thair is twa Kings and twa kingdomes in Scotland. Thair is Chryst Jesus the King, and His kingdome the Kirk, whase subject King James the Saxt is, and of whase kingdome nocht a king nor a lord nor a heid, bot a member.'

Andrew Melville to King James VI. September 1596

(quoted by Smellie 1903:236)

1.1 EUROPE: THE FLAME OF FREEDOM, RELIGIOUS AND POLITICAL

The spirits of Renaissance and Reformation began to influence Europe from about 1300 onwards, ushering in a period of unprecedented introspection of heart and mind. The Renaissance was essentially a secular movement, but the Reformation, which paralleled it chronologically, was 'in many ways a religious expression of Renaissance ideas.... Humanistic secularism and individualism were also fostered and expressed in the Renaissance Church' (Hobbs 1992:100).

The origins of the Reformation were initiated by the thinking of people, such as Wycliffe and Huss, which in due course resulted in attacks by Lollards and Hussites 'upon the hierarchical and legalist structures of the Church' (Cross & Livingstone 1974:1165), thus ushering in three centuries of political and religious struggle in Europe. Monarchs sought to restrict the power of the Papacy within their national churches, the divine right of kings began to be questioned by many thinkers and, in many places, struggle commenced against an Erastian type of royal absolutism. Indeed 'the seventeenth century witnessed the virtual triumph of Absolutism all over Europe, except in England and Scotland, the Netherlands and the Swiss Confederation' (Macpherson 1923:6). The ingrained longing to enjoy both political and religious freedom was abroad, much to the concern of rulers and Papacy alike. 'But although the Reformation and humanism may have had common aims, they developed in very dif-

ferent directions.... The humanists rejected Church authority because of their belief in the dignity of man; the reformers rejected it because they thought it incompatible with the authority of the Word of God' (Blei 2002:77). Attitudes of those rulers who sought to be absolute monarchs, such as Louis XIV with his dictum of '*L' état, c'est moi,*' were about to be seriously challenged.

The most decisive catalyst for change in religious thought came with the emergence of Luther's doctrine of justification by faith alone. His break with the Roman Catholic Church gave an enormous thrust to religious debate in Europe, though his advocacy of princely authoritarianism did little for the freedom of individual conscience. From 1523 onwards Zwingli succeeded in establishing limited theocratic reforms in Zurich but, after his death in 1531, the Swiss Reformation moved its epicentre to Geneva, with Calvin as the driving force, from 1541. 'In his hands reforming opinion assumed a more explicitly doctrinal and revolutionary tone.... Yet a coherent theological system, based upon the doctrines of particular election and redemption first appeared in Calvin's *Institutio Christianae Religionis* (1536). This system ... henceforth proved ... the driving force of the Reformation, especially in [what was to become] West Germany, France, the Netherlands and Scotland' (Cross & Livingstone 1974:1166). 'Calvinism ... found its most congenial soil in Scotland' (*ibid*:224). In Scotland, under John Knox, the Presbyterian cause advanced significantly, and in England it resulted in the rise of Puritanism and two civil wars between 1642 and 1648.

1.2 THE SCOTTISH SITUATION

Scotland, due to its isolated geographical situation, was initially more influenced than influential on the stage of Reformation Europe. It should be clearly understood that Scotland was not an adjunct of England, but a separate independent kingdom until the Union of the Parliaments of Scotland and England in 1707. 'If the study of English history has long suffered from the mistaken but deeply entrenched habit of separating English from the rest of

British history' (Israel 1991:11), it is as nothing compared to efforts to make Scottish history dependent on English, and thereby insignificant in itself.

Scotland's independence had been jealously guarded by nobility, clergy and laity alike. This heritage of Scottish freedom, decisively won at Bannockburn in 1314, was soon followed by the *Declaration of Arbroath* 1320. '*It is not for glory, riches or honours that we fight: it is for liberty alone, the liberty which no good man relinquishes but with his life ... for so long as an hundred remain alive we are minded never a whit to bow beneath the yoke of English dominion*' (quoted by MacLean 1970:44). Throughout the period under examination, the Parliaments of Scotland and England remained separate, despite the Scots King James VI (1567–1625) ascending the English throne in 1603 as James I. Even after the Union of 1707, a fiercely independent Scottish spirit survived, as it does to the present day.

By the time the Scottish Reformation under John Knox started in 1557, 'Calvinism had become the dominant politico-ecclesiastical force on the Continent' (Macpherson 1923:17). A Prelacy had been established in England through the Erastian action of Henry VIII after splitting from the Papacy during the 1530s, and by the end of his daughter Elizabeth I's reign in 1603, Royal Absolutism was firmly entrenched in England. When James VI of Scotland succeeded to the English throne on the death of Elizabeth I in 1603, he attempted to force Episcopalianism upon the Presbyterian Scots Kirk. England, the 'Auld Enemy,' had little concern for Scottish welfare or opinions, and the next three Stewart kings,¹ now firmly entrenched in London, pursued the process of Royal Absolutism vigorously, treating the Scots, especially the Presbyterians in the Kirk,² with high disdain and duplicity.

¹ Charles I, 1625-1649; Charles II, 1660-1685; James VII of Scotland and II of England, 1685-1689.

² *Ecclesia Scoticana* – the Kirk of Scotland – goes back a long way ... The Church of Scotland to most readers today is one denomination among others. Yet the name expresses an idea, prevalent before denominations were thought of, which has always had a fascination for the Scottish mind.... Possibly a Presbyterian *Volkskirche* sufficiently satisfies the requirement for the *Gemeinde* principle. Certainly ... the idea of a National Church has not been seriously questioned' (Burleigh 1960:v-vi).

Charles I (1625–1649) alienated not only the Scottish Presbyterians, but also the English Puritans, eventually paying for this by losing his head in 1649. Cromwell then governed England and Scotland as Lord Protector until his death in 1658, shortly before the Restoration of Charles II in 1660. During the time of the Commonwealth, Cromwell, though of a higher moral calibre than the Stewart monarchs, was not a blessing to Scotland. He defeated two Scottish ‘insurgencies’ in 1650 and 1651, but there was some amelioration of the pressure on Scots Presbyterianism due to its similarities with English Puritanism. Charles II, crowned as King of Scots in 1651 but not restored until 1660, despite professing an acceptance of the Covenants, proved duplicitous, and sought to impose Episcopalianism in Scotland. His brother, James VII of Scotland and II of England (1685–1689), further alienated both Presbyterians and Episcopalians in Scotland by openly avowing and promoting Roman Catholicism.³

1.2.1 International relationships

Internationally, Scottish relations with two major European powers underwent a significant change between 1560 and the 1660s. The *Auld Alliance*, a mutual support pact between France and Scotland against England, which had started in 1165, effectively ceased with the death of the French-born Queen Mother, Mary of Guise (regent during the minority of her daughter Mary, who would become Queen of Scots) in 1560. ‘The intimate theological connections between Scotland and France, whether Catholic or Reformed, did not evaporate in 1560’ (Hazlitt 1987:306), but ‘the chief determining political factor [giving rise to the Scots Confession of 1560], was that the

³ This footnote is inserted for the edification of those readers who may be unfamiliar with Scottish history. In very simplistic terms, Scotland was divided geographically into the Highland north and the Lowland south. Clans who were mostly Episcopalian or Roman Catholic peopled the Highlands, and gave unstinting allegiance to their clan chiefs, who were of the same blood. On the other hand, minor land-owners and peasantry of a more independent mind who were mostly Presbyterian populated the Lowlands. The situation was further complicated by what might be termed the religious axis. The south-west was strongly Presbyterian and became the heart of Covenanting country, whilst the north-east was strongly Episcopalian/Roman Catholic and was the area where Covenanter exiles were sent to. The country of exile was described as ‘North of the River [Tay].’ (Both Rutherford and Cargill would be exiled there.) A further complication was that, whilst the minor gentry tended to follow the religion of their area, the nobility countrywide were mainly Episcopalian/Roman Catholic. These are sweeping generalisations, and there are numerous exceptions. Nevertheless, it is hoped that this will help clarify the overall situation for the stranger to Scottish history.

traditional French presence in Scotland was now being substituted by that of the English' (*ibid*:288). The *Edict of Nantes*, 1598, may have appeared to bode well for Franco-Scottish relations, but its subsequent implementation and ultimate revocation in 1685 identified France's implacable enmity to Protestantism.

At the same time, there was a growing rapport with Protestant Holland, (now free from Spanish rule, hence Roman Catholicism), whose church had developed a 'presbyterial-synodical' stance (Coertzen 2004:241-244). Several players in Scottish Presbyterianism from 1660 to 1688, including all the significant Cameronian leaders, both clerical and lay, were members of the Scots' exile community there at one time or another. Yet, even in the Protestant United Provinces, there were varying degrees of comfort for Scots exiles. The Province of Utrecht, for instance, enjoyed a sort of quasi-independence, so 'Scottish refugees doubtless felt more secure [there] than in the provinces of Holland' (Macpherson 1932:10), which were ruled by the House of Orange, related to the Stewarts by marriage. 'Town officials ... in Utrecht would always warn the exiles' (Gardner 2004:107) [of plans to seize them].⁴ In 1676, Charles II prevailed upon the United Provinces to expel Rev John Brown of Whamphray, Rev Robert M'Ward, (both significant figures in the development of Cameronianism) and Col James Wallace (commander of the Covenanters at Rullion Green 1666) from Rotterdam for about a year.

1.3 THE COVENANTING BACKGROUND

The story of religious covenanting in Scotland began in 1557 when the Protestant Scottish nobility drew up *The First Covenant* agreeing to 'band thame selfis' to maintain 'the trew preaching of the Evangell of Jesus Christ' (Purves1968:195), and ended with the Glorious Revolution of 1688/9 when Prince William of Orange (whose mother was sister to Charles II and James

⁴ This is a reference to the seizure of Sir Thomas Armstrong in 1684 for 'all people of Holland ... think themselves obliged to rescue all men that come among them for refuge' (Gardner 2004:106 fn).

VII) and his wife Mary (daughter of James VII) ascended the thrones of both England and Scotland.

In 1560, John Knox published *The Scots Confession*, and the Scottish Parliament declared the Reformed Faith to be the national religion of Scotland. But, Mary Queen of Scots returned from France, where she had been brought up as a Roman Catholic, the following year. Her Catholic supporters were continually at loggerheads with the Reformers led by John Knox, who had been profoundly affected by Calvin's teaching during his stay in Geneva from 1556-1559. 'Mary's concern for the rights of conscience was of the one-side character which always prevailed among Romanists' (Taylor [1859] s a:5). Scotland's King James VI, Mary's son, on his accession to the throne of England after the death of Queen Elizabeth I in 1603, readily embraced the pattern of Episcopal church government extant in England and sought to impose it on Scotland. He considered that it would enhance the absolute control of both Church and State that he perceived his divine right justified. So, a struggle between Royal Absolutism, seeking to entrench Episcopalianism, and Protestantism resulted. Therefore, the struggle was a politico-ecclesiastical dichotomy, the emphasis depending upon which point of view one espoused. 'For more than a hundred years the fortunes of Scottish Presbyterians ebbed and flowed owing the determination of the Stuart kings to make the Kirk episcopal. Now the Crown was dominant and pro-episcopal Acts were passed (1584); now the Kirk came into power again and Presbyterianism was ratified (1592)' (Cross & Livingstone 1978:1251).

Thus, a time of religious persecution and resistance occurred in Scotland, coming to a head with the attempted imposition of Archbishop Laud's Liturgy in 1637.⁵ The eventual outcome was the signing of *The Scottish National Covenant* of 1638. 'The outstanding covenant of Scottish history, declared the firm determination of its ... authors and subscribers ... to resist to the death the claims of the king ... to override the Crown Rights of the Redeemer.' (Purves1968:196). In England, civil war broke out in 1642, and some degree

⁵ The first reading of the [Episcopalian] *Revised Prayer Book* for Scotland on 23 July 1637 sparked rioting, which ultimately led to the signing of the Scottish National Covenant of 1638.

of co-operation between the two kingdoms was reached by the signing of the *Solemn League and Covenant* of 1643. But this co-operation did not last long, and with the restoration of Charles II in 1660, the Crown was even more determined to bring Scotland to heel.

In March 1661, the *Act Rescissory* annulled all Scottish legislation since 1633, which 'at once restored the ecclesiastical *status quo ante*' (Dickinson & Donaldson 1954:153) and, in October 1662, the *Act of Glasgow* ordained that clergy admitted to parishes after 1649 were 'required to seek presentation from the patron and collation from the bishops.... About 270 ministers ... refused to comply' (*ibid*:162), resulting in over 300 Presbyterian ministers being removed, or 'outed', from their parishes. Such *Acts* were the forerunners of a new generation of legislation, culminating, but not ending, with the *Act of Supremacy* in 1669, which 'curtly asserted the king's "supreme authority and supremacy over all persons and in all causes ecclesiastical"' (*ibid*:153).

But 'the congregations ... preferred the ministrations of the deprived clergy to their successors.... Deprived ministers (were forbidden) to reside within twenty miles of their former parishes (and) ... conventicles⁶ became common' (Dickinson & Donaldson 1954:164/5). The persecution of Presbyterians reached its climax in the 1680s, many being martyred, or suffering imprisonment, torture, or deportation, before the Revolution of 1688/9, after which the Protestant religion in Presbyterian form became formally accepted by both Church and State in Scotland.

1.3.1 The Covenanters

Resisting government efforts to silence them, ejected ministers began to preach at Conventicles after the promulgation of *The Act of Glasgow* 1662. Worshippers started attending these meetings in increasing numbers in defiance of the Government. Despite the preaching of the 'outed' ministers being firmly rooted in orthodox Scottish Presbyterianism, the more extreme

⁶ Conventicles were proscribed religious meetings. They might be indoors or out of doors, but the expression is generally taken to mean secret gatherings on the moors.

Covenanters became not only outcasts from the State, but estranged from the Kirk.

In 1670, the *Act against Conventicles* made such gatherings treasonable, and preaching at them a capital offence. Despite a broad policy of conciliation being periodically in place, Conventicles continued to be excluded from such measures. From 1674, as repression became more extreme, still more preachers and their followers took to the moors.

1.3.2 The Hillmen

The most radical Covenanters of this movement became known as the Hillmen, and in due course as Cameronians. They refused to accept any compromise with regard to the way in which they understood their ***freedom of worship, doctrine, discipline and church government***, and they strenuously resisted all the *Acts of Indulgence* offered from 1669 onwards, the last being the *Toleration Act* of 1687. They also rejected any attempt by the Government to persuade them to abandon their independent position. By the end of 1687, most of the moderate Presbyterians had accepted the *Toleration Act* and returned to their parish churches. Indeed, many moderates 'were alienated by the excesses of the remnant of the extremists' (Dickinson & Donaldson 1954:174), but the Hillmen were strongly opposed to Erastianism in the form of Indulgences and Tolerations, and took a firm stance against ministers who conformed to such Indulgences, thus alienating themselves even farther from the Kirk at large.

The murder of the Archbishop of St. Andrew's by a small group of Hillmen on 3 May 1679 not only outraged the Government but alienated the moderates in the Covenanting faction, and caused considerable dismay amongst many of the Hillmen. The murder was shortly followed by the *Rutherglen Declaration* on 29 May 1679. This was the first public indication that the Hillmen were prepared to openly repudiate the authority of the Crown and caused a further and more serious split within Covenanting ranks. Up to that time, despite grave persecution, most covenanting leaders had continued to accept fealty to the

Crown as a God-given imperative. Now, led by Robert Hamilton, a small group abandoned this position.

A few days later, on 1 June 1679, Royalist forces under Graham of Claverhouse, were routed at Drumclog when they attacked an armed Conventicle. The Covenanters were so elated that many moderates flocked to join the new Covenanting 'army' mustering to face the royal army at Bothwell Brig (bridge). However, these moderates under Rev John Welsh still sought an acceptable compromise, resulting in the *Hamilton Declaration*,⁷ nine days before the Battle of Bothwell Brig, on 22 June 1679. This moderate *Declaration* initiated an open schism in the Covenanting camp, from which the latter never recovered. Instead of preparing for battle, the entire camp deteriorated into theological squabbling. The result was a resounding victory for the Royalists, followed by even more severe repression of both moderate and radical Covenanters alike, since the Government did not differentiate between the two parties. Many became fugitives, whilst most of the Covenanter leaders fled to Holland.

In late 1679/early 1680, two clergymen destined to play a vital role in the emergence of the Cameronian movement, the Revs Donald Cargill (1627–1681), and Richard Cameron (c1647–1680), returned to Scotland from Holland. In June 1680, two documents critical to an understanding of the newly emerging Cameronian movement's attitude were published. On 3 June 1680, the Government forces seized the *Queensferry Paper* whilst in Cargill's possession. This *Paper* was intended to clarify the Cameronian position, but was still in draft form when seized. Nineteen days later, the *Sanquhar Declaration* was nailed to the market cross of Sanquhar by a party led by Richard Cameron. The *Declaration* had similarities to the *Queensferry Paper*, but went further in that it actually declared war on the Crown. Whatever the interpretation of these two documents, their subscribers clearly repudiated the authority of the Crown.

⁷ The *Hamilton Declaration* was so-called, because it was published in the town of Hamilton. It was not drawn up by Robert Hamilton.

Both documents were eagerly seized upon by the Crown as evidence of treason, not only by the subscribers, but by all the Hillmen. At this stage, Donald Cargill and Richard Cameron, the principal leaders of the disaffected Covenanters in the field, established the precedent that clergy, rather than political or military leaders, should direct future Cameronian policy. But their period of leadership was destined to be very short. Cameron was killed a month after the *Sanquhar Declaration*. Cargill survived long enough to excommunicate Charles II, his brother the Duke of York, and other leading persecutors, at Torwood in September 1680, but was captured and executed in July 1681.

The disaffected Hillmen, now increasingly known by their new name of Cameronians, adopted a polity to become known as the United Societies.

From the earliest period in the history of the Scottish Church, the more pious and devoted people had been wont to associate in private fellowship meetings...Meetings of this sort had been maintained by the persecuted Presbyterians...and ... some of the more zealous of the party conceived the idea of bringing these scattered praying societies into one united organization (Hutchinson 1893:56).

The form, which the United Societies took, was perforce presbyterial rather than Presbyterian, since they sought to avoid becoming a court of either ecclesiastical or civil government.

Persecution continued and the Cameronians lost a series of leaders. After Cameron was killed, Cargill succeeded him but was soon captured and executed. The mantle of leadership then fell on the young Rev James Renwick, newly ordained, on his return from Holland in 1683. In 1684, Renwick published the *Apologetical Declaration*, which again 'declared war on all engaged in proceedings against them' (Dickinson & Donaldson 1954:180). When Renwick was captured and executed on 17 February 1688, Alexander Shields, licensed but not yet ordained, took over the leadership. Renwick and

Shields had co-operated in the writing of the *Informatory Vindication*, the definitive Cameronian apologetic published in July 1687, and which may lay claim to be recognised as the Cameronian *magna charta*.

Shields was the most significant of the three Cameronian clerics at the time of the Glorious Revolution of 1688/9. As time went on, splits had started to appear in the United Societies and, by 1690, a fatal schism had developed. This resulted in the majority of the Cameronians under Shields reconciling with the Revolution Kirk, and a smaller faction led by Robert Hamilton going their separate way. In 1689, prior to the schism, the Cameronian Regiment was raised and became a congregation of the Kirk by 1691, when Alexander Shields received a "call" to be their minister, and was ordained to that end by the Presbytery of Edinburgh.

1.4 THE CENTRAL RESEARCH PROBLEM

The emergence of a body of people to become known as Cameronians, and their impact (mainly from 1679 to 1690) upon events within the Scottish Presbyterian *milieu* and, in particular, their contribution to freedom of religion, forms the focus of this study. Many varied internal and external factors affected the life and work of the Cameronians. History generally regards them as being motivated strongly - some might say exclusively - by the dictates of their individual consciences. However, particularly after the Glorious Revolution of 1688/9, there were occasions when accusations of expediency as a motivating factor were advanced.

The central research problem which emerges is therefore:

What contribution did the Cameronians make to freedom of religion in Scotland.?

1.5 ORIGINAL CONTRIBUTION OF THIS THESIS (see also para 1.9.8)

John Cunningham (1859, ii:309) remarks that ‘No chronicler arose to chronicle the Revolution in the Church, nor did any leading Churchman arise to leave the impress of his mind upon the age.’ 130 years later, in his introduction to *By Force or Default? The Revolution of 1688-1689*, JP Kenyon (1989:1) comments, ‘The historiography of the Revolution of 1688 could best be described as being in a state of luxuriant confusion’, whilst Eveline Cruickshanks (*ibid*:v) considers that, although ‘the tercentenary of the Revolution of 1688 has been marked by ... multifarious publications ... historians ... have been content to follow the well-worn paths of Whig interpretation.’ It is remarkable how, even at this time, the events of 1690-92, have not been examined with the same degree of rigour as events prior to the Revolution. There has been a clear tendency to concertina all the events, between 1688 and 1693, involving the different sectors of the Cameronians into a very small compass, with many authors simply ignoring, or otherwise marginalising, important Cameronian events. This has led to many uncritically accepting historical judgements that are not borne out by a critical examination of the available evidence.⁸

In respect of the Cameronians, this has also led to an unbalanced view of their impact on church history and, in some cases, a refusal to accept that they made any impact at all.⁹ This thesis attempts to redress the balance and to restore the Cameronians to their rightful place in Scottish Church history. For instance, the following significant events occurred in Cameronian circles between 1688 and 1693:

⁸ Inter alia: 1. The reported closing words of Rev Thomas Douglas at the Drumclog coventicle 1679 (Smellie 1960:296). 2. Mitchinson’s (1982:278) statement: ‘each cellar holding a ... covenanter anxious to do a godly murder.’ 3. Macpherson’s (1932:74), ‘State within a state’. Several reports that the majority of the United Societies refused to join the Kirk in 1690 (DSCHT 785/6 and *Dictionary of Christian Denominations* 2003:85. 5. Hoskins (1998:198): ‘Only half the companies [at Dunkeld] were true Cameronians.

⁹ DC Lachman in *The Dictionary of Christian Denominations* (Day, P [ed] 2003), defines ‘Cameronians’ as ‘A term used to describe those who rejected the 1690 settlement of the established Church of Scotland.’ Not only is this misleading, for two-thirds accepted the settlement (Chapter 8), but this definition discounts all Cameronians prior to 1690, in other words, virtually the entire scope of this thesis.

- Dec 1688. The rabbling of the curates.
- March 1689. The Cameronian Guard protects the sitting of the Convention of Estates.
- May 1689. The Cameronian Regiment is raised under the spiritual authority of the United Societies, without vowing allegiance to any monarch.
- August 1689. The Cameronian Regiment secures stability in Scotland at Dunkeld, thereby permitting both the Parliament and General Assembly to meet in safety.
- December 1689. The Cameronian Regiment confirms formal acceptance of the name 'Cameronian,' and acknowledges William as king (in a proclamation from their winter quarters at Montrose).
- October 1690. All Cameronian clergy re-enter the Kirk.
 - The main body of United Societies also re-enter the Kirk.
 - The United Societies cease to exist.
 - The Hamiltonian rump departs and eventually, -
 - in 1693, forms the Societies of the SW.
- February 1691. The Edinburgh Presbytery ordains Alexander Shields and he is "called" to be minister of the Cameronian Regiment, thus demonstrating that the Regiment is now under the spiritual authority of the Kirk, not the United Societies.
- December 1693. Rev A Shields appeals to the General Assembly on the subject of more and better Presbyterian reinforcements for the Regiment.

A number of recent commentators have endeavored to correct this confusion, and lack of objectivity, and have shown considerable interest in the Covenanters and their lives. These include authors, such as Ian Cowan, who has made an extensive study of the *Scottish Covenanters* (1976), Maurice Grant's recent biographies of Richard Cameron (1997) and Donald Cargill (1988), as well as John Coffey's biography (1997) of Samuel Rutherford, and Ginny Gardner's study of *The Scottish Exile Community in the Netherlands 1660-1690* (2004). A number of related publications such as *The Club of*

1689-90 by James Halliday (1965:143-159), as well as ongoing and, as yet unpublished, research, by people like Mark Jardine with his study of Extreme Presbyterians and Alasdair Raffe's study on Religious Controversy and Scottish Society 1679–1714 also include aspects of Cameronianism not previously investigated. Although not so recent, Hector Macpherson's work *Alexander Shields, The Cameronian Philosopher* (1932) remains the only modern biography of Shields, whilst works like Willie Thompson's (1978:93-196) article, *The Kirk and the Cameronians*, and Neil Davidson's *Discovering the Scottish Revolution 1692–1745*, provide a modern left-wing view. SFH Johnston's Vol I of *The History of the Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)* (1957) is surprisingly informative on religious activity for a regimental historian.

In his Preface to *The Scottish Covenanters 1660–1688*, Professor Ian Cowan (1976:Preface) writes; 'Views about the Covenanters have oscillated between adulation and outright condemnationThey have been seen on the one hand as political extremists and as martyrs of the cause of religious freedom on the other. Such judgments in the past frequently reflected the ecclesiastical controversies of the age in which they were written, and it is only now possible to view the covenanting struggle in a more dispassionate manner.' Even modern authors, such as Rosalind Mitchison (1982:285), remarking on the situation subsequent to the Cameronian clergy's reconciliation with the Kirk, makes the unsubstantiated accusation that it 'enabled the Church to start the long process of fabricating seventeenth-century history in an attempt to sanctify the Covenanting past and weld it on to the Church.' Modern authors seem as partisan as their 17th-century counterparts. The Cameronians were neither superheroes nor blackguards but, for the most part, simple people subject to the vagaries of human existence, who lived through a time of brutal repression.

*We aren't no thin red 'eroes, nor we aren't no blackguards too,
But single men in barricks, most remarkable like you.
An' if sometimes our conduct isn't all your fancy paints,
Why, single men in barricks don't grow into plaster saints.*

(*Tommy*. Rudyard Kipling)

This dissertation is an endeavour to rectify the position, and to assess what contribution, if any, the Cameronian movement of the Scottish Covenanters made to religious freedom, principally as a result of their behaviour between 1679 and 1690. In the process a new look at the role of the Cameronians has emerged. As far as can be ascertained, although the Covenanting story has attracted a number of modern historians, no-one has yet made an exclusive study of the development of the Cameronian movement within the Scottish Covenanters, from its earliest roots to its legacy. Yet the Cameronians have an unique history of their own. Whilst the narrative does not claim entire originality (particularly when dealing with the subjects of recent and rigorous biographical studies, such as Richard Cameron and Donald Cargill [M Grant 1997 & 1988] and Samuel Rutherford [John Coffey 1997]), in the same way that Alexander Shields (1797:iv) states that ‘his lucubrations are not original,’ they are none the less essential to the development and understanding of this argument .

However, much of the narrative is original, particularly when dealing with the time around the Glorious Revolution of 1689/90 and, in particular, when dealing with the Cameronian Regiment¹⁰ and its actions. It is almost certain that the duality of religious and military roles has never previously been addressed. The Regiment has been viewed simply as yet another military unit, or else a grouping of crusading Covenanters. Crucial aspects, such as the fact that it was raised as a fighting congregation under the spiritual authority of the United Societies specifically to defend the Reformation, yet, by 1690, had become a congregation of the Church of Scotland, have never been examined.

Nor has the altered relationship of the Regiment to Chapter XXIII of the *Westminster Confession* ever been noted. The Regiment never swore allegiance to William, but granted him tacit obedience very soon after their

¹⁰ Dr Karin Bowie (History Dept, Glasgow University, e-mails 27 Jan 2006 and 25 Jan 2007) asks: ‘Did the regiment begin to diverge from the remaining Societies? Did it become part of the conforming Revolution establishment, even if a more left-wing part of it? ... I would be interested in reading a fresh history of the Cameronians, particularly to better understand the relationship between their religious societies and the military regiment in the 1690’s.’

formation. They were, and still are, the only grouping to formally accept the title of ‘Cameronian.’

In many cases, the conclusions are quite radical, putting a new slant on historical conclusions - some of which have been uncritically accepted for hundreds of years. In this process, a number of reference and other works have been found to be either erroneous,¹¹ or to put a misleading gloss¹² on situations, particularly when dealing with events post the Cameronian schism of 1690. Many such statements are substantiated neither by evidence, nor by contemporary or modern commentaries. Therefore, the major conclusions to this study are entirely original, exploding a number of myths, and hopefully redressing an imbalance in Scottish Church history. This will no doubt prove disturbing to some who have preconceived ideas about the Cameronians.

1.6 THE TITLE

The title of this dissertation is *Bible and Sword: The Cameronian Contribution to Freedom of Religion*.

The *Bible*, as the Word of God, was the Cameronians’ supreme authority, as it was for every Covenanter and indeed is for every Presbyterian. Ephesians 6:17b links the Word of God with the Sword of the Spirit: ‘The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.’ The phrase *Bible and Sword*¹³ indicates that the Cameronians used both spiritual and temporal warfare. This is discussed in Chapters 4, 7, and 9, and the use of the expression in the title is not intended to seek to justify the principle of a dual use of spiritual and temporal swords, but rather to indicate that both were involved in Cameronian behaviour.

¹¹ For instance the *ODNB* 1997 incorrectly states that Rev Richard Cameron had ‘no University training.’ This has since been amended by the inclusion of Maurice Grant’s biography of Cameron, *The Lion of the Covenant*. 1997.

¹² The *DSCHT*, 1993 (that has no entry on Cameronians), whilst the United Societies entry (:785) infers that the majority of the United Societies were not reconciled to the Kirk in 1690. ‘Though some followed them (the ministers) in this, a substantial number refused to join an uncovenanted Erastian Church.’ Though strictly speaking true, the *gloss* is misleading.

¹³ ‘A clean sword and a dirty Bible’ is a Cameronian Proverb. P.Hay Hunter’s novel (1904) on the life of Cleland is entitled, *Bible and Sword*.

1.6.1 The Cameronian name

An understanding of the use of the name 'Cameronian' is desirable. The eventual justification for use of the name will pose a critical question later, but here we are concerned only with its origin.

That the term Cameronian came into general use as a result of the example and leadership of the Rev Richard Cameron is not in dispute. 'From Mr. Richard Cameron, a young man lately ordained ... they had the name of Cameronians' (Wodrow 1833.3:202). Similar names¹⁴ have been used, but in Scotland, at least, the term Cameronian is widely understood as having its earliest connections with Richard Cameron, 'The Lion of the Covenant' (Smellie [1903] 1960:329). Claims that the expression came into use before approximately 1678, when Cameron, supported by Robert Ker of Kersland (whose son became a Captain of the Cameronian Regiment in 1689), began 'to stiffen the forces of resistance against the government' (Grant M 1997:100), are probably unsustainable. Daniel Defoe ([1717] 1843:70) claims that the name was in use by as early as 1670. 'The Persecution of the Cameronian Presbyterians, (so they were then call'd), which begun ... in the year 1670,' but this appears highly improbable as, at that stage, Cameron was the *dominie* (schoolmaster) in Falkland, and had not yet espoused the Covenanting cause. Patrick Walker (1827,1:212), writing around 1726, states that 'the late Kersland¹⁵ calls them by that name at Drumclog,' which is a possibility, but again seems too early in Cameron's ministry to be likely. Retrospectively, writers, such as Sir Walter Scott, use the Cameronian name in a much wider sense in books, such as *Old Mortality* and *The Heart of Midlothian*, but 17th century contemporary usage does not bear out such a wide-ranging use of the name.

It may be noted here that the term 'Cameronian', often loosely applied

¹⁴ Those who accepted the theological doctrines of John Cameron (c1579 – 1625) in France, were known as Cameronites. (Cross 1978:226)

¹⁵ Walker does not identify to which Kersland he refers, but since Robert Ker was in exile in Holland at the time of Drumclog, his son Daniel, the future regimental officer, probably made this comment.

to the adherents of Cameron and Cargill, was originally coined about 1678 or 1679 to describe, disparagingly, those who shared Cameron's views on the supremacy and the Indulgence It did not however gain much currency until after the Revolution of 1688, when it was used to denote those elements of the United Societies which did not join the Revolution Settlement. The term was never owned¹⁶ by those to whom it was applied, and it is uniformly described in their literature as a 'by-name' or 'nick-name' Grant M 1988:253).

In his *Short Memorial* 1690, on the title page, Alexander Shields refers to 'those of them called by Nick-name Cameronians,' and similarly in his *Proper Project for Scotland* 1699, he identifies the author as 'a person neither unreasonably Cameronian or excessively Laodicean.' This irritated Patrick Walker (1827 i:211), 'for he [Shields] takes the fool Title to himself of being True blue, he cannot give his Pamphlet a Title, without declaring himself not excessively Cameronian: How can he or any other instruct, that Mr Cameron, or these who concurred and succeed him, did exceed the Bounds of covenanted Presbyterian Principles?' Shields seems anxious to establish a centrist position for himself, since the Cameronians were perceived as the extreme left wing of the Covenanters, despite vigorous attempts to persuade themselves and the world to the contrary.

1.6.2 Definition of Cameronian

The ultimate justification for the use of the term 'Cameronian' is addressed later. Meanwhile, **for the purpose of this dissertation, the definition of a Cameronian is taken to be:**

Proto-Cameronians:

- the 'forefather' (Rev Samuel Rutherford);
- the 'fathers' (Revs John Brown of Wamphray and Robert M'Ward).

¹⁶ In fact, it was formally owned by the Cameronian Regiment from inception. See discussion in Chapter 8.

Cameronians proper:

- the 'initiators' ([Sir] Robert Hamilton and his early followers);
- the 'progenitors' (Revs Richard Cameron and Donald Cargill and their followers);
- the members of the United Societies from 1682 to 1689 (during which time Rev James Renwick and, subsequently, Alexander Shields led them);
- the *original* members of the Cameronian Regiment (Lt-Col William Cleland, his officers, and men).

1.6.3 Cameronianism

The term 'Cameronianism' is a generic expression embracing the entire spectrum of Cameronian life. This not only includes all those who subscribed to the thinking of Cameronian minded clergy, but those who predate Cameron, (who therefore cannot strictly be called Cameronians), but who played a role in the development of the Cameronian movement. It includes aspects such as antecedents, polity and policy, teaching and preaching, relations and attitudes to Church and State, as well as to each other. For example, 'Brown may with some justice be called the father of Cameronianism' (Macpherson 1932:8).

1.6.4 The Cameronian Contribution

Over time, the Cameronians have been variously credited with being the principal agent of bringing religious freedom to Scotland¹⁷ and, conversely, accused of being schismatic zealots who contributed virtually nothing.¹⁸ At various stages, they have been accused of being a political freedom movement, and even a guerrilla movement. As so often, the truth lies somewhere in between. The hypothesis rests upon whether, and to what degree, the Cameronians made a significant contribution to freedom of religion as defined below.

¹⁷ Authors inclined to be pro-Cameronian (see Works Consulted) include: A Armstrong (2003), T Campbell (1996), D Hay Fleming (1904 & 1931), P Hume Brown (1901/9), Jock Purves (1968), J King Hewison (1908-1913), JC McFeeters (1913), and W Thompson (1978).

¹⁸ Authors inclined to be antipathetic to the Cameronians include: R Greaves (1992), R Mitchison (1982), N Davidson (2003), P Hopkins (1998), and F MacLean (1970).

1.6.5 Freedom of Religion

It is incumbent to consider to what degree, if any, the Cameronians contributed to freedom of religion. The Cameronians were motivated by a desire for four particular religious freedoms and a desire to see these freedoms operating in the Kirk. These were stated in *The Solemn League and Covenant* 1643, and identified by James Renwick as Cameronian essentials in the *Informatory Vindication* 1687, which sets out the formal Cameronian position. 'So we deny and altogether disown a Separation from communion with this Church, in her **Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government**, as she was in her best & purest days:' (Renwick 1687:63/4). After the last General Meeting of the United Societies on 3 December 1690, Michael Shields records: 'The church's freedom and power restored, **the doctrine, worship, discipline and government**, and all the ordinances of Christ re-established in purity, peace and freedom, we cannot any longer stand at a distance from them' (Shields M 1780:461). These references form a bracket around the entire period of the United Societies' existence (as the Cameronian polity), from inception to dissolution, thereby displaying a steady consistency of purpose.

Similarly, the declared aim of the Cameronian clergy (and thereby the main body), was always reconciliation with the Kirk once things had normalised. The *Informatory Vindication* states: 'We absolutely deny a Positive Separation from the Scottish Covenanted Church, ... at the furthest we acknowledge a Separation Negative Passively ...' (Renwick 1687:63). In *A Hind Let Loose* 1687 (the final Cameronian apologetic prior to the Revolution of 1688/9), Alexander Shields (1797:266) states: 'In a constitute and settled state of the church ... the offended are not to withdraw ... but in a broken and disturbed state, when there is no access to these courts of Christ; the people by their withdrawing ... signify their sense of the moral equity of these censures.' 'As to the Church, they renounced all communion with it as presently enslaved and corrupted, but were not schismatics; ... They regarded this position as merely temporary' (Hutchison 1893:59).

The Cameronians were essentially a *religious* freedom movement. At no stage did the Cameronians seek to take over, or establish for themselves, a civil government. Michael Shields, secretary to the General Meeting of the United Societies, the Cameronian polity from 1682 to 1689, clarifies this in the Introduction to *Faithful Contendings Displayed* 1780. *'I shall premise a few things which I desire may be seriously considered, and soberly pondered, hoping they may have some weight with the unbiased. ... These meetings were, and are looked upon by the United Societies ... neither as civil or ecclesiastic judicatories; but of the same nature with particular Christian societies ... in the time of extreme persecution, by mutual advice and common consent ... so they might be helpful and encouraging to one another'* (Shields M 1780:7/8). Matthew Hutchison (1893:59) clarifies; 'The position they claimed was this: they reckoned themselves free from allegiance to the existing government, yet they did not attempt to set up another over themselves, but simply waited on Providence to remove that which they had disowned, or otherwise open up their way.'

1.6.6 The Modern View

John Witte Jr. identifies six essential rights and freedoms which in his view constitute the essence of modern freedom of religion, viz;

- Liberty (freedom) of conscience.
- Free exercise of religion.
- Religious pluralism.
- Religious equality.
- Separation of church and state.
- Disestablishment of religion.

(Witte 2000:37)

Liberty (freedom) of conscience

‘This is seen as the most fundamental right of religion’ (Coertzen 2005:354). The Stewarts brutally discriminated against the Cameronians, yet they refused to accept that their consciences were not free. A free conscience was theirs by virtue of the inalienable freedom that Christ granted to his followers. ‘If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed’ (John 8:36).

The free exercise of religion

‘Free exercise’ ... generally connoted various forms of free public religious action’ (Witte 2000:43) including worship, religious speech, religious assembly and religious education. It ‘also embraced the right ... to join with like minded believers in religious societies, which were free to devise their own mode of worship, articles of faith, standards of discipline and patterns of ritual’ (*ibid*).

Religious pluralism

Witte (2000:44) identifies two types of pluralism. ‘*Confessional pluralism* [is] the maintenance and accommodation of a plurality of forms of religious expression and organization,’ whilst ‘*social pluralism* [is] the maintenance and accommodation of a plurality of associations to foster religion.’

Religious equality

‘The efficacy of liberty of conscience, free exercise of religion, and religious pluralism depended on a guarantee of equality of all peaceable religions before the law’ (Witte 2000:45).

The separation of Church and State

‘The separation of church and state is not only necessary to guarantee freedom of religion, it also guarantees the integrity and independence of processes in the church’ (Coertzen 2005:356). ‘The state can ensure the observance of its laws by force. The authority of the church is of a spiritual nature’ (Spijker & Van Drimmelen s a:198).¹⁹ Presumably, this refers to

¹⁹ ‘De staat kan de naleving van zijn wetten afdwingen met geweld. Het gezag van de kerk is geestelijk.’

Romans 13:4 and also falls within the context of Chapter XXIII of the *Westminster Confession*.

The disestablishment of religion by the State

By the 'establishment of a church/religion ... the state ... undertakes certain actions to establish a certain church, faith or religion, as the church, faith or religion of the community that falls under the jurisdiction of the state' (Coertzen 2005:357). Disestablishment is the reverse process.

In due course, it will be seen that, whereas the Cameronians made a significant contribution to some of the above, there were others upon which they made little impact, or even opposed. The degree of their success in advancing these freedoms is, therefore, a measure of their effectiveness, both in their own time and for later generations. Witte's views cannot be transposed to Cameronian times, but assists in the evaluation for modern days. Yet they did affect, albeit sometimes vicariously, and even unwillingly, all the above to some degree. The thrust of this dissertation is not merely to assess whether there was a Cameronian contribution in the areas specified, but to assess the significance and effect of such contribution.

1.7 CRITICAL QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE CENTRAL RESEARCH PROBLEM

John Coffey (1997:15) expresses concern about some dissertations emerging 'from divinity and politics departments [which] tend to be very weak on historical context.' Conversely Coertzen (2006 Jan:7) draws attention to Berkhof's warning about the danger 'of defining church history only in terms of contextualisation and [therefore] much rather wants to see church history in terms of the critical questions relating to how the church fulfilled its calling within a particular time.' Therefore, the aspect of how the Cameronians fulfilled their calling is addressed, whilst endeavouring to keep the critical examination within the appropriate historical context. This raises some critical questions flowing from the Research Problem. These questions are dealt with

in the text as shown, and reconsidered in Chapter 9, where they are interpolated with major themes that arose during the development of Cameronianism. Some of the more important questions that are addressed are the following:

1.7.1 How did the Cameronian movement originate and develop?

Whilst the position of the Covenanters was one of orthodox Scottish Presbyterianism, it is desirable to see whether one can trace Cameronian roots back to John Knox's uniquely Scottish Calvinism, as well as to follow the thread of development up to 1690 and beyond, and to assess what, if anything, was unique about the Cameronians. The first part of this question is addressed in Chapter 1, the second part forms the main body of the thesis from Chapters 2 to 8 inclusive, and is reverted to in Chapter 9 (9.3.1).

1.7.2 Were the Cameronians essentially a politico-ecclesiastical movement, one of genuine religious conviction, or both?

Although the Cameronian clergy were deeply concerned about political oppression and Erastian interference in ecclesiastical matters, their ministry possessed a quality, which, in modern terms, would be described as extremely spiritual. There is little doubt that the period of religious persecution in Scotland from 1660 to 1688 was accompanied by intermittent periods of significant religious revival. Was this struggle religious with political undertones, or *vice-versa*? This question is addressed in Chapters 2, 5 and 7, and reverted to in Chapter 9 (9.2.1).

1.7.3 Did the Cameronians remain within Presbyterianism, or were they sectarian to the point where they fell outside the mainstream of Scottish Presbyterianism?

The Cameronian clergy, including the forefathers, were at pains to demonstrate that they held a non-schismatic and centrist position within Scottish Presbyterianism, but in this they failed. The Cameronians are widely regarded as being extreme left-wing Covenanters, whilst still remaining

orthodox Presbyterians. Is this view sustainable? This question is addressed in Chapters 4, 6 and 8, and reverted to in Chapter 9 (9.4.1).

1.7.4 Did the Cameronians strictly maintain their freedom of conscience or did they succumb to expediency around the time of the Glorious Revolution, 1688/9?

Did the Cameronians exercise real freedom of conscience even during the fiercest persecution? And did those who rejoined the Kirk, betray what they had been struggling for since 1679 by so doing, or had they truly won the freedom they sought, to be allowed to worship at the dictates of their conscience? Did Hamilton and his followers, by refusing reconciliation, display intransigence out of line with Cameronian main-stream thought? This question is addressed in Chapter 8, and reverted to in Chapter 9 (9.2.3).

1.7.5 Who, ultimately, were the *true* inheritors of the Cameronian spirit?

This problem arises as a result of the schism within the United Societies, one branch reuniting with the Kirk, and the other branch rejecting any form of reconciliation and ultimately developing into the Reformed Presbytery in 1743, thereafter becoming the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland. Just prior to the schism, the Cameronian Regiment was raised and formed a separate identity. Who could justifiably claim to have inherited the Cameronian spirit after 1689? This question is addressed in Chapter 8, and reverted to in Chapter 9 (9.4.7).

1.7.6 How did a number of rebellious Cameronians form a loyal Regiment and did they retain their own freedom of conscience in the process?

The critical aspect in bringing about such a change in attitude would, *prima facie*, appear to be the result of a change of regime from one of tyranny, to one that was prepared to accept individual conscience in matters of religion. 'How had this reconciliation between former rebels and the state become possible? For the vast majority ... it was simply because their aims had been achieved' (Davidson & Donaldson 2004:28). Yet, not all the United Societies

were prepared to accept the authority of this new regime, and certainly not to serve in its army. Was the new-won freedom therefore really a subjective freedom, depending on one's individual point of view? This question is addressed in Chapter 7, and reverted to in Chapter 9 (9.2.2).

In Chapter 9, the answers are interpolated into the text at the appropriate place.

1.8 HYPOTHESIS

On the basis of the above, the following hypothesis has been arrived at, to be demonstrated or otherwise by the research:

The development and actions of the Cameronian movement made a significant contribution to Freedom of Religion in Scotland.

1.9 METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH METHOD

'The task of research methodology is to assure that a research design and the conducting of the research attains results' (J Mouton & HC Marais²⁰ quoted by Coertzen 2006 Jan:2). The methodology used is a critical historical narrative, recounting and examining the development and actions of the Cameronians, principally, but not exclusively, between 1679 and 1692. The narrative is set out chronologically, with thematic interpolations as set out below.

1.9.1 The Point of Departure and Yardsticks

Point of Departure

Although this research principally concentrates on the period 1679 to 1692, it should be seen against the background of the *Scottish National Covenant* of 1638 and its predecessors. The point of departure, upon which this critical examination is based, is the *Scottish National Covenant* of 1638, for the Cameronians were first and foremost Covenanters, and the *Scottish National*

²⁰ Mouton, J & Marais HC 1992:17. *Basiese Begrippe: Metodologie van die Geestewetenskappe*. Raad vir Geestewetenskaplike Navorsing.

Covenant was the origin of that use of the name. But, there are other important documents which preceded it, such as ‘The Scots Confession of 1560, and the *First and Second Books of Discipline*. The Scots Confession was adopted by the Scottish Parliament in 1560 and remained the confessional standard [of the Church of Scotland] until superseded by the *Westminster Confession* in 1648’ (Cross & Livingstone 1978:1252), Samuel Rutherford, the forefather of Cameronianism, played a significant part in the formulation of the latter.

Yardsticks

The Cameronians never departed from their claim to operate on the basis of orthodox Scottish Presbyterianism, though they were somewhat radical in their implementation. For this reason, the plumb-line against which Cameronian behaviour will be checked is the Bible as the Word of God - the plumbline that they themselves used. Their Presbyterian orthodoxicality, on the other hand, will be tested against the *Westminster Confession of Faith* 1646, (ratified in Scotland in 1647).

1.9.2 Chronological history of events

This is the skeleton upon which the various thematic aspects hang. It provides continuity and logicity to the discussion, and the development of thought and action can be clearly followed. Both international and parochial events impacting upon Cameronianism are discussed.

1.9.3 Personae

Significant personae within Cameronianism, as well as others who influenced it in a meaningful way, are examined in the appropriate places taking into account the following:

- **Biographical:** A ‘thumbnail sketch’ of each person’s life, together with their behaviour in thought, word and deed, with a more particular examination of events germane to the dissertation.

- **Writings and/or Preaching:** A critical examination of such writings and preaching as contribute to the development of Cameronianism, together with an assessment of each work considered.
- **Character:** An examination of their strengths, weaknesses and spiritual condition.
- **Influence:** How they influenced their own and later generations for good or ill. A particular feature of the development of the Cameronian movement is the close personal influence, virtually amounting to osmosis, of each generation upon the next.

1.9.4 Significant documents

These include Covenants, Confessions and Declarations, and are examined on the following bases:

Those external to Cameronianism, but impacting upon it²¹

What significance, effect and influence did the document have?

Those internal to Cameronianism²²

²¹ GENERAL DOCUMENTS

1560. *The Scots Confession*. (www.swrb.com).
 1638. *The Scottish National Covenant* (www.truecovenanter.com).
 1643 *The Solemn League and Covenant* (www.truecovenanter.com).
 1646 *The Westminster Confession of Faith* (www.truecovenanter.com).

²² COVENANTING AND CAMERONIAN DOCUMENTS

- 1679, 29 May. *Declaration of Rutherglen* (www.truecovenanter.com).
 6 Jun. *Short Declaration of Glasgow* (Wodrow 1833 ii:91).
 13 Jun. *Declaration of Hamilton* (Glasgow). (www.truecovenanter.com).
 21 Jun. *Declaration of Oppressed Protestants in Scotland* (Wodrow 1833 iii:96-98).
 22 Jun. *Humble Supplication to Monmouth* (eebo.chadwyck.com).
 1680, 3 Jun. *Queensferry Paper* (www.truecovenanter.com).
 Jun. *Bond before Sanquhar* (Grant, M 1997:194-5).
 22 Jun. *Declaration of Sanquhar* (www.truecovenanter.com).
 12 Sep. *Torwood Excommunication*, also lecture & sermon (Howie 1880: 491–501).
 1682, 12 Jan. *Declaration of Lanark* (www.truecovenanter.com).
 1684, 28 Oct. *Apologetical Declaration*. (www.truecovenanter.com).
 1685, 28 May. *Sanquhar Protestation* (www.truecovenanter.com).
 1688, 17 Jan. *Testimony of Some Persecuted Presbyterian Ministers*. (www.truecovenanter.com).
 CAMERONIAN REGIMENTAL DOCUMENTS
 1685/6. Letters re invasion, possibly in Cleland's hand (NAS.GD158/1021 p.236 r+v, 237 r+v).
 c 1688. Letters known to be in Cleland's hand (NAS. GD26/9/256).
 1689, Jul. Muster Roll of Lt-Col Cleland's company (NAS, E100/13/2).
 1689. *Address and Supplication of the Cameronian Presbyterians to the Prince of Orange* (NLS, S302 [43]).

- What was the intent of the author?
- What was the effect upon those for whom it was intended, as well as upon the Cameronian body?
- An assessment of its effectiveness.

Since relevant parts of these documents are quoted in the text, and since some run as long as 800 pages, it is impractical to include them as Annexures. All these documents are accessible, as indicated in footnotes 21 & 22, and in Works Consulted.

1.9.5 Commentaries and opinions

'There are at least two histories that need to be considered – the past event in itself and the written contemporary account of the past event. Both of these histories carry certain perspectives' (Coertzen Jan 2006:8). Both contemporary 17th-century and modern commentaries and opinions are used throughout in order to evaluate assessments of people and events.

Most commentaries on the subject of Cameronianism, both contemporary and modern, are highly partisan.²³ Where such is clearly the case, an attempt has been made to assess the objectivity of the report, or lack of it. In his Preface to *The Scottish Covenanters: 1660–1688*, Ian Cowan (1976) comments; 'This book is a reappraisal of evidence which has been long available ... but in the past has been selectively used to support only one viewpoint.' 'If the government's error ... was "its senseless confusion of Cameronians with Presbyterians who neither approved nor countenanced the extremists," their lead has been ably followed by most other writers. To the more extreme covenanting hagiographers these are the years of the martyrs who died for presbyterianism and freedom of worship. To more scholarly historians the doctrines ... issued by the Cameronians were acts of rebellion ... while in matters of worship their wish to coerce others is to be condemned' (Cowan 1968:49).

12 Dec. Humble address of the Regimented Cameronian Presbyterians to King William (NLS S 302 [43]).

²³ See fns 17 & 18, p19.

1.9.6 Critical aspects

In his discussion on new methods of research and themes, which have arisen in relation to, inter alia, the study of religious minorities,²⁴ Pieter Coertzen (2006 Jan :4) considers that ‘not ... only religious but the social, economic, racial, ethnic and minority aspects [should be] taken into account’ where appropriate.²⁵ These, and additional aspects peculiar to the Cameronians, including their attitude to the bearing of arms in a formal way, and to the Covenants, are therefore dealt with in the body of the thesis.

1.9.7 Limiting the scope

It has been necessary to limit the scope of the investigation. Dr Karin Bowie, (Lecturer, Department of History, University of Glasgow. email, 27 January 2006) described the subject as a ‘project of massive scope.’ Therefore, only aspects that contribute to an understanding of Cameronian development and actions, contributing to a greater freedom of religion, are considered in detail. In particular, the examination of works by Cameronian authors, is confined to those which contribute in this respect. However, in order for the reader to arrive at the conclusions in a sufficiently informed state, it has been necessary to cover an extended period in the narrative, from 1556 to 1692, and as a postscript, up to 1968. Therefore, the narrative narrows in scope, but deepens in detail as time progresses, starting with a ‘broad-brush’ situation from 1556, and deepening to specific details by the time of the Glorious Revolution 1688/9 and its aftermath.

²⁴This quotation refers to the Huguenots. However, since there are marked similarities between the Huguenots and the Cameronians, and since their periods and areas of activity overlap, these are considered acceptable guidelines.

²⁵ Whilst here is no racial connotation in the modern sense, there are significant ethnic aspects, such as the antipathy between Lowlanders and Highlanders.

1.9.8 Sources (see also para 1.5)

Availability

As this dissertation is upon a peculiarly Scottish subject, and as it is being carried out in South Africa, the author has experienced certain constraints as a result of distance and financial limitations. This has largely been overcome by two visits to the UK and one to Holland, where most of the works consulted were accessed and many discussions took place. However, occasionally, it has been necessary to use a secondary source for a primary quote.

Some sources have several editions, some as much as 200 years apart. Where confusion might arise, the original date of publication is given in square brackets []. Editions cited are given in normal brackets ().

Modern authors

Not much has been written on the subject of the Cameronians in recent times. As far as can be ascertained, since Hector Macpherson's biography of Alexander Shields in 1932, and the *Cameronian Regimental Histories* published since 1957, except for Maurice Grant's biographies of Donald Cargill (1988) and Richard Cameron (1997), there have been no major publications exclusively on the subject of the Cameronians, although there have been a number of articles dealing with one aspect. Authors on the subject of Covenanters, such as Ian Cowan, often include Cameronians in their discussions. But, since there is still a paucity of balanced modern commentaries with sufficient detail on the subject, the author has had to rely heavily on certain (fairly) recent biographers, in order to cover the subject adequately. They are:

John Coffey's recent study on Samuel Rutherford, *Politics, Religion and the British Revolutions* (1997), has been useful in accessing the mind of the person who is claimed by this dissertation to be the "forefather" of Cameronianism. Although Coffey makes no link with Rutherford and the Cameronians, he nevertheless identifies critical definitions of conscience and toleration, which were to greatly concern

later Cameronian leaders. It seems a pity that he does not comment upon Rutherford's influence on M'Ward, let alone Cargill or Brown of Wamphray.²⁶ Certainly, Rutherford's influence was on a massive scale, and to single out one very small sector of Scottish Covenanters is surely an unreasonable expectation of Coffey?

Maurice Grant, recent biographer of the Cameronian leaders, Donald Cargill (*No King but Christ* 1988), and Richard Cameron (*Lion of the Covenant* 1997), is probably *the* living authority on Cameronian events and personalities between 1679 and 1688. He is the contributor in *DSCHT* (1993) on Cameron, Cargill and Renwick, and has been kind enough to remain in correspondence with the author throughout the writing of this dissertation. There are, therefore, sections where he is quoted fairly frequently, due to his encyclopaedic grasp of the subject, and lack of other commentators with a similar grasp of the fine detail of the precise period covered.

Hector Macpherson remains the only modern biographer (1932) of Alexander Shields, leader of the Cameronians at the critical time of the Revolution of 1688/9 and thereafter. In his Preface to *The Cameronian Philosopher: Alexander Shields* 1932, he remarks that 'this book may claim to fill a place hitherto vacant among the biographies of famous Scotsmen' (Macpherson 1932:vi). Therefore, he has been a significant source of reference on the later Cameronians from 1685 to 1692. His work, *The Covenanters under Persecution: A Study of their Religious and Ethical Thought* 1923, has also been of great assistance. However, at times, his opinions are outmoded, and the author disputes them. Where this is the case, they are discussed in the text.

1.9.9 Academic discussions

The author has visited the Universities (and libraries) of Edinburgh (New College and Main Campus), Glasgow, Strathclyde, St Andrews, Aberdeen

²⁶ Dr Sharon Adams (Scottish History, Edinburgh University. e-mail 17 Oct 2007) remarks, 'I suspect that Coffey does not mention this simply because of the scope of the question.'

and Utrecht. In addition, visits to the National Library of Scotland, the Mitchell Library, Glasgow, the United Services Library, Edinburgh Castle, the British Defence Academy, Low Parks Museum, Hamilton, Sanquhar Museum, the National Archives of Scotland, Stirling Archives, and the Public Records Office and National Archives, Kew. There have been wide-ranging discussions with academics, librarians, curators, clerics, former Cameronian officers, authors and historians. Where a discussion is of relevance to the thesis, it forms part of a critical engagement in the text or footnotes.²⁷

1.9.10 Visits

Visits to a number of sites of importance have been made,²⁸ inter alia, the scenes of:

- The signing of the *National Covenant* in Greyfriars churchyard 1638,
- The *Rutherglen Declaration* 1679,

²⁷ DISCUSSIONS

(Military rank indicates former officers of The Cameronians [Scottish Rifles]).

Adams, Dr Sharon, Scottish History Dept, Edinburgh University.

Barclay, Dr Kate, Cameronian museum historian, Hamilton 27 Jun 2006.

Blair, W Donald (Lt), chartered accountant & researcher. Milngavie. Glasgow. 12 Aug, 2004.

Bowie, Dr Karin. Dept of History. University of Glasgow. 26 Jun, 2006.

Cameron, Donald, Rev (Maj), Episcopal minister. East Linton, Midlothian. Aug, 2004.

Dawson, Prof Jane. Dept of History, University of Edinburgh. 8 June, 2006.

Farquharson, Ian D (Maj), banker. Edinburgh. 5 Aug, 2004.

Gardner, Ginny, author, Edinburgh. 7 Jun, 2006.

Grant, Maurice, author, Edinburgh. Jul, 2004 & Jun, 2006.

Grant, Phillip, (Maj) author. British Defence Academy, July 2006.

Gordon Smith, Peter (Maj), cartographer and author. Kingston-upon-Spey, Moray. 27 Jul, 2004.

Horne, A Sinclair, Rev, Secretary Scottish Reformation Society. Edinburgh. 16 Jul, 2004.

Jardine, Mark, researcher and author. Edinburgh. 2004 and 2006.

Mackay, Hugh (Col), descendant of Maj-Gen Mackay (d. 1692). Twynholm, Galloway. 28 Nov, 2004 and 14 Jul, 2006.

Mackenzie, Terry, Curator Cameronian Museum, Hamilton. 27 Jun 2006.

Murray, John (Lt-Col), Army legal services. Aberdour, Fife. 15 June, 2006.

Paterson, RH (Col), Royal Scots historian. North Queensferry, Fife. 4 Aug, 2004.

Philip, Dr Edith, librarian United Services Museum, Edinburgh Castle. 10 Sep, 2004.

Quigley, Andrew, Rev. RPC, Airdrie, Lanark. 8 Aug, 2004.

Raffe, Alaisdair, researcher and author. Edinburgh. 5 June 2006.

Sixsmith, Michael (Maj), Intelligence Corps. Faversham, Kent. 12 July, 2006.

Van Asselt, Dr Willem. University of Utrecht, Netherlands. 22 Sept, 2004.

Young, Dr John. Dept of History, University of Strathclyde. 26 Jun, 2006.

²⁸ This may seem irrelevant to those who know these areas intimately, but to someone from outside Scotland, a feel of the ground was desirable, e.g. whilst walking at Drumclog, the local farmer thrust his stick deep into the ground, thus demonstrating that, although we were apparently on firm ground, a horse and rider would sink into the bog. Such local knowledge was critical for the Covenanters.

- The *Sanquhar Declaration* 1680,
- The *Torwood Excommunication* 1680,
- Drumclog 1679,
- Bothwell Brig 1679,
- Douglas 1689,
- Killecrankie 1689,
- Dunkeld 1689,
- The Grassmarket (where Covenanters were executed),
- Dunnottar Castle (where Covenanters were imprisoned),
- The Bass Rock (where Alexander Shields and others were immured),
- Lochgoin (home of John Howie),²⁹
- Airdsmoss 1680,
- Steenkirk 1692, and
- Landen 1693.

1.9.11 Quotations

The archaic grammar, spelling and punctuation in many of the 17th-century quotations are haphazard, to say the least. One may find the same name spelled differently within the same paragraph,³⁰ and capital letters are frequently used quite indiscriminately. Some modern quotations also use capital letters in an arbitrary manner. Every effort has been made to be faithful to the original quotation, and these have only been edited where this is necessary for a correct understanding of the quotation used. For example, 'Stewart' is preferred, except where the original uses the spelling 'Stuart.' The use of [sic] is therefore used sparingly.

1.9.12 Citations, Bibliography and Length

The Harvard reference system³¹ has been used, the Bibliography is alphabetical (not subdivided into primary and secondary works), and the length of the dissertation (maximum 300 pages, preferably 250), are all in

²⁹ The author commanded the Cameronian picquet at the Lochgoin Conventicle in 1668.

³⁰ It should be noted that surnames commencing with 'Mac' may be spelled in different ways thus; Macpherson, Mackay; but MacLeod, MacDonald; McCormick; or even M'Ward.

³¹ Kilian, Jansie 1993. *Form and Style in Theological Texts*. Pretoria: UNISA.

accordance with the guidelines of the Faculty of Theology of the University of Stellenbosch.³²

1.9.13 Parentheses

Square brackets [] are used for author's interpolations within a quotation. Normal brackets () are used for comments and interpolations within the text.

1.9.14 Conclusions drawn

Conclusions are drawn at the end of each chapter and an analytical discussion of what is critical to the hypothesis can be found in the last chapter.

1.10 OUTLINE OF CHAPTERS

The development of the Cameronian movement, from its pre-inception stage, through its growth and decline, is discussed in Chapters 2 to 9 as set out below, and illustrated diagrammatically in Annexure B.

CHAPTER 2. THE CONCEPTION OF CAMERONIANISM: From Knox and Calvin in Geneva c1556, to the Birth of Cameronianism in 1679

This chapter looks at the doctrinal connection of Cameronianism to the earliest Scottish reformers, such as Knox and through him to Calvin, and considers the roots of orthodox Scottish Presbyterianism to the point where proto-Cameronian doctrine can be identified in the works of Samuel Rutherford, the 'forefather' of Cameronianism. The chapter continues with the development of early Cameronian thinking by two Scottish exiles in Holland, the Revs Robert M'Ward and John Brown of Wamphray, and the encouragement and support that they provided to the progenitors of Cameronianism in Scotland.

CHAPTER 3. CAMERONIANISM IN THE CRUCIBLE: From the murder of Archbishop Sharp, 3 May 1679, to the Battle of Bothwell Brig, 22 June 1679

This chapter deals with the period when open rebellion broke out in Scotland

³² As advised at Research Development Workshop, 28 November 2006, by Dr Clint le Bruyns, Faculty of Theology, University of Stellenbosch.

against the State, instigated by a Cameronian faction, prior to the formulation of any stated Cameronian policy.

CHAPTER 4. CAMERONIANISM COMMITTED: *From the return to Scotland of Richard Cameron and Donald Cargill 1679, to the execution of Cargill 1681*

In this chapter, high and low points in Cameronianism are reached in quick succession. Like Luther, who nailed his theses against Papal Indulgences to the door of the Schlosskirche in Wittenberg, Richard Cameron nailed his *Declaration* against Stewart Indulgences to the market cross in Sanquhar. The *Sanquhar Declaration* emitted by Cameron, and the *Queensferry Paper* and *Torwood Excommunication*, both connected with Cargill, set the scene for the development of a separate Cameronian polity.

A brief consideration of cause and effect of the relationship of Cameronians to The Netherlands is included in this chapter.

CHAPTER 5. CAMERONIANISM IN CRISIS: *From the leadership vacancy subsequent to Cargill's execution in 1681, up to the execution of Renwick in 1688*

During this phase, the Cameronians experienced a series of leadership crises. This was a period which saw the development of a formal Cameronian polity strong enough to endure until the Revolution, as well as the publication of definitive Cameronian principles contained in the *Informatory Vindication* of 1687.

CHAPTER 6. PRELUDE TO THE GLORIOUS REVOLUTION OF 1688/9: *Alexander Shields assumes leadership of the Cameronians*

This chapter deals with the period immediately preceding the Glorious Revolution when Alexander Shields took over as leader after the execution of Renwick. It includes an assessment of *A Hind Let Loose* 1687, Shields's *magnum opus* and the last pre-revolutionary Cameronian doctrinal apologetic.

CHAPTER 7. THE CAMERONIANS COME INTO THEIR OWN: *The Glorious Revolution of 1688/9*

This was a confused period of radical change in Cameronian attitudes during which William, Prince of Orange, and his wife Mary, ascended the thrones of both Scotland and England. This chapter also deals with the raising of a Cameronian Guard and a Regiment from within the United Societies, and the resultant outcomes.

The change in attitude to the State by Cameronians was not as simple as many historians report. A change of spirit from the continual bickering and fragmentation of the United Societies, to one of a genuine singleness of purpose within the Regiment bore surprisingly significant fruit.

CHAPTER 8. RECONCILIATION AND SCHISM: *In the wake of the Revolution, 1690-1692*

This chapter examines the schism and what happened to the various parts of the sundered Cameronian movement. Internal factors, including schism and exhaustion, as well as external events, led to the formerly united Cameronians' bitter divergence in attitude to both Church and State, resulting in the Revs Shields, Lining and Boyd leading the majority in rejoining the Kirk, whilst a minority under Hamilton entered into a new 'wilderness' experience, from which emerged the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland in the course of time. After more than 300 years, it is possible to identify much of what went right and what went wrong.

CHAPTER 9. THE CAMERONIAN CONTRIBUTION: *A new Era of Freedom of Religion Dawns*

This Chapter addresses the conclusions to the central research problem. The aim is to establish whether the hypothesis is sustainable or not.

The format of this Chapter will be:

Definition of Cameronian, and defining aspect of the Cameronian struggle.

Resumé of the development of the Cameronian movement.

Significant themes identifiable during the development of the
Cameronian movement.

Significant Cameronian contributions to Freedom of Religion:

For their own time,

For modern times.

Acceptance of the hypothesis.

Final observations.

L'ENVOI. LAST POST: The Cameronians' Last Conventicle, 14 May 1689

A brief review of the last Conventicle of The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles), at Douglasdale in 1689. (Excerpts from the service are on the DVD inside the back cover.)

CHAPTER TWO

THE CONCEPTION OF CAMERONIANISM

From Knox and Calvin in Geneva, c1556,
to the birth of Cameronianism, early 1679

'The great Marriage Day of this Nation with God.'

(Lord Warriston on the signing of the *Scottish National Covenant*, 1638)

2.1 THE BACKGROUND TO CAMERONIANISM: ORTHODOX SCOTS PRESBYTERIANISM

The underlying foundation for Scots Presbyterianism was Calvinism of the peculiarly Scottish *genré* initiated by John Knox (c1514 – 1572) and others. It is not intended to trace the development of Scottish Reformation theology that has already been extensively researched. However, 'Two main features of this Reformation theology may be noted. The first is the dynamic intervention of God in the history of his people. The effect upon Scottish theology ... was to give it a narrative, "salvation-history," form. The second feature ... is its focus on the Mediator. ... the inner heart of [Knox's] faith and message was found in the doctrine of the mediatorship of Jesus Christ' (Torrance in Wright & Badcock 1996:2). Here, the intention rather is to establish a direct line of descent from the earliest Scottish reformers, to the Cameronians of the 1680s, a sort of 'golden thread.' One might draw many such threads from Knox and his contemporaries to many parts of the church, even outside Scotland. But, the intent is to demonstrate that the Cameronians stand in the direct line of inheritance of orthodox Scots Presbyterianism. They may be considered an offshoot, but their rooting is nevertheless in the tree of Presbyterian Scots orthodoxy. 'It is widely ... asserted that the *Confessio Scoticana* of 1560 represents "pure Calvinism" in a Caledonian accent ... [but this] thesis is arguably too facile and simplistic' (Hazlett 1987:287). However, 'in publishing their own confession, the Scots availed of that liberty asserted in the unofficial appendix to the *First Helvetic Confession*: We therefore grant to

anyone the freedom to use the terminology which he believes is most suitable for his church' (*ibid*:295).

2.1.1 *The Scots Confession and the First Book of Discipline of 1560*

Both these documents were drawn up principally by John Knox¹ and a few others. 'The Reformers, for whom all authority was located in the Word of God, which effectively meant the Bible, employed the medium of the confession of faith as a safe alternative' to the previous usage of confessions as "official formulation of dogma"² (Hazlett 1979:293). 'The authors of the Confession claimed that their only source was Scripture' (*ibid*:300). The *Scots Confession* 'has always been regarded as an admirable summary of the faith it embodies. Till the Westminster Confession of 1646 was accepted as the common standard of both English and Scottish Presbyterianism, it remained the foundation of the Church of Scotland; and even after that date, it was still this Confession of Knox and his colleagues to which the Church looked as the purest expression of its mind and heart' (Hume Brown 1895:123).

Because Scotland was an independent kingdom, the Scots reformers were in a stronger position than any others in Europe, even Calvin himself.³

A rationalistic form of Calvinism arose which left its mark on Scottish theology. ... On the one hand, central place was given to the mediatorial work of Christ ... On the other hand, there took place a movement of theology in which the biblical concept of the covenant was split into to a covenant of nature and works and a covenant of grace. ... This bifurcation in theology was very marked in the difference between the federal Calvinism of Samuel Rutherford ... and the teaching of Calvin and the Scots Confession (Torrance in Wright & Badcock 1996:5).

¹ 'Having acquired iconic status, it was inevitable that Knox should be claimed at one time or another by virtually all Scottish protestants' (Dawson, *ODNB*, 2004-7:1571),

² 'Confessions could be changed their status could never be more than subordinate' (Hazlett 1987:293). This was to have significant implications later for Richard Cameron's (and others') interpretation of the Westminster Confession 1646.

³ 'Only after a struggle of fourteen years did Calvin attain the power which the Scottish Reformed Church possessed from the beginning – that of refusing sacraments to unworthy

Hazlett (1987:301) remarks, 'There are points in the Confession where Calvin is arguably not followed, and the *First Book of Discipline* was composed some months before the ConfessionThis back-to-front way of doing things suggests that the Scottish Reformers believed originally that a concrete programme for the reconstitution of the church in Scotland would have sufficed' (*ibid*:289).

In England, Cranmer's *Reformatio Legum Ecclesiasticarum* was published in 1571 with similar intent, but 'One essential difference ... reveals the gulf that separated the English from the Scottish Reformers. ... The Book of Discipline merely invoke[s] the State to give validity to a work which already has the sanction of Heaven, the English book is ... the simple fiat of the royal will' (Hume Brown 1895:125). Despite its inherent Scots flavour, the *Book* owes much to the Church of Geneva, and also to the German Church, founded in London in 1550 by John à Lasco. But 'the high ground taken by the Scottish Reformers' (Hume Brown 1895:130) exceeds both in that no oath to the magistrates is 'even suggested in the Book of Discipline' (*ibid*), whereas both Calvin and à Lasco required this. 'The scheme of the Scottish Reformers was practically a form of socialism such as seems implied in the very essence of the Christian teaching' (*ibid*:149). Such an implication was to prove a fruitful field for Cameronian thinkers of the next century for 'the most delicate task of the authors of the Book of Discipline was to distinguish the respective functions of Church and State ... The Church reserved a freedom of action with regard to affairs of State which might easily render Government impossible' (*ibid*:150).

2.1.2 The Second Book of Discipline, 1578

In the 1570's ... an unambiguously anti-episcopal movement emerge[d] in Scotland. Led by Andrew Melville, this movement codified its principles in the *Second Book of Discipline* (1578), generally regarded as the classic statement of Presbyterian principles. It covered *inter alia*; civil and ecclesiastical church functions; office bearers and their

members' (Hume Brown 1895:124).

ecclesiastical functions; election and ordination; education; assemblies; deacons, patrimony, duties of magistrates relevant to the Church; and a list of abuses (after Cunningham 1859 i:440-445).

In Rutherford's *Divine Right of Church Government and Excommunication* published in 1649 he 'defended Melville's two kingdom theory ...[that] church and state were distinct' (Coffey 1997:208). This concern was to emerge 50 years later, in James Renwick's Cameronian policy document, *The Informatory Vindication* 1687.

2.1.3 *The National Covenant; The Confession of Faith of the Kirk of Scotland, 1638*

The outcome of Charles I's attempt to enforce *Laud's Liturgy* upon Scotland in 1637 culminated in the signing of the *National Covenant* by many Scots nobles and barons in Greyfriars Kirkyard, Edinburgh on 28 February 1638. The following day ministers, burgesses and commons had a chance to sign, and 'extraordinary scenes of enthusiasm were witnessed' (Burleigh 1960:218). Copies were then taken all over the country and subsequently ordained by the General Assembly in Edinburgh on 30 August 1639, and ratified by Parliament on 11 June 1640 (Charles I, Parl 2, Act 5). The Covenant was eagerly subscribed to in the Covenanting country of the south-west, but largely ignored in Aberdeen and rejected in the Catholic highlands. Nevertheless 'although the Covenanters were not all of one mind, ... the Covenant was as truly national as any such document can ever be' (*ibid*:218). 'This meeting [of the Assembly] bore ample evidence of the reawakened spiritual life of Scotland and of a fresh stirring of the old national spirit of liberty' (Hutchison 1893:16). The *Covenant* was in three parts:

First: The first part of the *Covenant* is the *Negative Confession* of 1581, 'originally intended as a sort of supplement to the Confession of 1560, and even more explicitly listing and abjuring the errors of Rome' (Burleigh 1960:218). King James VI had signed this.

Second: Then 'follows an exhaustive list of the Acts of Parliament since the

Reformation passed against the Roman Church or in favour of the Reformed Church and the true religion' (*ibid*).

Third: Then follows the Covenant commitments of the signatories:

We ... solemnly declare, That with our whole heart we agree, and resolve all the days of our life constantly to adhere unto and to defend the foresaid true religion and ... to labour by all means lawful, to recover the purity and liberty of the gospel, as it was established and professed before the foresaid novations. ... And in like manner, with the same heart, we declare before God and men, That we have no intention nor desire to attempt anything that may turn to the dishonour of God, or to the diminution of the King's greatness and authority, but, on the contrary, we promise and swear, That we shall, to the uttermost of our power, with our means and lives, stand to the defence of our dread sovereign the King's majesty, his person and authority, in the defence and preservation of the foresaid true religion, liberties, and laws of the kingdom (The National Covenant 1638, from Dickinson & Donaldson 1954:101/2).

Dr Karin Bowie (discussion Glasgow University, 26 June 2006) makes the point that the National Covenant empowered every signatory. Each was personally responsible to defend the Church of Christ, '*in the defence and preservation of the foresaid true Religion, Liberties and Lawes of this Kingdome: As also to the mutual defence and assistance, ... So that whatsoever shall be done to the least of us, shall be taken as done to us in general, and to every one of us in particular. ... We therefore faithfully promise for our selves, ... to endeavour to keep our selves within the bounds of Christian liberty*' (*The National Covenant 1638 in Dickinson & Donaldson 1954:102-104*).

'The National Covenant ... had been essentially a constitutional, and not a revolutionary, document ... [but] there were indications that the revolt was to go much farther than the Covenant itself expressed' (Dickinson & Donaldson

1954:104). By accepting the authority of this Covenant, the later Covenanters had no choice in conscience but to rebel when their Christian liberty was forcibly removed.

2.1.4 *The Solemn League and Covenant, 1643*

In England, Civil War broke out in 1642 and, in 1643, an alliance was concluded between the English parliamentary forces and the Scots Parliament in the form of *The Solemn League and Covenant*. ‘This was the tangible evidence of “a presbyterian crusade for the imposition of uniformity in *doctrine, worship, discipline and government* on the three churches of Scotland, England and Ireland”’ (Dickinson & Donaldson 1954:121). ‘That it exercised a very important influence on the course of public events for a few years ... cannot be called in question’ (Hutchison 1893:17). The Covenanters accepted the *Solemn League* into the list of documents to which they adhered, and its major significance for the Cameronians was the identification of the four religious freedoms that were to lie close to the heart of their struggle namely; ***doctrine; worship; discipline; and church government.***

2.1.5 *The Westminster Assembly, 1643–1646*

On 27 August 1647, the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland ratified the *Westminster Confession* of 1646 as its formal Confession of Faith. The Scots Commissioners at the Westminster Assembly included Samuel Rutherford, his *amanuensis* being Robert M’Ward, both of whom were to play a significant role in the development of the Cameronian movement. However, ‘The Westminster Confession of Faith was the product mainly of Anglican and Puritan Calvinists ’ (Torrance in Wright & Badcock 1996:9).

‘The Westminster Standards were carefully considered and cordially accepted by the General Assembly as the Confession of the Church’s faith, and in this respect superseded the earlier document of 1560 ... The Westminster Standards are in full harmony with the ecclesiastical polity of the Church of Scotland from the reformation downwards’ (Hutchinson 1893:19). For the Covenanters in general the following were the salient principles:

1. The Scriptures are the supreme standard of faith and practice.
2. Christ is the exclusive head of the Church.
3. The Church is free and has spiritual independence.
4. The rights of Christian people are above the rights of the king.
5. The civil power owes allegiance to Christ.
6. Laws must be framed in accordance with God's word.
7. Magistrates have duties toward religion and the church, not just secular matters.

(after Hutchison 1893:19)

The parts of the *Westminster Confession*, which most affected the Cameronians, were those regarding the relationship of Church and State:

From the first the Headship of Christ over the Church and its direct subjection to His authority was recognised and acted upon. It belonged to the Church under the guidance of Christ speaking in his Word, to decide as to doctrine, worship, discipline and government; ... the Church claimed to be independent of civil control, owning no authority but that of Jesus Christ. As to the relation between Church and State ... the early reformers held that civil rulers had duties to discharge toward religion and the Church ... and while refusing to recognise the interference of the State *in sacris*, they were prepared to allow it a considerable sphere *circa sacra* (Hutchinson 1893:6-7).

Coertzen (2004:240/241) regards the *Westminster Confession* as being 'dogmatically, strictly Reformed' and that the Church Order resulting from the Westminster Assembly and contained in the '*Form of Presbyterial Church Government* was Presbyterian by nature.'⁴ Hutchinson (1893:19) considers that 'The Westminster Standards are in full harmony with the ecclesiastical polity of the Church of Scotland from the Reformation downwards.' Therefore, it seems reasonable that the *Westminster Confession* is an acceptable basis

⁴ De Ridder (in Coertzen 2004:242/3) points out the differences between Presbyterianism and Presbyterial Church Government. See discussion on the polity of the United Societies in Chapter 5.

against which to test the orthodoxy of Cameronian theology.

2.2 THE SITUATION IN SCOTLAND BEFORE AND AFTER THE RESTORATION OF 1660

After 1638, it became clear 'that the dual loyalties, to the Crown and to religion, expressed in the National Covenant, were in fact contradictory' (Johnston 1957:5). *The Solemn League and Covenant* of 1643, which was 'conceived in a spirit of aggressive Presbyterianism and was intended to bring the Church of England into a state of enforced uniformity with that of Scotland' (*ibid*), did nothing to ease tensions between Church and State.

During the reign of the Stewart dynasty, the Crown largely ignored, even abused, attitudes to matters both temporal and ecclesiastical, as detailed in the *Westminster Confession*. When Charles II landed at Kingston in the Scottish north-east in 1651 and signed the *Solemn League and Covenant*, hopes ran high that the situation in Scotland, both in Church and State, might improve. Such hopes were however short-lived. Up until 1660, however, Presbyterianism was accepted as the form of church government for the Kirk, but this was to change rapidly with the restoration of the House of Stewart.

Shortly after the Restoration of Charles II in 1660, the *Act Rescissory* 1661, annulled all Scots legislation since 1633, and was quickly followed by six further *Acts* which sought to re-establish Episcopalianism and ensured that growing opposition by the nascent Covenanting movement to the King's interference in Scottish church matters would be inevitable.

These further *Acts* were:

1. *Act for Calling in the Bishops to the Parliament* 1662 (Dickinson & Donaldson 1954:156).
2. *Act for the Restitution and Re-establishment of the ancient Government of the Church by Archbishops and Bishops* 1662 (*ibid*:157).
3. *Act against the Covenants* 1662 (*ibid*:158).

4. *Act against Conventicles* 1662 (*ibid*:159).
5. *Act (of Glasgow)* concerning 'Benefices and Stipends as have been possest without presentations from the lawfull Patrons' 1662 (*ibid*:162).
6. *An Act (Bishop's Dragnet) against separation and disobedience to Ecclesiastical Authority* 1663 (*ibid*:160).

This legislative onslaught upon Presbyterianism culminated with the *Act of Supremacy* 1669, which recognised the authority of the King in all matters ecclesiastical (*ibid*:160).

One result of this pro-Episcopalian legislation was the ejection of approximately 250 Presbyterian ministers from their parishes. 'The vacant pulpits were ... filled by men [appointed episcopal curates] of little learning and less character who did nothing to commend the new order of things to the people' (Berry 1904:43). Field Conventicles recommenced, despite such gatherings having been declared seditious. 'No Acts of Parliament could estrange the allegiance of the people from their faithful and beloved pastors. ... So dearly did the Covenanters value these opportunities of worshipping God according to their consciences that some of them attended the conventicles fully armed' (*ibid*:41/2). The Covenanting movement, the classic struggle for religious freedom in Scotland, was now well underway. This movement was to develop and grow despite persecution. In due course, an extreme left wing of Covenanters, to become known as the Cameronians, emerged. These were the most radical of the Covenanters, in that they not only rejected the Indulgences for themselves, but also refused to associate with, or allow their followers to listen to those clergy who had subscribed to, or accepted, the Indulgences even to a limited degree. However, some moderates were prepared to accept such limitations, and the first Indulgence of 1669 was accepted by 42 Presbyterian ministers.

One rubric of Presbyterian thinking is the separation of Church and State, hence the rejection of State interference in matters ecclesiastical. This was in line with the view of mainstream Presbyterianism that Church and State had mutually supportive roles but, as the Stewarts continued to try to enforce

Royal Absolutism, the Cameronian position became more radical than that of the Kirk.

2.3 DEFINITIONS

2.3.1 Erastianism

Erastianism is defined as ‘the ascendancy of the State over the Church in ecclesiastical matters’ (Cross & Livingstone 1978:467). In 17th century Scotland, this took the form of the Crown’s attempts to curb the freedom of the clergy to minister, and of the laity to worship, according to the dictates of their consciences. Those who strictly observed the Presbyterian faith rejected as unacceptable all Indulgences and Tolerations that the Stewart dynasty offered. In due course, this proved to be the aspect that most set Cameronianism apart from mainstream Presbyterianism.

2.3.2 Tolerations and Indulgences

At this point, it may be appropriate to define the concept of Toleration and Indulgence within our purview. The very word *indulgence* will make many readers think of Luther and his struggle against Papal Indulgences. That is not the concept under consideration here, although there are certain theological similarities. What, in particular, the Cameronians took exception to were the Indulgences that the Crown offered in 1669, 1672 and 1679, as well as the Toleration Act of 1687 (known as James VII’s Indulgences), which were a type of conditional religious amnesty.⁵ The common factor was that the Government permitted certain clerics to minister, but only under particular imposed conditions.⁶ For instance, from 1669, the Indulgences *allowed*, *ejected*, or ‘*outed*,’ ministers to return to their churches and pulpits, and to minister, but under restriction. Toleration in any form was considered by the Presbyterians generally to be a curb on the *right to freedom* of each individual to conduct his religious life according to the dictates of his own conscience. In

⁵ In the time of Charles I, there had been earlier cases of toleration, as well as that offered by Cromwell during his time as Lord Protector.

⁶ The first Indulgence of 1669 laid down the following conditions; Indulged ministers:
 1. Must attend the meetings of the Prelatic ministers [curates]. 2. Must permit no-one of the people from other parishes to attend their services. 3. Must refrain from speaking or preaching against the king’s supremacy. 4. Must not criticise the king or his government

other words, the Crown was offering that which it had no right to offer, as did the Papacy in Luther's time. In so doing, it arrogated to itself the right to limit individual freedom of religion.

2.3.3 Cameronians and moderates

Ironically, the Crown did not differentiate between moderate Presbyterians and Cameronians, resulting in indiscriminate persecution of both alike. Wodrow (1833, iii:203), an objective contemporary commentator, but not an admirer of the Cameronians, credits them with being 'as far as ever I could find ... sincere protestants,' but laments the fact that 'in England, and other places where our Scots affairs are very little known, the Cameronians and presbyterians are taken for the same.' He considers 'the occasion and beginning of this division among suffering presbyterians, was taken from the indulgence' (*ibid*:204). John McMain, editor of the 1723 edition of M'Ward's *Earnest Contendings* takes exception to Wodrow's attitude because Wodrow 'can't endure that ... Cameronians and Presbyterians should be taken for the same: Thus he caluminates upon these faithful Witnesses of Jesus Christ that stigma, or Name of Reproach, wherewith their enemies had branded them, calling them after a Man'⁷ (M'Ward 1723:376). Despite this objection, it does seem that Wodrow is correct in concluding that the Cameronian attitude to the Indulgences and other forms of Erastianism is what essentially separated them from the generality of contemporary Scottish Presbyterianism.

2.3.4 Cameronians claim to be orthodox Presbyterian

What is more open to dispute is whether the Cameronian stance was a departure from orthodox Presbyterianism. Hector Macpherson (1932:236) regards Alexander Shields, the Cameronian leader at the Revolution, to have been 'orthodox of the orthodox,' and this seems the general opinion about all the Cameronian clergy. The same applied to the more humble members of the movement. Even 'the more common sort ... [who] were with them ... owned some of their principles, out of a sincere regard for the reformation, rights, and solemn covenants of this church.... In short, all of them, as far as

(McFeeters 1913:239).

⁷ This is a scathing reference to the followers of Richard Cameron being called Cameronians.

ever I could find out were sincere protestants' (Wodrow 1829 iii:203). Therefore, each party (Cameronians and moderate Indulged), regarded themselves as the one and only truly orthodox mainstream of Scottish Presbyterianism - the Indulged because of their majority numbers, and the Cameronians as a 'suffering remnant.'

2.4 THE EARLY FATHERS OF CAMERONIANISM: THE REVS SAMUEL RUTHERFORD, ROBERT M'WARD AND JOHN BROWN OF WAMPHRAY

Arguably, Samuel Rutherford may be claimed as the forefather of Cameronianism. Not only are his credentials as an orthodox Presbyterian unimpeachable, but he left a legacy of strongly independent anti-Erastian thinking to such men as Robert M'Ward and John Brown of Wamphray. Similarly Robert M'Ward and John Brown of Wamphray may lay claim to be the fathers of Cameronianism, particularly as a result of their inspiration of Richard Cameron and Donald Cargill at a critical juncture in the development of the Cameronian movement.

2.4.1 The Forefather of Cameronianism: Rev Samuel Rutherford, c1600–1661

Rutherford stands in the direct line of Knox, who was influenced by Calvin, when he was minister to the English church in Geneva from 1556 to 1559. Knox's successor, Andrew Melville, was Professor of Divinity at St Mary's College of St Andrews University in 1580, and in 1639, Rutherford filled the same chair. He had been prepared from an early age, for 'he grew up under the ministry of the man who was to become Scotland's most vociferous polemicist, David Calderwood. ... Rutherford had the rare experience of hearing a true exponent of the Melvillian theory of the two kingdoms asserting the independence of the church from the Crown.... The experience marked him for life, for he was to be a Melvillian in the mould of Calderwood' (Coffey 1997:31).

Rutherford, standing to his principle of freedom from State interference in the

life of the Church, continued the work of developing and refining Scottish Reformed thinking with such zeal and intellect that he inevitably fell foul of the Crown with its Absolutist views. Rutherford, therefore, seems an appropriate person with which to start the investigation into the development of the Cameronian movement.

Biographical

Rutherford became Professor of Humanity at Edinburgh University in 1623, but was deprived of his office due to a personal scandal, and in 1627 became the parish minister at Anwoth in Kirkudbrightshire, in the heartland of covenanting activity. His *Exercitationes Apologeticae pro Divina Gratia*, in which he 'exposed with devastating clarity the Arminian errors of Archbishop Laud' (Cook 1992:8), led to his exile to Aberdeen until 1638, when he became Professor of Divinity at St Mary's College, St Andrews. From 1643 and for four years thereafter, he was one of the eight Scottish Commissioners at the Westminster Assembly, 'and very much beloved there for his unparalleled faithfulness and zeal in going about his Master's business' (Howie 1781:232). 'Rutherford and the other Scottish delegates vigorously defended the Presbyterian form of church government, exercising an influence out of all proportion to their numbers' (Coffey 1997:52).

He was therefore one of the founding fathers of the *Westminster Standards*, so the point of departure for Rutherfordian theology may with confidence be accepted as orthodox Calvinistic Presbyterianism of the Scots variety. He was consistent in his courageous stance for religious freedom as he saw it. In 1661, he died at St Andrews, as he was on the point of being arrested and taken to Edinburgh to stand trial for treason.

Rutherford's writings

'The small number of academic articles on Rutherford offer only patchy coverage of his ideas. Like seventeenth-century Scottish Presbyterians in general, Rutherford has not received sustained attention from professional historians' (Coffey 1997:17). However, most of his works are still available today and one may obtain considerable insight from them. 'His writings

manifest a passionate devotion to Christ crucified and a spiritual inwardness' (Torrance in Wright & Badcock 1996:6). Rutherford was 'the first to formulate the great constitutional principle *Lex est Rex* – the Law is King' (Taylor Innes quoted in Johnston 1887:305). This work 'has been called "the most influential Scottish work on political theory", and "the classic statement" in Covenanter political thought' (Coffey 1997:2). In his Introduction to *Theology and Theologians of Scotland, 1560-1750*, James Walker (1982:11) reckons, 'Most essential points ... Rutherford carefully considers; as, for instance the nature of the visible church as such ... Even in the Erastian controversy he is a necessary supplement to his great contemporary [Gillespie].'

In his *Divine Right of Church Government and Excommunication 1646*, Rutherford defended Melville's two kingdom theory as laid out in the *Second Book of Discipline*: '... church and state were distinct ... the church was concerned with the internal spiritual part of man, and could only use persuasive, non-violent corrective punishments, most notably excommunication The magistrate, on the other hand, was concerned with the external part ... and he could add co-active, compulsive and penal punishments' (Coffey 1997:208). Later Cameronians subscribed to this argument and James Renwick repeats it in the *Informatory Vindication 1687*, as well as Alexander Shields in *A Hind Let Loose 1687*. It was also to have a particular application in the life of Donald Cargill at the time of the *Torwood Excommunication 1680*.

But the work, which identifies Rutherford most clearly as the forefather of Cameronianism is: ***A Free Disputation Against Pretended Liberty of Conscience, 1649***. This was a reply to Jeremy Taylor, an Anglican bishop and chaplain to Charles I during the English Civil War, who attacked Presbyterians in *Of the Sacred Order and Office of Episcopacy, 1642*. Rutherford's standpoint was that 'the advocacy of toleration puts conscience in the place of God and the Bible' (Cross & Livingstone 1978:213). 'Conscience is hereby made every man's Rule, Umpire, Judge, Bible and *his* God, which if he follow, he is but at the worst, a godly, pious, holy Hereticke, who feareth his conscience more than his *Creator*' (Rutherford 1649:ii). Thus

freedom of conscience is only acceptable if God and His Word governs that conscience. Otherwise, there is no plumb line against which to verify it.

The toleration to which Rutherford took exception was not of the *genré* that James VII was to offer in 1687, excluding those who preached ‘true presbyterian covenanted principles’ (Howie 1781:233 fn), but rather that offered by Cromwell in 1645, offering toleration to ‘all sects and religions ... except popery and prelacy’ (*ibid*). ‘Rutherford believed that by exalting the role of conscience ... men like Cromwell⁸ were encouraging a subjectivist approach to religion and opening the floodgates to a fissiparous pluralism’ (Coffey 1997:214). Rutherford was more concerned with the principle of toleration as Erastian interference, rather than as a specific attack on Presbyterian behaviour. ‘The principle of toleration was beginning to be promulgated in England and accepted by certain individuals without due regard to the peace of the community. Rutherford came to the rescue of the good old view as he thought it’ (Johnston 1887:306).⁹

When we see a licentious toleration in one of the three kingdoms of all formes and wayes of serving God established by law, and no limitations nor bordering provided to hedge in the fleshly and lawless exorbitances of men ... (we) do protest and declare against the said pretended toleration (Rutherford 1649:266/7).

Amongst the aspects he rejects are:

- 1 Such liberty is inconsistent with the Word of God.
- 2 The liberty is against the National Covenant.
- 3 Magistrates may not ‘use the sword’ against false teachers.
- 4 To allow many religions must be contrary to true religious liberty.

⁸ ‘In 1652, a number of Protester leaders issued a “Letter to Cromwell” in which they protested against the toleration the English had introduced and what they saw as the subordination of the church to the state’ (Coffey 1997:58).

⁹ Rutherford was prepared to give some credence to still more ancient ways. ‘Ignatius very ancient, describeth our very Scottish presbyterie’ (*Peacable Plea* :37 quoted Coffey 1997:77). This resonates with the findings of ‘An Investigation into the Effect of Military Influences on the Theology and Form of the *Spiritual Exercises* of Ignatius of Loyola’ (Christie D 1998. Unpublished thesis, Rhodes University), wherein it was concluded that the *genre* of modern military writing, was first developed by Ignatius of Loyola in 1522.

Whereas freedom of conscience was a genuine part of Rutherford's thinking, plurality of religion was clearly not! He elaborates:

5 *The Lord cannot be one, nor his name one in both Kingdoms,* when by Law, multitudes of names, wayes and Religions are tolerated.

6 Many Religions suffered, must be contrary to the true religious liberty of Christian States and Churches, when men are licensed to disseminate lies and blasphemies in the name of the Lord.

(Rutherford 1649:268)

He consistently sought freedom from State interference for the Church.

We acknowledge all due obedience in the Lord to the king's majesty; but we disown that ecclesiastical supremacy in and over the church which some ascribe to him: that power of commanding external worship, not appointed in the Word, and laying bonds upon the consciences of men, where Christ made them free ... the lordly and spiritual government over the church is given unto Christ and none else. He is the sole ecclesiastic Lawgiver (Rutherford [1726] 2005:2).

Rutherford's character

Rutherford's spiritual depth is manifest. Wodrow (1833 i:204) describes him as 'That bright shining light ... one of the most moving and affectionate preachers of his time, or perhaps in any age of the church.' Maurice Grant (1988:23) is even more positive; 'In his application of these great truths Rutherford could draw on resources not only of intellect but of deep spiritual experience. It was this blend of the intellectual and the spiritual, the doctrinal and devotional, that made his influence so profound and that left an enduring influence on his students.' Perhaps his greatest eulogist is Howie (1781:233): 'And such was his unwearied assiduity and diligence, that he seems to pray constantly, to preach constantly, to catechise constantly, and to visit the sick exhorting them from house to house, to teach as much in the schools, and spend as much time with the students and young men in fitting them for the

ministry, as if he had been sequestered from all the world besides, and yet withal to write as much as if he had been constantly shut up in his study.'

Banished from his parish, exiled to Aberdeen, his book *Lex Rex* burned in Edinburgh, and summoned on his deathbed to answer a charge of high treason, his reply was that he had a higher tribunal to appear before. He was widely regarded as an exceptional man of God, 'a sensitive reed shaken with the wind of a stormful age, and giving out soft music that touched the soul to tears' (W Blair quoted by Johnston 1887:304). Rutherford was not only a brilliant scholar and teacher, but also a true shepherd with deep personal experience of the perils of the Way, and an ability to guide, comfort and encourage. Although he escaped martyrdom as a result of his terminal illness, 'he may justly be accounted among the sufferers of that time, for surely he was a martyr both in his own design and resolution, and by the design and determination of men. Few men ever ran so long a race without cessation, so constantly, so unweariedly, and so unblameably' (Howie 1781:238).

Rutherford's influence

If we are to lay claim for Rutherford as the forefather of Cameronianism, it is necessary to demonstrate that his influence upon later Cameronian thinkers was significant. Dr Sharon Adams (e-mail 17 Oct 2007), Scottish History, Edinburgh University, writes, 'To argue that Rutherford's thought and writings had an important influence on the later covenanters is fair, especially if you can show direct links and influences.' As will become apparent, one of the most significant aspects of development within the Cameronian movement, is the strong personal link and influence of each generation upon the next.

One such influenced was Rev Donald Cargill, a student of Rutherford's at St Andrew's for four years from 1648. 'Both by his manner and method then, no less than by his personality and influence, Rutherford contrived to imprint his teaching with a particular emphasis upon Cargill's mind. There are sound grounds for concluding that Rutherford's influence was the decisive factor in Cargill's early spiritual development' (Grant M 1988:24).

Another significant Cameronian to fall under the influence of Rutherford was Robert M'Ward, his secretary at the Westminster Assembly from 1643 to 1647, and who remained his friend thereafter. He was Rutherford's first biographer and publisher of the first edition of Rutherford's letters, under the title, *Josuha Redivivus*, in 1664. M'Ward's *History of the Indulgence* displays clear Rutherfordian influence, as does his subsequent advice and encouragement to Cargill and Cameron in 1679, during the critical period after Bothwell Brig. Rutherford's effect on Cargill and M'Ward alone gives him a claim to be one of the founders of Cameronianism. M'Ward's co-exile, John Brown of Wamphray, was also possibly influenced by him, since Brown's mother Jean was one of Rutherford's correspondents. In a letter to Marion McNaught,¹⁰ he writes 'Remember my love to ... Mr John Brown' (Rutherford 1863 ii:141). Rutherford was also a regular correspondent with the Gordon family of Earlston, who were active in Covenanting, and latterly, in Cameronian circles.¹¹

One interesting attitude that Coffey (1997:210) identified is in the remark that Rutherford and Gillespie 'always encouraged the formation of a church within a church through special gatherings of the truly godly.' Whilst this may appear to resonate with Hector Macpherson's (1932:74) comment that the Cameronians were a state within a state,¹² the concepts were quite different. One was spiritual, the other temporal. By never seeking to set up either ecclesiastical or judicial courts, the Cameronians would have been content with the concept, 'a church within the Kirk,' for that is the position they held publicly from 1680 to 1690. As early as about 1625, Rutherford had circulated 'treatises he had written to justify conventicles' (Coffey 1997:42) in his parish of Anwoth, and in the 1630's "Rutherford circulated manuscripts that encouraged the meeting of conventicles 'in greater numbers ...than yet we have heard practised' (Coffey 1997:197) Yet he was opposed to 'the

¹⁰ The recipient of no less than 44 letters in the published collection (1863) of Rutherford's letters.

¹¹ Alexander Gordon of Earlston was a member of the party deputed to travel to London, by the General Meeting of 13 Feb 1689, to present the Cameronian address to William of Orange (Macpherson 1932:60,92). Alexander Shields joined the Hillmen at Earlston after escaping from prison in 1686.

¹² Discussed in Chapter 5.

conventicles of Separatists and Brownists' (*ibid*). The indications are, that Rutherford would have supported Cameronian-type Conventicles, though he might have considered them to be a type of separatist, a position which they themselves strongly rejected.

It may appear presumptuous to claim Rutherford as the forefather of the subsequent Cameronian movement. Certainly, Coffey makes little mention of the quality of influence that Rutherford must have exercised over M'Ward, or the fact that many of his correspondent families were part of the Cameronian movement some 20 years after his death, or that Cargill was his pupil at a formative time of his life. Dr Sharon Adams (email 17 Oct 2007), comments: 'I suspect Coffey does not mention this simply because of the scope of the question and because there are other influences which have to be taken into account when looking at the Cameronians, which are non- Rutherfordian.'

True, but there is little doubt that Rutherford did leave a significant imprint on some who were to become catalytic in the future development of the Cameronian movement. His influence over M'Ward, Brown and Cargill, and his identification of the authority of the Word of God above individual conscience, as well as the danger of Erastianism in the Kirk, both strong Cameronian themes, would seem to justify a claim for him to be viewed as the forefather of Cameronianism.

2.4.2 Rev Robert M'Ward, 1628–1681

Biographical

Born in 1628, in Glenluce, Galloway, he enrolled to study divinity at St Andrews in 1643 at the same time as Donald Cargill, with whom he formed an enduring friendship. He was *amanuensis* to Rutherford at the Westminster Assembly from 1643 to 1647. In 1650 he held the Chair of Humanities at St Andrew's and went on to become the minister of Glasgow Tron in about 1660. Cargill was minister of Glasgow Barony at the same time, so, presumably, being of a like mind, they interacted.

In February 1661, M'Ward preached a sermon in Glasgow, in which he spoke

out against the Prelatic pressure being brought to bear upon Scots Presbyterians. He concluded with this remarkably humble remonstrance:

As for my own part as a poor member of this church of Scotland, and an unworthy minister in it, I do this day call you who are the people of God, to witness, that I humbly offer my dissent to all acts which are or shall be passed against the covenants and work of reformation in Scotland; and 2ndly, I protest, that I am desirous to be free from the guilt thereof, and pray, that God may put it upon record in heaven (Wodrow 1833, i:207).

This resulted in his banishment to Holland, from whence he never returned. In January 1676, he became joint minister of the Scots Kirk in Rotterdam but, even there, 'the rage of his persecutors followed him, even in a strange land; for about the year 1676, the king (Charles II) wrote to the states-general to cause remove James Wallace, Robert M'Ward and John Brown, out of their provinces' (Howie 1781:457). Despite Dutch protestations, these three were indeed forced to leave Rotterdam for about a year. Subsequently, together with John Brown of Wamphray, M'Ward was mentor and motivator to several leading Scots Presbyterian exiles, 'not only to such as were fled hither from the rage and fury of the bloody persecutors, but also to those who resorted to him and Mr Brown, for their advice in difficult cases, in carrying on and bearing up a faithful testimony against both left and right hand extremes' (*ibid*). It is clear that M'Ward tried to steer a conciliatory course wherever possible, except when his conscience militated against this.

M'Ward's writings

Like Rutherford, M'Ward was a prolific writer. M'Ward's principal work, assisting in the development of the Cameronian theological standpoint, was *Earnest Contendings for the Faith*, his reply to the Rev Robert Fleming's¹³ *Proposal for Union with the Indulged* published in 1681, advocating union with Indulged ministers in Scotland. Fleming, who was highly regarded by the

¹³ Fleming had taken over the Scots Kirk in Rotterdam during M'Ward's second exile.

English Puritan divines (Johnston1887:370), was sincere in his quest for unity, but M'Ward resolutely objected to any acceptance of the Indulgences, or of Indulged ministers, whilst still retaining his antipathy to separation and schism within the church. It should be noted he also retained a personal regard for Fleming.

Earnest Contendings for the Faith, being the Answers written to Mr Robert Fleming's First and Second Paper of Proposals, for Union with the Indulged; the first Paper printed Anno 1681. In which Answers, more sound and solid Proposals, for a safe and lasting Union are offered; and a solemn Appeal thereanent made. First published in 1681.

In this work, M'Ward advances the opinion that 'the Indulged have lost the cause by your (Fleming's) pleading,' and that Fleming, had 'dispatched a Friend with a Foe' (M'Ward 1723:35), by effectually classifying indulged Presbyterian ministers alongside the appointed Episcopalian curates in Scotland. Like Fleming, he had a deep concern for the unity of the church but ruled that 'We may not quit the least of the Truth, for the Peace and Concord of the Church' (*ibid*:197). 'If big words of the same Complexion were enough to bogle [frighten] us out of our principles, and bypass us into a Compliance with you, Gilbert Burnet,¹⁴ ... had turned us all over by the same Artifice, long ago into a compliance with Episcopacy' (*ibid*:200). He writes of 'the good old Way of the Church of Scotland' (*ibid*:199), and steadfastly refused to separate himself from that church, despite his stand against Indulgences and Erastianism. 'We look upon Erastianism as equally abjured by our Covenant, as equally hateful and dishonourable to Christ' (*ibid*:234). Finally he nails his colours to the mast:

¹⁴ A Scots Episcopalian bishop who, at one stage, was a member of a deputation sent 'into the west of Scotland to reason with and if possible, "to win over the ejected ministers and the nonconforming people"'(Johnston 1887:426). He became an exile in Holland.

We look upon this Indulgence, as both Mother and Daughter of our late abominable Supremacy¹⁵ and so as our Defection of as black a Dye and tincture, as possibly Episcopacy can be; and as having had, not only as many dismal Effects, as ever Episcopacy hath had; but more dangerous and deadly: For this is that cursed Device, which hath answered Satan's and the Court's Design of dividing and distracting the Godly; or, of uniting them on such Terms as should destroy their Cause (M'Ward 1723:234).

A Collection of Tracts collected in 1681 and republished in 1805 containing: The Banders Disbanded,¹⁶ The Poor Man's Cup of Cold Water, and The Testimony Against Paying the Cess.

These three tracts have a similar theme, namely to resist State interference in the affairs of the Church. Maurice Grant (1988:257) considers that, in *Banders*, M'Ward gives 'an admirably succinct account of Presbyterian principles as applied to the respective duties of kings and subjects,' which became an important theme in Cameronianism.

We cheerfully acknowledge, that it is the duty of both ministers and people and of every subject to pray for magistrates (whether supreme or subordinate) and all whom the Lord hath set in authority over us: and that not only so long as they continue to rule for the Lord or good of the land, but even when they become open tyrants, persecutors, &c. and continues such; I say, we ought to pray for the conversion and salvation even of such; except the Lord should either expressly discharge

¹⁵ Act of Supremacy, 1669.

¹⁶ There appears to be some doubt as to whether the author of *The Banders Disbanded* was Brown or M'Ward. Walker (1827 i:196) writes, 'Which famous Mr Brown, then in Holland wrote against, discovering the Snare and Sin of this Bargaining with the Enemy, called, *The Banders Disbanded* ... to which Mr M'Ward wrote the preface. Johnston (1887:341) says the same, but uses Walker as his authority, and also cites 'M'Ward's *Contendings*' with no date or page reference. However, John McMain, author of the Preface to *Earnest Contendings Displayed* (M'Ward 1723:ix), after identifying M'Ward as his subject by referring to 'his banishment from his Charge at Glasgow,' goes on to say that M'Ward 'wrote several Pieces, as *Naphtali* [which was in fact written by Stewart of Goodtrees], *Banders Disbanded*, *Cup of Cold Water*, *Prefatory Epistles* to some of great Mr Brown's pieces, ...' Although both Walker and McMain wrote some forty years after M'Ward's death, it is considered that M'Ward's claim to authorship of *Banders* is to be preferred. In 1805 'the authorship ... was ascribed to M'Ward' (M Grant, email 21 Nov 2005).

the same, or by some infallible demonstration declare that he has rejected them (which I humbly think we cannot be infallibly ascertained of, especially as to particular persons, without divine revelation) or else give such clear and sensible significations of his refusing to hear any prayers for them, and of his displeasure thereat, that we dare not adventure to put in such suits without fearing to offend him(M'Ward 1805, *Banders* :93/4)

But M'Ward goes further in his justification for civil disobedience. Depending upon one's interpretation of the following, some might conclude that. in certain circumstances, a call to offensive arms is justified. Firstly, he deals with the minister's responsibility: 'Because a minister as a minister (or ambassador of Christ) is not a servant or a subject to any mortal prince or potentate, and so may not without *lese majesty* to his sole sovereign Christ (whose alone servant he is) make such absolute engagements in things relating to his ministerial function, as others may in matters of their civil liberties and concerns' (M'Ward 1805:55). He then proceeds to raise an aspect that he considers so *much the more sinful*, incorporating comments which might easily be misconstrued by those naturally drawn to a violent response to persecution:

Because, by how much the more indispensable the exercise of the spiritual sword is than that of the temporal, by so much the more sinful it is for ministers absolutely to engage to live peaceably ... than the people so to do in order not to lift their carnal and temporal arms against the same rulers: and though we are more prone by nature to flee to the carnal sword for our bodily defence, when occasion calls thereto, yet the use of the spiritual is both much more necessary and indispensable (*ibid*).

So, whilst M'Ward emphasises the superiority of spiritual weapons, he fails to reject outright the use of temporal force. Civil disobedience is therefore permitted. The *Collection of Tracts* 1805 'form a sort of fiery cross'¹⁷ among

¹⁷ In Scotland, a fiery cross was used to summon the clans to war.

the more resolute of the Scottish sufferers' (Johnston 1887:342), and seek to encourage and strengthen the extreme Covenanters during the time of great suffering and persecution which continued to affect Cameronians after M'Ward's death.

M'Ward's character

M'Ward was a man of deep sincerity of conscience. Whilst on trial in 1661 and anticipating a death sentence, having accepted the authority of the Court and after declaring loyalty to the Crown, he concluded his defence thus: 'I declare that however I cannot submit my conscience to men, yet I humbly, as becometh, submit my person. Behold, I am in your hands, do to me whatsoever seemeth good in your eyes' (Wodrow 1833, i:212).¹⁸ Certainly his heart's desire was for unity within the church if possible, but not at the cost of sacrificing truth. 'I see not a possible, let be probable Way, how to prevent our begun Breach, from growing, (O! let Him prevent it who now only can!) into a fixed *Schism*' (M'Ward 1723:253).

He had his detractors. 'Mr Rowat, minister of Kilmarnock, said to him: "God forgive you brother, that darkens the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ by your oratory"' (Johnston1887:342). However, the general impression we have is of a man whose conscience remained steadfast, and whose attitude was not so rigid but that he was prepared to ameliorate his stance by conviction. His encouragement to Cameron and Cargill to stand fast against temporal interference in spiritual matters was in line with his own defence in 1661, whereas his attitude of submission to the Crown in legal terms had undergone a radical change by 1680. He also was gifted with prophetic insight, the most significant example of which took place at the ordination of Richard Cameron.

M'Ward's influence

M'Ward's influence is discussed below, jointly with that of John Brown of Whamphray. The influence of these two men was so closely interwoven that it would be repetitive to consider them individually.

¹⁸ Wodrow refers to M'Ward as 'M'Vaird.'

2.4.3 Rev John Brown of Wamphray, 1610–1679

Biographical

There is little recorded evidence concerning John Brown's youth. He was an ordained minister at Wamphray in Dumfriesshire, possibly as early as 1638 (Brown 1845:vii). Subsequent to the Restoration of 1660, he was an outspoken preacher against the Prelacy which was being forced upon the Scottish church. In November 1662, he was arrested and brought before the Council and charged with 'abusing and reproaching some ministers for keeping the diocesan synod with the archbishop of Glasgow, calling them perjured knaves and villains' (Howie 1781:395). This was hardly likely to endear him to the authorities and, in 1663, after some time in prison, he was exiled to Holland, from whence he was never to return. During his exile, he worked closely with Robert M'Ward; indeed they worked in tandem. They both lived in exile in Rotterdam, and were further exiled together from Holland for a year in 1676. Brown died in 1679, his last ministerial act being the ordination of Richard Cameron.

'Mr John Brown was unquestionably one of the most eminent divines Scotland has yet produced ... That he was firmly attached to the true presbyterian principles of the church of Scotland, his history of the indulgence abundantly demonstrates' Wodrow (1833, i:305). Johnston (1887:339) says that Brown was 'regarded as the most important theologian of the second period of Scottish Presbyterianism.'

Brown's writings

Brown was also a prolific writer. 'His published works form a library in themselves' (Carslaw 1908:106). For this investigation, two works are particularly important: his *Apologetical Relation* and his *History of the Indulgence*.

An Apologetical Relation of the Particular Sufferings of the Faithful Ministers and Professors of the Church of Scotland since August 1660. First published 1665 (citations from 1845 ed.)

This work is 'An historical defence of the Church of Scotland, and an

exposition and vindication of its principles' (Johnston 1887:341). Its first publication was 'much disliked by the Prelatic party ... and found a place in their *Index Expurgatorius*' (Carslaw 1908:106), and was burned by the hangman in Edinburgh, a clear indication that it was not only an outspoken indictment of the persecutors of Presbyterianism, but that it was considered a threat to the Crown.

In his Introduction, Brown (1845:5) sets out 'the ground and end of this undertaking,' under twelve headings through which he seeks to encourage the persecuted church. Since this publication preceded the First Indulgence of 1669, the principal area of attack is upon the Prelacy being thrust upon the Kirk. Specifically, he attacks the enforced presentation from patrons and collation by bishops laid down by the Act of Glasgow, 1 October, 1662; then attacks the dangers of taking the Oath of Allegiance enforced by the Act Rescissory of 1661, particularly because it affects the oath-taker's ecclesiastical responsibilities. Acknowledgment of an Episcopal curate's authority was tacit acceptance of Prelatic authority. He provides a justification for those ministers who refuse to accept the bishops' authority, and who continue to preach, both publicly and privately, demonstrating the unlawfulness of accepting the authority of the High Commission court due to the presence of a bishop appointed by the King; 'Who appointeth them by virtue of his prerogative royal, and supremacy over all persons in all causes ecclesiastical' (*ibid*:161). He concludes with the sinfulness of abjuring the Covenants, both National and Solemn League, rounding off with an appeal and warning to sister Reformed Churches.

Finally, it would become all neighbour reformed churches to be upon guard for the same spirit that troubleth that church now is the spirit of Antichrist seeking to re-enter there after he hath been cast out, ... and the door barred with solemn covenants and oaths made to the most High, ... for there is more Popery openly professed this day than hath been openly avowed almost these three hundred years (Brown 1845:211)

Having taken a stance against Papacy and Prelacy, Brown now focuses on the area that authoritatively identifies him as a Cameronian writer, namely;

The History of the Indulgence¹⁹: shewing its Rise, Conveyance, Progress and Acceptance; together with a Demonstration of the Unlawfulness thereof, and an answer to Contrary Objections: also a Vindication of such as Scruple to Hear the Indulged. First published in Holland in 1678, with the author simply called 'A Presbyterian,' but later identified as John Brown of Wamphray in the 1783 edition (citations from the 1783 ed.).

Only the first two Indulgences are discussed in this *History*, since the Third Indulgence was offered only in June 1679, subsequent to publication in 1678. According to Johnston (1887:341), a *Review and Examination of the History of the Indulgence* was published in London in 1680. Such a speedy reaction by the Crown seems a clear indication of the concern it engendered in government circles.

Brown discusses his reasons against the Indulgence under twelve Heads, and one discerns a similarity to the concerns in this work and of M'Ward in *Earnest Contendings*. They are certainly *ad idem* on the subject of Erastianism. Having objected to magistrates becoming judges of a minister's doctrine, and arbiters of who can preach and where, he proceeds; 'it was manifest and undeniable, that Erastianism was in the ascendant, and the design of the rulers was to subject all church power unto themselves ... our very notwithstanding and not opposing, ... this Erastian design, was a virtual ceding and yielding unto their invasions and usurpations' (Brown 1783:265).

Johnston (1887:341) makes the following assessment: 'Presbyterians who opposed the Indulgence did so on the ground that it was an assumption of ecclesiastical power, and an encroachment of the church's liberty. The very embracing of the Indulgence, reasons Brown, was a recognition of power in

¹⁹ Currently, the *History of the Indulgence* forms part of *Faithful Witness Bearing Exemplified*, including *A Useful case of Conscience* and *A Solemn Testimony against Toleration* by other authors, published in 1783. It is frequently referred to under the inclusive title.

the King to do, in and by his Privy Council, in church matters what he pleased.' Brown (1783:309-332) includes a 'Vindication of such as scruple to hear and own the indulged,' in which he emphasises that he is not judging whether those ministers who accepted the Indulgence are true ministers of the gospel or not. Indeed, he makes it clear that many of them, at some time, unquestionably were. It is not only acceptable, but essential for Presbyterians not to give in, even in the slightest degree, to any form of usurpation of the right of Christ to rule His church. He clearly searched his heart for the truth of the matter, earnestly desiring to cause no schism in the church. In this, he echoes M'Ward's concern. The embracing of the same attitude later by Cargill and Cameron was to have a marked effect on Cameronianism at the time of the Revolution of 1688/9.

The Character of John Brown of Whamphray

Brown had a deep and abiding faith, which evidenced itself in his life and work. Howie (1781:397), after enthusing on his preaching and teaching abilities, described him as 'warm and searching,' likewise that he made it 'his study and care to gain many souls to Christ.' Perhaps the greatest accolade comes from his companion in tribulation, Robert M'Ward: 'The whole of his sermons, without the intermixture of any other matter, had a speciality of pure gospel tincture, breathing nothing but faith in Christ and communion with him' (*ibid*).

In his 'Memoir of the Author' in the 1845 edition of *Apologetical Relation*, John McMains remarks on Brown's care of his Wamphray congregation. 'In their spiritual welfare he took a deep and commanding interest; and he was ready...to "spend and be spent for them"' (Brown 1845:viii). After his exile to Holland, he 'was in the habit of addressing letters of consolation and encouragement to his friends at home ... and they give a most pleasing view of the affectionate spirit, the unquenchable zeal, and high-toned piety of the author (*ibid*:ix-x).' McMains, reasoning that his view might be considered too subjective, is at pains to use the 'testimony of two most impartial witnesses ... the distinguished Dutch divine, Dr Melchior Leydecker, divinity professor at Utrecht who commented that, "his [Brown's] light did for a considerable time

shine here in our Low Countries, when, through the iniquity of the times he was, because of his zeal, piety, faithfulness and good conscience, obliged to leave his native land” ’ (*ibid*:x). And Wodrow, credited with being a ‘candid and impartial observer’ (*ibid*:xi) writes: ‘He was a man of very great learning, warm zeal, and remarkable piety ... the pamphlets and books he wrote, especially upon the indulgence, manifest his fervency and zeal: and the practical pieces ... discover his solid piety and acquaintance with the power of godliness’ (Wodrow 1833, i:305).

The overall picture that emerges is that of a man of great sincerity, with a gentler character than the fiery M’Ward, but with similar courage. One in the forefront of contemporary theological thinkers, he was filled with an unshakable zeal for God’s Kingdom, and an absolute certainty that Christ, and only Christ, had the Crown rights to that Kingdom. Brown was a man who loved to encourage others, and this he succeeded in doing with many exiles, and to particular effect in the cases of Cameron and Cargill.

2.4.4 The joint influence of John Brown of Whamphray and Robert M’Ward

Prior to their banishment to Holland in 1662 and 1661 respectively, Brown and M’Ward appear to have had no significant contact. Thereafter their cooperation was so close that one might say they worked in concert. Certainly it would be difficult, if not impossible, to say who had the greater influence upon the development of Cameronian thought, so they are considered jointly.

Firstly, it is germane to recall the example and influence that Samuel Rutherford had upon both of them. This was greater in the case of M’Ward, who studied under Rutherford at St Andrew’s and acted as his *amanuensis* at the Westminster Assembly. That Rutherford had an enduring influence upon him is evidenced by M’Ward’s publication of the first edition of Rutherford’s letters in 1664. It also seems reasonable to accept that Brown’s spiritual development through his mother’s influence, was affected to some degree by Rutherford. Certainly, he had a high opinion of Brown. In 1637, Rutherford (1863, ii:140) wrote about him to Marion Mc Naught, ‘I never could get my love off

that man. I think Christ has something to do with him.'

Both Brown and M'Ward arrived in Rotterdam in the early 1660s, and were associated with the Scots Kirk there. However, in 1679, it was their joint actions around the time of the Covenanting Battles of Drumclog and Bothwell Brig that stamped their authority upon Cameronianism. Two most vital players came under their close influence: The Rev Richard Cameron, 'The Lion of the Covenant,' and The Rev Donald Cargill, emitter of the *Torwood Excommunication*. On 7 October 1678, John Brown wrote to Cameron, expressing warm support for Cameron's uncompromising stand against the Indulged.

I have likewise heard of the trouble you have met with at the hands of some, of whom sometime other things were expected because of your faithful and zealous, yea and even seasonable appearing against that woeful Indulgence, the evil that God's soul hateth. I bless the Lord that helped you to stand in that day of trial. Stand fast, my dear brother, and speak freely and boldly; fear not (J Brown's letter, 7 October 1678, quoted by Grant M 1997:107).

Such outspoken intervention brought both Brown and M'Ward into serious disfavour amongst those Presbyterian clerics who were trying to muzzle, or at least, tone down, Cameron's preaching against the Indulged. Their 'policy of moderation was in danger of losing all credibility among the people' (Grant M 1997:108), especially when two exiled theologians of such standing espoused Cameron's cause. In September 1678, Rev Ralph Rodger, the Indulged minister of Kilwinning, wrote to M'Ward to complain about Cameron's attitude. The outcome was an invitation to Cameron from Brown and M'Ward to visit Holland and, in May 1679, he went there. Hence, he was absent from Scotland at the critical time of the Covenanting battles of Drumclog and Bothwell Brig, but the events that ensued from his visit to Holland were to set the seal on the eventual form of Cameronianism.

As he reflected on the situation, M'Ward seems to have become convinced that the witness to the truth in Scotland was in danger of

becoming completely extinct unless, in the providence of God, an instrument was raised up which would carry forward the testimony, no matter what opposition there might be. To M'Ward's mind it must have seemed providential that such an instrument was ready to his hand. The conviction grew on him that Cameron, ... must be sent back to Scotland invested with the authority to undertake the task to which M'Ward was persuaded, God had called him (Grant M 1997:160).

Clearly, the only acceptable stamp of authority that would permit Cameron to fulfil such a task was ordination. However, the *Form of Presbyterian Church Government*, adopted by the Westminster Assembly in 1645, clearly laid down that '*It is agreeable to the Word, and very expedient, that such as are to be ordained ministers be designed to some particular church, or other ministerial charge.*'²⁰ M'Ward had been at Westminster himself, yet he and Brown were now proposing to ordain Cameron to an 'Indefinite Ordination,' apparently using, as their justification, the statement in the *Act*, Sec 18.11: '*In extraordinary cases, something extraordinary may be done until a settled order may be had, yet keeping as near as possibly may be to the rule,*' and 18.12: '*There is at this time (as we humbly conceive) an extraordinary occasion for a way for ordination for the present supply of ministers.*' Whereas Sec 18.12 refers to the situation in 1645, Sec 20. 3-11 clearly indicates the intent that ministers should serve a particular congregation.

However, since Sec 21 of the *Act* comments upon '*these present exigencies, while we cannot have any presbyteries formed up to their whole power and work,*' clearly there were valid exceptions in 1645. So Brown and M'Ward, despite their radical departure from Presbyterian tradition, had a possible but tenuous precedent.

Nevertheless, their decision appears to be on shaky ground both theologically and legally. Of greater concern to them was the need to be true to their consciences, and to carry out what they earnestly believed to be the will of

²⁰ *Act of the General Assembly of the Kirk of Scotland, February 10, 1645, approving the Proposition concerning Kirk-government and Ordination of Ministers, Sec 18.6. SWRB # 9.*

God. Therefore, in late July or early August 1679, Brown and M'Ward, assisted by a Dutch minister, Rev Jacob Koelman, proceeded to ordain Cameron (and Thomas Hog) in the Scottish Church of Rotterdam to an 'Indefinite Ordination' as a Field Preacher within the Church of Scotland, thus inferring that the whole of Scotland was to be his parish. By so doing, these men displayed a conviction that the times were indeed extraordinary. At the end of the laying on of hands, M'Ward alone kept his hands on Cameron's head and declaimed, 'Behold, all ye beholders, here is the head of a faithful minister and servant of Jesus Christ, who shall lose the same for his Master's interest, and it shall be set up before the sun and moon, in the public view of the world' (Howie 1781:404). This prophecy was to be fulfilled within a year.

M'Ward's charge to Cameron prior to his ordination was indeed a challenge:

Richard, the public standard of the gospel is fallen in Scotland; and if I know anything of the mind of the Lord, you are called to undergo your trials before us, and go home and lift the fallen standard, and display it publicly before the world ... But before you put your hand to it, you shall go to as many of the field ministers as you can find, and give them your hearty invitation to go with you; and if they will not go, go you alone, and the Lord will go with you (Howie 1781:404).

This inspiring but demanding charge was to carry Cameron through his last decisive year in Scotland, during which M'Ward continually encouraged him by letter. John Brown had died shortly after Cameron's ordination, and M'Ward died in May 1681, but there is no doubt that these two men had a massive effect upon Cameron and his subsequent ministry.

Such independent behaviour was bound to be called into question:

News of the ordination of Cameron and Hog was swiftly carried back to Scotland, where it caused a predictable outburst of indignation among

the older nonconforming ministers. John Carstairs,²¹ one of the most senior among them, wrote bitterly to M'Ward on 20 August: "I somewhat wonder you have ordained these two young men – not very acceptable, to say no more, to the Church of Scotland. I fear it offends many; nor do I see, especially at this time, how it can be so well justified. Do you think that there is no ministerial church amongst the nonconforming ministers in Scotland to ordain whom they think fit to be ordained? And is it suitable to that Christian correspondence and deference that the churches of Christ ought to have with and to one another that a few ministers of the church in Holland should ordain ministers for the Church of Scotland without their desire, consent, allowance or knowledge?" (Grant M 1997:163).

Perhaps equally as important was their influence upon Rev Donald Cargill. In November 1678, when Cameron was under attack by moderates in Scotland for his refusal to stop preaching against the Indulgences, Cargill 'did not join in the chorus of criticism, and was obviously concerned to weigh the issues carefully before committing himself ...' (Grant M 1988:81). He was greatly encouraged by a letter from his old friend of Glasgow and St Andrews days, Robert M'Ward, the greater part of which was 'taken up with the Indulgence ("this wretched Indulgence, one of the greatest plagues and snares that ever befell the Church of Scotland")' (*Ibid*:82). M'Ward enclosed a paper by John Brown of Whamphray, which 'had been discussed at length between Brown and himself, and they were now "perfectly of the same mind" on the matter. Their conclusion, ... was that those who had accepted the Indulgence should not be heard,' In the tenor of his charge to Cameron, M'Ward encourages Cargill to 'go on in the strength of the Lord: preach, witness and wrestle within sight of the garland and the glory to be revealed; give not way to despondency; ... go forward as strengthened with all might according to his glorious power, unto all patience and all longsuffering and joyfulness' (*ibid*:83). Cargill visited Brown and M'Ward in Holland shortly after Cameron's ordination and departure back to Scotland, but seems to have been there only about three

²¹ Father of William Carstares, so influential at the Revolution of 1688/9.

months. There was much work to be done in Scotland, in what was also to prove the most momentous year of Cargill's life.

M'Ward and Brown may open themselves to an accusation of being 'armchair critics.' Their outspoken encouragement, even commands, to Cameron and Cargill ultimately led to the deaths of both men, whilst M'Ward and Brown remained 'safe' in Holland. Yet this accusation appears unfair in the light of a tribute from their contemporary, Patrick Walker:

I have often thought through my life, that it was a remarkably merciful dispensation ... the banishing of these foresaid worthies out of their native land. The enemies meant it for ill, but the Lord turned it for good, considering how much of their time they spent in praying for the Church of Scotland and her sufferers, how useful they were with their pens, what influence they had upon all men who savoured of religion, and built in Holland (as it were) a sanctuary for all sufferers who fled there, being men of such pity and parts: whereby we were more obliged to the prayers, and purses of Holland than all the world besides (Patrick Walker quoted by Grant M 1988:170).

Although Cameron and Cargill stand out as the two most deeply influenced by Brown and M'Ward, there were other significant players in the Cameronian saga who were also affected - some profoundly. One such was the Rev Alexander Shields, last leader of the Hillmen and first chaplain to the Cameronian Regiment. Shields was clearly acquainted with M'Ward who 'desired Mr Shields and some other friends to carry him out to see a comet or blazing star,' (Howie 1781:458) on his deathbed in May 1681.²² Since Shields arrived briefly in Holland only about the time of Bothwell Brig (22 June 1679), and Brown died in July or August of that year, it seems unlikely that they had much meaningful personal contact.

²² Macpherson (1932:7) wrongly states that Shields helped to carry M'Ward out in 1679. This seems to be confusion between the deaths of Brown and M'Ward, since Halley's Comet was visible in Holland in 1681/2 (Le Rousse Astronomy 1986. Twickenham, Hamlyn:214).

More authoritative information about the influence of Brown and M'Ward upon Shields comes during Shields's imprisonment on the Bass Rock. In a letter to his brother Michael dated 6 November 1685, he writes that he secretly received 'a rare manuscript of Mr M'Ward's debates with Mr Fleming' (*Laing MSS.* III. 344. Vol 2. No. 166, quoted by Macpherson 1932:47). This was probably a manuscript copy of *Earnest Contendings for the Faith*, so it appears likely that Shields had the opportunity to consider this work whilst in prison. At this time, he was working on his own *magnum opus*, *A Hind Let Loose*. Shields himself states that the VIIth Head of *Hind* was 'Largely dependent on a paper writ by two famous witnesses of Christ against the defections of their day, Mr M'Ward and Mr Brown ...' (Shields A 1797:786). He goes on to acknowledge their influence upon his work:

... yet to discover what were their sentiments of these things, and what was the doctrine preached and homologated by the most faithful ministers and professors of Scotland, eight or nine years since, how closely continued in by the contendings of this reproached remnant still persecuted for these things, and how clearly abandoned and resiled from, by their complying brethren now at ease (*ibid*:787).

So, the influence of Brown and M'Ward was discernible in Cameronian circles right up to the Revolution of 1688/9. One could go on! Rev John Blackader, father of a future Colonel of the Cameronian Regiment, and co-prisoner of Shields on the Bass, was a correspondent of M'Ward: (Sir) Robert Hamilton (of Preston), Covenanting commander at Drumclog and Bothwell Brig and sometime commander of Cameron's bodyguard, fell out with M'Ward over his moderation in dealing with Fleming: William Cleland, the soldier-poet and first Lt-Col of the Regiment, also an exile, wrote an elegy on M'Ward's death.

2.5 CONCLUSIONS FROM THIS CHAPTER

2.5.1 State of Freedom of Religion

For the Cameronians. Although the name "Cameronian" had not yet gained general currency, the first phase of Cameronian thinkers had already been

exiled to the Netherlands. They, in turn, were an encouragement to the persecuted Covenanters still in Scotland, by means of letters and messages. Field preaching, which had been widespread, was starting to come under severe pressure, and was becoming more dangerous both to preach at, and to attend.

For Scotland. With the Restoration of 1660, and the subsequent “outing” of many Presbyterian ministers, the Episcopal bishops brought more pressure to bear on the Kirk, filling the vacant parishes with curates (frequently men of low moral calibre and little learning). The common people were forced to attend such services in their local parishes, or else break the law by attending conventicles. However, Episcopalians were free to worship, but only as directed by their bishops.

2.5.2 Freedom in its widest socio-political sense was regarded as a Scottish heritage from at least 1314

2.5.3. *The Scottish National Covenant of 1638*, and to a lesser extent, the *Solemn League and Covenant* of 1643, gave rise to a grouping to become known as Covenanters, under which resistance to Prelacy and Erastianism subsequently developed in Scotland.

2.5.4 Cameronian doctrine emerged from an orthodox Scots Calvinistic Presbyterian background

2.5.5 Samuel Rutherford may lay claim to be the “forefather” of Cameronianism

He acted as a bridge between the Westminster Assembly and later Cameronian thinking. In particular, his personal influence upon Robert M'Ward, and to a lesser degree, Cargill and Brown of Wamphray, his identification of Erastianism as the principal threat to freedom of religion in Scotland, and the dangers of toleration to a genuine freedom of conscience, had significant influence upon current and later Cameronian thinkers.

2.5.6 Brown and M'Ward, the 'fathers' of Cameronianism

They were widely respected as leading theologians and their influence upon Cameronianism, particularly through Richard Cameron and Donald Cargill, was decisive. Even though the ordination of Cameron by M'Ward and Brown caused a furore, it was accepted that he had been properly ordained. They both identified the dangers of the Indulgences, as well as the right to the use of spiritual warfare and, in certain cases, even temporal warfare in resisting tyranny.

2.5.7 Whilst the early Cameronian thinkers demanded religious freedom

for themselves, they were not prepared to concede the same freedom to other parts of the visible church. Rutherford, whilst supporting four of the six modern principles of freedom of religion (as defined by Witte 2000:34), namely; Freedom of Conscience; Free Exercise of Religion; Separation of Church and State; and Disestablishment of Religion, rejects Plurality of Religions; and Equality of Religions.

2.5.8 The Cameronian attitude to the Church remained essentially

constant throughout the period under consideration. Christ was King and Head of the Church, and Erastianism was therefore to be rejected as an affront to 'the Crown rights of the Redeemer.' The Cameronians continued to consider themselves part of mainstream Scottish Presbyterianism, but this attitude was rejected by the mainstream Presbyterians themselves. Nevertheless, there was an earnest desire on both sides to maintain the unity of the (Presbyterian) body if possible, but not at the cost of betraying one's freedom of conscience.

2.5.9 The Cameronian attitude to the State altered significantly

between 1660 and 1679. Whilst 'it could ... be argued that the old Presbyterian/Reformed writers, such as Rutherford and Buchanan, specifically supported the principle of active disobedience to civil rulers who imposed a tyrannical regime over consciences' (Maurice Grant, e-mail 21 November 2005), the authority of the Crown and its courts was accepted by early leaders such as Brown and M'Ward but, by 1679, open rebellion had broken out and this new

attitude was now tacitly supported by the elder Cameronians in Holland.

2.5.10 'Each generation shaping up the next' (Cameronians 1968 *Disbandment Programme: s p*)²³

The influence of one generation upon the next is already becoming evident. Rutherford passes to M'Ward and Brown; Brown and M'Ward pass to Cameron and Cargill. The generational influence, which was to become a feature of Cameronianism is developing. Cameronianism is emerging as a fledgling movement that will soon take wings unto itself.

²³ Lt-Col Leslie Dow, (the author of the poem from which this quote is taken), asked: 'Is the military efficiency of ancestors an assessable factor, when you weigh up whether or not to keep in being, a body of men who have quietly handed down to each other standards, outlook and professional techniques for hundreds of years?' (Cameronians 1968. *The Covenanter* December:139).

CHAPTER THREE

CAMERONIANISM IN THE CRUCIBLE:

**From the murder of Archbishop Sharp, 3 May 1679,
to the battle of Bothwell Brig, 22 June 1679**

'No Quarter for Ye Active Enemies of Ye Covenant.'

(Wording on the *Bluidy Banner*, reputedly carried at Bothwell Brig 1679.

Now in the Museum of the Cameronian Regiment.)

3.1 EVENTS LEADING UP TO BOTHWELL BRIG

The events of 1679 set the stage for the most decisive phase of Cameronian development. By the time of the Second Indulgence of 2 September 1672, only Donald Cargill and a few other ministers from the south-west bore the brunt of field preaching at Conventicles. But a General Indemnity was proclaimed in March 1674 and was 'looked at by the common people of Scotland rather as an encouragement for the time coming, than as a remission for what was past' (Grant M 1988:66). Now began a time of great spiritual revival: 'Scotland broke lose with conventicles of all sorts, in houses, fields and vacant churches' (*ibid*:67). Many ministers were encouraged to preach in the fields once again but, by 1675, repression had recommenced. By now, worshippers at Conventicles frequently bore arms for defensive purposes and, by the time of Drumclog (1 June 1679), few ordained ministers were still in the field, and of these, fewer still were of a Cameronian turn of mind. Richard Cameron had been licensed to preach on 7 March 1678. He was not yet ordained, but 'had developed into a fervid evangelical preacher and an implacable enemy of Erastianism' (King Hewison 1913 ii:290/1). By the time of Bothwell, he had succeeded in making himself so unpopular with the moderate Indulged element that he had gone to Holland at the behest of John Brown and Robert M'Ward. In the Covenanter camp before Bothwell, the

only clergy who resisted the moderate attitude of Rev John Welch¹ and his supporters were the Reverends Donald Cargill, Thomas Douglas, John King and John Kid.

The post-Restoration Covenanters were not generally bellicose, nor trained for war. 'They disclaimed the taking up of arms, for any other purpose, but that of self defence' (Crichton 1824:37). Their solitary military expedition of any significance had been the Pentland Rising of 1666, which ended in the debacle of Rullion Green, where 900 Covenanters under Col Wallace (exiled from Holland with Brown and M'Ward) were easily defeated by the troops led by a sworn enemy of the Covenant, General Tam Dalyell of the Binns. Despite the ebb and flow of alternating reconciliation and repression on the part of the Crown during the 1670s, no significant offensive military action was initiated by the Covenanters prior to 1679, save for the Pentland Rising. Even defensive arms were used sparingly and usually only if worshippers at a Conventicle were 'cornered' by the dragoons. The normal response was to fade away into the mosses and hags² of the moors when necessary, such retreat being covered by those Conventiclars who were armed. The Covenanters still continued to accept the authority of the Crown despite the persecution but, for some, this attitude was about to change.

3.2 THE MURDER OF ARCHBISHOP SHARP

On 3 May 1679, James Sharp, Archbishop of St Andrew's and Primate of Scotland, happened to run into a group of Cameronian zealots on the road to St Andrew's. All reports confirm that this group had not expected to run into the Primate that day, but when they did, it was perceived that he had been delivered into their hands by God. They proceeded to murder him, vindicating their action as just retribution rather than murder. Whether or not this was the case, the result was to bring down the wrath of the Government on all Presby-

¹ 'Welsh was beyond doubt the leading field-preacher of his day, and the one most keenly sought by the authorities He had been active in field-preaching since the earliest days Among the field-preachers, and the people generally, there was none who exercised a greater influence' (Grant M 1997:71).

² Bogs and marshes.

terians, Hillmen and moderates alike. 'As might have been expected, their act was ... imputed to the whole presbyterian party, and was made the pretext for inflicting the most shocking cruelties on the covenanters ... by far the most numerous and respectable portion of the body unequivocally condemned the murder' (Taylor [1859] s a:710/1). Of the four standard questions³ subsequently put to suspected Covenanters as a test of loyalty to the Crown, one was: 'Was killing the Archbishop of St Andrews Murther, yea or no?' (Defoe1848:79).

A critical development was that some, but not all, Cameronian clerics were now prepared to attempt to justify the murder on scriptural grounds. Alexander Shields later sought to vindicate it, since it may be 'sometimes necessitated in such an extremity, to apply extreme remedies to extremity of evils' (Shields A 1797:717). At his trial, Cargill chose neither to justify nor condemn it, 'by declar[ing] he cannot give his sense thereof, but that the Scripture says "That the Lord giving a call to a private man to kill, he might do it lawfully"' (Wodrow 1833 iii:280). The fledgling Cameronian movement was beginning to refine and to harden its attitude to the State in a critical dimension, namely that of going beyond self-defence, and promoting retaliatory attacks. In this, they were at odds with the main body of Scottish Presbyterianism, which continued to hope for an acceptable reconciliation with the Crown.

3.3 THE *RUTHERGLEN DECLARATION*, 29 MAY 1679

The first public document that can justifiably claim to be exclusively Cameronian rather than Presbyterian is the *Rutherglen Declaration* of 29 May 1679. At Rutherglen, Robert Hamilton published this document, which was to dramatically affect the course of Cameronianism. He apparently acted on his own initiative, although he had discussed the concept three days earlier with Cargill, for whom he had a high regard. 'Cargill assented to their proposal in principle, though it appears that the substance of the testimony or declaration

³ The questions were: 1. Will you renounce the Covenant? 2. Will you pray for the King, or will you say God bless the King? 3. As above. 4. Was the rising at Bothwel Brig Rebellion, yea or no? (Defoe [1717] 1848:79).

was not discussed in any detail, and a draft of it had not yet been drawn up. This work fell mainly to Hamilton and Hackston, and Cargill ... took no active part in it' (Grant M 1988:91).

The intention had been to publish the Declaration in Glasgow but, due to the presence of Royal troops and the significance of the date (29 May was the day set aside by Act of Parliament to celebrate the accession of Charles II), Rutherglen was decided upon instead. About 80 armed men, including two of the archbishop's murderers, as well as Rev Thomas Douglas, who was to preach at Drumclog three days later, accompanied Hamilton on this, 'the first of his public appearances' (Howie 1781:585). They proceeded to burn the Acts mentioned below and then to read the *Rutherglen Declaration*. Claiming 'the word of the Lord, & the National & Solemn League & Covenant' (*Rutherglen Declaration*, www.truecovenanter.com, May 2004) as their authority, the Declaration proceeded to reject the following Acts of Parliament:

- *The Act of Supremacy* 1669.
- *The Act against Covenants* 1662.
- *The Act for the Restitution ... of Bishops* 1662.
- *The Act Rescissory* 1661.
- *The Act of Glasgow* 1662.
- *The Act Appointing 29 May an Anniversary day.*

The *Declaration* is brief and goes little farther than to repudiate the Acts burned, but it was a tacit repudiation of the authority of the Crown. Wodrow (1833 iii:67) includes a further paragraph, which does not appear in the original Declaration. 'Lastly. Against the acts of council, their warrants and instructions for indulgence and all other and sinful and unlawful acts, made and executed by them, for promoting their usurped supremacy.'

Wodrow admits that 'a good many copies of this paper ... want the clause anent the indulgence,' but proceeds to surmise that the clause was added when the paper was generally published. 'If this conjecture hold, it is a new

proof that Mr. Hamilton, and others engaged, their zeal to perform their public appearances very soon against other presbyterians, and the indulged in particular' (*ibid*). This is a serious charge which might well go right to the heart of Cameronian thinking, if Hamilton had indeed been preparing the ground for a separation from the Indulged on his own authority, and without clerical support. Although the *Informatory Vindication* 1687 later states that 'Care hath been taken to get the most correct copies that could be found at the publishing hereof' (Renwick 1687:115).⁴

Macpherson (1923:35) makes the bold statement that 'the Revolution began in 1680 with the drafting of the *Queensferry Paper*.' If that is the case, then the Cameronians may claim to have initiated the Revolution. But, if this is indeed the case, would it not be more accurate to state that the Revolution began at Rutherglen with the publication of the first exclusively Cameronian declaration? 'This rising in the West of Scotland, like many other considerable turns, had but very small beginnings: and it is scarce to be thought the persons concerned in them had any prospect that what they did, and particularly their attempt at Rutherglen, May 29th, would have been followed with what succeeded' (Wodrow 1833, iii:65). Was the Cameronian movement kindled into flame by an ill-considered action, akin to Jenny Geddes throwing her stool in St Giles' Cathedral?⁵ It can certainly be argued that Rutherglen was catalytic in starting a train of events leading inexorably to Drumclog and Bothwell, thus forcing a change in the pace of Cameronian actions from 1680 onwards, and profoundly affecting the course of Scottish history.

⁴ 'The clause does not appear in the copy of the Declaration published in the *London Gazette* of 12 June 1679, which may be taken as the definitive version of the document as posted.' (Grant, M e-mail 29 November 2005). The question remains as to where the clause in Wodrow comes from. It also appears in Johnston (1887:132). Hamilton was still in exile in 1687 when the *Informatory Vindication* was published, and signs of stress between him, Renwick, and Shields were evident by then.

⁵ When 'The new book was read for the first time in St Giles' [Cathedral, Edinburgh] on 23 July 1637 amid scenes of violence and disorder which soon developed into a regular riot ... a certain Jenny Geddes, played a leading part' (MacLean 1970:115). Tradition has it that she threw her stool at the preacher, and is therefore credited with the first protest action of the Second Reformation.

3.4 THE SKIRMISH AT DRUMCLOG, 1 JUNE 1679: SPIRITUAL WARFARE YIELDS TO TEMPORAL WARFARE

The action at Rutherglen provided the Government with the excuse it sought to proceed against the Covenanters afresh. 'This rising was long desired by Lauderdale [the Royal Commissioner], who had abandoned the milder policy which marked the beginning of his regime' (Macpherson1923:33). Col John Graham of Claverhouse was commissioned to proceed against all manner of covenanting activity in the south-west. On 31 May 1679, Claverhouse heard of a proposed Conventicle at Loudon Hill near Hamilton due to take place the following day. Hoping to surprise the worshippers, he approached with three troops of dragoons (about 150 men), but the Covenanters had been warned; the worshippers were dispersed, and those who were armed resolved to stand and fight. This was a significant departure from previous Covenanting behaviour, and was an indication of a new spirit of armed resistance emerging in Cameronian ranks. Cameronianism was about to exit the theoretical phase of Brown and M'Ward, and enter the active phase of Cameron and Cargill.

To call Drumclog a battle is to overrate its importance militarily. At best, it was a major skirmish. However, the after-effects of this action were to have a lasting, and almost catastrophic, impact upon the Covenanting cause. The conduct of the skirmish has been widely reported and commented upon, and does not concern us much here. Suffice to say that the Covenanters inflicted a serious defeat upon Claverhouse, but this was as much due to the ground⁶ as to military skill, of which there was little, or courage, of which there was much.

'The Covenanters did not wait the arrival of the military, who could not have reached them but by a circuitous route; neither did they take shelter in the mosses that lay near, and into which the cavalry could not have followed them; but they advanced eastward about two miles to meet the troops, singing Psalms all the way' (Aiton 1821:52/3). Whilst this all sounds wonderfully

⁶ Used in the military sense to include topography (hilly), and the condition of the going (difficult for cavalry but acceptable for infantry).

romantic, it is critical to note that this was a radical departure from the norm. The worshippers could have escaped, or even stood their ground in a strong position behind the bog, but they actually *advanced* upon the troops. A new belligerent spirit was abroad.

The critical aspect was that, for the first time since the Pentland Rising in 1666, the Covenanters had progressed from the use of purely defensive arms to the use of offensive arms. There had been some isolated attacks upon minor units of Government troops escorting prisoners, but Drumclog was the first occasion when Covenanters took on a body of properly equipped and trained government troops on ground of their own choosing, and comprehensively defeated them. What was of even greater significance was that the commander of the dragoons was none other than Graham of Claverhouse, arguably the best cavalry commander in Scotland at that time, hence his defeat tended to blow the military success of Drumclog out of all proportion.

3.5 INTRODUCTION TO THREE PERSONALITIES

Three personalities at Drumclog command our particular attention:

- **Robert Hamilton** who, in 1688, inherited the title of Sir Robert Hamilton of Preston, but never formally used it.
- **William Cleland**, later first Lt-Col of the Cameronian Regiment.
- And one enemy, **James Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee**.

3.5.1 (Sir) Robert Hamilton (of Preston), c1650-1701

Biographical

Hamilton was born into a family with a Reformation background and first appeared on the scene as the leader of a new movement within the Covenanters, which 'by 1677 ... sought to stiffen the pattern of resistance, and in various ways to carry the battle to the authorities ... [Although] the only aim of the majority who attended the field-meetings was to worship God according to their consciences – and to resort to justified self-defence if

pushed to extremity ... it was perhaps inevitable that some should have begun to take a stronger line' (Grant M 1997:76). One thing is certain about Hamilton: he always took a strong line, for good or ill. The respectability of this new movement was undergirded by the support of Robert Ker of Kersland, a veteran of the Pentland Rising. Kersland⁷ 'enjoyed a reputation as a folk hero, and to Hamilton and his supporters he became something of a father figure' (*ibid*:77). According to Gilbert Burnet, an Episcopalian bishop, whose sister was Hamilton's stepmother, and who knew Hamilton from a youth, 'He was then a lively hopeful young man' whom the company of dissenters turned into 'a crackbrained enthusiast' (King Hewison 1913 ii:291). Rev John Blackader goes further, describing him as 'the young incompetent convener of meddlers and sticklers who held deliberative meetings in 1678, before the times were ripe, to consider the propriety of rising in arms' (*ibid*).

As we have seen, Hamilton had taken the lead at Rutherglen on 29 May 1679, and now commanded militarily at Drumclog. There is some debate as to whether 'he was appointed to command' (Howie 1781:585), or whether he simply 'took the chief command' (Aiton 1821:53). Be that as it may, Hamilton emerged as the military commander of the Covenanters, which position he retained until after the Battle of Bothwell Brig, 22 June 1679. Hutchinson (1893:134), commenting on Drumclog and Bothwell, writes; 'His conduct ... has been severely criticized, alike in connection with the disputes that distracted the party, his management of the army, and also with respect to some actions of his own.' Hamilton had ordered that no quarter be given at Drumclog and, despite some Covenanters refusing to obey this order and sparing captured dragoons, Hamilton slew an unarmed prisoner with his own hand; 'and if he had been allowed to have his way, other five who had received quarter without his knowledge, would have shared he same fate' (Smellie 1960:300). Whilst Government troops sometimes executed Covenanters summarily, this is the only record of a summary execution on the part of the Covenanters. Such an attitude was to cause serious misgivings when Hamilton was military commander at Bothwell Brig. 'Mr Hamilton, their military

⁷ Minor landed gentry are frequently referred to by their locality. Thus Robert Ker's son, Daniel, became Kersland on Robert's death.

leader, ... and others ... would listen to no modification of their extravagant and intolerant principles ... no terms short of actual subjection to them' (Aiton 1821:68/9).⁸ He lost not only his credibility, but henceforth his influence in Cameronian circles was substantially reduced.

After being defeated at Bothwell, he fled to Holland and remained in self-imposed exile until the Revolution. Returning to Scotland at the time of the Revolution in 1688, he refused to be reconciled to the Kirk, as were the three Cameronian ministers and the majority of the United Societies. He remained in isolation as the leader of a Cameronian 'rump,' which eventually formed the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland in 1743. In 1701, he died at the age of 51, without ever reconciling with the majority of his former Cameronian comrades. Whatever one's opinion of Hamilton, he played a significant, albeit frequently disturbing, role in the development of Cameronianism.

Hamilton's writings

The *Rutherglen Declaration* was largely Hamilton's own work, or written at his instigation, and, as has been seen, it significantly affected the course and pace of Cameronianism. Some of his letters, including one to James Renwick, are contained in *The Christian's Conduct* 1762, and Johnston (1887:351) credits him with *A Relation of Some Remarkable Passages in the Life of Mr Donald Cargill* in the Appendix to *Cloud of Witnesses* (Thomson 1751:289). The Preface to *A Collection of Lectures and Sermons*, published in Glasgow in 1779, were 'collected from ten or twelve volumes mostly in an old small cramp hand. Some of them I suppose were wrote by famous Sir Robert Hamilton' (Johnston 1887:453), but the publication does not purport to be an original work by Hamilton.

So, other than the *Rutherglen Declaration*, Robert Hamilton is not credited with any writings significantly affecting the course of Cameronianism. The same cannot be said about his actions!

⁸ According to William Wilson (Aiton 1821:69fn): 'Hamilton not only refused to supplicate the Duke ... but desire[d] him to lay down the weapons that he had taken up against the Lord and his people.'

Hamilton's character

It would be easy to write Hamilton off as an unspiritual man, yet that would seem too harsh a judgment. Though he alienated many Cameronians, Renwick, possibly the truest Cameronian of them all, held him in high regard to the end of his life: 'But let the world say what they will, I must say this, and I say it without vanity or flattery, that a little of Robert Hamilton's spirit in such a day as this is very much worth' (Carlaw 1893:181). In his last letter to Hamilton before the latter's execution, Renwick wrote; 'If I had lived and been qualified for writing a book, and if it had been dedicated to any, you would have been the man' (*ibid*:264). But Hutchinson makes a fairly damning assessment:

We are not concerned to deny, that along with his excellences, there was something of the narrowness, the harshness of judgment, the lack of forbearance and charity towards opponents, which intensity of conviction in circumstance of isolation and continued wrong tend to produce in some minds He spoke and acted with the strength and decision that seemed to adversaries to be harsh and extreme, but which, at least, left no doubt as to his position (Hutchinson 1893:136).

James Taylor ([1859] s a:712) is even more blunt: 'A brave and zealous man, but narrow-minded, overbearing, and intolerant in the highest degree.' Carlaw (1908:142) comments: 'That he was an earnest and well-meaning man, no one can deny; but no unprejudiced person can fail to discern his vanity and narrow-mindedness, and not withstanding his intimacy with Cargill and Renwick, we have always felt disposed to regard him as the evil genius of the Covenanters.' But, one cannot deny that Hamilton always seems to have acted strictly according to the dictates of his conscience, and that his intransigence, extreme even in a Cameronian, led to much suffering and hardship for himself and his followers. We catch a glimpse of his inner feelings in his *Dying Testimony*: 'Nor is it my design to vindicate myself from the many calumnies that have been cast upon my name, ... I cannot but say that reproaches have broken my heart' (Hamilton 1762:60).

Hamilton's influence

Hamilton was probably the most significant lay Cameronian leader up to the Revolution of 1688/9. He continually sought to be at the point of influence, and it is difficult not to conclude that he was a considerable source of embarrassment to those whom he sought to influence. Kersland, upon whose credibility the movement, which Hamilton led depended, left permanently for Holland in 1678. Hamilton then proceeded to attach himself to Richard Cameron as leader of his bodyguard. 'Evidence suggests that ... he (Cameron) found Hamilton's activities an undoubted embarrassment There can be no grounds for concluding, as some have done, that Cameron was beholden to Hamilton for the views he put forward. Cameron's opinions were his own and, however much Hamilton may have felt able to influence him, he never countenanced the brand of militancy which Hamilton advocated' (Grant M 1997:101).

Wodrow (1833,iii:67) almost certainly refers to Hamilton when he remarks that; 'I am ready to suspect, that the warmth of some imposed upon the simplicity of Mr Thomas Douglas,' the preacher at Drumclog, and later the only minister to join Cameron and Cargill in the fields. Whilst there is no record of who encouraged the call to arms at the sudden close of the service,⁹ it seems likely that Hamilton would have been a prime motivator. Some contemporary commentators credit Hamilton with being the cause of the victory. 'Mr Hamilton in this action discovered abundance of bravery and valour, and from this day's success, he reckoned himself entitled to command afterwards wherever he was, though he had no experience in military matters' (Wodrow 1833, iii:70). But Carslaw (1908:142) disagrees: 'At Drumclog [Hamilton] was nominally in command, though it was entirely to such experienced officers as Hackston and Cleland, and to the spirit which animated all the men, that the defeat of Claverhouse was due.' Hamilton assumed the role of military commander at Bothwell Brig three weeks later with disastrous results.

⁹ Traditionally, it was the Rev Thomas Douglas. "I have done," Douglas said. "You have got the theory: now for the practice. You know your duty; self-defence is always lawful" (Smellie 1960:296). Maurice Grant (e-mail 29 November 2005) remarks, 'There is no evidence for this in contemporary sources. It seems to be a later (possibly Victorian) accretion.' The saying has, however, become part of Cameronian lore, and is (mis)quoted in several other sources including King Hewison (1913, ii:300).

Still, he continued to have supporters. Howie (1781:586) remarks that; 'After their defeat at Bothwell-bridge, Mr Hamilton was by the Erastian party and their accomplices, most horribly stigmatized and reproached.' From that time until the Revolution, he acted as Commissioner for the United Societies in Holland. Shortly after his arrival, he was at the centre of a controversy amongst the Scottish exiles about Robert Fleming, the minister of the Scots Church in Rotterdam, an old fellow student of Cargill's.¹⁰ However, whilst in exile, Hamilton was influential in persuading the Classis (Presbytery) of Groningen to ordain James Renwick and Thomas Lining (in Embden), both of whom were to play an important role in Cameronianism. Therefore, his influence must be considered significant to the development of Cameronianism, and he must be credited as the founder of the fledgling Cameronian movement at Rutherglen in 1679. He was also largely instrumental in causing the Cameronian schism of 1690.

3.5.2 William Cleland, c1661-1689

Biographical

Cleland was the son of the Marquis of Douglas's¹¹ game-keeper. He was of the new generation of Cameronians - Alexander Shields being born the year before him, and James Renwick the year after. He was to demonstrate his considerable military ability at Drumclog. 'Part of the credit for the Covenanter's victory seems to have been due to a young man, William Cleland, who commanded part of their foot in a flank attack on Claverhouse's left' (Johnston1957:14). Defoe (1848:240) reports that, at one point, Cleland seized Claverhouse's bridle, and could have killed him, had he been supported. However this report is uncorroborated.

After the debacle of Bothwell Brig, Cleland went into exile in Holland, where he studied law at Utrecht University - possibly at the same time as Shields. In

¹⁰ Although opposed to the indulgence, M'Ward was not prepared to sever ties with those ministers who had accepted it. M'Ward was not prepared to cut off Fleming as a brother, so Hamilton ostracized not only Fleming, but M'Ward as well, which may have hastened M'Ward's death. This dissention may also have been a factor in hastening Cargill's return to Scotland.

¹¹ Father of the Earl of Angus, first Colonel of the Cameronian Regiment.

1685, he returned briefly to Scotland in an effort to raise the South-west in support of the abortive expedition against James VII, led by the Marquis of Argyle. In 1688, he again returned to Scotland at the Revolution and distinguished himself as the first Lt-Col of the Cameronian Regiment, which he led to victory at Dunkeld in 1689 at the cost of his own life.

Cleland's writings

Cleland's only known extant English publication is *A Collection of Several Poems and Verses Composed upon Various Occasions*, published in 1697, some eight years after his death. This slim volume gives some insight into Cleland's character. About the time of Drumclog when he was only 18, he wrote the love poem, *Hullo, my fancie* but, in his *Mock Poem on the Expedition of the Highland Host*¹² who came to destroy the Western Shires in Winter 1678, he not only satirized the Highlanders, but shows a mature grasp of ecclesiastical and political affairs:

What power absolute and great,
The King has over Church and State.
Yet *Presbyterians* never stands,
To violate the King's commands,
Yea just as if they could defy him,
His due allegiance they deny him.

(Cleland 1697:23)

The following couplet was certainly prophetic. When it was written, the Stewart monarchy were firm friends with France, but the first foreign campaign of the Regiment, which Cleland was to raise and command, was waged against Louis XIV of France some 12 years later.

¹² The Highland Host was an attempt to cow the Covenanters in the South-west by quartering a rabble of Highlanders upon them the year before Drumclog and Bothwell Brig. The result was only increased bitterness. Ironically Highlanders were to be the enemy Cleland defeated at Dunkeld in 1689.

But here my fancie's at a stance,
 Are we to have a Warr with *France*?¹³

(*Ibid*:11)

Cleland was the first of many Cameronian soldier-poets, the last serving one being also the (last) Lt-Col of the Regiment, Leslie Dow (see *L'Envoi*).

Disputatio Juridica de Probationibus, 1684

In 1684, Cleland published his Latin thesis, *Disputatio Juridica de Probationibus*, at Utrecht.¹⁴ Although this is a legal document, it gives important insights into the point of view of the man who was to lead the military Cameronians in 1689. His remarks concerning the Rules of Evidence are revealing:

When the bond of religion and virtue is removed thus weakening it, they [rules of evidence] are needed when there is need for suitable witnesses. One who despises the divine would be certainly forbidden to give testimony, likewise someone without honour, ... one proving himself unworthy by laying claim to the sacrosanct name of God and lastly one who upholds what is false.'

It appears that Cleland refutes the right of Godless persecutors to give evidence. At the trials of many Covenanters, evidence was frequently dubious, or even downright lies, and Cleland questions the acceptability of such evidence. In a clear attack on the system used to question Covenanters, frequently under torture, he writes that *'the inquisition by pseudo-Christians is to be condemned and their tyrannous wars plus those who hold as guilty those who refuse to swear even at the point of death.'* As a means of

¹³ This conforms with Richard Cameron's prophecy on 18 July 1680, 'The Rod that the Lord will make use of shall be the French' (Walker 1827 i:200). Although they did not invade, the French continued to support the Jacobites up to 1745 and the Cameronian Regiment fought in two campaigns against Louis XIV.

¹⁴ Cleland registered at Utrecht under the name, Gulielmus Cleland Scotus, in 1684. However, despite his thesis being in the holdings of the British Library, there is no record of it in the *Album Promotoren Utrecht* (visit of the author to University of Utrecht, 22 Sept, 2004). Possibly, he published it privately.

interrogation, torture *'cannot be used as probatio neither by Divine or natural law,'* and *'one who has undergone torture, must be absolved from the trial and from the crime'* (Cleland 1684:s p).

Cleland's writings give an insight into the fact that those Cameronians who took military command post-Revolution were neither unlettered nor unthinking. Many were university graduates and had as good a grasp of current affairs and ethics as had the Cameronian theologians.

Cleland's influence

Cleland's leadership was demonstrable and implicitly conceded even by his enemies. In the *Proclamation against Rebels* of 26 June 1679, Cleland's name appears fourth on the Fugitive's Roll, immediately after Robert Hamilton, Captain John Paton and Major Joseph Learmonth (Wodrow 1833. iii:115). According to Aiton (1821:55) 'Balfour and Cleland were the first to step into the bog' at Drumclog. Initially, the exchange of fire effected no casualties on either side, but 'William Cleland, with 12 or 16 armed footmen, supported by 20 to 24 with halberts¹⁵ and forks, advanced and fired at the military. But still no-one was injured, till Cleland advanced alone, fired his piece and killed one dragoon' (*ibid*). So, to Cleland belonged first blood. Both Crichton (1824:96fn) and Wodrow (1833. iii:70) credit Cleland's actions as being instrumental in winning the battle. 'It was mainly due to his [Cleland's] precocious talent that Claverhouse ... had been put to rout' (Hume Brown 1909 iii:10/11).

His natural flair for innovative tactics was demonstrated when 'he made the country people, upon the soldiers presenting their pieces and firing, fall flat to the ground, so that they quite escaped their shot' (Wodrow 1833, iii:70), an effective technique but despised by the professional military of the day as ungentlemanly behaviour.¹⁶ Certainly, Cleland's conduct at Drumclog and

¹⁵ Halberts were to prove effective against Highland broadswords at the Cameronian Regiment's first battle at Dunkeld.

¹⁶ Over a century later, when no less a soldier than the Duke of Wellington 'ordered his infantry to lie down during enemy bombardments, this was perceived as a controversial, possibly pernicious, innovation' (Hastings 2005:xiii).

Bothwell Brig helped to establish his position as the future Cameronian military leader. Upon his return to Scotland in 1688, his input was critical to the formation of the Cameronian Regiment and its conduct up to Dunkeld in 1689.

Cleland's character

'Student of St Andrews, bosom-friend of the young Lord Angus, Christian whom the field meetings that he loves have made "very sober and pious," and poet to boot' (Smellie 1960:297). Little has been written about his life, much less his faith. Whilst regretting that so little is known of Cleland's history, Crichton (1824:97 fn) describes him as 'a polite Gentleman, and able Poet, a devoted Patriot, a brave soldier, and a pious Christian.' It seems clear that Cleland's religious stance was acceptably Cameronian. As to his character, Maj-Gen Hugh Mackay (1833:71),¹⁷ commander in Scotland in 1689, described him as 'a sensible resolute man, though not much of a souldier,' whereas Hume Browne (1909 iii:11) is more perspicacious in describing him as having 'natural military genius.' The irony was that, after the defeat of Mackay's entire army at Killiecrankie, it was Cleland who led the lone Cameronian Regiment to decisive victory over the same enemy three weeks later.

Cleland was a man of faith, but his military leadership qualities were what the hour required. One should remember that he had Alexander Shields as his chaplain and religious mentor throughout the critical period of the Revolution, and was acquainted with both Robert M'Ward and John Brown of Wamphray. Cleland was akin to another great soldier, Field Marshall Slim, whose chaplain in World War II was Dr Donald MacDonald, also a Cameronian padre. He described Slim as '*anima naturaliter Christiana*, a man to whom belief came instinctively; but it was a belief uncomplicated by dogma' (Lewin 1976:5). '[Slim's] concept of religion was a practical mingling of faith *and* works he had asked Donald MacDonald to make his chaplains pray "flat out" for victory as if, in the most literal way, he was ordering up extra ammunition' (*ibid*:324). One can see Cleland taking a similar attitude at the Battle of Dunkeld in 1689, when the ammunition *did* run out, and the Cameronians melted down lead

¹⁷ 'Mentioned more than once by Bishop Gilbert Burnet, (Hamilton's uncle), as the most pious soldier he had ever known' (Mackay 1833:xvi).

from the Cathedral roof to make more bullets.

3.5.3 John Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee, c1648-1689

Although Claverhouse was a persecutor of the Cameronians, he deserves a paragraph here, for he is critical to a proper understanding of the Cameronian story. His military career began in 1672 in the French army of Louis XIV, under the Duke of Monmouth. Two years later, he transferred to the army of William, Prince of Orange. During this service, he is alleged to have saved William's life. When he was due to obtain command of a regiment in 1674, command was awarded instead to Hugh Mackay of Scourie (Mackay 1833:xiv), whom he was to confront again in 1689. Claverhouse returned to Scotland in 1678, and was commissioned under Charles II. He became a scourge of the Covenanters in the South-west, but was highly regarded by the Royalists. He was generally known as either 'Bonnie Dundee' or 'Bluidy Clavers,' depending on one's political point of view.

'Cleland, it was said, was the only one among his enemies of whom Dundee was afraid, and he had at least reason to respect him as an equal foe' (Hume Brown 1909 iii:10). Cleland was the only person ever to defeat him in action (at Drumclog 1679). On 27 July 1689, Claverhouse died leading the Highland clans against Mackay of Scourie at Killiecrankie, and Cleland died three weeks later at Dunkeld, leading the Cameronians to victory against Claverhouse's army (after www.oxforddnb.com 9 Nov 2005).

3.6 THE BATTLE OF BOTHWELL BRIG (BRIDGE), 22 JUNE 1679

Three weeks after Drumclog, the Covenanting 'army' found itself on the south bank of the River Clyde at Bothwell Brig, close to the town of Hamilton. By now, they numbered about 4000. At one point after Drumclog, their numbers were estimated at 6000, but many had faded away. Facing them was a well-equipped and trained Royal Army¹⁸ of between 7000 and 10 000,¹⁹ under

¹⁸ The Army included the Earl of Mar's (later O'Farrell's) Regiment, who were later to mock the Cameronian Regiment in Flanders in 1692 for their religious proclivities.

command of the Duke of Monmouth. During the intervening period, there had been much to-ing and fro-ing, which is well-documented by Wodrow and others, and is not germane to this dissertation. Of more pertinence are the attitudes of the various Covenanting factions. The Drumclog group had been joined by a several sub-groups, mostly from the South-west, many of whom did not have the same radical motives as Hamilton and those who had been at Drumclog.

These ... knew nothing of Mr Hamilton and Mr Douglas's declaration at Rutherglen They reckoned them a body of people appearing for the presbyterian interest, and in hazardous circumstances at present, whom the king's army would swallow up unless assistance were given them; and therefore resolved to hazard themselves in their defence, not knowing what Providence had to bring forth from these small beginnings (Wodrow 1833, iii:89).

Included amongst the additions to the Covenanters' camp was Rev Donald Cargill, thus bringing the Cameronian-inclined clergy to four.²⁰ It should be made clear that many of the clergy who had accepted the Indulgence had done so only after much heart-searching, and that virtually all Presbyterian ministers, Indulged or otherwise, were extremely unhappy about the condition of Church and State in Scotland, in particular the continuing persecution, which was now quite brutal.

On 6 June, a declaration from the Covenanters' camp, known as the *Short Declaration of Glasgow*, was published. This had been drawn up by Hamilton's party and testified against "popery, prelacy, Erastianism and all things depending thereon", the last phrase being intended as a pointed

¹⁹ Estimates vary widely. Buchan (1925:12) says 2500, but this probably refers only to regular troops. Aiton (1821:66) says 5000. The Earl of Linlithgow (quoted Wodrow 1833 iii:99-100 fn), who commanded until the arrival of Monmouth, reckons the militia alone at 5000, but the regular cavalry, artillery and regular infantry must be added to this, so Maurice Grant's (1997:154) estimate of 10 000 appears quite probable.

²⁰ Of the other three, Douglas had preached at Drumclog, King had been rescued from Claverhouse after Drumclog, and Kid was of a like mind regarding the Indulgence and those clergy who had accepted it.

reference to the Indulgence' (Grant M 1988:94). However, the following day:

The Rev Mr Welch, from Ayr, Mr Hume and 10 or 12 other ministers, and many armed men, ... joined the Whig army. The Ministers and Officers who had conducted matters thus far, were agreed not only on opposing Episcopacy, and the King's Supremacy in Church Affairs: but also in condemning the Indulgence granted by the Government, and all who had accepted or approved thereof. But Mr Welch, and the other Ministers and Officers who joined that day, and had themselves accepted of the Indulgence, wished not to touch on that point ...; and much wrangling took place (Aiton 1821:63).

The Covenanter camp now split into two clearly defined parties, bitterly opposed to each other.²¹ The camp deteriorated into a series of squabbles over the drawing up of a declaration intended to be representative of the entire spectrum of opinion present. 'There was not a leader of any calibre to marshal that immense conventicle of wrangling theologians' (King Hewison 1913 ii:306). A more disparate pair than the two Cameronian leaders, Cargill and Hamilton, would be hard to find. The evidence points to Hamilton as being intransigent to a degree verging on megalomania. Indeed Buchan (1925:12) describes him as 'little better than a madman.' On the other hand, Cargill was his usual cautious and earnest self. 'To no one did these divisions cause more distress than to Donald Cargill. He was himself a strong opponent of the Indulgence, he had preached against it publicly' (Grant M 1988:95). But, he had also preached with Welch and had strong ties with him and other ministers of the moderate party who considered it 'most unfit that presbyterians should bite and devour one another. They urged, the indulgence was a point in its nature disputable, and not yet declared sinful by any general

²¹ The names apportioned to each group give some insight as to the antipathy they bore each other. Wodrow (1833, iii:91) describes Welch's group as 'the moderate party,' and Aiton (1821:64) says they were the 'rational or moderate party.' However, Howie (1781:585), whose sentiments were entirely Cameronian, calls them 'the Erastian party' and even 'the corrupt party' (*ibid*:586)! Conversely, Hamilton's group, 'The Cameronians, or honest party, as *they called themselves*' [italics mine], Aiton (1821:64/5) caustically describes them not only as 'the (*soi disant*) honest party' but also 'the violent party.' Wodrow (1833,iii:91) more graciously refers to them merely as 'the first party.'

assembly ... adding, that a declaration in this matter would certainly break them who were gathered, among themselves, and hinder a considerable body of people, who had clearness about the indulgence, or at least could not make it a ground of separation, from joining them' (Wodrow 1833, iii:91).

A draft document, *The Declaration of the oppressed protestants now in arms in Scotland*, drawn up in Edinburgh, now reached the moderates in the camp. 'This declaration contains a succinct account of the present circumstances of this church and nation, and the real sentiments of the most judicious, knowing, and the greatest part of the suffering presbyterians' (Wodrow 1833, iii:98) It concludes in what must surely be accepted as a most reasonable tone: 'Protesting always, that, upon the obtaining of our forsaid just and reasonable desires, we are most ready to lay down arms, and behave ourselves with all submissive obedience toward lawful authority' (*ibid*). Wodrow comments that, had this document been published, the moderates would probably have prevailed, and the battle and subsequent persecution might have been avoided. However, it provided the basis for *The Declaration of the Presbyterians now in Arms in the West*, commonly known as the *Declaration of Hamilton*, published by the moderate party on 13 June 1679 at the market cross of Hamilton and elsewhere. Whilst seeking redress, the document did not go so far as to reject the king's lawful authority. The main headings were:

1. The preservation of the Church, Protestant, Presbyterian, Covenanted, with its legal standards.
2. The maintenance and defence of the King.
3. The obtaining of a free parliament and a free assembly.

(King Hewison 1913 ii:308)

Hamilton and his party were fiercely opposed to such acceptance of royal authority and proposed a day of fasting and humiliation, but this was rejected by the moderates. Meanwhile, Cargill tried to effect a reconciliation, but to no avail. Ultimately, 'when all else failed ... (Cargill) said, "Gentlemen, it seems now that we must part, and I take you all to witness that the cause of our

parting is that the rest of the ministers will not consent to a day of humiliation and fasting for the land's public sins. And let this be recorded for our vindication to posterity ...” (Grant M 1988:96).

At that point, ‘Hamilton took it upon himself to send orders to Mr Welsh, Mr Hume, Mr Rae and others of the more moderate party, to preach against the indulgence Mr Rae sent a very home and close answer to him, and desired the messenger to tell Mr Hamilton and the rest, that he had been wrestling against Erastianism in the magistrature for many years; and that he would never truckle to the worst kind of Erastianism in the common people; that he would receive no instructions from him ... as to the subject and matter of his sermons’ (Wodrow 1833, iii:93). Such high-handed behaviour by Hamilton, amounting to gross interference in other people's conscience, was unlikely to lead to an amelioration of the tensions prevailing; indeed, it exacerbated them. As it was, prior to the day of the battle, the Covenanting ‘army’ could not even agree whether to appoint as officers those with military experience, or those of an acceptable theological point of view.

By 21 June 1679, the Royal Army had taken up position on the north bank of the River Clyde and the time for prevarication was past. The Duke of Monmouth, commander of the Royal force, had a reputation for clemency, and it was decided to draw up a *Supplication of the Presbyterians*. Next morning, 22 June 1679, the day of the battle, Hamilton signed this essentially moderate document ‘in the name of the Covenanted Army now in Arms’ (www.eebo.chadwyck.com 10 Sep 2004), under the mistaken impression that Cargill, who was only one of the authors, had drawn it up. This action, and the summary execution of an unarmed prisoner after Drumclog, were to haunt him for the rest of his life, since he opened himself up to accusations of compromising his conscience.

Monmouth indicated that he would grant clemency if the Covenanters laid down their arms, but Hamilton again was intransigent to a ridiculous extent. The outcome was a complete rout of the Covenanters, with disastrous results for the Presbyterian cause in Scotland. In Government eyes, the moderates

were now inseparably lumped together with the Cameronians, despite the schism between the factions, and great persecution followed. 'The occasion for these restrictive measures was not primarily the Cameronian disturbances, which served as a convenient justification of the new policy, but shifting political circumstances' (Greaves 1992:76).²²

Most Covenanting leaders, including Hamilton and Cleland, fled to Holland. Cargill was wounded, but escaped to Holland at the 'urgent invitation from M'Ward and Brown' (Grant M 1988:101). It seems that 'M'Ward's invitation was a general one to all the fugitives from Bothwell' (*ibid*:250) and that Cargill was accompanied by Hamilton. Douglas, the preacher of Drumclog, also escaped to Holland, but returned in 1680 and allied himself with Cargill and Cameron, surviving to the Revolution and eventually ministering in John Brown's old parish of Wamphray.

King and Kid were taken to Edinburgh, tried under torture, and in a refinement of cruelty hard to comprehend, executed on the afternoon of the same day that the amnesty for those who had been at Bothwell was promulgated. The *Fugitives Roll*, published on 5 May 1684, included many who had not been at Bothwell, but 'they contain a list of very good people persecuted for conscience sake' (Wodrow 1833, iv:15-16). The Cameronian cause was in tatters.

3.7 CONCLUSIONS FROM THIS CHAPTER

3.7.1 State of Freedom of Religion

For the Cameronians. The Covenanters, which included both moderates and extremes (ultimately known as Cameronians), were in a parlous state. Moderates and radicals alike were hunted down. In May 1684, a Fugitive's Roll was published but, despite the delay, it contained many who had been in exile since Bothwell, as well as many good and innocent people. To all intents

²² 'Monmouth's popularity among moderate Scots had increased substantially [after Bothwell Brig] ... Therefore, the stage was set for an alliance between Monmouth's opponents in both realms' (Greaves 1992:76), culminating in the abortive rebellion of 1685, led by Monmouth in England and Argyle in Scotland.

and purposes, the Covenanting movement had all but collapsed. However, many of a Cameronian turn of mind continued to seek a way to restore their freedom of religion in doctrine, worship, discipline, and church government, as identified in the *Solemn League and Covenant* of 1643.

For Scotland. The forces of oppression, in the form of Government troops, whose behaviour was legitimized by Erastian legislation, now had a virtually free hand to force all Presbyterians under the aegis of the Episcopal Church.

3.7.2 Significance of the *Rutherglen Declaration*

Had Hamilton not published the *Rutherglen Declaration*, Drumclog, Bothwell Brig and their disastrous aftermath might well never have happened, and the resulting schism in Covenanting ranks might have been avoided. But the underlying reason for Rutherglen was frustration at the increasing pressure on their religious freedom, particularly with regard to worship and doctrine.

3.7.3 Significance of Drumclog for Cameronianism

Although the military conduct of the action has little concern for this dissertation, certain religio-political results need to be examined:

Drumclog gave the Covenanters an unrealistic opinion of their military ability.

Although it can be argued that numbers were similar on both sides (contemporary reports vary wildly), the fact remains that raw, untrained and ill-equipped farmers defeated the cream of the government cavalry under a leader renowned both for his military ability and for his persecution of the Covenanters. It was a double victory, military and moral.

The stage was being set for schism within Covenanting ranks.

An elevated opinion of their military prowess resulted in the meeting of a Covenanting 'army' before Bothwell. This gathering contained many influential moderate ministers who were to disagree strongly with Hamilton's extreme behaviour, but few with any military ability.

The moral tone of the military leadership was not high.

Normally, ministers gave the lead in Covenanting affairs, but Hamilton, a layman, assumed command at Drumclog though he displayed neither much military ability nor generosity of spirit. (This was to change in 1689 with Cleland's assumption of the military leadership.)

Cleland displayed more military ability, humanity and leadership than Hamilton. He repudiated interrogation under torture in his thesis, *De Probationibus*, as well as prosecution evidence of dubious veracity.

Due to the indignity of his defeat at Drumclog, **Claverhouse** henceforth prosecuted a virtual personal vendetta against all Covenanters and, in particular, Cleland. This was to have far-reaching effects for the Cameronians, even beyond his death, since Claverhouse's victorious army forced the Cameronian Regiment's first battle upon them after Killiecrankie, although Claverhouse himself had been killed.

Drumclog forced the Government's hand to take sterner military action than heretofore.

Henceforth, the Cameronians never called into question ***the use of arms***.

3.7.4 Significance of Bothwell Brig for Cameronianism

On the face of it, Bothwell appeared to be an unmitigated disaster. 'The Bothwell rising was a blunder of the first magnitude' (Macpherson 1926 *RSCHS* 1:230). But, there were significant developments resulting from it:

The Cameronians were now isolated from the rest of Scottish Presbyterianism. The moderates now mostly gave up the struggle against Erastianism in Church affairs. Many accepted the Indulgence. The Cameronians either had to give up the struggle, or go it alone. They chose the latter. Had Monmouth accepted *The Supplication of the* [moderate] *Presbyterians*, there is a possibility that the Kirk at that time

might have become an Episcopalian/Presbyterian amalgam. This would still have been anathema to the Cameronians due to the Prelatic aspect and their struggle would probably have continued, but it is highly probable that, in that event, they would have been less marginalised by the moderate Presbyterians. As it was, the Kirk continued to be run by a *mélange* of Episcopalian curates and Indulged Presbyterian ministers.

The Cameronians henceforth eschewed the use of offensive arms, but were prepared to use defensive arms in virtually any situation.

Henceforth Cameronian leaders were clerical rather than lay. Hamilton's irrational behaviour resulted in an increase in clerical authority in Cameronian circles.

3.7.5 General conclusion: The Indulgences emerge as the 'sticking point' of Cameronian thought

Most of the Indulged and moderate ministers were opposed to Erastianism, but were prepared to reconcile their consciences with accepting the Indulgence, in many cases with complete sincerity. Despite their clergy earnestly seeking a way to avoid splitting from the main body of Scottish Presbyterianism, the Cameronians were unable to reconcile their consciences to accept the Indulgences as the cost of practising their ministerial calling.

Despite setbacks, the stage was being set for the emergence of the Cameronian movement as a separate identifiable grouping.

CHAPTER FOUR

CAMERONIANISM COMMITTED: From Richard Cameron and Donald Cargill's return to Scotland, 1679, to Cargill's execution, 1681

'Michael, come let us fight it out to the last: for this is the day I have longed for, and the death I have prayed for, to die fighting against our Lord's avowed enemies; and this is the day we will get the crown'

(Richard Cameron to his brother, on the day they were killed)

4.1 GENERAL SITUATION AFTER BOTHWELL BRIG, 1679

Richard Cameron had already gone to Holland at the behest of Brown and M'Ward before the Rutherglen Declaration was published on 29 May, 1679. Before he arrived, he had probably given an assurance, under pressure, that he would cease preaching against the Indulgence for a set time. According to Walker (1827 i:193), Cameron was summoned to a presbytery meeting at Dunscore, at which 'for the third time they designed to take his Act of Licence from him They prevailed with Mr Cameron to give his Promise for a short Set-time to forbear such explicate preaching against the Indulgence, and Separation from the Indulged.' 'After the giving of that weary Promise, finding himself bound up by Vertue thereof from declaiming the whole Counsel of God, he turned melancholly; and to get the definite Time of that unhappy Promise spent, he went to Holland' (*ibid*:195). The making of this promise was to burden Cameron until his death.¹ For Cameron, the Indulgence, and all it implied, was theologically the *sticking-point*. In this, he was strongly encouraged by both John Brown of Wamphray and Robert M'Ward, who held similar strong opinions.

Those who lacked the ability to escape to Holland or elsewhere remained to suffer in Scotland. As many as 1200 prisoners were taken after Bothwell and

¹ See p 116.

confined in miserable conditions in Greyfriars Kirkyard, Edinburgh, where the *National Covenant* had been signed in 1638. Some escaped and some were released, but 'the 257 who remained were, one morning, put on board a vessel lying in Leith Roads, the Council having decreed that they should be banished to the West Indies and sold as slaves' (Carslaw 1908:148). The ship was wrecked off the Orkney Islands and most perished. It was to the suffering remnant in Scotland that Cameron and Cargill were to return.

Cameron returned to Scotland in August/September 1679, not only an ordained minister, but greatly encouraged in his stance against the Indulgence and the Indulged by Brown and M'Ward. Cargill left Holland for Scotland in November 1679. His departure may have been hastened by a split in the Scots Church at Rotterdam. The minister, Robert Fleming, who had recently been released from prison in Edinburgh, and who had been at St Andrew's with Cargill, 'could not bring himself to condemn those ministers who complied with the Indulgence' (Grant M 1988:107). M'Ward, though he disagreed with Fleming, as usual tried friendly persuasion rather than condemnation. Cargill seems to have taken a similar course, but Robert Hamilton was immoderate in his condemnation of Fleming and a rift resulted - Hamilton even falling out with M'Ward. It seemed that the Cameronians were doomed never to have a unified attitude in anything, not even in their opposition to the Indulgence.

When Cameron and Cargill arrived back in Scotland, field preaching had almost fallen by the wayside:

At a meeting of nonconforming ministers in Edinburgh on 16 September (1679), there had been a general agreement that the bond offered with the Third Indulgence could be accepted without compromise of principle, and several of the former field-preachers later accepted license to preach on the government's terms. Through time, the path of non-resistance came to be regarded as the norm, the mark of charity and moderation, while continued resistance became identified with intolerance and extremism Increasingly those who stood firm came to be regarded as a separate party, intent on political agitation

rather than religious struggle. ... Scant regard was paid to the fact that for some the issues remained on the same high spiritual plane where they always had been, and the public standard of the rights and liberties of the church was left in the hands of an increasingly maligned few (Grant M 1988:108/9).

Cameron and Cargill, initially assisted by Thomas Douglas, took up the challenge. No other ministers were prepared to join them by participating in Field Conventicles.² Cameron was the pace-setter. Utterly fearless, utterly outspoken, he attracted thousands to his preaching. His first two conventicles attracted 3000 or more, for 'seizing every opportunity within his reach, he preached the Gospel and dispensed sealing ordinances' (Howie 1880:380). As usual, Cargill was more canny, but came alongside Cameron to encourage him, and he, Cameron and Douglas convened public fasts at Darmead in April 1680, and Auchengilloch on 28 May. Cameron and his co-preachers were now drawing more and more listeners but, at the same time, anger in moderate Presbyterian circles, as well as government attempts to capture the Cameronian clergy, increased dramatically.

4.2 RICHARD CAMERON, c1647–1680

It now behoves to examine in more detail the contribution of Richard Cameron to Cameronianism. Whilst the course of events from his return to Scotland up to his death is important, what is of critical concern to this dissertation is Cameron's attitude to dealing with the Indulgences and the Indulged, coupled with his attitude to the use of spiritual and/or temporal warfare.

4.2.1 Biographical

In 1647 or 1648, Richard Cameron was born at Fordell, near Leuchars in Fife. He graduated MA from St Andrew's in 1665 and became a schoolmaster (*dominie*) in Falkland. His family moved to Edinburgh in 1675, and about this

² Rev John Blackader preached his last conventicle at Livingston on 28 March 1681, and was shortly thereafter captured and imprisoned on the Bass, where he died in 1686 (Howie 1781:501/2). He appears to have been in ill health at the time of Cameron and Cargill's return from Holland and he did not join them on the moors.

time, he was profoundly influenced by Rev John Welwood³ who 'had carefully thought through such issues as obedience to rulers, the right of popular resistance and the relative responsibilities of church and state He was the first to propagate publicly, that those ministers who had accepted the government's Indulgences had, in doing so, recognized the king's supremacy and, by virtue of that fact, they were disobedient to Christ and had forfeited the right to a hearing' (Grant M 1997:55). In 1678, Cameron was licensed to preach by a field presbytery led by Rev John Welsh. He immediately gained a reputation for speaking out strongly against the Indulgences, which gained him widespread reproof from the Presbyterian Church in Scotland at large. But, at this stage, he was encouraged from Holland by Brown and M'Ward. Ordained in Holland, he returned to a brief but brilliant ministry of field-preaching in Scotland.

Perhaps the most definitive Cameronian act was his publication of *The Sanquhar Declaration* in the town of that name on 22 June 1680. This so infuriated the government that their efforts to hunt him down increased, and he was killed in a skirmish at Airdsmoss on 22 July 1680.

4.2.2 Cameron's Preaching

Broadly speaking, Cameronian divines were either men of letters or men of action. This does not mean that each was confined to only one aspect, but that circumstances tended to force them into a particular mould. For Cameron, the man of action *par excellence*, opportunities to write and publish were few. But a number of Cameron's sermons have been preserved, and it is possible to examine the major themes of his preaching from Kirkmahoe in 1679 (prior to Bothwell Brig), up to his last sermon at Kype Water the Sunday before he died (18 July 1680). The sermons discussed here are mostly recorded in John Howie's (1880 ed Kerr J), *Sermons Delivered in Times of Persecution in Scotland*, and by other contemporary commentators such as

³ 'Wellwood ... handles the nobility and gentry with the utmost freedom, not only for their compliance with apostasy and their bad example generally, but for their specific sin of "oppression of the poor and racking of rents' (Macpherson 1926 *RSCHS* 1:227).

Patrick Walker.⁴

One of the most outstanding aspects of Cameron's preaching is his command of Scripture. It would be invidious to seek out examples, for his preaching is liberally 'larded' with Scripture, woven into the very weft of his discourse. Not only does Cameron frequently return to his text during a sermon, but passages of Scripture are repeatedly used throughout as a means of expressing his message.

At the time of his ordination, it seems that he received a new infilling of the Holy Spirit. When he returned to Scotland for the last year of his life, his preaching was so effective that he often had several thousand listeners, and he demonstrated a strong prophetic strain. When Cameron moved his preaching from the head (about Indulgences) to the heart (about Jesus), his ministry flourished in the most extraordinary way. Many listeners were deeply emotional: *'There is some tenderness amongst you now ... but that is not all: the angels will go up and report at the throne what is everyone's choice this day; ... "There were some in the parishes of Auchinleck, Douglas and Crawfordjohn that were receiving our Lord in the offers of the gospel, and he is become their Lord," and this will be welcome news ... Will you take him, yea or not? Will you take him home with you?'* (Howie 1880:432).

Although his preaching became more effective as time passed, his early sermons already demonstrate a fearlessness and concern for his hearers on an individual spiritual basis. Many of his addresses commence with a most personal challenge. In 1679, at Kirkmahoe, he asks: *'Unto whom are ye come here today?'* (Howie 1880:384); at Auchengilloch, 20 May 1680, *'What are you doing here this day?'* (*ibid*:405); and at Carluke, 8 July 1680, *'Now, know ye wherefore you are come here today?'* (*ibid*:441). From the earliest days, his great concern was for the souls of his hearers. *'There are many that will make profession of coming unto Christ ... but it is the disciples only that come*

⁴ Although described as a packman or itinerant pedlar (of books), he had a good reputation with the United Societies, being their treasurer at the time of the Revolution. Generally his reports are considered reliable (after *DSCHT* 1993:851/2).

to him' (*ibid* 1880:384). And, he is very bold when it comes to challenging them to repent for their sin. He includes all degrees: *'If some poor young man or woman, some of this or that rank, some gentleman or lady, were here brought to Christ this day' (ibid:389)*, and his appeals centre on Christ. *'Christ hath been crying to you ... "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life" ... our Lord is here this day saying, "Will ye take me?"' (ibid).*⁵ 'There is no doubt, an inescapable tension that the evangelical biblical and theological scholar will never outlive – between the outward intricacies of technical research ... and the exposition of the biblical message for all to receive by the Spirit. Reformers ... were no strangers to the suffocating sophistry of the schoolmen which did nothing to open up the Scriptures for the plough-boy' (Satterthwaite, Philip E & and Wright David F 1994. *A Pathway into the Holy Scripture*: 8/9). Cameron certainly understood this danger and had the rare ability to communicate profound theological truths to educated and simple hearers alike, 'influencing thousands by his eloquence' (Cross & Livingstone 1974:226). It is widely held that not only did his followers know their Bibles, they also understood them.

He deals with the dichotomy of temporal and spiritual as a recurring theme, *'One may be greater in the kingdom of heaven than another, though not in the Church militant ... there may be no degree of spiritual greatness in the Church ... And yet there are spiritual degrees'* (Howie 1880:385). He speaks of temporal affliction and eternal judgment. *'For the wicked ... though they escape temporal woes, yet there is an eternal woe abiding them'* (*ibid*:387) and returns to this theme at Auchgilloch: *'And there is a temporal and eternal destruction that come (sic) from Him ... indeed the evil day is not so far off as many may think'* (*ibid*:408). The spirituality of the open moors is an aspect of Conventicles not lost upon Cameron. *'We take these hills around us to witness against you this day, if this be not your end to bring Christ back again into this land'* (*ibid*:405). *'When ye look to the moon, to the stars, to the rivers and brooks, do ye see the hand of God in them? When ye look to the very*

⁵ During this sermon at Crawfordjohn on 11 July 1680, Patrick Walker tells us that both the minister and the greater part of the people fell into a fit of calm weeping perhaps the delivery of no sermon ... was more remarkably blessed with success from the Lord in Scotland since the primitive times' (Howie 1880:431 fn).

corn ridges, do you see the hand of God in them, and in every pile of grass? Meditations of this kind would make you more meet to praise Him' (ibid:422).⁶

But, in the form of Indulgences, Erastianism is seen as *the* serious stumbling block to the nation's spirituality. Not only those ministers who accept them, but those who listen to such ministers, are condemned. One should recall how much Cameron's promise to forbear speaking out against the Indulgences for a while shadowed his spirit right up to the day of his death. Making reference to Rutherford,⁷ he stresses the necessity of first talking privately to ministers who have accepted the Indulgence, before condemning them publicly (Howie 1880:390). But, thereafter, he has no choice but to speak out: *'It is the case of the most part of the ministers ... not only the indulged, but the non-indulged, that the Lord is not reprovng or striving with them We must speak against ministers ... that have betrayed the work of reformation' (ibid:410)*. He is no respecter of persons. *'The dead ministers, the formal professors that have the life of godliness; and there is no company so loathsome as the ministers and professors that have nothing of the power of religion or godliness among them.'* But, as so often, he ends with a fervent plea to come to Christ: *"Ye will not come to me that ye might have life"* (ibid:440).

In Cameron's eyes, the worst sort of Erastianism is a threat to the Kingship of Christ. *'Will you take Christ to be your king, and to be the anointed king of the church'?* (Howie 1880:413). Whilst Cameron is not *'against all monarchy and civil Government ... if God let pure government be established, that is most for the good and advantage of civil and ecclesiastical society' (ibid:423/4)*, he emphasises that the Lord is the one who will bring justice to His people. *'They take away your lands, but they can never take away the right ... the right remains to your children, and your young ones shall possess the land' (ibid:438)*. Therefore, the evil of the Stewart dynasty, and of those who subscribed to it, both in Church and State, was a dominant theme. Cameron lays the blame for the woeful condition of Scotland squarely on the shoulders of

⁶ 'For a race to have this quality [of a musing nature], there is a need to be enveloped in nature, to have wide spaces around, and ... to be a "hearth centred" society' (Christie, D 1995. Celtic attitude to the Created World. Unpublished paper, Rhodes University).

⁷ Rutherford's *Peaceable Plea for Presbytery*, ch viii:85.

the persecutors themselves. Reporting on a Conventicle at Newmonkland on the first Sunday after the *Sanquhar Declaration* (28 June 1689), Patrick Walker (1827:199) quotes Cameron as saying, 'He was fully assured, that the Lord, in Mercy to this Church and Nation, would sweep the Throne of Britain, of that unhappy Race of the name of Stewart, for their Treachery, Tyranny, Leachery (*sic*), but especially their usurping the royal Prerogatives of King CHRIST; This he was sure of, as his Hand was upon that Cloth.' On 4 July, at Grass-water, Cameron declared in prophetic vein, '*As for that unhappy Man, Charles the II ... after him there shall not be a crowned king in Scotland of the name of Stewart*' (Walker 1827 i:200). But he did not put all the blame on the monarch alone. '*Thou hast destroyed thyself, O Church of Scotland, O ministers of Scotland, O commons and people of all sorts in Scotland, ye have destroyed yourselves*' (Howie 1880:407).

Sometimes, Cameron refers to what were later to become recognised as Cameronian historical events, bringing events within the ken of his hearers into vivid focus. Of the moderate *Hamilton Declaration*: '*There were few or none but what in some sort joined with the Hamilton Declaration ... The truth is, we have all destroyed ourselves*' (Howie 1880:411). He even likens the days of the *Rutherglen Declaration* and Bothwell Brig to Christ's triumphal entry and the day of the crucifixion. '*Last year ... our Lord was, as it were, upon the Mount of Olives. He rode, as it were, triumphantly ... to the Market Cross of Rutherglen, and many cried "Hosannah" ... But since the 22nd of June 1679,⁸ how many have cried out, "Crucify him, crucify him"*' (*ibid*:405). This may appear to verge upon the blasphemous, but Cameron continues '*Christ is too dear a Lord for us. These field meetings of His are too costly for us*' (*ibid*), bringing immediacy into his hearers' current situation. It is noteworthy that this is Christ's meeting, not man's.

Preaching with Donald Cargill at Carluke on 8 July 1680, he took as his text Isaiah 49:24-26, "Shall the prey be taken from the mighty?" In his preface, he dealt with the need for private fasting to accompany public fasting and for

⁸ The date of the Covenanter defeat at Bothwell Brig.

greater sincerity of purpose. *'Oh! But lightness of behaviour becomes us ill at this time [for] ... the purpose of God is ... about to bring forth a great deliverance unto the Church and State of Scotland'* (Howie 1880:443), at which time *'all the neighbouring nations will come and take ... a copy of the doctrine, worship and discipline of the Church of Scotland'* (*ibid*:444). The freedoms that the Cameronians sought will not be for them alone.

In Cameron's last sermon⁹ at Kype Water on 18 July 1680, four days before his death, taking as his text Psalm 46:10: *"Be still and know that I am God,"* his expectation continues to be that God, not man, will make wars to cease. Returning to the theme of spiritual warfare: *'Who knows then that the time may be drawing near when the Lord may make these wars cease for a time? But the truth is they must come to a greater height ere they cease Who knows but that the day is approaching when our Lord is to break the bows'* (Howie 1880:454). Cameron encourages his hearers *'not only [to] submission as to what is past ... but also a quiet and patient waiting on the word for an outgate and relief as to what He may trust us with in time to come'* (*ibid*:456). Near the end of his sermon he takes to task those who are lacking in patient endurance. *'Folk that are of an anxious spirit about events should have a deliverance soon But you might be content ... if it were for seven years;¹⁰ nay, if it were for all your days, and your sons' days. It is probable and likely that it will not be so long, but we shall say nothing as to that'* (*ibid*:459/60).

Cameron must surely be rated as an outstanding preacher, and full of the Holy Spirit. 'He possessed ... a gift of unadorned popular eloquence that told mightily on his hearers; he knew how to reach the heart, and could sway his vast audiences as the wind the trees of the forest. He was a born preacher ... and secured the affection and confidence of the witnessing remnant' (Hutchison 1893:53). Accusations¹¹ that he allowed his political themes to preponde-

⁹ In his report on this sermon, Patrick Walker (1827 i:202) says: 'that Blood should be their sign, and NO QUARTERS their Word.' The reference to 'no quarters' does not appear in the sermon in Howie 1880, and may be an attempt, by Walker, at justification from the mouth of Cameron for Robert Hamilton's killing of an unarmed prisoner at Drumclog (see p 83).

¹⁰ In fact, the Revolution was seven years later, in 1688.

¹¹ In a sense, Hector Macpherson (1926 *RSCHS* 1:225) supports this opinion. 'As the persecution was essentially a political one, the Covenanters had of necessity a political policy

rate in his preaching cannot be substantiated. Although he did deal with the troubles of his time, his overwhelming theme was Christ.

4.2.3 Cameron's Writings

Such brief documents as Cameron did produce had as great an influence upon Cameronianism as many lengthier works. '*The Sanquhar Declaration*, Cameron was to say, would shake the throne of Britain. And in due time, and in its own way, it did' (Grant M 1997:249).

The Bond taken before Sanquhar, March 1680

In March 1680, 27 signatories originally subscribed a Bond 'to test the strength of support which Cameron could expect, and to gain agreement privately for what would in the process of time be declared publicly' (Grant M 1997:198). 'This bond was almost certainly drafted by Cameron' (*ibid*:195) and 'showed clearly the influence of M'Ward' though 'it went farther than M'Ward had been prepared to go' (*ibid*:199). The Bond bluntly disowned the authority of the Crown.

Cameron stood firmly within the Scottish Reformed tradition of a mutual contract between king and people, which George Buchanan originally propounded in *De Jure Regni Apud Scotos*, 1579, and which Samuel Rutherford developed further in *Lex Rex* 1644, as well as John Brown of Wamphray in his *Apologetical Relation*, 1665 (after Grant M 1997:195/6). Therefore, early Cameronian thinkers developed this as an enduring theme. But Cameron was prepared to go farther than his predecessors and was thus in danger of overstepping the bounds of orthodox Reformed tradition.

The first signatory of the Bond, surprisingly, was not Cameron himself, but Thomas Douglas, who had been a member of the 'presbytery,' which had met at Dunscore in 1678 to discipline Cameron, but who had since espoused the Cameronian cause at Drumclog, Bothwell and in Holland. One significant omission from the signatories was Cargill, who, though he was of one mind

called for by the circumstances of the time. Political ideals were often expressed in theocratic phraseology, for their political philosophy was based on the ecclesiastical.'

and spirit with Cameron, was 'cautious and deliberate by nature, he was clearly reluctant to commit himself publicly to a particular view until he had thought the issue through to his own satisfaction' (Grant M 1997:200). Cameron had now drawn about him a coterie of like-minded individuals. He was no longer alone, and support from the common people as well as opposition from moderate Presbyterians and government alike, was increasing simultaneously. 'The group which now formed itself around Cameron was motivated solely by considerations of defence – defence of themselves, certainly, against attack by enemies, but primarily to allow the preaching of the gospel to proceed unhindered. To enable them to provide an effective defence, several [note, not all] of them carried arms Some present-day writers have likened them to a guerrilla movement,¹² but that is to do them a fundamental injustice' (*ibid*:201).

The Sanquhar Declaration, 22 June 1680

On 22 June 1680, the first anniversary of Bothwell Brig, Richard Cameron, accompanied by his brother Michael and about 20 horsemen, rode into the small town of Sanquhar.¹³ Michael read a document that was then nailed to the market cross. This document, to become known as *The Sanquhar Declaration*, metaphorically set the heather alight throughout the south and west of Scotland. The document was clearly based on the Bond discussed above, but went even further in that it actually declared war upon the Crown. '*We, being under the standard of our Lord Jesus Christ, Captain of Salvation, do declare a war with such a tyrant and usurper [Charles Stuart], and all men of his practices, as enemies of our Lord Jesus Christ.*' Identifying themselves in the heading as the '*True Presbyterian, Anti-prelatic, Anti-erastian, persecuted party in Scotland*', and in the text as '*a remnant in whom He will be glorious,*' they disowned the king both in church and state for his '*perjury and usurpation*

¹² See Chapter 6.

¹³ Wodrow (1823 ii:212) remarks that the party was 'in arms,' but a possible example of a biased gloss may be contained in Greaves (1992:72). 'While the Council was investigating the Queensferry declaration, the Cameronians *struck* [my italics]. On the afternoon of 22 June, a party of mounted zealots, with swords and pistols drawn, rode into Sanquhar.' Whilst there is no contemporary evidence for 'swords and pistols drawn,' Smellie ([1903] 1960:335) also reports this. Whereas it is considered that Greaves might insert such a gloss to put the Cameronians in a bad light, Smellie, an ardent supporter of the Covenanters, is unlikely to do so intentionally. However, his reporting style is overly hagiographic, and not always accurate.

in Church matters, and tyranny in matters civil,' and declared that he had forfeited any right to the Crown of Scotland *'by his perjury and breach of covenant both to God and His Kirk.'*

It is significant that Cameron confined his attack on the Crown to the persons of Charles II and his brother James, Duke of York. Cameron's 'sticking-point', the Indulgence and the Indulged, were not even mentioned. Cameron and his supporters have been attacked on the false premise that they sought to assume a magisterial authority for themselves, but later Renwick was to refute such an interpretation in the *Informatory Vindication* of 1687. On 15 July 1680, Cameron produced a short vindication of his thinking in an open letter, first published only in 1997. In it, he remarks that 'we must expone (i.e. interpret) that so much obtested chapter 23 of this Confession of Faith¹⁴ which was accepted by this kirk only in so far as it was applicable to our covenants, which certainly allows not a man to be supreme above our religion, as he in London now pretends' (Grant M 1997:246-248). He then calls on Rutherford's *Lex Rex*, and Stewart and Stirling's *Naphtali*, as justification 'that the people are free if the king breaks the Covenant betwixt him and them' (*ibid*:247), using the examples of Charles I being rejected for not taking the Covenant, (whilst Charles II broke it, having sworn to it), and the forced deposition of Mary Queen of Scots.

What sets the *Sanquhar Declaration* on a different plane to any that went before, is the declaration of war. Neither *The Rutherglen Declaration*, the *Bond*, nor *The Queensferry Paper* went so far as not only to repudiate the Crown's authority in spiritual and temporal matters, but to throw down the gauntlet. In fact, it was open rebellion - every bit as much as Bothwell was. In order to understand this crucial area, it becomes vital to identify *what type of war* Cameron was declaring; spiritual, temporal, or both?

4.2.4 What type of war was Cameron declaring?

¹⁴ Section 23.4 of the *Westminster Confession* was habitually brought up against the supporters of the *Sanquhar Declaration*, not only by the moderate Presbyterians but even by the civil authorities when interrogating those of them who fell into their hands (Maurice Grant, email 2 March 2006). This problem Renwick specifically addresses in the *Sanquhar Protestation* 1685 (see Chapter 6).

Sometimes, it is difficult to be certain of Cameron's point of view. *'Refuge faileth us. What shall we do? Ye shall not find a man among ten of us that has anything to defend himself with. There were some hope if all that are here had arms, but even some that have them are afraid to wear them. There is no courage among us'* (Howie 1880:412). This might well seem a call to arms, since those who resist the tyranny are serving *'the Lord who is calling men of all ranks and stations to execute judgment upon them ... against whom our Lord is denouncing [declaring] war'* (ibid:415).

But this is a simplistic view. *'Some would triumph in a great arm ... but know ye what it is to triumph in the work of His hands?'* (Howie 1880:422). *'Our persecutors have forces and armies at their command', [but] 'we begin to think it needless to preach, pray, fast, weep or fight; for when we attempt to rise, the Lord comes and gives us such a blow'* (ibid:445/6). *'Many think that if we had such an army as we had last year we would contend with them'* [but] *'we need not trouble ourselves about it'* (ibid:447). For God Himself will bring deliverance, and none other. *"I will contend with those that contend with thee" ... never think ye will get salvation till God come and contend with His enemies. Many would invert the Lord's order and method'* (ibid). *'Many folk will say ... "we should not fight." But let them see a man that says he is not for fighting (it is true, if the Lord call not to it, it should be so), 'but Cameron proceeds to make it clear that prayer is the right way. "Pray always and faint not."... if ye quit your duty in prayer before He come, ye will get no thanks ... Up therefore and be doing! Up to your prayers and the Lord be with you!'* (ibid:449). *'The least faith in exercise has more strength than thousands of men and armies!'* (ibid :461).

This is hardly the preaching of a man telling his followers to engage the enemy in their own strength, but rather to trust to God for the outcome. Archibald Alison, who was captured when Cameron was killed, recalled Cameron's words in his (Alison's) testimony before execution: *'We are not to compare ourselves with Gideon's three hundred men, no not at all ... for we design not to fall upon any party of the forces, except they be few in number and oppose us in keeping up the gospel in the fields; for I am persuaded that*

one meeting in the fields has been more owned and countenanced by his presence ... than twenty house meetings' (Thomson 1779:83). A careful reading of Alison's testimony reveals that preaching the gospel is what matters to him, not killing government troops, even if 'they be few in number' (*ibid*). Even Greaves (1992:73) concedes that Alison and his companions were 'prepared to fight ... only in their defense.'

Preaching with Cargill and Douglas at the Fast at Auchengilloch on 28 May 1680, Cameron specifically addresses the type of warfare intended. '*Let us fight against these wicked rulers with the weapons of the spiritual warfare, the arms of secret prayer. Let us pray to the Lord to cut them off*' (Howie 1880:417). Certainly, Donald Cargill understood the war to be spiritual. 'The core of the Cameronian message was prophetic and apocalyptic ... "God is saying this day to his people in Scotland," proclaimed Cargill in May 1680; "I can do nothing against the wicked, until ye be closer walkers with me, and then Judgment shall quickly fall upon them"' (Greaves 1992:70). At his trial, when questioned about the *Sanquhar Declaration*, he replied: 'As to that part declaring war, he ... thinks that they thereby intended only to justify the killing of any of the king's forces in their own defence, when assaulted, otherwise it might have been esteemed murder' (Wodrow 1833 iii:282).

'The Covenanters had no military organization ... They had religious aims and aspirations, but no military objectives – they did not see military force as an adjunct to achieving their aims. In their minds they were fighting a spiritual war' (Sixsmith 2007:11). Maurice Grant (1997:215) agrees: 'It was, then, a spiritual warfare to which Cameron was calling his hearers – a warfare by prayer and witness-bearing, leaving the issue to God.'¹⁵ If this is correct, then Cameron, the "Lion of the Covenant," and the man who gave the Cameronians their name, has been largely misjudged by history. He was a man who put his complete faith in God, not in man, and who held to the word of Scripture: 'For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful

¹⁵ The *Informatory Vindication*, Head 3, later confirms this attitude (see p145).

for the destruction of fortresses' (II Cor 9:3/4). He and his companions at Sanquhar were not just 'a few ... poor men,' as Cross and Livingstone (1978:226) comment. Unlike the House of Stewart, they operated under the hand of God, and the spiritual war declared at Sanquhar was decisively won at the Glorious Revolution of 1688/9. That Richard Cameron and most of his companions at Sanquhar did not live to see their victory is not important, for the battle was indeed the Lord's.

4.2.5 The Character of Richard Cameron

Cameron was pre-eminently a man of action, but it seems clear that his spirituality deepened as time went on and that, in the last year of his life, it grew exponentially. When he first preached under licence, his underlying concern was that Erastianism should not trammel the church in Scotland, and that men and women should be truly free to worship according to the dictates of their conscience. To a casual observer, it may appear that Cameron's concern with the Indulgences limited his spirituality, but this was not the case. As events demonstrated, more than any other Scots clergyman, he turned out to be the rock upon which Erastianism ultimately foundered. Whilst the majority of Presbyterian ministers in Scotland were prepared to accept government strictures upon their ministry¹⁶ after Bothwell Brig, only Cameron and a very few others were not. In this lonely stance, they were strongly backed by John Brown of Wamphray and Robert M'Ward (both in continental exile), who were able to stand back and observe events from a perspective difficult to achieve within Scotland.

The day before his last sermon, having spent most of it in solitary prayer and meditation, Cameron told his hostess; 'That weary promise that I gave to these ministers has lain heavy on me, for which my carcass shall dung the wilderness, and that within a fortnight' (Walker 1827 i:201). The promise was the one he had made at Dunscore to desist speaking out against the Indulgences for a set time. It might seem strange that it lay so heavy on his

¹⁶ It should be remembered that many sincere ministers were prepared to accept some measure of Erastian interference, due to a genuine and earnest concern that their flocks should not be left shepherdless.

spirit, but it was the only time in his life when he had given in to man, instead of obeying God. His words were indeed prophetic, for he was dead within 10 days, hunted down and killed by government troops.

4.2.6 The Influence of Richard Cameron

Considering the brevity of Cameron's ministry, the extent of his influence is remarkable. One might say that Cameron (and to a lesser extent Cargill) was the one who established Cameronianism on a broad front. Up to the time of Sanquhar, the Cameronian movement was effectively 'leader-driven.' Mostly the clergy led the way, though at times lay leaders such as Hamilton forced the pace. After Sanquhar, the movement began to take on a wider perspective to the point where an identifiable Cameronian polity ultimately appeared in the form of the United Societies, made up, in the main, of the rank and file of the movement.

The principal reason for this was the impact of Cameron's preaching had on the simple people of the Scottish South and West during the last year of his life. Earlier field-preachers, such as Blackader and Welsh, had made a profound spiritual impact upon large numbers of worshippers at conventicles, but Cameron took them to a new plane, and in greater numbers. His nickname, 'The Lion of the Covenant' was ascribed to him only after his death, but the appellation was accurate. At a time when only the most dedicated Covenanters refused to accept the Indulgence and amnesties offered by the Crown, the followers of Cameron still stood aloof in the face of ever-increasing persecution by government, and intensifying vilification from moderate Presbyterians. 'It was largely due to his efforts that the final surrender never took place. His example of self-sacrificing service was to prove an inspiration to many in the dark days ahead' (Grant M 1997:292).

But was Cameron as orthodox as he claimed to be? 'It has been fashionable to decry Cameron as a deviant from the mainstream of Presbyterianism' (Grant M 1997:293/4). In her discussion of Cameron's behaviour at the time of Sanquhar, Mitchison (1982:266) opines that 'the party had also discarded the Westminster Confession, for this accepted the civil power and the royal choice

of ministers and bishops, and had also discarded part of Calvin's own doctrine in denouncing prayers for the king.' 'It is a supreme irony that Cameron, of all men, should be so stigmatized, for few were more devoted in their attachment to Presbyterian and Reformation principles. Next to Scripture itself, Cameron was guided ... by the standards of the Scottish Reformers ... Far from being a deviant from Scottish Presbyterianism, he could claim to be one of its most orthodox proponents and defenders' (Grant M 1997:293/4). Mitchison may have two arguable points, but 'Cameron's reservation to chapter 23 of the Westminster Confession can (not) necessarily be taken as typifying his approach to the Confession as a whole: he was always extremely loyal to the Westminster standards which he saw as part of the "Covenanted Reformation" which he prized' (M Grant, email 3 March 2005). As for a departure from Calvin, the Scots Confession of 1560 demonstrated that Scottish Calvinism had always had a degree of independence. In Richard Gamble's (1984:131) 'opinion ... we have from the beginning of the Reformation a clear disagreement between Geneva and Scotland surrounding the nature of political resistance.' In all respects, Cameron was an orthodox Scots Presbyterian.

Further, it might appear that in the *Sanquhar Declaration*, Cameron placed his political agenda above the spiritual. In the author's opinion that is not the case. He saw the struggle for individual political freedom as a necessary adjunct to true freedom in the Presbyterian Church. Had the House of Stewart been prepared to allow genuine religious freedom in Scotland, some extreme Presbyterians might even have been prepared to co-exist with a Scottish Episcopal Church, providing that the Scottish Presbyterian Church was free from the Church's Prelatic interference and the State's Erastian interference. But the State's interference supervened in both areas, and the two problems were thus snowballed into one.

Not everyone commended Cameron's behaviour. Mitchison (1982:265) dismisses Cameron as a man 'of strong passions and little education,' and has little time for Cameronian documents, going so far as to describe the *Apologetical Declaration* of 1684 as 'the most obstinately bloodthirsty' of the all their 'extremist documents The subtleties of doctrine and the realities of

Christian living were pushed aside for the sake of war.’ This is simply not borne out by historical evidence. As Allan Armstrong (2006:2) remarks: ‘Establishment historians ... denigrate the evidence of “The Killing Times” saying it has been mightily exaggerated,’ rather in the way that many now say the Holocaust never happened. Certainly by 1680, field preaching was virtually unknown, the majority of Presbyterian ministers having succumbed to the king’s Indulgences. ‘Several meetings of ministers used their utmost endeavours to divert him from preaching separation [on his return from Holland], but did not prevail’ (Wodrow 1833 iii:220). John Welsh, in particular, was against such extremes, though Wodrow remarks that actions such as Cameron’s ‘have been rather esteemed heroic than mad and irregular’ (*ibid*).

Modern commentators are divided on Cameron’s influence. Cowan (1976:104/5) remarks that it is ‘surprising that this small sect of covenanting Presbyterians and their martyrs has subsequently been taken to represent dissent in the decade following Bothwell Bridge. That this has been so undoubtedly sprung from their intensity of conviction expressed in a variety of manifestoes which not only explained their tenets but also strengthened government resolution that such dangerous men must be extirpated.’ Burleigh (1960:251) attempts to give a balanced view: ‘The Cameronians ... were extremists whose excesses were condemned by nearly all their Presbyterian brethren at the time. Nevertheless ... without their testimony the victory of Presbyterianism would have been impossible.’ ‘I am sure,’ said John Malcolm, a martyr who often heard Cameron, ‘the gospel preached by Mr Richard Cameron especially was backed with the power and presence of Christ’ (Thomson 1779:91).

One significant aspect of Cameron’s death was that he died sword in hand, the only Cameronian clergyman to do so.¹⁷ It was not unusual for Covenanting clergymen to bear arms, the critical aspect being that the weapons were used only for self-defence. But, once committed, they were at

¹⁷ This was not a new departure for Scottish clergy. ‘Many ordained priests are known to have taken part in the war [for Scottish independence c1295–1314], not only by exhortation but also by wielding arms’ (Dow 1962:11).

liberty to invoke the military adage that ‘attack is the best means of defence.’ After Cameron’s death some of the troops involved told Patrick Walker ‘that handful were men of the greatest courage that they ever saw set their faces to fight If they had been as well trained and armed and horsed as we were, we would have been put to flight’ (Walker 1827 i:207) Outnumbered two to one, nine of Cameron’s party were killed, whereas the government troops lost 28 killed or mortally wounded. Cameron’s head and his hands were cut off and brought to the Council. ‘There’s the Head and Hands that lived praying and preaching, and died praying and fighting’ (Walker 1827 i:205). They were then exhibited over one of the gates of Edinburgh.¹⁸ The prophecy made at his ordination was fulfilled.

As with so many other men of the Spirit, Cameron’s influence was probably greater after his death than during his life. ‘In his native Scotland, his name has become synonymous with resolute and unflinching adherence to a cause. In his own day, that cause was surely the best of all possible causes – the right of his Master Christ to rule over his own house, and the right of the people to enjoy their civil and spiritual freedoms’ (Grant M 1997:295). To this day, the name of Richard Cameron is still widely respected in Scotland.

4.3 DONALD CARGILL, 1627–1681

Next to Richard Cameron, the Rev Donald Cargill was the most vital link in Cameronian development at that time. After Cameron’s death, he carried the standard of field preaching entirely alone, and his two major publications underpinned and enlarged upon Cameron’s stance in the *Sanquhar Declaration*. For a period after his death, there were no active Cameronian ministers at all in Scotland, and Cargills’ example and courage enabled many simple folk to stand firm, until a new leader in the shape of James Renwick was raised up.

¹⁸ The following story is indicative of the faith of Richard Cameron’s old father. ‘Mr Cameron’s father being in the Tolbooth of Edinburgh for his principles, they carried them to him, to add Grief to his Sorrow, and enquired if he knew them. He took his Son’s Head and Hands, and kissed them, and said, I know them, I know them, they are my Son’s, my dear Son’s, and said, It is the Lord, good is the Will of the Lord, who cannot wrong me or mine, but has made Goodness and Mercy to follow us all our Days’ (Walker 1827 i:205).

4.3.1 Biographical

Donald Cargill was the last of the 'old' generation of Cameronians, having been born in Rattray, Perthshire in 1627. In 1637, he was sent to school in Aberdeen at nine or ten years of age. Samuel Rutherford had been banished there in 1636, and whilst it is conjectural that he influenced young Donald at this stage 'his [Donald's] home background had strongly predisposed him in favour of the cause of the Covenant' (Grant M 1988:15). In 1644, Cargill enrolled at St Andrew's University to study philosophy but, in 1647, he had a remarkable spiritual experience, and the following year he enrolled at St Mary's College, St Andrew's, where Rutherford was Professor of Divinity and Robert M'Ward a fellow-student. He therefore fell under proto-Cameronian influence at an early stage.

In 1655, after some vicissitudes, he received a call as minister to the Barony Church in Glasgow. M'Ward was also ministering in Glasgow at that time. In 1656, Cargill married, but was widowed after only four months. He continued at the Barony until the Restoration of 1660, when Prelacy was once again foisted upon Scotland. On 26 May 1662, Cargill spoke out against the king. 'Wo, wo, wo, unto him, his name shall stink while the world stands, for treachery, tyranny and lechery' (Howie 1781:420). He was 'outed' by the Act of Glasgow¹⁹ on 1 October 1662, and banished 'North of the (River) Tay' on the same day. For ten years, he lived in comparative obscurity at his family home in Rattray. He did not take the First Indulgence offered on 7 June 1669, but a Petition from Cargill to the Council for leniency on his banishment was granted later that year, permitting him to return to the Glasgow area. Whilst there, he and other ministers formed a "'field presbytery" of non-conforming ministers which ... seems to have enjoyed a surprising freedom from interference' (Grant M 1988:60). Cargill now entered a time of low-key Conventicle ministry. His name was included in the Second Indulgence offered on 2 September 1672, but his refusal to accept this identified him as a

¹⁹ The Act of Glasgow, 1662, removed all Presbyterian ministers from their parishes who had not received collation from the bishops. Some 274 ministers were ejected, mostly in 1662, but some also in the 1670s and 1680s (after McNeill & MacQueen 1996:400).

committed Covenanter. 'From now on Cargill would minister not to a country parish, nor to a city charge; he would minister to the people of God in Scotland wherever their lot might be cast, wherever there were those who remained loyal to the church and its Head, wherever there was a witness against the tyranny that sought to usurp the authority of Christ' (ibid :65).

By 1674, there were about 40 active field preachers but, as the spiritual fervour of the country folk increased, so did persecution. By 1679, Cargill was living the life of a fugitive field preacher and had openly associated himself with Richard Cameron and his stance against the Indulgences and hearing those clergy who subscribed to them. About this time he received encouragement by letter from M'Ward in Holland. However, the aftermath of Drumclog led inexorably to Bothwell Brig, at the end of which Cargill found himself badly wounded and a fugitive in earnest. He fled to Holland, where Brown and M'Ward encouraged him, and returned to Scotland shortly after Cameron, to again take up his testimony that Christ, and only Christ, was Head of His Body the Church. His time was short, for he was captured on 11 July 1681 and executed in Edinburgh, along with four other Cameronians, on 27 July 1681.

4.3.2 Cargill's writings

Like Cameron, Cargill spent so much time on the run eluding government forces that he had little time to write. However two documents which are inextricably connected with Cargill have relevance to this dissertation.

The Queensferry Paper, 3 June 1680

This document is closely linked to Donald Cargill, yet it is far from certain how much of it actually originated from his pen. 'The paper evidently had its origin in Holland the previous year (1679), when Cargill had been in the company of Robert Hamilton and other fugitives after Bothwell' (Grant M 1988:119). There is a possibility that Alexander Shields drew up the original draft (Mark Jardine, discussion Edinburgh, 9 June 2006), but the probability is that Hamilton, having received help from Cargill at the time of the Rutherglen Declaration, now sought the latter's help in framing a statement of Cameronian principles in a formal document. 'That he [Cargill] had a major hand in it cannot be

reasonably doubted What is much less clear is how far these principles represented his own personal views' (*ibid*:118).

The document became known as the *Queensferry Paper*, since it was seized at South Queensferry on 3 June 1680, in the possession of Cargill and his companion Henry Hall, whilst still in draft form. Hall was captured and died from wounds sustained during his capture, but Cargill, also wounded, escaped. The Government immediately published the *Paper* under the title of *A True and Exact Copy of a Treasonable and Bloody Paper called the Fanatiks New Covenant*. 'It is plain beyond doubt that Cargill, who never acknowledged responsibility for the paper, did not intend that it should see the light of day in the form in which it was drafted' (Grant M 1988:119). Its publication in unrefined form was clearly an embarrassment to the Cameronians. The probability is that this expedited the publication of the *Sanquhar Declaration* by Cameron.

The version published in Wodrow (1833 iii:207–211) is longer than the version originally published by the government. Wodrow has eight Articles in his copy of the *Queensferry Paper*, but the original has only 'seven Articles, or statements of policy' (Grant M 1988:119). It 'has apparently been expanded and developed to express in a more coherent form the principles of its authors' (*ibid*:255). Since our study is concerned more with the development of Cameronianism than with identifying what is 'original Cargill,' the Wodrow copy is discussed below. In his testimony, William Thomson, who was executed with Cargill, states: 'I adhere to the paper commonly called Mr. Donald Cargill's Covent (sic), ... to the original copies of these papers, as they were corrected and revised by the authors' (Thomson 1779:184). Since William Thomson was executed on 27 July 1681, it is clear that revisions were undertaken within one year of the draft document being appropriated.

The **prologue** identifies the paper as a declaration for conscience's sake, and a '*solemn and sacred bond*' along the lines of Cameron's bond before

Sanquhar. In it, the potential subscribers²⁰ *'resolve to covenant with and before God, ... that men (knowing) ... our inward thoughts ... (so) that those who join with us, may do it on solid grounds.'* **The Paper commences** with a brief Confession in God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and an affirmation of the Scriptures, followed by a determination to advance the Kingdom of God by the establishment of the *'true reformed religion.'* Reformed Presbyterian doctrine, worship and church government are declared exclusively correct. **Article Fifth** in Wodrow comprises both **Articles Fourth and Fifth** in the original. It rejects the authority of the Stewart dynasty for *'its' tyrannous behaviour upon those who were merely 'maintaining Christ's right of ruling over their consciences.'* The wording *'we neither own, nor shall yield any willing obedience to them, but shall rather suffer the utmost of their cruelties and injuries'²¹ (until God shall plead our cause),'* appears to express a willingness to accept the result of civil disobedience similar to the type advocated by Gandhi in the 1940s, and has reference to the discussion on declaring war contained in **Article Eighth** (below). **Article Fifth** further states that the subscribers will set up governors over themselves in place of the existing authorities, referring to the civil magistrate in Chapter XXIII of the *Westminster Confession*. This flies in the face of the Cameronian principle, steadfastly held and specifically repudiated at the formation of the United Societies in 1682, *not* to set up a civil government over themselves. This article smacks of Hamilton's influence.

Article Sixth identifies the duties of ministers *'to preach, propagate, and defend the kingdom of God, and to preserve the doctrine, worship, discipline, government, liberties and privileges of the same from all corruptions or encroachments'*, and then proceeds to attack not only those ministers who accepted the Indulgence, but those who had any connection with them. *'This was an exclusiveness of a kind never advocated by the general body of the Presbyterians. It was of a piece with the exclusive spirit which had caused M'Ward so much distress ... and which Cargill himself did his best to discourage'* (Grant M 1988:122). One wonders whether the influence of

²⁰ Since the *Queensferry Paper* was seized in draft form, it was never actually subscribed to.

²¹ This is reminiscent of the wording of the *Declaration of Arbroath* 1320.

Robert Hamilton is also discernible in this? Certainly, his views on separation from the Indulged were more extreme than any of the Cameronian clergy.

Article Seventh continues explaining the role of ministers and emphasises that clergy must be *'rightly chosen and rightly ordained.'* It would appear that this might have been inserted later, as a counter to the increasingly radical influence of the Hamiltonian (lay) party. Cameron's ordination was open to question in certain circles. This Article may be a defence mechanism to ensure that clergy, and not laity, direct Cameronian doctrine and discipline henceforth. This Article also states that *'It is not the intention to separate from the communion of the true church, nor set(ing) up new ministers,'* another critical Cameronian principle.

Article Eighth confirmed the mutual defence bond mentioned in the prologue. However, there is a reference to a declaration of war, which requires closer examination. Macpherson (1923:34) writes, 'a state of war between the Cameronians and the Government was openly proclaimed.' Such statements have been widely and uncritically accepted for more than 300 years. A careful reading of the wording reveals that the authors consider that if the Cameronian party continues to be *'pursued or troubled any farther in our worshipping rights and liberties, that we shall look upon it as a declaring war.'* In other words, war is being declared *by* the government *upon* the Cameronians, not the other way round. An acceptance of this is required for a proper understanding of the Cameronian attitude to the use of weapons.

As far back as 1673, Cargill had signed a moderate supplication, 'making it clear that he acknowledged the power of the state in its own sphere. Indeed he was never to challenge this principle' (Grant M 1988:68). The concept 'propounded was a republican form of Government ... plainly contrary to Presbyterian principles it showed the danger – of which Cargill for one, was always deeply conscious – of fighting the spiritual warfare with carnal weapons, of giving the enemy an advantage by fighting on his terms' (*ibid*:121). Admittedly, the *Paper* comments that its authors *'seek to cause to perish, all that shall, in an hostile manner, assault us, and to maintain, relieve*

and right ourselves of those that have wronged us, but not to trouble or injure any, but those that have injured us.' This speaks forcefully about the inherent right of self-defence and the protection of the innocent.

The *Queensferry Paper* was of wider compass than previous Cameronian documents, and soon became an item on the list to which several Cameronian martyrs subscribed in their testimonies before execution. Macpherson (1923:34) goes so far as to describe the document as 'the magna charta of the [Cameronian] party ... a document of far-reaching import.' This is probably an overstatement,²² but what is not in dispute is that it did have a significant effect on the development of Cameronian thought. However, it is important to remember that it was still in draft, and some later Cameronian documents, such as the *Apologetical Declaration* 1684, repudiate certain parts (such as the inference of setting up a Cameronian magistracy) as being out of line with later formal Cameronian policy.

The Torwood Excommunication, 12 September 1680

Unlike the *Queensferry Paper*, this document is exclusively and definitively the work of Donald Cargill. He emitted this excommunication at the Torwood Forest on 12 September 1680, three months after the *Sanquhar Declaration*. It is possible that he chose Torwood because of its historical links with the struggle for freedom in Scotland,²³ for in a letter of 16 March 1681, Cargill was to chide those 'that take a greater delight in Bruce and Wallace ... than they do in the Word of God' (quoted by Grant M 1988:154).

By now, Cargill was the only active field preacher left in the whole of Scotland. The government went all out to apprehend him, considering that, with Cargill out of the way, the Cameronian movement would collapse. Cargill was greatly distressed by Cameron's death and withdrew into a period of prayer and meditation. 'It was clear nevertheless that not only was he grieving over the distressed state of the church ... he was preparing for something totally

²² The *Informatory Vindication* is generally regarded as the Cameronian *magna charta*.

²³ William Wallace hid there after the Battle of Falkirk in 1298, and it was the mustering ground for the army of Robert Bruce in June 1314 before the Battle of Bannockburn, *the* decisive battle whereby Scotland threw off the English yoke.

foreign to his previous practice, for some kind of positive, public act' (Grant M 1988:131). On 12 September, an immense crowd assembled at the Torwood to hear him, drawn by an expectation of something sensational. They were not disappointed. His intention was to excommunicate the King!

The format of the day was a Lecture, a Discourse, the Excommunication proper, ending with a Sermon. Rather than considering Cargill's preaching,²⁴ (as has been done with Cameron), his words on the day of the Excommunication will be examined, the better to retain the originality of the narrative.

The Lecture was a biblical justification for the Excommunication that was about to take place, the text being Ezekiel 21:25-27; "... *Remove the diadem, and take off the crown:...*" Cargill commences: '*Now I have only one thing to beg of you, that you would not entertain prejudices against us before we speak*' (Howie 1880:491). A much needed plea, as what he was about to do, would upset many friends, as well as foes. He touches on his first sermon after Cameron's death, twice saying, '*there is a great one fallen*' (*ibid*:491). But, his main theme is that God is the righteous judge who will not leave oppressors unjudged. '*The Lord is wearied of many ... but He is about to make a great change*' (*ibid*). For it is God who commands the crown to be removed, but unlike Joshua (in Zechariah 3:4-5), there will be no clean garments for King Charles. '*The Lord gives orders to rend his insignia regalia*' [*for*] ... *it is to be observed concerning the overthrow of princes, that it is generally of great extent*' (*ibid*:492). In the style of Cameron, he asks '*How long shall this be?*' (*ibid*:493), but one can only say that Cargill equivocates about the length of time, though not about the eventual outcome: '*Until he come ... His day is coming*' (*ibid*:493/4).

The Discourse is an explanation of the nature and causes of excommunication. Cargill commences by adding I Corinthians 5:13b to his text: "*Therefore put away from amongst yourselves that wicked person:*" Whilst excommunication is the highest censure of the church, it is not to be used '*at all times*

²⁴ Maurice Grant's *No King but Christ: The story of Donald Cargill*, 1988, Appendix 1 :211-228, deals fully with Cargill's preaching.

against all sins' (Howie 1880:495). In order to suffer this penalty, the subject must first of all be someone '*who pretends to belong to a true church [but] ... by his sinning is become an alien*' (*ibid*:495), so excommunication is the removal of the '*insignia of Christianity*' (*ibid*:496) and a '*ministerial punishment ... [and] a ministerial declaring of the mind of the Lord*' (*ibid*),²⁵ ratified by God himself in terms of "*Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven*" (Matt 16:19). Cargill had no doubt of his authority to act in this manner. His ordination was beyond question (which *might* not have been the case for Cameron). His right to excommunicate was enshrined in Chapter XXX. IV of the *Westminster Confession*, and John Knox himself had ruled that '*all Estaitis within this Realme be subject, yf thay offend, alsweil the Reullaris as thay that are reulit*' (Laing 1895 ii:253). However, Knox also laid down that, in the case of 'Excommunication, (which is the greatest and last ponishment belonginge to the spirituall Ministerie); it is ordenyed, that nothings be attempted in that behalf without the determination of the whole Church' (*ibid* iv:205). Cargill deals with this aspect in a letter:²⁶ 'If ever any excommunication is just, this is: and so far orderly as the times and state of affairs will permit, for the consent of the church cannot be expected in the perturbed state thereof, neither ought it to be waited for in a declined and corrupted state of the church' (Grant M 1988:149). Presumably, Cargill considered himself to be the last of the clergy of the true church (after the manner of Elijah in I Kings 19:10: "I, even I only, am left"), but he steers very close to the wind of orthodoxy by such unilateral action. 'It was simply as a "minister of Jesus Christ," a minister of the Church Universal that Cargill ... passed the sentence of excommunication' (Macpherson 1926 *RSCHS* 1:226).

The Excommunication proper commences: '*I, being a minister of Jesus Christ, and having the authority and power from Him, do, in His name and by His Spirit, excommunicate and cast out of the true Church, and deliver up to Satan, Charles II, king, &c*' The list of those excommunicated is what

²⁵ Here, Cargill explains the Cameronian purpose in making public declarations at the market cross; 'as a herald at the public cross declares the mind of the king and states, concerning such' (Howie 1880:496). Of course, this was not a practice confined to the Cameronians.

²⁶ This letter was first published in the *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, 1910/111, pp.248-9. However, there is another copy of the letter in the *Wodrow Manuscripts*, where it is definitely ascribed to Cargill (Grant M 1988:260 fn).

might be expected, encompassing, the hierarchy of the principal persecutors of the Covenanters. Those excommunicated were:

King Charles II, for;

High contempt of God;
Great perjury;
Rescinding all laws for establishing (true) religion and reformation;
Commanding armies to destroy the Lord's people;
Being an enemy and persecutor of the true Protestants; and helper of
Papists;
Bringing guilt upon the kingdom;
Adultery, incest and drunkenness.

James, Duke of York, (subsequently James VII), for idolatry.

James, Duke of Monmouth, for leading armies against the Lord's people.

John, Duke of Lauderdale, for blasphemy and apostacy, etc.

John, Duke of Rothes, for perjury, adultery, etc.

Sir George MacKenzie, for apostacy, persecution, etc.

(General) Thomas Dalziel of Binns, for leading armies and oppressing the Lord's people.

Cargill closes with a declaration of his conviction that *'the sentence is just, and there is no king, nor minister on earth, without repentance²⁷ of the persons, can lawfully reverse these sentences'* (Howie 1880:501).

The Sermon after the Excommunication is quite short. Taking as his text *"For the Lord will not cast off for ever...."* (Lam 3:31-32), in a somewhat repetitive way, Cargill (who remarks, *'We shall not go through everything in this text'* [Howie 1880:503]), highlights: because God's nature is unchangeable, and because He is faithful, He cannot perpetually cast off His people. So, although it may appear that the faithful remnant may have been cast off, this cannot be so, for *'Yet He will have compassion He will turn the wheel upon the wicked, and he will have his people up again, [for] there is nothing that will make us sure of his return, but His compassion and mercy'* (*ibid*:506).

²⁷ See p133 fn 31 below, for those who appear to have repented.

Many, who had formerly sided with Cargill, now felt he had overstepped the mark. Even an author as well disposed as Smellie (1960:345), writing as late as 1903, remarks that; 'in the clear dry light of prudence and sagacity we may decide that Cargill did a reckless thing.' If it was reckless, then it was quite out of character, for he did nothing without earnest thought and prayer. Cargill was convinced that he had carried out the will of God, and never resiled from that position. Some time later, he said, 'I know I am and will be condemned by many for what I have done, but condemn me who will, I know I am approved of God, and am persuaded that what I have done on earth is ratified in heaven; for if ever I knew the mind of God, and was clear in my call to any piece of my generation-work, it was in that. And I shall give you two signs, that ye may know I am in no delusion: 1. If some of these men do not find that sentence binding upon them ere they go off the stage, and be obliged to confess it, & 2. If these men die the ordinary death of men, then God hath not spoken by me' (Howie 1781:425/60). By this prophecy, he was prepared to be put to the test by posterity, and posterity was to prove him correct.²⁸

What the Excommunication adds to our understanding of the Cameronians is that, even at this juncture, with only two field-preachers left alive,²⁹ they still considered themselves the remnant of the true Presbyterian Church, with all the authority that implied. Even the State 'recognized that those people who believed that Cargill had divine authority ... would now regard themselves as loosed from their allegiance' (Grant M 1988:137). Despite clear evidence that Cargill intended civil disobedience, not armed rebellion, the government's response was to redouble efforts to extirpate him and his followers, and, as usual, many innocent people suffered.

4.3.3 Cargill's Character

The depth of Cargill's walk with his Lord was manifest to those who knew him, both friend and foe. At his trial, the indictment said that 'he had cast off all fear

²⁸ In Howie's (1781:426) and Walker's (1827 ii:9) opinion, all those mentioned in the Excommunication died 'unnaturally': Charles II poisoned, James VII in exile, Lauderdale of gluttony, Rothes in great terror, Mackenzie by haemorrhage, and Dalziel (or Dalzell) choked on his wine.

²⁹ Cargill and Blackader, who was inactive due to ill health.

of God,' to which Cargill replied, 'The man that has caused this paper to be drawn up, hath done it contrary to the light of his own conscience, for he knoweth I have been a fearer of God from mine infancy The advocate ... [Sir George Mackenzie, one of the excommunicate] could not deny the truth thereof' (Howie 1781:431).

His spiritual awakening took place in about 1647 when, in deep depression, he decided to throw himself into an abandoned mineshaft. But instead, he heard 'the words of the Saviour, "Son, thy sins are forgiven thee," [which] powerfully spoke peace to his soul' (Purves 1968:175). 'He was filled not only with an inward peace, but with an unshakeable assurance of his salvation that was to remain with him to the end of his life' (Grant M 1988:20). Even on the gallows, his clear conscience resulted in an inward peace. 'My conscience doth not condemn me ... but I am at peace with God through a slain Mediator' (Thomson 1779:39). He surely had the 'peace which passeth all understanding' (Phil 4:7). A remarkable degree of joy was manifest in him. Before his execution on 27 July 1681, his testimony commences: 'This is the most joyful day that ever I saw in my pilgrimage on earth; my joy is now begun' (*ibid*:35), and his penultimate sentence begins, 'Welcome joy unspeakable' (*ibid*:40). Indeed joy on the scaffold was manifest with so many of the Cameronian martyrs that it became almost a trademark.

Cargill was a careful and cautious man, yet once committed to any plan of action, certain that it was the will of God, he was quite fearless in its prosecution. Faith in his Lord and the rightness of His cause, carried him through a hard life with many discouragements. Faith in the rightness of his cause brought him back from Holland with Cameron, when others remained safely on the continent, for he was a man of courage. His sermon speaking out against the Day of Thanksgiving for the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, his courage in returning to Scotland to what was virtually certain death in 1679, his moral courage at Torwood and on the gallows, set an example to many to stand fast against the Erastianism which sought to limit their religious freedom. Shortly after the Queensferry incident, 'some persons said to him, We think, Sir, preaching and praying go best with you when your danger and

distress are greatest. He said, it had been so, and hoped it would be so, that the more that enemies and others did thrust at him ... the more sensibly the Lord had helped him' (Howie 1781:425). Yet, despite his courageous stance in the teeth of bitter persecution and opposition, Cargill never sought his own way and, though courageously outspoken, he never delivered a railing judgment upon any of his enemies, save in the exceptional circumstance of the *Torwood Excommunication*.

He loved his people greatly, and was loved in return. Near the end of his ministry, one of his hearers remarked: 'O Sir; ... all is good, sweet and wholesome that you deliver,' but went on to complain of the brevity of his preaching, to which Cargill replied, 'What comes not from the heart, I have little hope will go to the hearts of others' (Howie 1781:427). Banished, severely wounded twice, exiled, hunted, brutalized after capture, and ultimately executed, he continued to love and encourage others, even on the scaffold. 'All ye that are the poor remnant ... I say to you that are thus waiting, Wait on, and ye shall not be disappointed' (Thomson 1779:38).

He was a man of prayer. 'From his youth he was much given to secret prayer, yea whole nights' (Walker 1827 ii:7) and, at times of crisis, such as after the death of Cameron and Torwood, he tended to become more solitary than normal and would retreat into prayer and meditation. Cargill was noted for his abstinence: 'Sober and temperate in his diet, saying commonly, "It was well won that was won off the flesh"' (Robert Hamilton quoted by Howie 1781:432).

Any discussion of Cargill's life would be incomplete without considering the many occasions when it seems obvious that God intervened in a supernatural way. His escapes are too numerous to discuss here, similarly his rapid recovery twice from what might have been mortal wounds. From the time of his arrest in particular, it seems clear that he was sustained by a supernatural care. Bonshaw, who captured him and treated him callously on the journey to Glasgow, never lived to enjoy the reward of 5000 merks. Cargill had prophesied that Bonshaw would die at Lanark and he was killed in a sword fight there a year later. When Cargill reached Glasgow, John Nisbet, the

archbishop's factor, ridiculed him thrice: "Will you give us one word more?".... Cargill said with regret, "Mock not ... The day is coming when you shall not have one word to say" (Howie 1781:429). Soon after, Nisbet's tongue swelled up and he died unable to speak. When Cargill reached Edinburgh and was arraigned before the Duke of Rothes (one of the excommunicated), who 'raged against him, threatening him with torture and a violent death. ... To whom he (Cargill) said: "My lord Rothes, forbear to threaten me, for die what death I will, your eyes shall not see it"' (*ibid*). Rothes died on the morning of the same day that Cargill was executed. On the day of his sentencing, it was proposed: 'That he was old and had done all the ill he would do, to let him go to the Bass, and be a prisoner there during his life' (Walker 1827 ii:50). The Earl of Argyle, who had the casting vote, said 'Let him go to the gallows, and die like a traitor' (*ibid*). Argyle himself was executed in June 1685.³⁰

'To the end of his days, often at the risk of his own reputation, Cargill refused to assent or adhere to anything that did not satisfy his own conscience as being motivated for the sole aim of God's glory ... For him the issues were essentially spiritual' (Grant M 1988:109). The last word comes from what may seem a surprising source, none other than Sir Robert Hamilton:

He was affectionate, affable and tender hearted to all such as he thought had anything of the image of God in them. ... generous, liberal and most charitable to the poor; a great hater of covetousness; a frequent visitor of the sick; much alone; loving to be retired; but when about his Master's public work, laying hold of every opportunity to edify; in conversation still dropping what might minister grace to the hearers; his countenance was edifying to beholders; often sighing with deep groans; preaching in season and out of season, upon all hazards; ever the same in judgment and practice. From his youth he was much given to the duty of secret prayer (Thomson 1779:422/3).

³⁰ It is reported 'that [the] Morning before he [Argyle] died, That, above all Things in his Life, that [his casting vote] lay heaviest upon him' (Walker 1827 ii:51). In May of the same year, Argyle had remarked to Thomas Urquhart: 'I am perswaded I will be called Infatuate Argyle: But all that does not trouble me so much, as that unhappy wicked vote I gave against that good man and minister, Mr Cargill' (*ibid*).

4.3.4 Cargill's Influence

Cargill, like Cameron, influenced many. His greatest impact was upon the common people and his concern for them was great. Often, he would respond with compassion to a plea from a simple person, even if responding might put his life in jeopardy. When he was about to depart from the Glasgow Barony Church without taking up his charge there, 'a certain godly woman, she said to him, "Sir, you have promised to preach on Thursday, and have you appointed a meal to poor starving people, and will ye go away and not give it?"...This so moved him, that he durst not go away' (Howie 1781:424). Thus began a ministry to that congregation which effectively lasted for his lifetime.

There is little doubt that the example of both Cameron and Cargill stiffened the resolve of the suffering remnant in Scotland until Renwick's ordination in 1683. 'For Cargill, the doctrine which he taught was not merely a system of theology, but a set of living realities to be put into daily practical experience Schooled as he was in the varied experiences of life, with his share of personal sorrow, he was well able to convey these truths to his hearers with sympathy and understanding. It was this identity of heart, preacher with hearer, that was the foundation of his popular appeal' (Grant M 1988:212). It is clear that he was regarded as something of a father figure amongst the Cameronians, and encouraged many in their hour of testing. Perhaps the power of Cargill's influence is nowhere better demonstrated than by his ability to call his enemies to repentance. We have already remarked on the impact he made upon the Earl of Argyle. The Duke of Rothes also seems to have repented before he died,³¹ and may therefore thank Cargill for leading him to salvation.

Cargill also inspired at least two future leaders of the Cameronians. On 1 August 1680, Alexander Shields heard him preach at Craigmad in Stirlingshire

³¹ 'When he [Rothes] found the Pangs of Death turning sharp upon him, he cried out for some of his Wife's Ministers ... for his Ministers were good to live with but not to die with ... [Two Presbyterian ministers] 'dealt very faithfully and freely with him ... To whom he said, "We all thought little of what that man did, in excommunicating us; but I find that Sentence binding upon me now, and will bind to Eternity." Several Noblemen and Bishops being in the next room, some of them said to the Bishops, "He is a Presbyterian Minister that is praying; the Devil aye of you can pray as they do, tho' your prayers would keep a soul out of Hell" ... William Duke of Hamilton rejoined, "We banish these Men from us, and yet, when dying, we call for them; this is a melancholy work"' (Walker 1827 ii:46/7).

(Walker 1827 ii:10). 'This must have been immediately before his (Shields') second visit to Holland' (Macpherson 1932:8). It is a moot point how much influence this had on Shields, but he later credits Cargill together with Cameron, with 'a zeal and boldness becoming Christ's ambassadors' (Shields A 1797:160). But, perhaps Cargill's greatest influence was at the moment of his death. 'For one spectator, a young man of nineteen, by the name of James Renwick, it set the seal on his resolve to identify himself completely with the suffering church and with the cause which Cargill and his friends had laid down their lives. Two years later, at Darnead, Renwick, now an ordained minister, took for the text of his first sermon ... the well-remembered text of Cargill's last sermon, and it was James Renwick's way of showing to the world that he had taken up the mantle Cargill had so honourably laid down' (Grant M 1988:204/5).

Subsequently after the death of Cameron on 22 July 1680, and the capture of Cargill on 11 July 1681, their followers, now increasingly known by their new nickname of Cameronians, were bereft of clergy until the arrival of James Renwick, newly ordained, from Holland in September 1683. When in turn Renwick laid his life down in 1688, Alexander Shields was to take up his mantle.

4.4 CAMERONIANS IN THE NETHERLANDS

'Very few historians have acknowledged the part played by the [Scottish] exiles [in the Netherlands]' (Gardner 2004:179). The aftermath of Bothwell Brig brought a flood of Scottish exiles to Holland. During 1679/80, 11 Scots ministers³² arrived (*ibid*:Appendix I), many at the invitation of M'Ward and Brown. In addition to Richard Cameron, those who were destined to be leaders in the Cameronian movement were Donald Cargill, Thomas Douglas (the preacher of Drumclog), and Alexander Shields. There were also 13 confirmed lay exiles³³ who arrived after Bothwell (*ibid*:Appendix II), some of whom had already become, or were to become, significant Cameronian

³² In total, 65 Scots ministers were exiled to Holland (Gardner 2004:Appendix 1).

³³ About 100 confirmed exiles and 140 possible exiles are recorded (Gardner 2004:Appendices 2 & 3).

personalities.³⁴

Those who escaped to Holland tended to be the more privileged Covenanters. Examining the list of *Definite Exiles* in Appendix II of Ginny Gardner's (2004) *The Scottish Exile Community in The Netherlands; 1660--1690*, one is struck not so much by the presence of members of the nobility, such as Archibald Campbell, Earl of Argyll, Lord Lorne and Lord Colville, and several baronets, including Sir Robert Hamilton of Preston and Sir Patrick Hume of Polwarth, but by the many lairds,³⁵ no fewer than 22, including such Cameronian sympathizers as Robert Ker of Kersland. 'Those known to come from the middle orders of society numbered sixty-two ... The remainder were further up the social scale' (Gardner 2004:17).

The Netherlands played a significant role for Covenanting clergy. 'The Dutch Church was Calvinist in theology and Presbyterian in polity.... the general atmosphere of Holland was more or less congenial to the Covenanters' (Macpherson 1932:8). The University of Utrecht (founded 1636) appealed more to Cameronians than Leyden, being more strictly Calvinistic. 'Leiden was generally considered to be more moderate in its theological outlook than ... Utrecht' (Gardner 2004:126). 'Although the evidence is inconclusive, MacWard's Dutch circle probably provided the emergent leadership of the [United] Societies with support and educational opportunities, as Koelman took part in Cameron's ordination and it was probably on account of MacWard's intellectual circle that two of the defining figures of the United Societies, Walter Smith and Alexander Shields ... took up their studies at Utrecht' (Jardine 2005:83). 'Voetius formed a school of Dutch ministers which included Willem à Brackel and Jacobus Koelman' (Gardner 2004:126). Both à Brackel and Koelman were of assistance to exiled Cameronians. à Brakel was a good

³⁴ In addition to William Cleland and Robert Hamilton, John Balfour of Kinloch and David Hackston of Rathillet, both of whom had been involved in Sharp's murder, arrived. Hackston was subsequently captured on the day that Cameron was killed and executed. Henry Hall of Haughhead, in whose house Cameron had been licensed, was later mortally wounded whilst helping Cargill to escape on the day when the *Queensferry Paper* was captured. William Blackader of Troqueer (son of Rev John Blackader, a prisoner on the Bass Rock with Shields), was the elder brother of another John, who later became Lt-Col of the Cameronian Regiment. He (William Blackader) was involved with Cleland in the abortive Argyle raid of 1685 and became physician to King William after the Revolution. James Boig was executed with Cargill and three others on 27 July 1681.

³⁵ Minor landed gentry.

friend to the United Societies. Michael Shields (1780:32) described him as 'one who hath various ways declared much concernedness with, and laid out himself not a little for the encouragement of the suffering remnant.' Koelman assisted at Cameron's ordination, and à Brackel was a facilitator at both those of Renwick (Groningen 1683) and Lining (Emben 1688).

Gisbert Voetius (1589-1676)³⁶ was appointed Professor of Theology at Utrecht in 1634. His outlook suited the Cameronians, particularly his antipathy to Cocceius and Arminius (both of Leyden), since the Cameronians considered Holland to be a hotbed of Coccesian and Arminian heresy, as well as being somewhat latitudinarian.³⁷ 'Voetians rejected the liberal theology of Johannes Cocceius' (Jardine 2005:83). 'Voetius is said to have written his *Theologia practica* after becoming acquainted with some of the Scots divines' (Gardner 2004:126). Both John Brown of Wamphray and Robert M'Ward corresponded with Voetius, and may well have been amongst those who inspired the writing of the *Theologia practica*. 'Through MacWard's promotion of the works of the covenanting divine Samuel Rutherford, he became intimate with Professors Gisbert Voetius ... Matthias Nethenus, Andreas Essenius, and Leusden at the relatively conservative University of Utrecht' (Jardine 2005:83). Dr Melchior Leydecker, Professor of Divinity at Utrecht, eulogized John Brown of Wamphray. 'There was a door opened abroad for teaching young men at a university, a benefit which could not be rightly gotten at home, which was obtained by the means of the said Mr William Brackel' (Shields M 1780:41). 'After the Revolution ... [it was] hoped to have Koelman called to the ministry in Scotland' (Gardner 2004:126).

In 1651, Samuel Rutherford, the forefather of Cameronianism, was offered, but declined, the Chair of Divinity at Utrecht 'upon the death of the learned Dematius' (Howie 1995:235), possibly because his *Exercitationes Apologeticae pro Divina Gratia* 'exposed ... the Arminian errors of Archbishop Laud' (Cook 1992:8) from a rigidly Calvinistic standpoint. In 1636, its publication in

³⁶ 'Voetius was the founding father of Utrecht University,' (Prof Henk van Rinsum, Utrecht Lecture, University of Stellenbosch, 8 Nov 2006). Utrecht University is credited with being the *alma mater* of the Stellenbosch Theological Faculty.

³⁷ In the event, William II's latitudinarianism proved a boon at the Revolution of 1688/9.

Amsterdam led to his deposition by the Privy Council in Scotland and exile. Alexander Shields enrolled at Utrecht as a student of theology in 1680, prior to his appointment in London in 1685. His *magnum opus*, *A Hind Let Loose* and Renwick's *Informatory Vindication* were both published at Utrecht. At Utrecht, other Cameronian students of note included William Cleland, who published his legal thesis, *Disputatio juridica de probationibus*, there in 1684, and James Douglas, Earl of Angus, who was sent there to study in 1690 along with his *gouverneur* Capt James Cranston. He left (reputedly to his father's anger), to assume command of his Regiment (Angus's), the Cameronian Regiment, at Steenkirk on 3 Aug 1692, their first battle on foreign soil, during which he was killed whilst rescuing some Cameronian soldiers.

Cameronian exiles were also involved in the planning and preparation of William's invasion force for the Glorious Revolution of 1688/9 (see Chapter 7).

4.5 CONCLUSIONS FROM THIS CHAPTER

4.5.1 State of Freedom of Religion

For the Cameronians. Inspired by Cameron and Cargill, the Cameronians (as they were now becoming known) began to demonstrate that they would not be cowed by persecution, but held fast to their inalienable right to worship where they wanted, to hear whom they wanted, and to believe what they wanted. A new spirit of religious freedom was abroad in the fields as the Cameronians continued their struggle for freedom of doctrine, worship, discipline, and church government.

For Scotland. As the Cameronians began to exercise their right to freedom of religion as far as they could, despite the persecution, the hand of the government fell more heavily upon the rest of Scotland, and more pressure was brought upon moderate Presbyterians to conform to Episcopacy or bow to Erastianism. This many did, including many Indulged ministers, who, nevertheless, were often sincere men of God.

4.5.2 Cameronian clergy were Orthodox Presbyterians

The Cameronian clergy (and it should be said, virtually all the Scots Presbyterian clergy) were men of high moral standing. They were not men of expediency, but of conviction. No Cameronian clergyman ever advocated permanent separation from the Church of Scotland. They claimed to hold steadfastly to their Presbyterian orthodoxy, whilst accepting that the times were exceptional, and therefore required exceptional action. Separation from those who had accepted the Indulgences was always regarded as merely a temporary measure.

4.5.3 The Cameronian movement considered that it possessed the full authority of the Church to act in matters of conviction

In the same way that Brown and M'Ward held that they operated under the authority of the Church of Scotland, Cargill held the same to be true regarding his authority to emit the *Torwood Excommunication*, and Cameron the *Sanquhar Declaration*.

4.5.4 Cameron's Preaching themes

Cameron's sermons were at their most effective when he was dealing with matters of the Spirit, calling people to repent and turn to Christ. His appeal embraced even his enemies.

- One of the most outstanding aspects of Cameron's preaching is his command of **Scripture**.
- He demonstrated a strong **prophetic strain**.
- When Cameron moved his preaching **from the head to the heart**, his ministry flourished in the most extraordinary way.
- His sermons demonstrate a **fearlessness**, as well as **concern for his hearers' spiritual wellbeing (salvation)**.
- He deals with the **dichotomy of temporal and spiritual** as a recurring theme.
- At field meetings, he uses the **spirituality of the open moors** as a theme.
- **Erastianism in the form of Indulgences** is seen as *the* serious

stumbling block; the worst sort of Erastianism being any threat to the Kingship of Christ. *'Will you take Christ to be your king?'*

- Cameron refers to the **need for private intercession** (e.g. fasting) to **support public intercession**, and for greater sincerity of purpose.
- His expectation continues steadfast, that **God, not man, will make wars to cease**, and so will bring freedom of religion to Scotland in His own time.
- However, **God's time might be longer than some expect**. *'But you might be content ... if it were for seven years.'*
- Cameron's **main theme is Christ**, and that all should come to Him.

Cameron's preaching did much to stiffen the resolve of the earliest Cameronians to stand fast in the face of persecution, specifically for their own freedom of worship.

4.5.5 Richard Cameron was ordained and commissioned in Holland for an 'Indefinite Ministry' in Scotland. Perhaps the most significant contribution that John Brown of Wamphray and Robert M'Ward made to Cameronianism was the ordination of Richard Cameron. By ordaining him to an 'Indefinite Ordination,' with effectively the whole of Scotland as his parish, they intended to demonstrate that the Church in exile had the same authority as the Church in Scotland. Not only that, but M'Ward's charge to Cameron to 'go home and lift the fallen standard, and display it publicly before the world' (Howie 1781:404), was a Charge with real spiritual authority as in II Timothy 4:1-2: 'I charge thee therefore ... Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and doctrine.'

4.5.6 Chapter XXIII of *The Westminster Confession* emerges as an area of key concern to Cameronians. A man-made document, such as a Confession, Constitution or Covenant, may be 'liable to amendment or excision' (Rev Dr Donald MacDonald 1968, quoted in Baynes 1971:226). Whilst it was acceptable for Cameronians to question the *Westminster Confession*, it was not acceptable to question Romans 13:1-7, for 'the word of our God shall

stand for ever' (Is 40:8). Rev Richard Buckley, writing in 2007, reiterates this: 'Scripture is *final authority* in matters of life and faith and that the Westminster Confession is *subordinate standard*.... There is no liberty of opinion on those matters that enter into the substance of the faith but liberty on those matters that do not enter into the substance of the faith' (Church of Scotland *Ministers Forum* 2007:No.293)³⁸. The standard Covenanter response, when interrogated on this point, 'was on the lines indicated by Cameron, i.e. the Confessional statement is not to be taken in absolute terms but necessarily assumes conformity by the Sovereign to the ordinary *leges regnandi*, i.e. he must not degenerate into tyranny' (Maurice Grant, e-mail 2 March 2006).

4.5.7 The Cameronian movement was becoming a 'popular' movement

Up to the time of Bothwell, although the Covenanting movement was widespread and might be considered as a popular movement, Cameronianism had been confined to the emerging leaders and a few followers who had become disenchanted with the pace of reform. After Bothwell, when most of the gentry and clergy escaped to Holland, the common folk were pursued and persecuted under a new wave of tyranny. From the time of the return of Cameron and Cargill to Scotland, Cameronianism began to broaden its appeal. In the same way that the clergy had become polarized between the Indulged (who were the majority) and the Cameronians, so the laity began to make a decision for one or the other. The preaching of Cameron and Cargill was so inspired and so full of evidence of the Holy Spirit that many who listened became emboldened to hold out for the religious freedom, which they saw as their inalienable right.

The martyrdoms of Cameronian clergy and laity, who stood fast to the end, inspired more to follow suit. One does not defeat an ideal by killing those who stand for it. Yet, down through history, time and again, this has been tyrants' preferred *modus operandi* in the dying throes of their rule. It was the reaction of both Church and State to Christ. It did not succeed! Neither did it with the

³⁸ 'This disclaimer of inspired infallibility is implicit in all Reformed credal formulations' (Hazlitt 1987:296). 'Geve ony man wyll note in this our confession ony Artycle or sentence repugning to goodis holy worde ... that it wald pleis him ... to admonische us of the same in wrytt' (Preface to Scots Confession 1560' (quoted *ibid*).

Cameronians, for Cameronianism now began to emerge as an identifiable popular movement.

4.5.8 Cameronianism now had its own founding documents

These were; *The Queensferry Paper*; *The Sanquhar Declaration*; *The Torwood Excommunication* and - in many ways much harder to justify - *The Rutherglen Declaration*. With the exception of the last, these documents not only set out the Cameronian point of view (in much the same way as modern liberation movements release media or mission statements), but they also had the prophetic purpose of calling Church and State to acknowledge their shortcomings before God. Article Sixth of *The Queensferry Paper* is the first Cameronian document to set out the four religious freedoms which lay at the heart of their struggle; *'to preserve the doctrine, worship, discipline [and] government ... from all corruptions or encroachments.'* Whilst Cameron's preaching did much to stiffen the resolve of the early Cameronians to stand fast for their religious freedom, it was Cargill who clearly identified what these freedoms were: **doctrine, worship, discipline and government.**

4.5.9 Spiritual Warfare

Whilst the Cameronians had indeed declared war upon the House of Stewart, the intention of both Cameron and Cargill was that it should be a spiritual, not temporal, warfare. This was not always well understood by the Cameronian laity, and the government saw it as an opportunity to vilify the entire movement. History has widely and uncritically accepted the temporal warfare theory, thereby perpetrating the myth of Cameronianism as a guerilla type movement, whereas the Cameronians had repudiated allegiance to the House of Stewart principally, because of the Erastian interference in their spiritual lives. Cameron and Cargill permitted and approved self-defence, but did not encourage offensive armed action.³⁹

4.5.10 The Netherlands played a significant role in Cameronianism

The Netherlands played a decisive role in Cameronianism as a place of

³⁹ This was later to become formalised after the formation of the United Societies. See Chapter 5.

refuge, education and inspiration. Every Cameronian leader of significance was to visit, or live in, the Netherlands at some stage. There was also an exchange of doctrinal themes and close co-operation between Cameronian and Dutch divines. Ultimately, The Netherlands was the source of the regime change that the Revolution of 1688/9 brought about, providing both a springboard for invasion and a replacement for the Stewart dynasty.

4.5.11 A strong personal osmosis continued to develop, 'each generation shaping up the next.' From Rutherford to Brown and M'Ward, and thence to Cameron and Cargill. Cameron's fearless preaching against Erastianism, in the form of the Crown's Indulgences, his continual appeals to repent and turn to Christ, and his encouragement not to give into oppression, combined with Cargill's display of ecclesiastical authority, inspired the common people to stand fast. Their example stiffened resistance to oppression, by leaders and common people alike. Cameronianism was weathering the storm - for the time being!

CHAPTER FIVE

CAMERONIANISM IN CRISIS:

**From the leadership vacancy subsequent to Cargill's execution in 1681,
up to Renwick's execution in 1688**

*'Out of the furnace of affliction
and of the sufferings of the innocent;
For the sake of the faithfulness of their fathers,
and for the sake of His own holy Name;
The Lord will bring forth a righteous nation*

(Rev John Hawkridge, Moderatorial Address
to the General Assembly of the PCSA, 1981)

5.1 GENERAL SITUATION SUBSEQUENT TO CARGILL'S EXECUTION

The Cameronian situation was at crisis point once again. 'After whose [Cameron and Cargill's] death, the case of the land was deplorable, yea more than it was after Bothwel for now had ministers given over all public preaching, except in some private chambers' (Shields M 1780:5).

Burleigh (1960:251) judges the Cameronians quite harshly, in line with the prevailing mainstream Presbyterian attitude: 'In general the sufferers were humble people, peasants or mechanics of independent minds, who could not, or would not, clear themselves of suspicion of having some degree of sympathy with the Cameronian doctrines The Cameronians gave the government every excuse to wage war on them and they themselves retaliated. They were extremists whose excesses were condemned by nearly all of their Presbyterian brethren at the time.'

Burleigh is quite correct in his assessment of the condemnation of the Cameronians by the Presbyterian generality but, in fact, Cameronian excesses were minimal. Other than rescue attempts, there are no recorded pre-emptive attacks by Cameronians upon government troops or installations after 1679,

other than one successful rescue attempt. The reverse cannot be said. A fresh period of intense persecution and brutality against the Cameronians commenced, culminating in “The Killing Times” of 1684–1685, by which time virtually all other Presbyterians had capitulated in the struggle against Erastianism and accepted the Indulgences, leaving the Cameronians isolated.

Originally writing around 1717, Defoe (1848:94) remarks that, after Torwood, ‘two sorts of people blamed the Cameronians for running that length. First, their Brethren of the Presbyterian Church, who temporised at that time and not thinking themselves called to bear their Testimony in such a manner against their persecutors; or perhaps not being able to bear the fury of the Prosecution, consented to receive the liberty of their worship by the Indulgence of the King ... [since that time] God has been pleased to convince most of these people, that their suffering brethren were in the right.’

Wodrow, an objective writer, but not a Cameronian admirer, remarks:

It is indeed a matter of wonder to me, that at such a juncture more delusions and monstrous errors did not break out. When after Mr Cargill's death, his followers formed themselves into societies, their records bear, that they have been at much pains to keep themselves from these delusive extravagancies ... and through this diligence was crushed in the bud; and the rest of the presbyterians, who now and then had sermons, and pains taken on them by their ministers, and under the want of stated ordinances, gave themselves to meditation, reading and prayer, were in no hazard this way, and many of them were solid, knowing, exercised Christians (Wodrow 1833 iii:355).

Added to physical persecution was new legislation. James, Duke of York, Roman Catholic brother of Charles II, was Commissioner to the Scottish Parliament of 1681. ‘That Parliament's first statute ... ratified all acts in favour of the protestant religion, but its second secured the indefeasible hereditary succession to the crown’ (Dickinson & Donaldson 1954:185), thus raising the probability that the next monarch would be Roman Catholic. Then, on 31

August 1681, the Test Act was passed, imposing an Oath on a wide range of people and associating the Act with the Duke of York's right to succession. The oath, whilst professing the Protestant faith, also affirmed the king to be 'the only Supream Governour of this Realme, over all persons and in all causes as weill Ecclesiastical as Civill' (*ibid*:188). Such an oath was repugnant, not only to the Cameronians, but to many Indulged Presbyterians.

Cameronian attitudes to Church and State were to become more defined during the period leading up to the Revolution of 1688/9. It is important to understand the confusion of the religious and political aspects of the struggle.

The Government's concern was political, in pursuit of Royal Absolutism. In this, the Church was merely a pawn to be used to further this concern. Thus, by the use of Indulgences, the Crown sought to control Presbyterians. But it also controlled Episcopalians through Prelacy. And, from James VII's accession in 1685, Roman Catholics were also used as Royal pawns. The Cameronians, on the other hand, sought religious freedom for themselves, and by implication for others, in that they held that the Kirk should control its own doctrine, worship, discipline and government free from Government interference in the form of Erastianism.

To this end, they sought the removal of the House of Stewart, as a tyranny that denied these freedoms. However, they did not seek to set up, or become, a government over Scotland, or even over themselves, despite certain prominent members, such as Alexander Shields, having republican leanings. The declared Cameronian policy was to obtain religious freedom and, from this, they never departed. There were, however, some with political aspirations within their ranks, mostly of the upper class or minor gentry. At this point, most of these were in Holland but, as the Revolution drew near, some who might claim the title of Cameronian became embroiled in seeking political power. But, it should be clearly understood that this was a departure from declared policy, and undertaken on an individual basis. Therefore, the Cameronian struggle was religious with political undertones, whereas it was political with religious undertones on the Government side.

5.2 THE UNITED SOCIETIES ARE FORMED

At this juncture, the Cameronians had neither leader nor clergy. 'The condition of the party that adhered to the *Sanquhar Declaration* was now very deplorable. Not only were they the objects of relentless persecution ... but they were without a preacher to administer to them the consolations of the gospel ... but they did not despair of the cause which they firmly believed to be that of truth, righteousness and liberty, and resolved at all hazards to maintain their position. But how was this to be done?' (Hutchison 1893:55). A structure was necessary to overcome this problem, and the outcome was the formation of a formal Cameronian polity, which became known as the United Societies.

'On 15 December 1681, delegates gathered at Lesmahagow in Lanarkshire to establish the United Societies. ... According to Alexander Gordon of Earlston¹ ... the organisation comprised approximately 80 local societies with a total membership of perhaps 6 000 or 7 000 persons' (Greaves 1992:81). The members were mostly simple people. 'The sufferers in the cause of civil and religious liberty ... were for the most part, individuals in the lowly walks of life. This circumstance reflects unspeakable credit on the thinking and virtuous peasantry of Scotland' (Simpson 1905:261), who 'simply claimed the ... privilege of worshipping God according to the dictates of their own conscience' (*ibid*:226). Such worship might be both arduous and dangerous.²

The United Societies were presbyterial in form, but not quite Presbyterian. There is little doubt that the members would have wished to have been orthodoxically Presbyterian with a structure of elders, kirk sessions, synods

¹ Earlston's father had been a correspondent of Rutherford's, and Alexander was Robert Hamilton's brother-in-law.

² For example, during the 1670s, Communion services in the field had commenced. 'Often these sacraments grew to such a size that they were not secret at all, but openly defiant of authority' (Schmidt 1989:38). Gilbert Burnet gives a good pen-sketch of field Communion. 'On the Wednesday before they held a fast day with prayers and sermons for about eight or ten hours together; And on the Lord's day they had so very many, that the action continued above twelve hours in some places; And all ended with three or four sermons on Monday for thanksgiving. ... and high pretenders would have gone 40 or 50 miles to a noted communion' (*ibid*:32). This distance was frequently done on foot, sometimes at night, so such commitment was not lightly undertaken. Add to this the danger of being discovered and attacked, either *en route* or at the Communion site itself, and one has some idea of the situation, which United Society members had to endure.

and general assemblies, but the times precluded this. As persecution increased, a series of small fellowships, similar to what today would be called 'cell groups,' developed throughout the south of Scotland. 'They formed little conventicles without a preacher' (Simpson 1905:98). These were then linked into Societies, and Societies within the same county became linked into a District Society or Correspondence. A large county might have two or more District Societies. The District Societies then sent Commissioners to a General Meeting that met quarterly. The relation to Presbyterian structure is clear but, due to the lack of Kirk sessions and ministers, it was perforce only 'somewhat after the model of Presbyterians with its gradation of courts' (Hutchison 1893:57).

From an examination of Michael Shields'³ detailed record of the early General Meetings in *Faithful Contendings Displayed* 1780, it is clear that the United Societies had to feel their way at first. Considering their lack of clerical leadership and the perilous times, they seem to have been remarkably balanced and earnest. 'Each Society consisted of those who ... occupied the position taken up by Cameron - separation from all other Presbyterians who accepted the Indulgences, or in any way held communion with the Indulged or ceased to be open witnesses; and separation from the State, as expressed in the *Sanquhar Declaration*. Along with this adherence to the doctrinal standards of the Church and to the whole attainments of the Second Reformation was required' (Hutchison 1893:57).

Their Terms of Communion stipulated that no-one could be a member who:

- Took any government bond or oath.
- Paid cess, or money to the civil authority or the Indulged clergy.
- Used any government pass, or voluntarily appeared in a court of law.
- Recognised Indulged or 'silent' Presbyterians in any way.

³ Michael Shields (Alexander Shields' brother) was secretary to the United Societies' General Meeting from its inception in December 1681 until its dissolution in 1690. In 1689, he became scribe to the Cameronian Regiment.

A type of 'Statement of Purpose' is set out by Michael Shields, secretary to the General Meeting:

These meetings were, and are looked upon by the United Societies ... neither as civil or ecclesiastic judicatories; but of the same nature with particular Christian societies ... in the time of extreme persecution, by mutual advice and common consent, endeavouring jointly to know the sins and duties of the day, that so they might be helpful and encouraging to one another in concluding what was necessary for their preservation, and the propagation of the testimony, according to the word of God, the laws of nature, and the fundamental constitutions and laudable practices of this ancient and covenanted church and nation of Scotland, acting jointly by way of consultation, deliberation and admonition (Shields M 1780:7-8).

A need was felt for the ability to express the feelings of the whole grouping in the form of a public declaration. These declarations had become a means whereby both government and the public were made aware of current Cameronian policy, as well as expressing their frustration and feelings, and had been used to that end at Rutherglen, Hamilton and Sanquhar. Such declarations, despite causing division amongst Scots Presbyterians at large, had the prophetic role of calling both Church and State to examine their policies and attitudes.

The purpose of the first General Meeting of the United Societies on 15 December 1681 was 'To consider about, and determine upon giving a Public Testimony against the wicked acts of the late parliament, especially that wretched Test' (Shields M 1780:10). It was determined to publish a *Declaration* at Lanark on 12 Jan 1682. The *Lanark Declaration* had little new to say save a brief reference to the Test Act and the Duke of York. It was essentially a declaration of the intense frustration felt by the Society members. '*Is it any wonder, considering such dealings and many thousands more, that true Scotsmen ... should after twenty years tyrannie break out at last, as we have done?*' (*Lanark Declaration* 1682 in Johnston 1887:144-147). As usual, the

government was furious, and publicly burned the *Lanark Declaration*, together with the *Solemn League and Covenant*, the *Rutherglen* and *Sanquhar Declarations* and the *Queensferry Paper* in Edinburgh. They also fined the town of Lanark 6000 merks and persecution increased. 'Some were banished, ... made recruits ... in Flanders ... sold as slaves ... kept in ... bolts and irons ... or [summarily] despatched as sacrifices' (Wodrow 1833 iii:363). The government was lashing out blindly, since the insignificant Cameronian remnant was causing more concern than the authorities cared to admit. Although the leaders at Lanark are unnamed, they had assumed the mantle of Richard Cameron and Donald Cargill for the time being. Clearly, leaders of courage existed, even during this 'leaderless' phase.

5.2.1 Some important attitudes discernible in the early days of the United Societies have relevance here

There was a desire to do things properly, yet lovingly. 'At the time when these meetings were first frequented, it could not be expected that such order was in them as could have been wished ... yet by degrees they afterward attained to a more exact method in managing matters.' Yet, so that 'the Christian charity and brotherly love of any not too rigidly censorious will cover the same' (Shields M 1780:8).

There was a desire to speak with one voice by 'settling a General Correspondence to run circular through the whole societies ... for the speedy knowing of one another's minds about any matter' (*ibid*:12). No-one was permitted to make any public statement without the consent of the General Meeting. Too often had the wrath of the authorities descended upon innocent people as a result of the actions of a few, for 'if wrong as to matter and manner, the whole would be blamed' (*ibid*:13).

There was an attempt to steer a middle course. This had always been a problem for those with Cameronian leanings. Brown and M'Ward tried to hold to it, even Cameron professed it, and Cargill

certainly tried very hard. But they were all clearly on the left of Covenanting society. The best they might hope for was to hold a centrist-left position, but even this proved a problem. 'What contentings and wrestlings they had ... with some declining to the left hand by defection, and with others upon the right hand running to unwarrantable extravagances' (Shields M 1780:7). Michael Shields remarks on the distress of having a powerful and evil enemy to wrestle with: 'But that would have been more easily borne, if they had wanted contending with many of their dear brethren ... Before they had but one party to deal with, and these all on the left hand ... from formerly sworn unto principles: now, they had another to contend against on the right hand, running into excesses of zeal, beyond its due boundaries' (*ibid*:32). In dealing with such internal wranglings, a young man, by the name of James Renwick, began to earn a name for wisdom and ability.

To be armed now became a *sine qua non* for a Cameronian

The Commissioners required each man 'to provide himself fit weapons in case there should be any need requiring the same' (Shields M 1780:19). But these were for self-defence only, so 'that they might be in some posture for their own defence, if bloody papists should make a massacre' (*ibid*:20). Consistently, the majority of Cameronians eschewed violence where possible.

The United Societies were intended as a temporary measure and were not intended as a form of civil government.

The position they claimed was this: they reckoned themselves free from allegiance to the existing government, yet they did not attempt to set up another over themselves, but simply waited on Providence to remove that which they had disowned, or otherwise open up their way. Meanwhile, acting on their natural rights, they took what measures they could to protect themselves. As to the Church, they renounced all communion with it as presently enslaved and corrupted, but were not

schismatics; and though destitute of church organisation, regarded themselves as representing the true Presbyterian Covenanted Church of Scotland. They regarded this position as *merely temporary* [italics mine], and forced upon them by the broken and disordered state of things both in Church and State (Hutchinson 1893:59).

5.2.2. Size of the United Societies

The United Societies mustered a significant number of members. Hutchinson confirms Greaves's (1992:81) report 'that in 1683, there were eighty Societies representing an aggregate of 7000 members, exclusive of women.' (Hutchinson 1893:63). However, 'that the numbers did not diminish during the next five years, notwithstanding the fierce persecution, seems evident from the fact, that at the Revolution they mustered 9000 strong on Douglas Moor⁴ ... As the Societies were confined to southern Scotland, it is manifest that they must have embraced no inconsiderable proportion of the population' (*ibid*).⁵ Macpherson (1932:74) disagrees. 'But more disquieting than their numbers, which were insignificant compared to the population of Scotland, was their intractable spirit. In the years 1680 to 1688, the United Societies virtually constituted a state within the State; and a community at war with the State.' These remarks do not stand up as well to critical examination as they did when they were written, due to the availability of more critical examinations of Cameronian doctrine available to the modern scholar. However, what is less open to dispute is that 'the Cameronians alone were left to do battle for the principle of the Rights of Man against Absolutism; alone they scorned all compromise or accommodation with the Stewart despotism' (*ibid*:75).

5.2.3 "A state within the State?"

It is appropriate to examine the comment, "A state within the State," in more

⁴ However, a number of "sympathisers" were probably also present.

⁵ *Scottish Population History* (Flinn 1977:198/9) estimates the population of the principal Covenanted counties of Ayr, Lanark, Renfrew and Wigton (Galloway), to be 150 000 in 1691. Taking his figure of four occupants per house, 7000 men gives an estimated 28 000 family members. Thus, the Cameronian population of the South-West could have been nearly 20% of the total population.

detail. The Cameronians were not only at pains to confine their repudiation of the State to those who persecuted them, but not to constitute themselves as any form of civil authority. In his discussion on the *Queensferry Paper*, Wodrow (1833 iii:208) remarks ‘that the Cameronians and Society people themselves did not pretend to vindicate every expression in this paper; yea, afterwards in some of their public papers, they expressly disown it, in as far as it does in any way import any purpose of assuming to themselves a magistratical authority.’ This was later confirmed as policy in 1687 by the *Informatory Vindication*, the Cameronian *magna charta*

5.2.4 The term ‘a community at war with the State,’ also requires looking into. We have already seen how Cameron and Cargill intended their war with the Crown to be primarily spiritual. If that had not been the case, then their followers could only be described as a dismal failure at prosecuting the war! The United Societies were at pains to ensure that temporal weapons were used exclusively for defensive purposes, and reacted vigorously against any who overstepped the mark. In 1684, two members of the Life Guards, Kennoway and Stuart, were murdered. The details are unclear, but that Kennoway was brutal in the extreme is manifest from the fact that Wodrow (1833 iv:152-153) takes two entire columns to enumerate his cruelties. History generally agrees that he deserved to die, but naturally the Society members were blamed. They, however, ‘refused to admit some persons to their fellowships whom they suspected to be concerned in this murder’ (*ibid*:152):

The appointed curate at Carsphairn, one Peirson, was an active supporter of Grierson of Lagg, perhaps the most brutal of all those who hunted the Cameronians down. A group of fugitive Cameronians determined to ‘essay to force him to give a written declaration that he would forbear instigating their enemies ... still expressly declaring they would do him no bodily harm.’ However things went wrong, and Peirson was killed in circumstances, which were almost certainly genuine self-defence. ‘Whatever happened, Renwick and the Societies expelled the perpetrators ... and in the [Sanquhar] Protestation condemned the “fact not materially murder” as gone about “contrary to our [Apologetic] Declaration ... in a rash, and not in a Christian

manner” (King Hewison 1908 ii:446/7).

In contradistinction, no disciplinary action was taken when a half troop of Claverhouse’s horse escorting prisoners was ambushed at Enterkin on 29 July 1684 and some prisoners were rescued. Rescuing prisoners was acceptable behaviour. The declared war continued to be, for the most part, spiritual not temporal, and this principle was applied with extreme rigour.⁶

Some modern authors still reject this. ‘After the *Apologetical Declaration* the Covenanters began to fulfil their promise of systematic murder’ (Mitchison 1982:268). The author has uncovered no evidence in support of this statement. ‘It would not have been surprising if men who were placed beyond the protection of the law, and hunted like wild beasts had ... turned upon their ruthless persecutors and taken deadly vengeance But this threat of revenge was never executed’ (Taylor [1859] s a:726 fn). In *Traditions of the Covenanters* (1905), Robert Simpson records several instances when Covenanters had government soldiers at their mercy. In each case, the soldiers were spared, some of them later converting to the Covenanting cause and others promising to no longer take part in hunting down Covenanters.

Whilst the Covenanters demonstrated extreme restraint, the same does not apply to government actions. ‘In reply the government insisted that anyone not abjuring the more bloodthirsty sections of the [*Apologetical*] *Declaration* ... should be shot out of hand’ (Mitchison 1982:268). Referring to ‘the extraordinary severities exercised ... with the barbarous murder of some honest country people in the fields,’ Wodrow (1833 iv:147) proceeds at some length to elaborate on the exceptional cruelties to which the Cameronians and others were subjected, mostly without retaliation. ‘As far as I can learn, they made no attacks, unless it was at Swine-abbay [the murder of Kennoway and Stuart alluded to], where they had no small provocation till they were attacked’ (*ibid*).

⁶ This attitude prevailed in the Cameronian Regiment and was applied as late as the Aden campaign of 1966, when a soldier was sentenced to detention for striking an Arab, despite extreme provocation.

It is not the purpose of this dissertation to dwell upon the degree of persecution inflicted upon the Cameronians. In modern terms, much seems not only brutal, but disgusting.⁷ Cowan (1976:132) remarks that, 'In terms of human life the final toll was not great, some 78 victims having been summarily despatched in the fields.⁸ ... To these must be added those who paid the ultimate penalty after normal judicial proceedings, but the final total does not greatly exceed 160 in all.' There was little *normal* about the judicial proceedings, which were frequently accompanied by torture. Mitchison (1982:268/9) also supports the figure of 78 summary executions 'and others were executed after trial,' but gives no figure. Johnston (1887:597-601) records 171 Covenanters killed by formal or summary execution from 1679 to 1688, excluding those killed in skirmishes. Therefore, if one takes an average between Cowan and Johnston, the score of violent deaths attributable, other than in skirmishes, would appear to be approximately, Cameronians 3 - Government 165, which does seem a trifle disproportionate.⁹ It would appear that the Cameronians had some justification in claiming the moral high ground. Perhaps a more justifiable heading for this paragraph might be "The State at War with a Community?" Mitchison (1982:269), no friend of the Cameronians, considers 'that a vast amount of nonsense has been talked about [the 'Killing Times', and] a great deal of garbage has been inserted into the received edition of Scottish history.' Agreed, but the provenance of such

⁷ Hackson of Rathillet, who was captured after being severely wounded in the affray in which Richard Cameron was killed, is a case in point. Brutally treated *en route* to Edinburgh, despite his wounds, he was sentenced to death. He was 'butchered at the Cross of Edinburgh ... the Hangman cutting off his Secrets [privates], and throwing them at his Face, ripping up his Breast with a Durk, and taking out his heart alive ... and then threw it into the fire.... His Hands and Head were struck off alive, and his Body divided into four Quarters, and placed upon public Ports' (Walker 1827 i:204). 'This barbarous procedure did very much discover the malicious temper of his persecutors and embittered the spirits of a great many' (Wodrow 1833 iii:223).

⁸ Perhaps the classic case is the killing of John Brown of Priesthill by the hand of Claverhouse at his own front door. 'With some difficulty he was allowed to pray, which he did with the greatest liberty and melting ... he having great measure of the gift as well as the grace of prayer, that the soldiers were affected not one of them would shoot him, or obey Claverhouse's commands, so that he was forced to turn executioner himself, and in a fret shot him with his own hand, before his own door, his wife with a young infant standing by, and she very near the time of her delivery of another child. When tears and entreaties could not prevail, and Claverhouse had shot him dead ... the widow said to him, "Well Sir, you must give an account of what you have done." Claverhouse answered, "To men I can be answerable, and as to God, I'll take him into mine own hand." I am well informed, that Claverhouse himself frequently acknowledged afterwards, that John Brown's prayer left such impressions upon his spirit, that he could never get altogether worn off' (Wodrow 1833 iv:245).

⁹ The author considered it so improbable that, subsequent to 1679, the Cameronians had been responsible for the violent deaths of only three, (other than in self-defence and in rescue attempts), that a vigorous search was made, even to obtaining assistance from Dr David Hume of NLS, who, after graciously investigating, remarked 'I'm afraid I wasn't able to find anything [further] in any of the books I consulted' (e-mail 27 Apr 2007).

garbage is not exclusively one-sided.¹⁰ *Quis custodiet ipsos Custodes?*¹¹

The Cameronians have also been accused of being a guerrilla movement. Neil Davidson (2004:23) classifies them as 'Presbyterian Guerrillas in the Service of the Feudal Estates.' This is not a sustainable point of view.¹² One would have to take a very subjective view to consider that the armed Conventiclers of the United Societies fulfilled such a definition. Nevertheless, it is understandable how those, who do not examine the evidence closely, could promulgate such a misconception. 'All the evidence, or lack of it, tends to the conclusion that the Covenanters did not understand guerrilla warfare and had no intent to practice it. The Covenanters had no military organisation, no clandestine cells,¹³ no weapons other than for personal defence, no political strategy. They had ...no military objectives' (Sixsmith M 2007:11). One should also note the strict discipline that the United Societies applied to any of their number who took part in indiscriminate violence.

5.2.5 The Leadership Vacuum

The lack of clerical leadership was keenly felt. Squabbles that were not easily resolved broke out in the General Meetings, due to a lack of clear authority. There was a readiness to accept as members those who had fallen from the high standards laid down, provided they were prepared to repent. But 'seeing albeit they wanted ministers, and were not themselves competent for the trial and removal of scandals ... faithful and public preaching could not be obtained' (Shields M 1780:20-21). What was needed was a shepherd to show the way at this difficult time.¹⁴ The General Meeting of 11 August 1682 resolved to call Rev Thomas Douglas, the preacher of Drumclog, but Douglas

¹⁰ It is, for instance, readily agreed that many Covenanting writers have exaggerated the numbers who suffered under the various persecutions (see for example Taylor [1859] s a:739). Nevertheless, the type of persecutions endured is well documented.

¹¹ (Juvenal *Satires* 6 I 347).

¹² The *Dictionary of Military Terms: US Department of Defense* (1995. London: Greenhill Books:168) describes "guerilla force" as 'A group of irregular, predominantly indigenous personnel organized along military lines to conduct military and paramilitary operations in enemy-held, hostile or denied territory.'

¹³ In this, Sixsmith is not quite correct. The United Societies consisted of a series of 'cell-type' fellowship groups, somewhat akin to the system used later by the Communist Party. However, the purpose of the Cameronian cells was for fellowship, whereas the Communist purpose was revolution.

¹⁴ The possibility of calling the Reverend Alexander Peden was considered. Known as 'Prophet Peden,' due to his outstanding prophetic gift, and an active Covenanter since 1662, he was now old and weary, and 'the followers of Cameron were not clear as to Peden's soundness on the government question' (Hutchison 1893:55), so he did not join them.

declined. Since the United Societies had no success in finding an already ordained minister whom they considered fitted their stringent requirements, it was resolved at the General Meeting of 11 October 1682 to send four promising young men to Holland for training and, hopefully, ordination. These were James Renwick, John Flint, William Boyd and John Nisbet (Shields M 1780:43).¹⁵

In Scotland, the split between the United Societies and the Indulged grew ever wider, and the government persecution ever fiercer. 'The furnace was "heated one seven times more than it was wont to be heated." Statutes and proclamations fiercer than ever were fulminated against the nonconformists' (Taylor [1859] s a:720). However, 'the return of Renwick from Holland in the autumn of 1683 stiffened Cameronian resistance to this persecution' (Johnston 1957:18). As before, the Cameronians resorted to stating their case by a public declaration and, on 8 November 1684, the *Apologetical Declaration* was affixed to several market crosses and church doors in the south of Scotland. The heart of the 'Killing Times' were 1684 and 1685 and, on 28 May 1685, Renwick visited Sanquhar, accompanied by about 200 men, and there read the *Sanquhar Protestation* (sometimes called the *Second Sanquhar Declaration*). The isolation continued to intensify. 'Apart from the Cameronian remnant, the country of which James VII became king in February 1685 was not merely at peace but was effusively loyal' (Dickinson & Donaldson 1954:190). Yet, the very real danger of Popery being imposed upon Scotland at last began to trouble the minds of certain of the nobility and Indulged clergy.

In May/June 1685, an attempt by the exiled Earl of Argyle to raise the Highlands and the south-west of Scotland against King James, in conjunction with an expedition to England led by the exiled Duke of Monmouth, failed dismally, and both Argyle and Monmouth were executed. Cameronians in Scotland held aloof from the Argyle expedition, although certain Cameronian

¹⁵ William Boyd, who had been in Holland until 1688, joined the Revolution Church in 1690 with Alexander Shields and Thomas Lining, but accepted a call to Dalry immediately afterwards. (After Reid 1896:65).

exiles from Holland were involved.¹⁶

5.3 JAMES RENWICK

Rev James Renwick was to have a decisive influence upon Cameronianism. By the time of his execution in 1688, the movement had achieved its ultimate pre-revolutionary form and structure.

5.3.1 Biographical

On 15 February 1662, James Renwick was born in Nithsdale of humble parents. His father was a weaver. On completing his MA degree at the University of Edinburgh, he was denied public laureation as he 'openly refused the oath of allegiance' (Shields A 1806:42) to the Crown, obligatory for all *alumni*. However, he 'obtained private laureation' (*ibid*) shortly thereafter. He soon became disenchanted with the behaviour of the clergy in general and, after witnessing the martyrdom of Donald Cargill in 1681, he determined to join the Cameronian movement. Accordingly, he was present at the meeting of the United Societies in October 1681, at which it was resolved to publish the *Lanark Declaration*, though 'he had no hand in the penning thereof' (*ibid*:49).

In December 1682, Renwick went to Groningen University in The Netherlands at the instigation of Rev William à Brakel, minister of Leeuwarden in Friezland. Largely due to the good offices of à Brakel and Robert Hamilton, the Classes (Presbytery) of Groningen ordained Renwick on 10 May 1683 (Shields A 1806:58), after a remarkably short period. The original plan was to have Renwick ordained in Emden, but 'because the principal man there who was to have judgment in the affair, was Cocceian in his judgement ... Hamilton solicited the Classes of Groningen to undertake it, which they willingly promised to do' (*ibid*:53). There appears to have been no question about the authority of the Classes to ordain Renwick, despite the probability of objection

¹⁶ Sir Patrick Hume of Polwarth and William Cleland, both significant players in the raising of the Cameronian Regiment, were actively involved in this expedition. John Fullarton, the second Lt-Col of the Regiment and James Henderson, the first Major, were also involved.

from the Indulged ministers of the Church of Scotland.¹⁷

One critical aspect was Renwick's steadfast refusal to submit to the requirement that he subscribe to the catechism of the local Netherlands church. 'At length they condescended that he subscribe to the confession and catechism of the church of Scotland, a practise never before heard of in that land; which was accepted' (Shields A 1806:54). Richard Cameron had been ordained in Rotterdam as a minister of the Church of Scotland, but that had taken place in the Scots Kirk and with Scots ministers officiating. Renwick's situation was quite different, being entirely under the authority of the local Classes, but it seems clear that his refusal to accede to any confession other than that of the Church of Scotland was motivated by a desire to ensure that his ordination would hold good for his work in Scotland.

The day after Renwick's ordination, 'Mr Brakel told them (the Classes) that a formal libel was coming from the Scottish ministers at Rotterdam, containing heavy accusations against the poor society people in Scotland' (Shields A 1806:59). Had this accusation arrived one day earlier, Renwick's ordination would certainly have been delayed or even cancelled, with far-reaching effects upon the United Societies.

On his return to Scotland in September 1683, Renwick was now a fugitive with a price on his head, and on 20 September 1684, Letters of Intercommuning¹⁸ forbidding any, under severe penalty, to succour him in any way, were issued. Nevertheless, he assumed the clerical leadership of the United Societies, labouring hard and enduring much privation.¹⁹ On 5 December 1686, Alexander Shields joined the Cameronians at Wood of Earlston in Galloway, having escaped from prison in Edinburgh. In due course, he was to

¹⁷ Subsequently, another Cameronian minister, Thomas Lining, was ordained by the Classes of Embden in 1688.

¹⁸ Letters of Intercommuning were issued by the Government after August 1675, forbidding any contact or succour to specific fugitives, under threat of severe penalties (Dickinson & Donaldson 1954:173).

¹⁹ Until Alexander Shields's arrival, Renwick had no support or encouragement from any clerical brethren other than Alexander Peden. Even here 'reproachers so far prevailed with him (Peden) as to instigate a declared position against Mr Renwick' (Howie 1781:512). However, there was reconciliation when Peden was on his deathbed and he encouraged Renwick with words similar to M'Ward's to Cameron: 'I find you a faithful servant to your Master; go on in a single dependence upon the Lord, and you will get honestly through, and clear off the stage' (Walker 1827 i:93).

assume Renwick's mantle as leader of the Cameronians. Meanwhile, they were to co-operate closely and become close friends and confidants.

During 1686, Renwick and Shields co-operated in the writing of the *Informatory Vindication*, later recognised as the Cameronian *magna charta*. In 1687, James VII offered three Tolerations along the lines of the previous Indulgences so much deprecated by the Cameronians. These offered some measure of relief for moderate Presbyterians, Quakers and the like, but increased the persecution of 'those enemies of Christianity ... the field conventiclers, whom we recommend you root out with all the severities of our laws' (letter from James VII to the Council, quoted by Dickinson & Donaldson 1954:194). The most significant relief was for Roman Catholics, who were now clearly in the ascendant, and a warning note began to sound in many Scottish minds. 'These Indulgences paved the way for the post-Revolution Kirk, and but for the outbreak of the English Revolution, Scotland might have acquiesced in James's policy of Toleration. Only the Cameronians remained adamant' (Johnston 1957:20).

Still, the persecution continued and Renwick was captured on 1 February 1688 and executed in Edinburgh on 17 February. It is probable that had he moderated his stance, even to a slight degree, he would have been spared. Scotland was weary of bloodshed. But James Renwick was not prepared to deviate from the testimony he had borne through the hunted years. He was the last Scottish martyr to be legally executed.²⁰

5.3.2 Renwick's Writings

Renwick, continually hunted as a fugitive, did not have much opportunity to write major works. Four of his writings, however, do require examination in order to understand Cameronian attitudes. These are: The *Apologetical Declaration* 1684, the *Sanquhar Protestation* 1685, the *Informatory Vindication* 1687 and the *Testimony of Some persecuted Ministers of the Gospel* 1688.

²⁰ Johnston (1887:601) records the names of six further martyrs who were summarily executed in the fields during June/July 1688.

The Apologetic Declaration and Admonitory Vindication of the True Presbyterians of the Church of Scotland: Especially anent intelligencers and informers. 8 November 1684 (Wodrow 1833 iv:148-149).

At the General Meeting of 15 October 1684 it was resolved to issue the *Apologetic Declaration*. The document was drawn up by Renwick himself, published on 28 October 1684 and fixed to several market crosses and church doors on 8 November 1684, apparently without the normal accompanying public address. Alexander Shields provides a succinct précis of the document in his *Life of Mr James Renwick*, first published in 1724. Reiterating previous declarations whereby the authority of Charles Stewart was repudiated, its intent was to '*testify to the world, that they purposed not to injure or offend any whomsoever, but to pursue the ends of their covenants in standing to the defence of the work of reformation and of their own lives*' (Shields A 1806:82-83) In a genuine Christian style, it proceeds to '*utterly detest and abhor that hellish principle of killing all who differ in judgement or persuasion from us, it having no bottom upon the word of God*' (Wodrow 1833 iv:148). It seems clear that Renwick was seeking to steer a delicate course to hold the United Societies together by catering for moderate and extremist alike, whilst still remaining absolutely faithful to his own conscience; in truth a most presbyterian way of handling the situation by consensus not *fiat*, all the while ensuring the superiority of the Word of God.

The salient feature of this *Declaration* is that it does indeed say something new. For the first time, the Cameronians actually threaten certain of their persecutors. Not only military enemies and politicians, but spies and informants, malicious bishops and curates are required '*to take warning of the hazard ye incur*' (Wodrow 1833 iv:149). Whilst self-preservation is described as a '*sinless necessity*,' it is clear that many of the Cameronians have had all they can take, and that persecution had reached a point where the more extreme elements might well break out spontaneously into individual action. This, therefore, is expressly forbidden by the document. But the *Apologetic Declaration* did indeed have an effect other than merely infuriating the

Government further. Carslaw's (1909:35) comment that 'This declaration, for a time, struck terror to the hearts of many of their enemies' may be an overstatement, but that it did have an effect on some is evidenced by Wodrow. 'The most venomous malignants were affrighted, informers and intelligencers in the west and south for some time were deterred from their trafficking, and the most virulent and persecuting of the curates in Nithsdale and Galloway thought fit to remove for some time to other places' (Wodrow 1833 iv:150). The worm had turned!

The Protestation and Apologetick Admonitory Declaration, of the Contending and Suffering Remnant, of the true Presbyterians of the Church of Scotland: Against the Proclaiming James Duke of York, King of Scotland, England, France and Ireland, The lawfulness of the present pretended parliament, and the apparent in-let of popery, &c published at Sanquhar, better known as *The Sanquhar Protestation*, (also called the *Second Sanquhar Declaration*) 28 May 1685.

At Blackgannoch, the General Meeting of 28 May 1685 agreed on a 'protestation against proclaiming James, Duke of York, King of Scotland ... and it was resolved that it should be published the same day at the burgh of Sanquhar' (Shields M 1780:166). It is clear that it had been prepared beforehand, and the fact that the meeting was held close to Sanquhar (the significance of which is self-evident), bespeaks a prior intent. True to the principles laid down in the *Apologetic Declaration* that there must be previous deliberation, the Meeting had to agree before action was taken. 'Immediately after the meeting was ended, about 220 men drew up in arms ... and Mr James Renwick having prayed, the said Protestation was published' (Shields M 1780:166).

The salient points of the *Sanquhar Protestation* were:

- The declarants, as usual, claimed to be 'the true Presbyterians of the Church of Scotland.'

- James was rejected as King, principally on account of his Catholicism.
- The Scots Parliament of 1685 was rejected as illegal.
- The dangers of Popery were extrapolated.
- The Protestants of England and Ireland were admonished for having fallen away from *The Solemn League and Covenant*.
- The Reformed Churches elsewhere were challenged to take a firmer stand in support.
- The United Societies claimed to be continually misrepresented by their enemies.

Few contemporary commentators discussed the *Protestation* at any length.²¹ 'It is a pity that the *Protestation* has not received the attention it deserves, for it is a very articulate and rational statement of the Societies' position on a number of basic issues' (Maurice Grant, email 8 February 2007). In addition to the foregoing points, that might have been anticipated in a Cameronian document, it covers two aspects which are important for an understanding of their doctrine.

The problem of Chapter XXIII.IV of the Westminster Confession is addressed:

'The magistratical power considered generaliter ... may be in the person of ... one of a different religion, but considered specialter, given for the good of the church, it is only in the person of a professor of the true religion.... In foreign lands, be the persons in whom is the power ... of a different religion, we cannot refuse subjection to their laws, so far as they are consistent with the written word of God, and our true Christian liberty. Howbeit, our covenants and acts of parliament have put a bar upon the admission of any person ... while such, to govern in Scotland' (*Sanquhar Protestation* 1685:3). Whilst the *Protestation* accepts the *Westminster Confession* in a general sense, one is left with the impression that Renwick is anxious to demonstrate that the Cameronian rebellion is *legal*, both spiritually and temporally. Acts of

²¹ Alexander Shields (1806:95) supports it as being 'conspicuously consonant ... to the old principles,' whereas Wodrow makes no mention of it at all.

Parliament are therefore also cited as a reason why James cannot reign.²² Later on the *Protestation* refers to '*the true religion of Jesus Christ, according to his word, our covenants, national and solemn league*' (*ibid*:5), which might appear to rank the Covenants' authority immediately after Scripture and before the *Westminster Confession*, but this argument is weak since, in the *Informatory Vindication* (Renwick 1687:25), the *Confession* and *Catechisms* are placed before the *Covenants*.

The problem of armed aggression is addressed:

Their enemies accused the Cameronians of being '*persons of murdering and assassinating principles ... we do hereby declare before God that we abhor, renounce and detest [such] ... principles and practices.*' The document continues '*to disclaim all unwarrantable practices by a few persons reputed to be of us,*' and goes on to denounce '*the unwarrantable manner of killing that curate of Carsphairn,*' referred to above.

Thus, the *Protestation* seeks to give credibility to both the substance and the conduct of the Cameronian struggle.

THE INFORMATORY VINDICATION of a Poor, wasted, misrepresented, Remnant of the Suffering, Anti-Popish, Anti-Prelatick, Anti-Erastian, Anti-Sectarian, True Presbyterian Church of Christ in Scotland, United together in a General Correspondence; By way of Reply to Various Accusations, in Letters, Informations & Conferences, given forth against them. Published at Utrecht, July 1687.

'The *Informatory Vindication* is the most definitive of the Societies' documents, and ... gives the best insight into their principles' (Maurice Grant, e-mail 18 August 2005). It provides an authoritative overview of Cameronian principles at an advanced stage of their development. The *Vindication* was written by Renwick and Alexander Shields in conjunction, and approved by the General Meeting at Friarminion on 4 March 1687 after a three-day deliberation. The Shields brothers, Alexander and Michael, then took it to Holland, and it was

²² Under United Kingdom law, Roman Catholics are excluded from succession to the throne. Similarly, no Roman Catholic has ever commanded the Cameronian Regiment.

published at Utrecht in July 1687. It became available in Scotland by December of that year. It consists of an *Introduction*, a *Declaration* and a *Vindication* under VII Heads.

The Introduction is a brief history of Covenanting times from 1648 to 1687, with specific reference to the major acts of interference with freedom of religion, and the Presbyterian Church's handling (or mishandling) thereof. As usual, the Cameronians are at great pains not to be seen as schismatic. '*(Not that we might carry on a faction or separation from the Scottish true Presbyterian Church, as we were misrepresented, but) that we might declare our adherence to the principles thereof*' (Renwick 1687:14).

The Declaration addresses the United Societies' attitude to relationship with State and Church. The document itemises what the Cameronians accept and what they reject.

First, we sincerely, unanimously, & constantly Testify to:

The Word of God contained in the Scriptures.

(Westminster) Confession of Faith.

Covenants, National and Solemn League

Catechisms, Larger and Shorter.

Acknowledgement of Sins.

Causes of God's Wrath.

*Ordinary and perpetual officers of the Church such as Pastors,
Doctors, Elders & Deacons.*

Presbyterial form of Church Government.

Acts of General Assembly from 1638 to 1649.

Faithful Contendings for defence of the Reformation.

Declarations from Rutherglen to Apologetic Declaration

*Faithful and free preaching of the Gospel in the open fields and in
houses.*

*Lawfulness of defensive war against Usurpers of our Ecclesiastical and
Civil Liberties.*

[as in Head VIII of *The Queensferry Paper*]

Testimonies given by martyrdom, banishment, imprisonment,

stigmatizing, torture or suffering in other ways for adherence to the Reformation or not owning tyranny.

Second ... our rejecting:

Whatsoever is contrary to the Word of God, or not founded thereupon. Popery, Quakerism, Libertinism, Antinomianism, Socinianism and all other heresies.

Errors on the right hand:

Anabaptism, Independency, Millenarism [Premillennialism], Sects and Schisms.

Errors on the left hand:

Prelacy and Erastianism, Idolatry, Superstition and Prophaneness.

Supremacy or tyranny.

Hearing Curates of the indulged.

Illegal Oaths and Bonds, (such as the Test and Abjuration).

Paying militia money, cess, fines or stipends.

(after Renwick 1687:28-29)

Dealing with the magistracy, the paper distinguishes between the office and the person. The office of magistrate is accepted as a '*Holy and Divine institution for the good of human society*' (Renwick 1687:29). Magistrates act as ministers of God, and should perform their duties '*in a direct line of subordination to God*' (*ibid*) in civil matters. Continued abuse and tyranny '*do sufficiently invalidate his Right & Relation of Magistracy, & warrant subjects, especially in Covenanted Lands, to revolt from under & disown allegiance to such a power*' (*ibid*). Like Cameron, Renwick is in conflict with the letter, but not the spirit, of Chapter XXIII.IV of the *Westminster Confession*.

In church matters, magistrates have power over the '*outward*' things of the church, but not '*inward*' things such as doctrine, worship, discipline and (church) government. The magistrate '*may Convocate Synods in the Church*²³ *pro re nata*', but may not preside in any church debates, though he may give civil sanction to synodical results, '*but we deny him any power to restrain Church Officers in Dispensing of Christ's ordinances, or forbid them to do*

²³ This was to prove significant for Alexander Shields, Lining and Boyd at the Revolution.

what Christ has given them in Commission' (Renwick 1687:31). Finally, he is allowed a *Cumulative power* to support church officers, but denied a *Privative power*, which may detract in any way from the church's independent authority, *'for he is a Nursing father & not a step-father'* (*ibid*:32).

Turning to the ministry, the office is again separated from the person. The salient points are:

Faithful ministers should be loved and encouraged.

No-one may minister without licensing or ordination.²⁴

A minister's authority stems only from *'Ministers and Officers which Christ hath appointed over His own Church.'*

(after Renwick 1687:35)

The paper now turns to an area of critical concern for Cameronianism, that of schism and separation. *'We hold that Schism, or disowning and rejecting of, or groundless & unwarrantable Separating from, true & faithful Ministers, to be a very heinous, hateful & hurtful sin; yet this doth not hinder, but that it may be a duty, in a broken state of the Church, to withdraw from Ministers chargeable with defection'* (Renwick 1687:35-36). It may be necessary to leave one part of the church and even to *'adhere unto the other part of the Church ... who are standing steadfast to the defence of the Reformation'* (*ibid*:37). However, the authors are determined not to be labelled as schismatics. *'This is no separation from the Church of Scotland, but only a departing and going forth from her sins, backslidings and defections, as we are commanded by the Lord'* (*ibid*).

²⁴ One is Licensed to preach, but Ordination is necessary in order to administer the Ordinances (Sacraments of Holy Communion and Baptism).

The Vindication:

The preamble states that the United Societies stand accused by certain persons of *'having erected amongst us a formal Authoritative Community, & Erastian Republic; taking unto us the Government of Church & State; Attributing unto the people the power of Church Government; Imposing sinful and unjust restrictions upon Ministers and Professors; & unwarrantably dividing and separating from them; & consequently overturning the very Foundation of Presbyterian Government & the Covenanted Reformation'* (Renwick 1687:45). These accusations are very serious indeed, going, as they do, to the very heart of the Societies' declared intent to be neither an ecclesiastical nor civil court, and to maintain strict orthodox Presbyterianism despite being, for a season, forced by events to be apart from the rest of the Church of Scotland. They are rejected vigorously as being calumnies. Carslaw (1902:67) considers such accusations to be the main reason for the preparation of the *Vindication*. 'So persistent indeed were the attempts at this time to malign the character and misrepresent the opinions of Renwick and his friends, that with the help of Alexander Shields, he prepared and published the *Informatory Vindication*.'

The Vindication proper is under Seven Heads and addresses many concerns. The most critical are considered below:

1. Decisions at General Meetings are binding upon those who take them, and those whom they represent, but are not regarded as binding upon society as a whole. No one may advance a point of view, which is personal, but all are restricted to that which has been agreed by the Society they represent. Time must be allowed for deliberation, particularly with difficult problems, in order to obviate rash individual behaviour.
2. Dealing with the *Sanquhar* and *Lanark Declarations*, there was no intent to claim or *'perform Civil and Ecclesiastical [authority] representing both Church & State'* (Renwick 1697:51). Yet, the wording; *'the persecuting party have de jure forfeited their right, & the backsliding party fled from their Testimony'* (*ibid*:52), appears to repudiate the authority of the Crown in State

matters, and moderate Presbyterians in Church matters.

3. The type of war declared is once more addressed. The authors differentiate between *'a hostile war & martial insurrection ... [which] is Declared against the Tyrant and such as should rise with him in arms, And Declaring a war of contradiction and opposition by Testimonies, &c. ... [which is] against all who side with the Tyrant'* (Renwick 1687:54). Whereas the killing of any *'because of a different persuasion & opinion from us'* is condemned as murder, self-defence and rescue in a *'martial opposition'* are justified. The authors of *The Lanark Declaration* are chided in the subtlest possible way, for certain styles of address, especially for imputing the title *'Convention of Estates'* to the authors of *Sanquhar*, *'inexpediently and unadvisedly'* (*ibid*:56).

4. By now, the reader is aware that the degree, or type, of separation from the rest of the Church of Scotland by the Cameronians was a matter of grave concern to them. The problem was that both Cameronians and moderates considered that the other party had gone badly wrong. Though the Cameronians did not dispute their separation from the Indulged, they *'absolutely deny a Positive Separation from the Scottish Covenanted Church ... at the furthest we acknowledge a Separation Negative Passively.... So we deny and altogether disown a Separation from communion with this Church, in her Doctrine, worship, discipline & Government, as she was in her best & purest days'* (Renwick 1687:63-64).

6. Whereas some delegations were sent to other Reformed churches in Europe, there was no intention to speak for the whole of the Church of Scotland, but only on behalf of the United Societies.

7. Objections to the sending of potential ministers to the Netherlands for training, with a view to licensing or ordination are addressed. Neither training nor ordination by those whom the Societies considered to be faithful, was available in Scotland at the time, and that there was no alternative but to seek them elsewhere. In particular, as might be expected, a defence is made of

Renwick's own ordination. Point VI effectively *précis* the entire Head V.

We knew assuredly, that the Reformed Churches of Christ abroad had a power to License & ordain Ministers, either to the Church Universal, or in particular cases to particular Churches, upon the request of a people, cumulatively not privately, That is, for to help and confirm these Churches in their own power, but not to deprive them of their rights, or to usurp Authority over them; Not as an Act of Authority over, but as an Act of charity to them. Finally ... hereby we designed neither to bring up an evil report upon the Church of Scotland, Neither to carry on a Faction or a Schism in it; But, upon the contrary, to Declare our standing to the Reformation attained to in this Land, And to satisfy our own Consciences (Renwick 1687:101).

8. Referring to the '*title of the foresaid Protestation, viz. True Presbyterian Church of Scotland*' (Renwick 1697:104), a remark is made that this expression is found in some other papers. That is an understatement! Something similar is to be found in every Cameronian publication from Sanquhar onwards; it had almost become a *sine qua non*. Now there appears some amelioration of this stance. '*We do confess it unsuitable to express it so comprehensively*' (*ibid*). This must be construed as a tactical retreat, from what was held by many to be a position of arrogating a greater authority to the United Societies than they could justify.

9. There is a distinction between the '*Catholic or Universal*' Church and a '*Particular Organical Church*' (Renwick 1687:109) in Head VII. Although the Societies agreed that their Communion had stricter requirements than some, they made no rules for anyone other than their own members. The Head concludes with a consideration of the disciplining of '*scandalous persons*', but the real point is to emphasise that '*under no consideration whatsoever ... [is] the power of Church Government ... seated in the people.*' Ecclesiastical authority is from God alone, not the people, a vital requirement if Cameronianism is not to run off the rails of orthodoxy through the radical acts of some hot-heads.

Assessment of the Informatory Vindication

The *Informatory Vindication* is a sincere attempt to present the Cameronian doctrine in a reasonable and understandable manner to friend and foe alike. Its statements are not an indication of a change of heart or mind, but rather a determined attempt to clearly explain and justify Cameronian thinking.²⁵ ‘We are firmly persuaded in our Consciences before God, that this is His Cause & Covenanted Reformation which we are owning and suffering for’ (Renwick 1687:114). The thinking is clear and incisive. The tabulation sets it out almost in the format of a military paper, similar to the *Ignatian Spiritual Exercises* of 1522, rather than a theological apologetic.

The Salient Features are:

- The *Informatory Vindication* is the most definitive of the Societies’ documents.
- Cameronians are at great pains not to be seen as schismatic. Schism and separation is an area of critical concern.
- Relationship with State and Church is clarified.
- The office of magistrate is accepted as a ‘*Holy and Divine institution for the good of human society.*’
- In church matters, magistrates have power over the ‘*outward*’ things of the church, but not ‘*inward*’ things such as *doctrine, worship, discipline and (church) government.*
- The office of ministry is separated from the person.
- The accusations against the Societies are taken very seriously indeed.
- Decisions at General Meetings are binding upon those who take them.
- There is no intent to claim or ‘*perform Civil and Ecclesiastical authority.*’
- The document differentiates between ‘*a hostile war (aggressive) & martial (defensive) insurrection.*’
- They ‘*absolutely deny a Positive Separation from the Scottish*

²⁵ However, the Societies and Renwick in particular came under criticism from some ultra-conservatives for having abandoned their original principles. Patrick Grant ... alleged that Renwick had formerly held that the Societies had magisterial authority in the fullest sense, as appears to be asserted in the Lanark Declaration. However, it does Renwick no disservice to accept that his thinking may have matured in this regard’ (Maurice Grant, email 12 April 2006).

Covenanted Church ... at the furthest we acknowledge a Separation Negative Passively So we deny and altogether disown a Separation from communion with this Church, in her Doctrine, worship, discipline & Government.

- There is no intention to speak for the whole of the Church of Scotland, but only on behalf of the United Societies.
- Neither training nor ordination by those whom the Societies considered to be faithful, was available in Scotland at the time, and that there was no alternative but to seek them elsewhere. (In particular, as might be expected, a defence is made of Renwick's own ordination.)
- The Title of the document, viz. 'True Presbyterian Church of Scotland' had almost become a *sine qua non*. Now there appears some amelioration of this stance. 'We do confess it unsuitable to express it so comprehensively.'
- There is a distinction between the 'Catholic or Universal' Church and a 'Particular organical Church.'

Wodrow's (1833 iv:416) assessment of Renwick's purpose seems sound: 'The reader hath all that can be said in favour of the heights some of them ran to. And Mr Renwick evidently smoothes the former actings of that party, and in some things he recedes from them, and puts the best face he can upon their past and present conduct.' Such an intention seems entirely reasonable; after all, it was a vindication!

The Testimony of some persecuted Presbyterian Ministers of the Gospel, unto the Covenanted Reformation of the Church of Scotland, and to the present expedience of continuing to preach the Gospel in the Fields, and against the present Antichristian Toleration in its nature and design &c. Given in to the Ministers at Edenburgh (sic) by **Mr. James Renwick upon the 17. Janwarii 1688.**

This was the last of Renwick's public declarations, and was produced in the month prior to his capture and execution. Essentially, he reiterates his standpoint against toleration, and encourages people to continue to stand fast

in the face of an increasing risk of Popery. *'We have therefore chosen rather to approve ourselves faithful unto God, tho' by so doing, we should never be so much persecuted ... we are hopeful that the Testimony of our Consciences ... will abundantly support us against the worst of evil that can befall us'* (www.truecovenater.com 5 May 2007). The effect of this document was slight as, by now, events were moving toward the Revolution, which took place at the end of that year.

5.3.3 The Character of James Renwick

Renwick was perhaps the most gentle of all the Cameronian clergy. Perhaps he was also the most spiritual. His parents were deeply committed to their faith and young James was dedicated to the Lord's service when he was born. By the age of two years, he was reputed to be praying, and by the age of six, to be reading the Bible. Whilst in Edinburgh, he seems to have fallen into some less reputable student ways, but soon began to question the behaviour of some Indulged ministers, especially in view of the frequent martyrdoms taking place in the Grassmarket. Witnessing the martyrdom of Donald Cargill moved him so deeply that he determined to commit himself to the Cameronian cause.

His manifest commitment to the cause of Christ, combined with an ability to present a juridical case in a balanced but courageous way, made him an obvious ministerial candidate. His spirituality and ability so impressed the church in Holland that he was ordained in a very short time, despite significant opposition. At his ordination, 'he was so filled with the Spirit of God, that his face seemed to shine, and that there had never seen nor found so much of the Lord's Spirit accompanying any work as that' (Shields A 1806:55). In his 'Account of the Year 1683,' Michael Shields (1780:111) remarks on 'the home-coming of Mr James Renwick; whereby they were put in hope of, and did enjoy the gospel preached, which is very refreshing and reviving, after so long a famine of gospel ordinances ... It was strengthening in that weary day, comforting in that sad, and enlightening in that dark and gloomy day' (*ibid*).

His sermons are full of Christ. His first at Darnead, 23 November 1683, and

his last at Borrowstonness, 29 January 1688, both refer to the necessity of closing with Christ. There seems more of politics in his later preaching, probably as a result of the increased persecution that he endured, but he starts out by calling all to come to Christ in his first sermon. This not only includes the persecuted remnant, but also every degree of persecutor. During the four years of his ministry, he gained a reputation for both gentleness and steadfastness. Continually falsely accused of many things, such as excommunicating 'all the ministers of Scotland,' and 'that he had no mission at all' (Shields A 1806:64/5), he responded with courage and dignity. That he had a mission indeed is evidenced by his baptising more than 500 children in his first year of ministry.

In words reminiscent of one of Rutherford's eulogisers, Alexander Shields has somewhat to say of his spirituality. 'He was redacted ... to many extream Difficulties and Inconveniencies: not daring to travel, yet finding no Place of Rest ... yet, remarkably was the Lord seen to supply and make up the want of all external Means and accommodations ... with such incessant and indefatigable Diligence, and with such remarkable and admired Success in preaching ... so, it would seem incredible to strangers, how any man could perform so much in so short a time ... Nay, I doubt ... that any minister had more frequent exercise in time of persecution, than he had' (Shields A quoted by Walker 1827 ii:51). Shields proceeds to report that, not only did many get saved by Renwick's preaching, but that the membership of the United Societies increased, and that at the height of the persecution.

Renwick provided a badly needed spiritual focus for the harassed Cameronians during the hottest persecution. 'They loved him for his work's sake, and not less for his own amiable qualities; for he was gentle and affectionate, while courageous and firm; considerate of the feelings of others, while steadfast in adherence to his own personal convictions' (Hutchison1893:67). Lest it be thought that Shields and Hutchison were biased, as they probably were, William Wilson of Douglas, in his introduction to *A Choice Collection of Very Valuable ... Sermons 1776*, writes 'that he (Renwick) was one of these, who esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of

this world' (Wilson 1776:ix).

At the time of his trial, had Renwick sued for mercy, it seems likely he would have received it. When Bishop Paterson visited him shortly before his execution, to seek a reprieve for him, 'He answered ... these are the truths which I suffer for and which I have not rashly concluded upon (Shields A 1806:150). As with so many other Covenanting martyrs, there was manifest evidence of joy at his end. 'He went ... to the scaffold with great cheerfulness, as one in a transport of triumphant joy' (*ibid*:156). He was 26 years and two days old. 'From that time until this day no one within the realm [of Scotland] has suffered death for professing the faith of his conscience' (Berry 1904:44).

5.3.4 The Influence of James Renwick

James Renwick expanded the base of Cameronianism in a way that no-one had done before. Whereas Rutherford, Brown and M'Ward were inspirational in a few significant lives, and Cameron and Cargill had carried the battle to the enemy, one might say that Renwick was the inspirer of the insignificant, which in no way is intended to denigrate the members of the United Societies. Renwick's greatest influence was with the 'foot soldiers' of the Cameronians. They formed the base upon which the Societies depended. It is a moot point whether the United Societies would have survived the 'Killing Times' had Renwick not been there to guide, encourage and inspire. 'His wisdom and skill contributed largely to the successful organisation of the Societies; and ... he yet exercised a great and most beneficent influence on all their proceedings and decisions' (Hutchison 1893:66).

Renwick's incisiveness in the *Informatory Vindication* clarified the definitive principles of Cameronianism for the first time. He had a close relationship with Alexander Shields, who assumed his mantle after his death. It would be hard to say who influenced whom more. They were different personalities, but firm friends, and complemented one another - Renwick the loving pastor, Shields the academic debater: Both were determined and courageous, and both committed to King Jesus. They were *ad idem* on the principles of Cameronianism in the same way that Brown and M'Ward had been.

Maurice Grant comments on the effect of Renwick's death on public opinion:

While I doubt if it would be right to make too much of the effect of Renwick's death in precipitating the Revolution, it seems to me that it was not without some consequence for general Scottish opinion.... I think it could reasonably be said that Renwick's execution gave a severe jolt to those who had been content to go along with the policy of toleration, showing as it did the regime in its true colours. There is evidence that the authorities themselves recognised this, by their almost desperate efforts to make Renwick sue for a pardon. To that extent Renwick's death ... did have its effect ... in preparing Scottish opinion for the Revolution and in reinforcing the misgivings, which were already beginning to gather (Maurice Grant, email, 16 January 2007).

But this time, the Cameronians already had their new leader in place.

5.4 CONCLUSIONS FROM THIS CHAPTER

5.4.1 State of Freedom of Religion

For the Cameronians: The Cameronians had successfully maintained their own freedom of worship, doctrine, discipline and church government to a considerable degree, particularly as a result of the formation of their own polity. This gave cohesion to the Movement. The clarification of their policy in the *Informatory Vindication* also helped the laity to understand what their rights were regarding freedom of religion. They were about to enter into a new era of religious freedom.

For Scotland: The nation was in a state of flux just prior to the Revolution. The Kirk, which had virtually entirely succumbed to Erastianism in the form of Indulgences, as well as to the intrusion of the Episcopal and Roman Catholic Churches (that had experienced a period of protection and growth), was about to undergo a radical change.

5.4.2 A formal Cameronian polity had come into being

The United Societies provided a formal structured polity for Cameronians. The United Societies were:

- Presbyterian, but not Presbyterian, perforce due to the absence of elders, ministers and fixed congregations.
- They did not seek to assume juridical or civil government functions.
- They insisted that public actions, such as the publishing of declarations must be mutually agreed upon prior to the act.
- Public declarations were no longer identifiable with one individual as *Sanquhar* 1680 and *Torwood* 1680 had been. They were now the corporate responsibility of the General Meeting.
- They sought to be moderate, but applied rigorous discipline to those who acted on their own initiative, without first obtaining the authority of the General Meeting.
- They were a religious freedom movement, not a political or guerrilla movement.

5.4.3 Relationship to the Church

- They continued to claim authority as the remnant of the *True Church* of Scotland.
- They continued to separate themselves from the Indulged Presbyterians, yet insisted they were not schismatic.
- Separation from the Kirk was considered a temporary measure, only applicable in the 'broken' state of the Kirk.
- Reconciliation with Indulged Presbyterians was always possible and even sought upon repentance.
- They continued to repudiate Popery and Prelacy whilst accepting that both Roman Catholicism and Episcopalianism formed part of the Visible Church, albeit in grievous error.

5.4.4. Relationship to the State

- Resistance to the State was not against the principle of civil authority as set out in the *Westminster Confession* Chapter XXIII. IV, but against

the tyranny, which abused that authority.

- The Cameronians held that the Crown had abrogated its own right to act as magistrate in terms of the *Westminster Confession*.
- Rejection of the State was also a temporary measure.

5.4.5 A Cameronian *magna charta* had been published in the form of the *Informatory Vindication*

This sought to vindicate and explain the Cameronian position and policy to friend and foe alike.

5.4.6 The authority of the Cameronian clergy was in the ascendant

- A more moderate, disciplined and rational behaviour within Cameronian ranks was becoming evident.
- They considered Ordination to be universal. Thus, whilst Cameron was ordained in by Scots in Holland with the whole of Scotland as his parish, Renwick was ordained by Hollanders to the same end. This was a departure from strict Westminster Standards, which departure they were at great pains to justify as necessitated by the exigencies of the times.
- The United Societies refused to arrogate to themselves the right to ordain clergy, thus demonstrating their determination not to constitute themselves an ecclesiastical court. Yet they did licence preachers, thereby displaying some inconsistency.

5.4.7 From 1685 onwards, the Cameronian situation slowly began to change

- In 1685, the accession of James VII and the ensuing Toleration Acts made some Indulged ministers and Presbyterian politicians realise there was a genuine threat of Roman Catholicism being forced upon Scotland. Society in general began to waver in its support and submission to the Crown. Renwick's martyrdom was a contributory factor in the general animosity towards James VII. 'The testimony of the latest of the martyrs ...James Renwick... was as clear and

uncompromising as any which Knox had ever rung in the ears of Queen Mary, or Melville in those of her contemptible son.... In [his] few but emphatic words, there breathes the very spirit of the presbyterian church of Scotland' (Buchanan 1863:117).

- Public opinion was somewhat affected in favour of the Cameronians by the execution of James Renwick a few months before the Revolution. It stirred the hearts of many Scots. 'Intensive efforts were made even by his prosecutors ... to mitigate the sentence ... but these efforts in themselves are clearly indicative of the changing ecclesiastical climate' (Cowan 1968:132).
- The United Societies experienced no leadership vacuum and no loss of momentum after Renwick's execution.
- Some of those threatened by the *Sanquhar Protestation* of 1685 actually felt sufficiently threatened, in the case of some of the Prelatic curates, to cause them to abandon their parishes in the South-west.

The Cameronians were slowly becoming a force to be reckoned with, for their persevering stance was beginning to seem justified to others, besides themselves.

CHAPTER SIX

PRELUDE TO THE GLORIOUS REVOLUTION 1688/9: Alexander Shields assumes leadership of the Cameronians

'The darkest hour is just before the dawn'

(John Wesley 1760)¹

6.1 GENERAL SITUATION IN 1688, PRIOR TO THE REVOLUTION

By the time of Renwick's execution, Scotland was in a state of flux. The thinking population had come to realise that James VII's proposals for toleration were principally a pretext to promote Catholics to positions of influence. James offered three Indulgences, in February, June and July of 1687, which 'undid at one stroke all the work of a generation of efforts ... to weld the presbyterians into the established church. It also went far to unite the nation in opposition' (Dickinson & Donaldson 1954:195). These Indulgences, whilst offering toleration to moderate Presbyterians, Catholics and Quakers, specifically excluded field Conventicles. Meetings 'in the open fields, for which ... there is not the least shadow of excuse left: which meetings in fields we do herby strictly prohibit and forbid, against all which we do leave our laws and acts of parliament in full force and vigour' (Indulgence of June 1687, quoted *ibid*:197).

However, in the Covenanting heartland of the South-west, 'the vast majority of parishioners withdrew from their [episcopal] parish churches' (Cowan 1976:134), not necessarily going so far as to join the United Societies, but rather returning to their own 'outed' ministers. 'The great majority of the moderate Covenanters had taken advantage of the Toleration ... and had come together in associations which were Presbyteries in all but name' (Macpherson 1932:73). 'On the other hand for many schism was unacceptable and for this reason, if for no other, the Episcopal church may

¹ Common rendering of John Wesley's *Journal* (1913 ed. iv: 498): 'It is usually darkest before day break.'

have survived had it not been for the increasingly overt Catholicism of the king' (Cowan 1976:134).

More to the point, non-Roman Catholics amongst the ruling class began to realise that their days of influence were numbered. 'The catholic faction had much to lose and little to gain [by revolution]; certainly the Scottish Catholics² ... were unlikely to assume the role of prospective revolutionaries' (Cowan 1989:69). The *Revocation of the Edict of Nantes* in 1685 had given Protestants, of whatever ilk, throughout Europe, cause for concern regarding the intentions of Catholic monarchs. The Cameronians were experiencing a trying time. 'After Renwick's death only a few sparks of their old spirit remained' (Cowan 1976:132). Mitchison's (1982:276) comment that, after Renwick's death, 'the rest of the Covenanting ministry merged with the more moderate Presbyterians ... Presbyterianism at last had a united front' is inaccurate. The Cameronians were about to emerge into their strongest phase ever and it would require a reconciliation by the Cameronian clergy with the Kirk before a virtually united Presbyterian front appeared two years later.

After the death of Renwick, Alexander Shields became the leader of the Cameronians up to the time of the schism of 1690. He had been Renwick's constant companion and assistant since his escape from prison in October 1686.

6.2 ALEXANDER SHIELDS

6.2.1. Biographical

In 1660 or 1661, Alexander Shields was born in Haughhead in the Merse. He was one of three brothers, all of whom were involved in Covenanting activities. On 7 April 1675, at the early age of 15 years, he obtained his MA degree in philosophy and theology at the University of Edinburgh. He had an inclination to study divinity, but being unable to reconcile the prelatist teaching

² 'There were perhaps only about 2000 Catholics between the Moray Firth and the Solway' [the NW-SE axis referred to in Chapter 1fn 2] (Cowan 1989 69). If this is correct, it means that the United Societies outnumbered Catholics in this area by nearly 4 to 1.

in Scottish universities with his conscience, he went to Holland around the time of Bothwell Brig, 1679, to pursue his studies there. He met Robert M'Ward whilst there, but returned briefly to Scotland where Patrick Walker (1827, ii:10) reports he heard Donald Cargill preach at Craigmad on 1 August 1680. He returned to Holland soon after that and registered at the University of Utrecht in the same month (*Album Studiosorum* 1680, University of Utrecht), though it appears unlikely that he graduated there.³

At about the end of 1684, he went to London as amanuensis to Dr John Owen, a non-conforming English cleric, where 'he was appointed to a regular congregation meeting in the Embroiderer's Hall' (Macpherson 1932:12), and accepted licensing 'from the Scots dissenting ministers in London' (Howie 1995:581).⁴ On 11 January 1685, he was arrested whilst conducting a service in a private house. His text on this occasion (Gen 49:21, 'Naphtali is a hind let loose) was to be used as the title of his *magnum opus*, published in 1687. 'I was led to speak on the Excellency of the *Blessing of liberty*, the Extent of *Christian liberty*, the Preferableness of *Spiritual liberty* beyond Temporal freedom' (Shields A 1715:3).

Because he was a Scot, he was taken to Edinburgh by sea to face a Scottish court on 13 March 1685. Thereupon followed a seven-month period of interrogation, when the 25-year-old Shields reasoned brilliantly with the court in a successful effort to save his life, while scrupulously striving to maintain a clear conscience.⁵ He was faced with the normal inquisition to which all Covenanting prisoners were subjected, and threatened with torture and death. But, since he was 'charged with no Fact or Overt Act, but only for Matters of

³ Hector Macpherson (1932:10 fn) reports: 'The Librarian of Utrecht University has courteously investigated this matter.... "We can inform you that we have looked up the *Nomina promotorum*, but we did not find his name during the years 1678–90, nor does the Library possess a dissertation by Shields; it is therefore not probable that he took a degree at Utrecht University.' This was confirmed during a visit by the author to University of Utrecht, 22 September 2004.

⁴ *Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticae* V :239 states that Shields was an 'ordained minister', but Macpherson (1932:12 fn) correctly remarks that he did not receive ordination until receiving a Call from the Cameronian Regiment in 1691.

⁵ This has been documented in detail by Shields in *A True and Faithful Relation of the Sufferings of the Reverend and Learned Mr Alexander Shields, Minister of the Gospel*, only published in 1715 after his death.

Opinion' (Shields A 1715:134), he 'endeavoured to plead before the Council ... that Priviledge common to Mankind, *the freedom of the thoughts*, Subject to no Tribunal under Heaven' (*ibid*:32). The court's main concern was to get Shields to renounce Renwick's *Apologetic Declaration*, published on 8 November 1684, and which Shields had never seen, by taking the *Oath of Abjuration* brought in on 25 November 1684 as the government's *riposte* to Renwick's document. At length, in order to save himself from the gallows, he was persuaded to '*renounce and disown that and all other Declarations, IN SO FAR AS, that, or they do declare War against the King expressly ... and assert, that it is lawful to Kill all that are employed by His Majesty, or any because so-employed in Church, State, Army or Country*' (*ibid*:46). This acceptance of the *Abjuration Oath*, even in its reduced form, was to trouble him for the rest of his life.

Shields was sentenced to be imprisoned on the Bass Rock.⁶ There he remained until he was moved back to the Edinburgh Tolbooth, from whence he managed to escape, disguised as a woman, on 22 October 1686. He next appears at a Society meeting in Galloway on 5 December. There was nowhere else for him to go and, since he had corresponded with Renwick whilst on the Bass and his brother Michael was Clerk to the United Societies, he had an *entrée*. He was a fugitive twice over, being on the Fugitives' Roll of 1679, as well as an escapee from prison. If he did not throw in his lot with the Societies, his only alternative was foreign exile.

His situation was brought before the General Meeting at Wanlockhead on 22 December 1686. Despite their leader, Renwick, 'being very well satisfied with him' (Shields M 1780:279) as a result of time spent together, the Societies steadfastly adhered to their principle 'that nothing which concerns the whole should be done without acquainting them therewith ... [and] that Mr Alexander should not be employed in the public work until he came to the General Correspondence, that all might be satisfied anent him' (*ibid*:282). Having assured themselves of Shields's unqualified support for the principles set out

⁶ A bleak island prison in the Firth of Forth, where 31 significant Covenanters, both lay and cleric, were immured between 1673 and 1688.

in the *Informatory Vindication* (still in draft form), he then confessed to having 'involved himself in the guilt of owning the (so-called) authority of James VII' and 'of taking the oath of abjuration' (*ibid*:283). After deliberation and listening to Shields's version of his licensing in London in 1685, the General Meeting licensed him to preach; therefore, this being the second time he was so licensed.

'Thus was inaugurated a close collaboration between two young men of great talent and high character – a partnership which was only to be dissolved by death' (Macpherson 1932:65). Renwick and Shields collaborated upon the final drafting of the *Informatory Vindication* and, it having been approved by the General Meeting at Friarminion on 4 March 1687, Alexander and his brother Michael went to Holland where the *Vindication* was published at Utrecht in July 1687. Alexander continued writing *A Hind Let Loose*, which was published, also in Holland, by the end of the year, at which time the brothers had returned to Scotland.

Shortly afterwards, in February 1688, James Renwick was arrested, tried and executed, whereupon his mantle fell upon Alexander Shields. Now, there was serious concern about obtaining ordination for Shields in Holland, as the Cameronians once again had no ordained minister. But, on the eve of the Revolution, Shields could not be spared. 'All over southern Scotland he was greatly in demand and he took part in some large field meetings' (Macpherson 1932:73). By now, James VII's Tolerations were widely accepted by Catholic, Episcopalian and moderate Presbyterian alike. In a letter to Robert Hamilton in Embden dated 1 August 1688, Michael Shields (1780:355) reports that 'in the meantime the persecution is very hot, and in many respects harder and heavier to conflict with than before the Toleration, which as it hath brought ease to some ... so it hath brought greater bondage and heavier burdens to us.' As so often happens, a tyranny under threat imposes its greatest persecution during the dying throes of its regime. The Stewarts were no exception.

This was the difficult phase through which Alexander Shields had to guide the

United Societies, for a rift had already started to appear within the Societies. This was a critical time as the rift ultimately developed into open schism after Shields (re)joined the Kirk in 1690, along with the two other Cameronian clergy.

On 4 February 1691, he received a Call from the Cameronian Regiment and was finally ordained. Thereafter, he served as regimental chaplain in the Low Countries during William's campaign against Louis XIV from 1692 to 1697. In September 1697, from the Low Countries, Shields accepted a Call to St Andrew's from which point he ceased to have much influence. Cameronianism, in any case, was on the wane. On 24 September 1699, he sailed as chaplain with the disastrous expedition to the Scots colony of Darien, dying on the way home in Jamaica on 14 June 1700 at the age of 40 years.

6.2.2 The Writings of Alexander Shields

Shields was a prolific author, and it is impractical to attempt a definitive survey of his writings here. We therefore concentrate mostly upon his *magnum opus*: *A Hind Let Loose*, first published in 1687. It should be remembered that, whilst James Renwick is credited with the principal authorship of the *Informatory Vindication*, he and Shields co-operated in its production. Shields was one of the first to call the Society people by the name Cameronians, and some of his titles include this name: *A Short Memorial of the Sufferings and Grievances, Past and Present of the Presbyterians in Scotland: Particularly those of them called by Nick-name Cameronians* 1690, and *A proper project for Scotland ... by a person neither unreasonably Cameronian or excessively Laodicean* 1699. Many of his works comprise a record of persecutions endured by Cameronians and others, inter alia; *A true and faithful Relation of the Sufferings of the Reverend and Learned Mr. Alexander Shields, Minister of the Gospel* 1715, a record of Shields's arrest and trial, and *The Life and Death of that Eminently Pious, Free, and Faithful Minister and Martyr of Jesus Christ, Mr James Renwick: with a Vindication of the Heads of his Dying Testimony* 1724. Also. *The Scots Inquisition: Containing a Brief description of the Persecution of the Presbyterians in Scotland* 1745.

'The *Enquiry into Church Communion* 1706 ... was an *apologia* for the action of the three Cameronian preachers in entering the Revolution Church' (Macpherson 1932:216) and should be read in conjunction with the *Account of the Methods and Motives of the late Union and Submission to the Assembly* 1691, jointly authored by Thomas Lining, Alexander Shields and William Boyd. Much of Shields's *magnum opus* was written on the Bass Rock⁷ and at Utrecht, and the *Relation of His Sufferings* 1715, was written whilst he was actually undergoing trial and imprisonment in London and Edinburgh. Many of his letters and sermons are extant, including reports from the battlefields of Flanders, where he was chaplain to the Cameronian Regiment from 1692 to 1697.

A Hind let Loose; or An Historical Representation of the Testimonies of the Church of Scotland, for the Interest of Christ; with the True State thereof in all its Periods. 1687.

'The first edition ... published in 1687, did not bear the author's name, but was "By a Lover of true Liberty"' (Johnston 1887:373). Subsequently, it was republished under Alexander Shields's name in 1744. The first copies began to reach Scotland by March 1688, and the book was banned on 15 August (Wodrow 1833 iv:444), together with such other 'seditious' books as *Lex Rex* (Samuel Rutherford 1644), *Napthali* and *Jus Populi Vindicatum* (James Stewart of Goodtrees 1667 and 1669), *A Poor Man's Cup of Cold Water* (Robert M'Ward 1678) and the *Apologetical Relation* (John Brown of Wamphray 1665). Shields was in excellent Cameronian company!

Whereas the *Informatory Vindication* was a vindication of the Cameronian position, *Hind* is more 'logical, challenging and thought-provoking ... as the reasoned exposition of Cameronian thought' (Macpherson 1932:215). It contains Shields's doctrine of the Kirk and theory of the State and 'had no small influence in Holland' (*ibid*).

⁷ Another Bass Rock author was James Fraser of Brea (1638 - 1698), who 'took care to interpret the Scriptures out of themselves' (Wright & Badcock 1996 :7), in the Rutherfordian manner. He wrote 'one of the most impressive works in Scottish theology', *A Treatise on Justifying Faith*, 'when a prisoner on the Bass Rock' (*ibid* ;8).

Shields's dissertation is about Christian freedom, or rather freedoms. There is a clear reference in the Preface to his own escape from prison '*providence having opened a door "for delivering himself as a roe from the hand of the hunter," he thought it his duty, and as necessary a piece of service as he could do to the generation, to bring to light his lucubrations thereupon; with an endeavour to discover to all that are free born ... that he is "a hind let loose" from the yoke of tyrannical slavery*' (Shields A 1797:iv). He proceeds to inform the reader that his *lucubrations* are not original, but initiated by such great reformers as Buchanan, Knox, Rutherford, John Brown of Wamphray and Robert M'Ward - practically all the authors whose works were banned along with *Hind*. In this '*little treatise [of 835 pages!] must be contained a compendious history of the church of Scotland, her testimony in all ages, and a vindication of the present state of it*' (*ibid*:vii). Then, after enumerating the difficulties that faced him in producing and publishing such a work, he makes the telling point that the Cameronians are '*now the only party that is persecuted in Scotland*' (*ibid*:xvi).

The book proper is divided into three Parts:

- PART I. An Historical Representation of the Testimonies of the Church of Scotland.*
- PART II. A Brief Account of the Sufferings of the Last Period (1660-1687).*
- PART III. The Present Testimony Stated and Vindicated.*

PART I is divided into six chronological Periods, in which the church history of Scotland is set forth. Shields 'regarded the Culdees as the Protestants of their day' (Macpherson 1932:164). They 'were men, whose memory is still fragrant for pity and purity of faith and life ... before either Prelacy or Popery was known in Scotland' (Shields A 1797:25). An oft-repeated theme in Scottish theology is that the Celtic Church, of whom the Culdees were a part, were the forefathers of the Reformed Church in Scotland.⁸ Though Shields's argument

⁸ The Celtic Church was effectively brought within the Roman fold at the Synod of Whitby, 664, and finally extirpated through the influence of the saintly, but Roman Catholic, Queen Margaret of Scotland, c1045–1093. Dr James Fraser (email, 6 August 2004), lecturer in Early Scottish History and Culture at the University of Edinburgh, comments as follows: 'From the time of the Reformation in Scotland, the "Celtic church" became something of a battle ground

has been called into question by modern methods of investigation, what is clear is his desire to seek an historical justification for Cameronian behaviour in the 17th century. He makes the point that *'Though they were not for partaking in wicked unnecessary wars, without authority, or against it, yet we have ground to conclude, they were for war, and did maintain the principle of resisting tyranny'* (Shields A 1797:27).

At a leap of about 1000 years, Shields then links the Culdees with the Lollards. Here, it is interesting to note the appearance of several names later associated with the Cameronians during the reign of the Stewart dynasty, which started with Robert II, son of Walter the Steward, in 1371. Shields continues with examples from the reigns of James II, III and IV:

- William, Earl of Douglas, was *'most treacherously'* killed by James II (1437–1460). (The Cameronian Regiment was raised at Castle Dangerous, the Douglas seat).
- James III (1460–1488) *'for his treachery and tyranny, was opposed and pursued by arms by his own subjects ... was slain at Bannockburn [not in the famous battle of 1314, but in 1488] by Gray, Ker and Borthwick,'* (the last two surnames being those of founding Cameronian officers).
- James IV *'was constrained, by the valour of Archibald Douglas Earl of Angus, [a later Earl was first Colonel of the Regiment), to reform the court.'*

(Shields A 1797:35)

It seems almost as though Shields is setting the stage for later Cameronian opposition to the tyranny of the House of Stewart.

over which Catholic and Protestant apologists ... (especially in Scotland and Ireland) fought for the right to "claim" the earliest phase of Insular Christianity.... some Protestant writers in Scotland explored the idea that the Reformation here had been an act in restoring the forms of Christianity practised by their ancestors before the "Romanisation" of the Church in the 12th century.... over the past fifty years ... intensive source analysis of a kind that was simply impossible in 1689 ... has shown ... that the whole "Celtic Church" generally – were "catholic" enough in their beliefs and practises for the whole idea of a "Celtic Church" as distinct from the Roman one to be untenable.'

Coming to the age of the Covenants, Shields 'selects with great care, and gives a succinct and eminently readable account of the struggle between Crown and Kirk' (Macpherson 1932:166) from the regency of Mary of Guise 1542, until the abdication of Mary Queen of Scots in 1567. This is the age of Knox and Buchanan, and sets the stage for Shields's defence of tyrannicide under Head IV. From 1570 the struggle ceases to be against Popery, and is now against the Episcopalian Church, which King James VI of Scotland, newly established in England as King James I, espouses, since he can control the bishops and hence advance the supremacy of the Crown in matters ecclesiastical.

From 1638 to 1658, is the period during which the problems of the Church of Scotland become '*malignant enemies, and their backsliding brethren the Resolutioners, and also against the Sectarians their invaders; whose vast Toleration and Liberty of Conscience* [italics in the 1687 edition] ... *invaded our land*' (Shields A 1797:101). When Shields comes to describe his own period, 'His pen is literally dipped in gall.... There is no critical power displayed here ... but there is tremendous power of sustained invective. Of sarcasm, too, Shields had plenty' (Macpherson 1932:167,169). Sharp's murder is justified as 'the just demerit of his perfidy For ... several worthy gentlemen ...executed righteous judgement upon him' (Shields A 1797:153). Then follows a history of the times during which the Cameronians were active, which, together with PART II, sets the scene for the main body of the work.

PART II details the sufferings of the Cameronians.⁹ *'The persecution of*

⁹ The persecutions included:

- Martyrdom, both judicial (execution) and arbitrary (murder).
- Exile, both imposed and voluntary.
- Worshippers forced to listen to Episcopal curates (frequently of a low moral and theological calibre).
- Treachery, by execution after the granting of quarter (at the Pentland Rising 1666).
- Denial of freedom of conscience.
- Erastian Indulgences, designed to lure the faithful away from the truth.
- Worshippers driven into the fields to meet under arms for self-protection.
- Innocent people brutalised by the Highland Host quartered on them in 1678.
- Payment of the Cess, a tax used to finance troops to put down the Covenanters.
- Undue cruelties post-Bothwell Brig 1679 (including the executions of the Revs King and Kid the day amnesty was granted).

Scotland hath been very remarkable and scarcely outdone by the most cruel in any place or age, in respect of injustice, illegality, and inhumanity' (Shields A 1797:217). Publications such as *The Cloud of Witnesses* (Thomson [1714] 1779), and other nearly contemporary bi-partisan authors, such as Wodrow and Defoe, as well as partisan authors, such as Howie and Walker, all support the tenor of Shields's observations. Some modern observers have justifiably cast doubts on the numbers involved,¹⁰ but the types of persecution are well authenticated.

Shields is deeply concerned with freedom of conscience. *'What is a man's excellency but a good conscience? But these men, having seared consciences of their own ... cannot endure so much as to hear of the name of conscience in the country*' (Shields A 1797:223). One man who was to appear before the Council, and who declined an oath, as it was in conflict with his conscience, was advised: *'Conscience (said he) I beseech you whatever you do, speak nothing of conscience before the lords, for they cannot abide to hear that word. Therefore ... there have been more conscience-debauching and ensnaring oaths invented and imposed ... than ever was in any nation in the world*' (*ibid*). Part II ends with a eulogy on the Cameronian martyrs, concluding: *'Christ had many witnesses who did retain the crown of their testimony ... till they obtained the crown or martyrdom*' (*ibid*:245).

PART III. The Present Testimony: stated and vindicated in its Principal Heads. This comprises the main body of Shields's dissertation under seven Heads in which he offers *'a short vindication of the heads and grounds of our great sufferings*' (Shields A 1797:257).

Head I. In Shields's opinion, there are three questions regarding one's duty to hear the Word of God: *'what we should hear, Mark 4:24, how we*

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- Imprisonment in unduly cruel circumstances, especially at Greyfriars Kirkyard in 1679, and at Dunnottar Castle in 1685.
 - Banishment as slaves to Barbados and the Carolinas, or enforced service as soldiers in Flanders.
 - Acts of Parliament to legalise the above persecutions.

¹⁰ For example, the numbers quoted by James Taylor ([1859] s a:739) are clearly exaggerated, bearing in mind the discussion in Chapter 5.

should hear, Luke 8:18, and whom we should hear' (Shields A 1797:258). It is significant that he gives no Scripture to substantiate the last, but comments, *'though it be not so expressly stated as the other two, yet the searcher of the scriptures will find it as clearly determined'* (*ibid*). Using authorities, such as Gisbertus Voetius, Samuel Rutherford, and John Brown of Wamphray, he argues that since there is only one body of Christ, division and schism is a sin, but unity *'must be in the way of truth and duty'* (*ibid*: 263). However, diversity in non-fundamentals need not prevent communion between churches. He lists the different degrees of communion, which may be held with the ministers and members of the various parts of the visible church.

- *A catholic communion* with the catholic church;
- *A more special communion* with the Protestant Reformed Church;
- It is *lawful to own communion with the churches of the United Provinces and take ordination from them*, (with Renwick clearly in mind);
- *A more particular communion* with Covenanted churches in Britain and Ireland;
- *A nearer organical communion* with the national Church of Scotland;
- *A stricter congregational communion* with the Societies.

(Shields A 1797:263/4)

He defines the different states of the church as 'infant, growing, settled and broken.' In his opinion, the church of Scotland is in a 'broken' state, and so people may *'exercise a discretive power ... by withdrawing from such ministers as are guilty [of corruptions]*. (*ibid*:266). There is really nothing new here. Shields reiterates the classical Cameronian arguments about the acceptability, indeed the necessity, of separation, but not of schism.

The work is a consistent apology for Cameronian behaviour. 'In the case of excommunication, the Church is to act by virtue of the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, I Cor 5:4,5, not by the magistrate's power' (Shields A 1797:287).

Here, he is most probably supporting Cargill's *Torwood Excommunication* in the same way as he seeks to justify Renwick's ordination by the Classis of Groningen, on the basis of a *more special communion* with the Protestant Reformed Church and the lawfulness of owning '*communion with the churches of the United Provinces and [to] take ordination from them*' (*ibid*:264).

Point IV deals with the need for a minister '*to have a right to administer there where we join with him*' (*ibid*:289/90). In theory at least, Cameronian field preachers were usually careful not to minister without a Call. They waited for an invitation from the people of a district or parish before ministering there. Thus, despite their 'parish' being theoretically the whole of Scotland, the principle applied that people had the right to call whom they wished, and not to have a curate, or even a Presbyterian minister thrust upon them.

Head II. Shields was a champion of the Rights of Man, which stood in opposition to the Divine Right of Kings. One of the few aspects, which Reformer and Roman alike agreed upon, was implacable opposition to Absolutism and Divine Right of Kings. The Stewart dynasty was obsessed with its Divine Right. But this argument was not new. 'Shields stood in the succession of Scots thinkers who had ... held to the "social contract" theory of the origin of the state.... this purely Scottish philosophy went behind Calvinism and the Huguenots.' We find it in John Major, Dean of the Faculty of Theology at St Andrew's who, as far back as 1523, 'although not a Reformer, stood for liberty against absolutism as sturdily as did his pupils, Knox and Buchanan' (Macpherson 1932:175).

Shields extrapolates over 220 pages on the subject of a tyrant's inadmissibility to fulfil the office of magistrate according to the ordinances of God. In no way does he refute the necessity for magistracy or its divine appointment, even should the magistrate be a tyrant. Therefore, before a king can be disowned, as in the *Sanquhar* and *Lanark Declarations*, there must be no question as to the manifest tyranny of such a king. Tyrants do not prevent anarchy, rather they are the cause of it.

A Shields (1797:365) sets out his general thesis thus:

A people long oppressed with the encroachments of tyrants and usurpers, may disown all allegiance to their pretended authority, and when imposed upon to acknowledge it, may and must rather chuse to suffer, than to own it. And consequently we cannot, as matters now stand, own, acknowledge, or approve the pretended authority of King James VII as lawful king of Scotland; as we could not, as matters then stood, own the authority of Charles II. This consequence is abundantly clear from the foregoing deduction, demonstrating their tyranny and usurpation.

Therefore, Shields puts the onus of blame on the tyrant for destroying his own right to rule, not on those disowning him by their refutation.

His comments about the Dutch are worthy of notice, particularly in view of his republican leanings, and his later good relationship with King William.

The Dutch also, who have the best way of guiding of kings of any that ever had to do with them ... There is says he "A reciprocal bond betwixt the lord and his vassal; so that if the lord break the oath, which he hath made unto his vassal, the vassal is discharged of the oath made unto his lord." This is the very argument of the poor suffering people of Scotland, whereupon they disowned the authority of Charles the II' (Shields A 1797:369/70).

Head III. The Government used enforced oath-taking as a means of forcing the Covenanters to resile from their position of conscience, knowing that they would not be prepared to swear falsely. The oaths were designed to trap the unwary and to exclude opponents of the government from positions of authority in Church and State. Shields rejects the *Act of Supremacy*, bonds to guarantee peaceful behaviour and enforced bonds, such as those imposed by the Highland Host of 1678 and offered to those in prison. But, he saves his final blast for a detailed condemnation of the *Abjuration Oath*. Here, we have an intensely personal apologetic. Having emphasised that he took the oath

only IN SO FAR, he launches into a lengthy refutation, concluding with an appeal to Voetius. *'So let them be taken which way they can ... it is either a denying the truth, or subscribing a lie: and consequently these poor people suffered for righteousness that refused it'* (Shields A 1797: 617).

Head IV. Shields sets forth a justification for Field Meetings or Conventicles. He commences his argument with an appeal for *'the necessary duty of hearing the gospel'* (Shields A 1797:617). It should be borne in mind that field conventicling, alone of all religious observances, continued to be proscribed right up to 1688.

He elaborates on ministers' *'right to preach in this unfixed manner, wherever they have a call'* (Shields A 1797:634). This is important from the Cameronian point of view and raised problems with the moderate Presbyterians in whose parishes they preached. Shields vindicates the exceptional position of covenanting ministers, quoting from James Durham's *A Commentary upon the Book of Revelation* 1658. *'For though he be not a catholic officer ... nevertheless he may exercise ministerial acts authoritatively, upon occasions warrantably calling for the same, in other churches ... especially in a broken state of the church ... so he hath right to preach every where, as he is called'* (quoted by Shields A 1797: 634/5).

This *Head* concludes with the positive aspects of field meetings. In Shields's opinion, field meetings are a testimony. To discontinue field meetings would be an encouragement to their enemies, a discouragement to the *'poor ignorant people'* (*ibid*:651) and a scandalous example to posterity.

Head V. Cameronians have been accused of being a guerrilla organisation or even an organisation involved in 'systematic murder' (Mitchison 1982:268). We have already seen that the evidence does not bear this out and Shields sets out the formal Cameronian position. But, rather than address the behaviour of a single person or small group in the exercise of self-defence, he deals with the academic problem of armed resistance to tyrannical authority.

I plead both for resistance against the abuse of a lawful power, and against the use and usurpation of a tyrannical power, and infer not only the lawfulness of resisting kings, when they abuse their power ... but the expediency and necessity of the duty of resisting this tyrannical power (Shields A 1797:655).

Two critical points are raised. Personal revenge is not permitted, and rising in arms is permissible only *'in a case of necessity for the preservation of our lives, religion, laws and liberties'* (*ibid*:665). Yet, he advocates the principle of *'kill rather than be killed'* (*ibid*: 673). In fact he argues that we are obliged to act thus. Even in those days, self-defence was no murder.

Head VI. This *Head* was presumably prompted by reaction to the murder of Archbishop Sharp on 3 May 1679, which gave rise to a standard question applied at the examination of Covenanting suspects: 'Was the Archbishop's death murder?' Hector Macpherson (1932:210) makes a not very convincing statement: 'It is but a step from the vindication of rebellion to that of assassination.... Shields ... formulates a very convincing argument for tyrannicide: *'When the oppression of tyrants comes to such a height and pinch of extremity ... that either they must succumb as slaves, and mancipate consciences, persons, liberties, properties, and all that they are or have ... or surrender themselves and their posterity, and ... the interest of religion, to be destroyed ... they may be sometimes necessitated in such an extremity, to apply extreme remedies'* (Shields A 1797:716/7). He then lists the circumstances, which *'show what length we may warrantably go in this matter'* (*ibid*:723).

The negative circumstances are:

- Nothing can justify the murder of the righteous or innocent;
- Innocent killing may still be culpable homicide;
- None may be killed who do not deserve it according to the laws of God;
- It is murder to kill under self-justification, even if sincere;

- One cannot kill without evidence which will stand up in court;
- An inferior may not kill a superior to whom he is in subjection;
- Even if the killing is justified, it must not be in secret or suddenly;
- The motive must not be personal spite or revenge;
- The end must not be simply the removal of a person from society;
- One must not usurp the magisterial function;
- It may be murder to kill, even in cases of defence of life;
- Assassination is “extraordinary”, and must not become “ordinary.”

(Shields A 1797:723-725)

Conversely, on the positive side, the following ‘*may be done warrantably, in taking away the life of men, without breach of the sixth command*’:

- All killing is not prohibited, only murder;
- It is lawful to take the life of convicted murderers by public justice;
- It is lawful to kill in self defence;
- It is lawful to kill the enemy in a just war;
- It is lawful to kill to rescue one’s brethren;
- It is lawful to prevent murders by killing the murderers first;
- Such prevention is the law of God.

(Shields A 1797:736)

One is left with little doubt that Shields’s, hence the formal Cameronian standpoint, was that tyrannicide was permissible in exceptional cases. Shields goes to great lengths, some years *post-factum*, to justify the murder of Sharp. Then, almost prophetically, Shields clears the way for Cameronian military actions at the Revolution by addressing a theoretical situation ‘*especially upon the dissolution of a government when people are under the necessity to revolt from it, and so are reduced to their primitive liberty, they may then resume all that power they had before the resignation, and exert it in extraordinary*

exigents of necessity' (Shields A 1797:754).

Head VII. Shields's original intent was to put this in as *Head IV*, but '*having a paper writ by two famous witnesses of Christ ... Mr M'Ward and Mr Brown, ... I thought it needful to insert it here*' (Shields A 1797:786/7). Since to examine this Head in detail '*would dilate the treatise, already excresced, into a bigness, far beyond the boundaries I designed for it*' (*ibid*:787), we shall terminate this section with Shields's bitter opinion of the ultimate intent of all the persecutions endured:

The usurper ... having taken to themselves the house of God in possession, they will sacrifice the lives, liberties, and fortunes of all in the nation to secure themselves in the peaceable possession of what they have robbed God: and that there shall not be a soul left in the nation, who shall not be slain, shut up or sold as slaves, who will own Christ and his interest (Shields A 1797:791).

Assessment of *A Hind let Loose*

This is an important Cameronian document. Although, in some ways, it says the same as the *Informatory Vindication*, it goes further in detailing how Cameronians should behave in the 'broken' condition of society then obtaining, and considers how to move towards the achievement of a 'settled' state. Principally, its importance lies in the fact that it is the last apologetic written by a Cameronian clergyman prior to the Revolution. Hence, it gives us the best insight available to the thinking and condition of the United Societies at the very end of the persecution period that formed their unique character.

Macpherson describes *Hind* as a balanced *apologia* for the United Societies. It certainly is an apologetic for Cameronian behaviour up to 1687, but whether it is balanced is debatable. It is evident that Shields has attempted to present the Cameronian 'party line,' and sometimes his argument seems to exceed his own personal conviction. He had previously spoken out against certain excesses of the more extreme Cameronians. 'Shields made certain criticisms of the attitude of the extremer elements among the Cameronians. Certain

excesses had been committed by the more violent members of the party, and Shields was at pains to tell ... how damaging these were to the cause' (Macpherson 1932:50). Yet, here we have a document that could hardly be paralleled for bitterness and invective. Whilst Shields was a man of great conviction, he was also a pragmatist. He remains constant to the formal Cameronian position of separatism but non-schismatism, and of implacable opposition to Erastianism. Yet, later it will be seen that his pragmatism extended even to include certain Erastian behaviour at the Revolution of 1688/9.

'Shields contended [it is] quite unnecessary to have Scriptural precedents for every line of action.... He gets behind Scriptural tradition to the moral order itself' (Macpherson 1932:185).¹¹ In Shields's (1797:321) own words: '*Many things may be done, though not against the law of God, yet without a precedent of the practice of the people of God Every age in some things must be a precedent to the following, and I think never did any age produce a more honourable precedent, than this beginning to decline a yoke under which all ages have groaned.*' This is dangerous ground. Bearing in mind the long-standing Presbyterian rubric that the Scriptures are the supreme rule of life and work, it seems surprising that Shields does not consider his position might be contrary to Romans 13:1-6, as well as Chapters I and XXIII of the *Westminster Confession*. There seems a possibility that Shields used some Scriptures expediently in *Hind*, which opens up some questions when we consider his behaviour at the Revolution, by which time the situations of both Church and State had dramatically altered.

Not all those kindly disposed to the Cameronians supported their policy of separation. Wodrow (1833, iii:214/5) quotes a letter from an unnamed Presbyterian minister: 'Their practising and promoting separation, was the most unaccountable thing I observed in their way, and evidently came from their ignorance and narrow spiritedness, which brought them to think that

¹¹ In this, Shields was at variance with Rutherford: 'Even more important than the testimony of the church was the testimony of scripture. The authority of scripture was not to be compromised by adding the authority of tradition' (Coffey 1997:77).

nobody could oppose evil and promote good, but in their way and according to their scheme. This way breaches increased, and the little strength we had was quite broken; all charity was swallowed up in misconstruing and condemning others.'

The argument for *self-defence* extends into a justification for the declaration of war in the *Sanquhar Declaration* of 1680, encompassing defence of religion, liberty and fundamental laws. It goes deeper than a mere apology for the bearing of arms at Conventicles. Shields's contention is that a population has a duty to resist tyrants. He makes an interesting point when he says that *'unlimited obedience is not here required; so neither unlimited subjection. We may allow passive subjection in some cases ... passive subjection, when people are not in a capacity to resist, is necessary. I do not say passive obedience, which is a mere chimera'* (Shields A 1797:659).

Shields also identifies rescue as an imperative, as is relief of the oppressed, but when he considers tyrannicide, he lays down three conditions which he considers unjustifiable:

- *'It may be murder for a man to kill another, because he thought him so criminal, and because he thought it his duty, being moved by a pretended enthusiastical impulse, in imitation of the extraordinary actions of such as were really moved by the Spirit of God'* (Shields A 1797:726).
- *'Though the matter were just ... if it be done ... suddenly and precipitantly'* (*ibid*:729), and
- if *'it be out of malice, hatred, rage, or revenge, for private or personal injuries, it is murder'* (*ibid*:730).

A case can be argued that these conditions did exist at Sharp's death, but 'Shields specifically denies this in each case' (Maurice Grant, email, 4

November 2006).¹² Therefore, it seems that Shields's argument may be fairly subjective and that he stretches his point too far. Macpherson (1932:204) accuses Shields of using 'a not very convincing piece of reasoning' and taking 'refuge in a somewhat flimsy line of argument' (*ibid*:208), which stands in contrast to the brilliant reasoning ability demonstrated by Shields during his trial when he effectively held the best legal minds in Scotland at bay. In *Hind* he has no such legal interplay to cope with, yet there seems a thinness in some of his arguments that might be improved upon.

In summation, whereas *Hind* is accepted as the final and definitive treatise on the Cameronian stance at the end of the 'broken' period of the Church in Scotland, it is a most personal document, revealing the heart and mind of its author, Alexander Shields.

6.2.3 The Character of Alexander Shields

Shields was a man of sincere faith and exceptional moral courage, and a man of deep spiritual discernment. Manifestations of the Holy Spirit were not so obvious as in some other field ministries, but Shields's ministry of the Word and Sacraments was most effective. Perhaps it is correct to say that the United Societies viewed him more as a gifted political logician and author of documents, than as a charismatic spiritual leader.

Wodrow (1833 iv:233) examines his character at some length. 'Mr Shiels [sic] was a minister of extraordinary talents and usefulness, he was well seen in most branches of valuable learning, of a most quick and piercing wit, and full of zeal, and of public spirit, and of shining and solid piety.' He emphasises Shields's moderate and reconciling nature: 'I find him opposing the heights which some of the society people ran to; and whatever lengths he went in the troubled and oppressed state of the church ... yet, as soon as a door was opened for giving a testimony against what he took to be wrong in the disturbed state things had been in, he came in, and brought multitudes with

¹² 'It is worthy of note that David Hackston, who was present, refused to take any part in the killing of Sharp because he was involved in a private lawsuit with the archbishop and he did not wish it to be thought that he had acted out of personal prejudice' (M Grant, email, 4 November 2006).

him to join in public ordinances' (*ibid*). This last refers to Shields rejoining the Kirk at the Revolution and bringing most of the Society members with him. For this, he was variously commended or vilified, depending on the position of the commentator.

Shields's moderation was manifest. During an acrimonious debate at Douglas on 26 September 1689 about whether the Societies should rejoin the Kirk, Shields acted as a moderating influence urging that 'it was a grave and greatly important matter, not rashly to be determined' (Wodrow 1842 :195), and he proved to be the catalyst for re-entry into the Kirk for the majority of United Societies' members. His moderation was coupled with moral and physical courage. He refused to be cowed during his trial in Edinburgh, as he refused to be cowed by the Hamiltonian faction after his decision to rejoin the Kirk. He survived four years being hunted after his escape from prison and, at the Battle of Steenkirk 1692, his courage under fire was commented upon by 'Generall McKye and my Lord [Angus], [who] took great pleasure at the brisk attacque and took notice of Mr Shiells who to know how the enemy was posted exposed himself to our own fyre' (Johnston 1948:74fn).

In *Scottish Theology* John Macleod (1943:109/110) describes him as:

... one of the most striking figures of his epoch. In the last dark days of the Stuart tyranny he had been the undaunted field preacher who carried on his work at the risk of his life. When he was satisfied in his judgement that it would be schism on his part to refuse to rejoin the restored Reformed Church he acted on that judgement. This step ... many of the followers of Cameron ... refused to take. He held however that the witness which he and his brethren submitted in writing to the Church of 1690 was of such virtue and value as to exonerate them from responsibility for the shortcomings and failures of so many of the Indulged and other Presbyterians in the dark days and from complicity in the failures and faults of the present time ... he only maintained the principles of constitutional freedom that had been taught before him, by George Buchanan and Samuel Rutherford and John Knox. They were

Scotland's contribution to the exposition and defence of liberty.

Whatever one's opinion of Shields's theology and politics, one cannot deny his exceptional abilities.

6.2.4 The Influence of Alexander Shields

Shields may not have been charismatic in the style of Cameron, but his influence upon Cameronianism was perhaps even more critical. He arrived with the Hillmen in December 1686 under something of a cloud, due to his conditional acceptance of the *Abjuration Oath*, but once he had repented and satisfied not only Renwick, but also the General Meeting of his sincerity, he was accepted into the Societies where he immediately assumed a leadership role in close co-operation with Renwick.

His influence through his writings was most significant. He was commissioned on 4 March 1687, together with his brother Michael, to arrange for publication of the *Informatory Vindication* in Holland. Remaining there until the end of the year, he completed and published *A Hind let Loose*. Both publications caused a furore in Scotland, and Macpherson (1932:215) opines of *Hind* that 'it is possible that as the reasoned exposition of Cameronian thought it had no small influence in Holland, and most likely came under the notice of the Stadtholder.' Such an outcome would add weight to the argument that the Cameronians significantly influenced the condition of the Church in post-Revolution Scotland, but Macpherson's suggestion is unsubstantiated. What appears more probable, though still subjective, is that Rev William Carstares, Prince William's chief Scottish adviser at the time of the Revolution, had read *Hind* and taken note of the Cameronian standpoint.

Shields's main period of influence with the United Societies occurred after Renwick's capture on 1 February 1688. Once more, the Cameronians had no ordained minister, but even after the ordination of Thomas Lining in Embden on 5 Aug 1688, Shields remained the recognised clerical leader up to, and during, the Revolution. This period was a time of considerable confusion for Shields and for all the Cameronians. Throughout it, he was in the forefront of

all the disputes, being influential, not only as a result of the numerous papers, petitions and letters he drafted, but also as a result of his debating skills that were constantly employed. Shields's influence during this period was really critical, both at the raising of the Cameronian Regiment, and at the time of the return of most of the United Societies to the Kirk. After 1690, the Cameronian polity took on an entirely different aspect and Shields's influence, though still considerable, was on the wane.

6.3 THE LEAD UP TO THE REVOLUTION

'Recent historiography has tended to present the Scottish experience of the Revolution as being essentially reactive to events in England' (Gardner 2004:178). This is a fair assessment. The history of the Revolution has been well documented and it is not the function of this study to examine it in detail but, since the outcome of the Glorious Revolution 1688/9 is essentially the pivot upon which the whole hypothesis of this dissertation hinges, an assessment of the Cameronian impact on the course and outcome of the Revolution is crucial.

The position of the United Societies in Scotland was equivocal. The General Meeting of 24 October 1688 held at Wanlockhead, discussed what action should be taken should there be an uprising. Much concern was displayed about the acceptability of any association outside the Societies. 'It was concluded unanimously that we could not have an association with the Dutch, in one body, nor come formally under their conduct, being such a promiscuous conjunction of reformed Lutheran malignants and sectaries, to join with whom were repugnant to the testimony of the Church of Scotland' (Shields M 1780:366). However, it was resolved that it was desirable to rise in a posture of defence, and if the Dutch landed in Scotland, to muster to the place where the landing occurred. Further, it 'was agreed, that they [the Dutch] might be treated with ... [in order] to co-operate together against the common enemy, to inform them of their motion, to take ammunition from them, and to admit some of them to come and teach us the art of war, but not to take them for our officers, nor come under their conduct' (*ibid*:366).

Although it would appear that the domestic United Societies were ‘sitting on the fence,’ it is important to note that this was the first time that a proposal to participate in an act of war rather than armed rebellion was seriously contemplated. This was a pivotal decision for the Cameronians, and it should be noted that it was unanimous. Despite this, no action was taken by members of the domestic United Societies prior to William’s landing at Torbay in England on 5 November 1688. Therefore, any effective Cameronian input for planning and implementation of the invasion had to come from exiles in the Netherlands.¹³

6.4 CONCLUSIONS FROM THIS CHAPTER

6.4.1 State of Freedom of Religion

For the Cameronians. The Cameronians were beginning to sense that an era of genuine freedom, in which they would be free to practise their religion in the manner which they believed to be correct, might be just about to dawn. They continued to seek freedom of doctrine, worship, discipline, and church government for themselves.

For Scotland. Conversely, the Indulged, Roman Catholics, and Episcopalians began to realise that their position was far less secure than they had imagined and, particularly after the execution of Renwick, some considerable soul-searching began amongst those who had supported, or given in, to the oppressors.

¹³ Not only did a number of Cameronian exiles accompany William’s force, but some of them had a hand in the preparations for invasion. Around May 1688, Capt Mackay (nephew of Gen Hugh Mackay, future commander of William’s army in Scotland) and Dr William Blackader (son of a Covenanting preacher who had died on the Bass Rock, and brother of a future commanding officer of the Cameronian Regiment) were arrested in Scotland on suspicion of being spies. A letter (PRO, SP 8/2, Pt 2, ff 107–112a quoted Gardner 2004:184), containing a wide-ranging intelligence report, and an unsigned letter fragment (PRO, SP 8/2, f 113) detailing a plan for the invasion of Scotland, assuring William of the writer’s ability to secure ‘a great many to be ready for service,’ was almost certainly penned by William Cleland and is a reference to Cameronian readiness to take up arms. A number of Cameronian sympathisers and other religious exiles, including 600 Huguenots, accompanied William’s invasion force.

6.4.2 The United Societies continued under strong leadership in the confused run-up to the Revolution

Immediately after Renwick's execution, Shields was already in place as leader-in-waiting. Two other clergy, Lining and Boyd, supported him, so the clergy leadership situation was stronger than after the death of Cargill, since this time there was no hiatus. That Shields was held in the highest regard and trust, is evident from the fact that even when the Societies began to dissolve, he was frequently asked to draft documents by factions to which he stood opposed.

6.4.3 The Cameronians became *more* political and *less* religious

The comparatives should be noted. This does not infer that the United Societies ceased to be a religious organisation and became a political one, rather that, with the changing times, they were forced to engage more with political problems, particularly with the impending arrival of William of Orange. They began to develop a new attitude to military action and became less concerned about relations with the Kirk.

6.4.4 Rifts were starting to appear within Cameronian ranks

The changing political climate gave rise to increasing individualism within the General Meeting. The previously held *dictum* that all must agree on a course of action before it was implemented, began to waver.

6.4.5 *A Hind Let Loose* was the last definitive Cameronian apologetic and clarified Cameronian policy in its immediately pre-Revolutionary state.

Highlights were:

Freedom of Conscience

The individual's right to freedom of conscience in every situation was emphasised. Therefore, it was the duty of a people to oppose the abuse of power and tyranny, even to the use of tyrannicide in an extreme case.

The following were detailed:

- The types of persecutions suffered.
- Degrees of permissible communion within the holy catholic church.
- The people's right (and duty) to choose their own ministers, and a minister's right to serve nation-wide, in a 'broken' state of the church.
- The necessity for continuing the practice of Conventicling.

The following were justified:

- Excommunication (Cargill's authority at Torwood justified).
- Ordination by a Netherlands Presbytery holds good for Scotland (Renwick's, and thereby Lining's).
- The policy of separatism was not schismatic.
- The United Societies did not seek to replace the role of civil government.
- Issue was taken with the letter, but not the spirit, of Chapter XXIII.IV of the *Westminster Confession*.

State of the Church

The difference between a 'broken' (current) and a 'settled' (hoped for) state of the Church was emphasised.

Justification through continuity

Justification was sought for the non-conformist standpoint by claiming a somewhat dubious continuity from the earliest days of Scots Christianity and setting the stage (quasi)prophetically for a Stewart v Cameronian struggle.

Use of Arms

The use of weapons not only for defensive but offensive use, was now justified under certain conditions, clearing the way for the actions of the Cameronian Guard and Regiment at the Revolution of 1688/9. This was a radical change of doctrine. Despite their apparent weakness and ineffectuality, the Cameronians were about to come into their own.

CHAPTER SEVEN
THE CAMERONIANS COME INTO THEIR OWN:
The Glorious Revolution of 1688/9

'A clean sword and a dirty Bible'
(A Cameronian proverb)¹

7.1 EVENTS OF 1688/1689

The landing of William, Prince of Orange², at Torbay in England on 5 November 1688, precipitated a succession of events that profoundly affected Church and State in Scotland, and produced a radical change in the Cameronian position. Initially, William made for London, and by 23 November, King James VII of Scotland³ (and II of England) had fled to France, leaving the way clear for William and his wife Mary, to accept the Crowns of England and Scotland.

'A revolution which had such inauspicious beginnings was to prove to be a major turning point in the political and ecclesiastical governance of Scotland. It is undeniable however that the Scots who so enthusiastically embraced such principles in the course of 1689–90 had at the onset been very reluctant revolutionaries' (Cowan 1989:77). At least, the Cameronians, revolutionaries since 1680, were no longer alone.

The Revolution in England was bloodless, and Episcopalianism was quickly settled as the established religion. Prior to William's landing, James had called the Scots army south to support his cause. He had also summoned the Scots Brigade in the Dutch army to support him but, in the event, he obtained little support from either of these forces. As soon as William landed, many of

¹ Quoted to the author by Rev A Sinclair Horne, Magdalen Chapel, Edinburgh, where the corpses of Covenanters were brought after execution in the Grassmarket.

² William was the grandson of Charles I through his mother Mary (Charles's daughter), and William's consort, Mary, was the daughter of James VII.

³ It should be remembered that the Parliaments of England and Scotland remained separate until 1707, although both countries had the same monarch from 1603.

the Scots nobility and gentry, as well as clergy of various denominations, headed south to London, to seek preferment from the new king, as did many exiles who had accompanied the invasion force. 'The nobility were as usual "trimming" with a foot in both camps, ready to see how events developed' (Maxwell 1963. *RSCHS* 15:169-191). This resulted in a power vacuum in Scotland, and 'mob rule ... at first prevailed' (Cowan 1989:76), especially in Edinburgh, the capital. Since the Scots crown was offered to William and Mary only on 11 April 1689, there was an *inter-regnum* period, during which the Cameronians played a significant role. 'During the period when anarchy reigned,⁴ the compact and well-disciplined body of the Hillmen came into their own, and exercised an influence on the course of events out of proportion to their numerical strength' (Macpherson 1932:79).

7.1.1 The 'Rabbling of the Curates'

In December 1688, a spontaneous Cameronian demonstration took place in the South-West under the direction of Daniel Ker of Kersland, the son of Robert Ker (used by Robert Hamilton to give credibility to his early extreme movement in 1677/8). This was known as the 'Rabbling of the Curates.' Episcopalian curates, who had been imposed on the parishes of the South-West, were forcibly removed or, 'thus rabbled out of their manses, their parishes and their livings' (Cunningham 1859 ii:261). This happened to about 200 curates.

Although some were manhandled and mocked, 'no life was taken, and no gross outrage committed' (Story 1874:162). 'Though these proceedings cannot be defended ... they were characterised by a degree of moderation quite unusual in such circumstances' (Taylor [1859] s a:742). However, relief at the cessation of the persecution that had been so long endured, caused feelings to run higher than the Cameronian clergy would have approved of. In a period during which the Cameronian laity again emerged into a leadership role (as at

⁴ In December 1688, an Edinburgh mob sacked the Royal Chapel at Holyrood Palace where some guards were killed. Later, at Glasgow Cathedral, there was an incident of snowball-throwing at worshippers. As usual, several historians blame the Cameronians for these actions. However, Wodrow (1833 iv:475) remarks that 'a rabble of common thieves got up and pillaged several houses.' In fact, it was the Cameronian Guard that put an end to such goings-on.

Rutherglen and Bothwell in 1679), the discipline that the United Societies had so successfully required of their members, wavered for a season.

Cunningham (1859 ii:262fn) remarks that ‘the Cameronians themselves got somewhat ashamed of their rabbling Reformation work.’ Certainly the ‘rabbling’ was not acceptable to Alexander Shields and the other Cameronian clergy and, at the General Meeting of 24 January 1689, a general letter to all curates in the South-West was drawn up, warning them to vacate their charges or else they would be ejected by force. The same Meeting initiated a departure from previous practice, in that it was resolved that ministers and elders, military officers, and commissioners should meet separately, not jointly as heretofore. After deliberation, each group was to bring their salient points before the General Meeting for ratification. The reason for this would appear to be that events were moving so rapidly, and were of such significance, that greater expedition was required than heretofore.

Renewing the Covenants

The Societies renewed the Covenants at Borland Hill on 3 March 1689. Hector Macpherson (1932:83) considers that this was decided upon ‘in order to prove to William that the Society could not be disregarded,’ but it seems they pinned their hopes more upon a petition drawn up by Alexander Shields. Although he and Kersland were appointed by the Meeting of 13 February 1689 to take this petition to William in London, they never went, as they were deemed vital for the work in Scotland at this juncture.

7.1.2 The Cameronian Guard

With the approval of William, the Scots nobility, who had been in London on 8 January, called a Convention of Estates⁵ in Edinburgh on 14 March 1689. A ‘watching committee,’ comprising the Cameronian clergy, Shields, Lining and Boyd, and ‘10 men ... from the Western shires’ (Shields M 1780:387), arrived in Edinburgh the day before the Estates sat. They were accompanied by

⁵ ‘A change in the composition of the General Council in 1504, to include “the thre estatis” probably resulted in “the new name “Convention of Estates” - a coming-together-by-invitation of the Estates [the body through which the king ruled] as opposed to a formal summoning to Parliament’ (Dickinson & Donaldson 1954:256).

several hundred Cameronians under arms since ‘the malignants intended to do some mischief to the meeting of Estates’ (*ibid*:388). The situation in Edinburgh was volatile, to say the least. The Convention met ‘under circumstances of danger and excitement, as well as of the utmost national importance’ (Grub 1861:299). Mitchison (1982:278) again makes an unsustained⁶ accusation of ‘every cellar holding a western Covenanter anxious to do a godly murder.’ The Castle that dominated the town, was still held by the Duke of Gordon in the name of King James VII, and Claverhouse (now Viscount Dundee) was disposed to attempt a *coup d’état* to restore James. The Estates were defenceless and, although the Earl of Leven (returned from exile with William) raised a regiment in one day,⁷ it was entirely untrained and unequipped.

Therefore, the Convention called upon the Cameronian ‘countrymen’ to defend the sitting of the Estates and to besiege the castle. ‘By a remarkable series of events, the Scots Presbyterians moved from a very weak position to a much stronger oneThe presence of the Western Cameronians in Edinburgh had an effect on events’ (Maxwell *RSCHS* 15 (1963-65):181).⁸

Thus came into being the Cameronian Guard, an irregular body, which, though technically under the command of Leven, was led by Cleland and Ker and was composed of motivated men who had suffered long and who now saw victory within their grasp. The Guard numbered about 500, but its effectiveness is demonstrated by ‘the Catholic diarist of the siege [who] estimated their numbers to be 7 000’ (Johnston 1957:23). Michael Shields (1780:388) writes: ‘It is acknowledged by many, that what they did then was good service to the nation, for if they had not come, the meeting of Estates would not have sitten at that time, and may be not at all; and if so, that which they did in declaring K. James to have forfeited his right to the crown, and abolishing Prelacy, might not have been done yet.’ It may be an overstatement to say that the Cameronian Guard saved Scotland from reverting to

⁶ She justifies this comment with a quote from the song, *Bonny Dundee*, by Walter Scott.

⁷ This Regiment, Leven’s, became the King’s Own Scottish Borderers (KOSB) and formed part of Mackay’s force at Killiecrankie.

⁸ Whilst Maxwell makes this comment about the ‘Cameronian Guard,’ he surprisingly makes no mention in his article about the conduct of the Cameronian clergy at the General Assembly of 1690 (which he covers in some detail).

Stewart rule, but they certainly influenced Scottish politics at a critical juncture, for 'the convention enjoyed comparative security, especially with the raising of an armed force from among the Cameronians' (Dickinson & Donaldson 1954:199).

However, their service was of short duration as Maj-Gen Hugh Mackay of Scourie arrived from Holland on 27 March with three regiments of the Dutch Scots brigade, and the Guard was disbanded the following day. 'The Countrymen who have serve as guardes to have a week's pay ... and that ther officers have the thanks of the meeting' (*Acts of Parliament 1689, ix, 18*). Ian Martin, historian of the King's Own Scottish Borderers (KOSB), writes (e-mail 8 February 2007): 'There is no record of payment to the Countrymen (Cameronians), who presumably declined to accept money for what they regarded as their duty,' an entirely reasonable conclusion. 'The impression I get ... is that, whilst the Estates were appreciative of the help given by the Cameronians, they regarded them with some degree of disquiet' (*ibid*). Cunningham (1859 ii:269) also remarks on the risk of the Cameronians staging their own *coup d'état* since, for a brief period, they were the only force under arms in the capital. Fortunately they had no such political aspirations.

The hearts of Shields and his fellow-delegates must have been rejoiced exceedingly by the decision of the Convention on the 4th of April that James VII had forfeited the throne, and still more the approval of the document known as the Claim of Right, in which the illegitimacies and the tyrannies of the last two reigns were enumerated. The contentions of the Cameronian party were vindicated up to the hilt. The Divine Right of Kings was thrown completely overboard. When Cameron read the Sanquhar Declaration in June 1680 with only twenty men to support him, he became a rebel and an outlaw; but he said then what the Scottish people were to say through the Convention in 1689 ... The Glorious Revolution may be said to have begun in 1680, and the heralds of it were the Cameronians (Macpherson 1932:84/5).

But by July 1689, a greater problem had arisen. Claverhouse had raised the

Highland clans for the Jacobite cause, causing alarm in State and Church alike. 'The Privy Council got ready to retreat to England if Dundee should reach Stirling' (Mitchison 1982:283).

7.2 THE RAISING OF THE CAMERONIAN REGIMENT

Meanwhile 'the "watching committee" held many meetings in Edinburgh ... the chief question which exercised them was whether or not they should give active support to the new Government' (Macpherson 1932:85). Since Claverhouse had raised a Jacobite army, civil war appeared imminent. At this point, the Convention accepted a proposal by the Laird of Blackwood⁹ for 'raising a regiment of West country men under Lord Angus as colonel, and William Cleland as lieutenant colonel' (Shields M 1780:390). Their commissions were dated 19 April 1689.

A General Meeting of the Societies was called at Douglas on 29 April to approve the move. Certainly, whilst the Convention and the Commander-in-Chief (Maj-Gen Mackay), saw this as desirable, the Societies were less pliable, and there were serious misgivings. 'The Cameronian attitude to the question of military service is not without interest. They did not, of course, question the legitimacy of war: the lawfulness of defensive war, by which they meant rebellion, was all along maintained by them. They were indeed enthusiastic for the use of force, differing sharply from the moderate Covenanters. They objected *in toto* however, to militarism, because [it was] based on the principle of blind obedience' (Macpherson 1026:231).¹⁰ The Meeting deteriorated into 'jangling debates' (Shields M 1780:394), the like of which had been so regrettable before Bothwell. Now that persecution was over, the Societies began to split between those who felt their objectives had

⁹ It is not clear where Blackwood received his authority to make this offer. He had exceeded the remit of the General Meeting of 4 March 1689, which had intended that the matter of the Regiment should not yet be made public. But, Shields seems to have approved the suggestion. Blackwood was factor of the 2nd Marquess of Douglas, the father of the Earl of Angus, and doubtless well acquainted with Cleland, whose father was the Marquess's gamekeeper. However, he was of dubious reputation and was sacked in 1698.

¹⁰ Macpherson is correct in this observation. To consider that the Cameronian Regiment was ever subject to *blind* obedience at any stage, from 1689 to 1968, would be a serious misjudgement. See various anecdotes below.

been achieved and were now worth defending, and those who refused to accept anybody or organisation that did not subscribe to the Covenants. There was much heated discussion. A number of proposals regarding the regiment were drawn up, but discarded. Finally, Alexander Shields drew up two proposals, which were presented to the General Meeting at Douglas on 13 May 1689, a petition on behalf of those who wished to serve, and a declaration to be subscribed to by all officers and soldiers.

The petition was addressed: '*To the Right Honourable the Lieutenant Colonel, and other officers in the Earl of Angus's Regiment – The humble Petition of the Soldiers that desire to serve in the said Regiment.*' Although this Petition was never formally subscribed to, it sets out the conditions for the formation of the Regiment to which the General Meeting tacitly agreed.¹¹

The Headings were:¹²

1. All officers and soldiers must make profession of:
 - Their soundness in religion.
 - Sincerity in the cause truly stated.
 - Harmony with the principles of the Church of Scotland.
 - Adherence to the Covenants and work of Reformation.
2. 'All ... may concur in all lawful and expedient endeavours in advancing the reformation of the church and state'
3. That grievances of the past may be expressed, and that the army be purged of those who have been enemies of the cause.
4. That the Regiment be as separate as possible from promiscuous military formations.
5. 'That our officers be always of our own choice.'
6. 'That as soon as peace is settled, those who wish may disband.'

¹¹ Hector Macpherson (1926 *RSCHS* Vol1: 231/2) remarks 'that because it was a community at war with the other factions of the State, the Cameronians believed themselves to be in a position to state their terms to the new Government before they accorded it military support.' The phrase 'at war with the State' has already been called into question in Chapter 5. It is considered that the Cameronians needed no excuse to state their conditions at this time.

¹² The documents appear in full in Shields M 1780:398-402.

7. That we may choose a minister [chaplain], and an elder in every company.
8. To be permitted to worship both on and off duty, and to gather weekly for 'fellowship in prayer and Christian conference.'
9. That severe military sanctions should be imposed for licentious behaviour.

The accompanying *Declaration* was a statement of principle to defend King William and the true religion, liberties and laws of the kingdom. The traditional Cameronian position on 'Popery, Prelacy, Erastianism, Sectarianism, tyranny and arbitrary government' was elaborated upon, the document concluding thus: '[We] shall endeavour that none be imbodyed in our regiment that have not given proof of their fidelity, integrity and good affection to the foresaid cause, or of their remorse for their defects therein' (Shields M 1780:401/2).

The Meeting heard the papers read and concluded that they should be shown to Polwarth, Cleland and Blackwood, whose reaction was that such an agreement was quite unworkable for any military unit under discipline. 'Never perhaps were any similar documents drawn up as the conditions of military service: the Declaration indeed resembled in some of its paragraphs the ordination vows of Scottish Presbyterian ministers' (Hutchison 1893:93).

The matter was referred back to the General Meeting. In the meantime, Polwarth drew up a short declaration that was to prove critical on the morrow. On that day, 14 May 1689, Cleland, Blackwood and the military council of officers broke off negotiations with the General Meeting. The pragmatic military mind, and the excessively independent Covenanting mind did not meld easily! 'The Cameronian General Council at Douglas on 13-14 May raised so many difficulties that the project would have collapsed if Cleland and the preacher Shields had not swayed the mustered companies by their appeals' (Hopkins 1998:139). Cleland was much upset: 'That he had lost himself by failing in his promise to raise a regiment; but since it was so, he would do it with honour' (Shields M 1780:403). But 'several companies standing in arms still continued' (Wodrow 1842 iv:190) on the Holm of

Douglas, and Cleland was prevailed upon (it is not clear by whom, but Alexander Shields seems likely) to address the assembled companies. He came first to the company commanded by his brother-in-law, Capt John Hadow and, after expressing his regret at the outcome of events, Capt John Campbell of Moy read the very short paper that Polwarth had drawn up the night before. The paper¹³ stated:

To declare that you engage in this service, of purpose to resist Popery and Prelacy, and arbitrary power; and to recover and establish the work of reformation in Scotland, in opposition to Popery, Prelacy and arbitrary power in all the branches and steps thereof, till the government in church and state, be brought to that lustre and integrity which it had in the best times (Shields M 1780:403/4).

Clearly, the paper was intended to cut through the endless prevarication to which General Meetings were subject and, whilst emphasising resistance to Roman Catholicism, Episcopalianism and tyranny, not once but twice, it sounded a clear and simple call for those prepared to defend their new-found freedom by force of arms - a new departure for Cameronians. 'This being read, Mr [Alexander] Shields explained it a little ... that they were for maintaining and defending the work of reformation and our covenants' (Shields M 1780:404).

In Hector Macpherson's (1932:89) opinion, 'Shields was ever a realist and he agreed, doubtless with many mental reservations, to this declaration ... [as] he saw clearly that military support must be accorded to King William, and that if it was not accorded, Claverhouse might succeed in effecting a Stewart restoration, in which case the horrors of the "killing time" would be repeated a hundredfold.' This may be an overstatement, but the possibility of victory for Claverhouse was not entirely remote, and no one in Douglas that day, commissioner or soldier, was under any misapprehension that, in the event of

¹³ In *The Historical Record of the Twenty-Sixth or Cameronian Regiment* 1867, p6, Carter adds two points in this document concerning the officers; but, since Michael Shields makes no reference to these, and since he was present and so heard the paper read 20 times over, he is considered more reliable.

a Stewart restoration, the persecutions of the past would be as nothing to those visited upon them in the future. If the Revolution must be defended by armed force, the Cameronians had a duty to serve in such a force.

No oath of fealty was sworn at the original mustering. 'Normally an oath of fealty to the monarch would have been taken during the attestation. These were, however, exceptional times; there was an Interregnum in Scotland' (Ian Martin, email 26 November 2004). It virtually goes without saying that had any oath been proposed, no one would have taken it. The Cameronians had bitter experience of enforced oaths during the persecution. Wisely, therefore, this matter appears to not have been mooted.

The conditions that the General Meeting attempted to set for entry into the Regiment were quite impossible for any military formation to sustain, if it were to function with any degree of discipline and efficiency. Consequently, the conditions were tacitly understood, but never implemented. Cleland went round all 20 companies. John Campbell of Moy read the declaration at the head of each company and Alexander Shields followed with a short exhortation. Thereafter, each company was marched off under its captain. Thus came into being possibly the most unique regiment ever to serve in the British Army, - certainly the only one raised on a religious basis, as a fighting congregation. 'Initially the Regiment was organised on the model of a presbyterian congregation rather than on normal military lines. The men were puritans in faith and life. They insisted that the most rigorous discipline should be maintained among them, and that their officers should be men whom in conscience "they could submit to"' (Cameronians 1968 *Disbandment Programme:s p*).¹⁴

To demonstrate the confusion of all parties at this juncture, one can hardly do

¹⁴ The regiment might well claim to be more akin to a Presbyterian congregation than was actually possible in the United Societies, which were still presbyterial in form. With an elder in each company, and a licensed preacher (soon to be ordained) as chaplain, they could nearly lay claim to be an orthodox Presbyterian congregation, with elders, session and minister. However, a presbytery was still lacking, since the Regiment continued under the spiritual authority of the United Societies until the schism of 1690, after which it fell under the authority of the Kirk, and formed a separate congregation, apparently with "a right of Call" by 1691.

better than note what happened in Douglas after the regiment was marched off. 'Towards evening, after the affair was past, the most part of the meeting convened again, when it was proposed to them. What next was called for at their hands? To which some answered, they thought it necessary that an offer should be made of raising another regiment of our friends' (Shields M 1780:404/5). This offer was actually made to Polwarth, but discretion advised against bringing it to Parliament.

The nation was in a state of disquiet and unrest. 'Troubles and commotions were not few in the land' (Shields M 1780:405). In addition to Claverhouse raising the Highlands, 'papists and malignants' were busy in the Lowlands, and an Irish invasion was feared in the South-West 'The fears of which, made the most part of the Fencible-men in the western shires, to chose officers and often to muster As for the Society people, many of them were engaged in Angus's regiment, and these at home were frequently rendezvousing under their own officers' (*ibid*). Alexander Shields, who accompanied the Regiment on the line of march as its chaplain, drew up a declaration from *the humble soldiers of James Lord Angus*. On 18 July 1689, a deputation from the Regiment laid this declaration before the General Meeting at Carntable. 'The meeting ... were well satisfied and shewed their desire and willingness to keep up correspondence with the regiment' (*ibid*:406). In fact, there was a *rapprochement* between the Regiment and the Societies, for both had hostile critics. Michael Shields (*ibid*:404) recorded that despite: 'Some objections made against some captains which the lieutenant-Colonel choosed, especially against Captain Monro, yet they were made officers in the regiment.' So, Cleland did exercise authority in the matter of choosing his own officers, although, after Dunkeld, they came in for some negative criticism: 'Their heads are blown up with such notions as render them intolerable The reputation they gained [at Dunkeld] will quickly vanish' (Johnston 1957:38 quoting Alexander Munro of Bearcrofts 1689).

7.2.1 Events before Dunkeld

Maj-Gen Hugh Mackay marched against Claverhouse with the main body of the Scottish army and was defeated at Killiecrankie on 27 July 1689, but

Claverhouse was killed in the battle. This was a critical loss for the Jacobite cause, but the heartland of Scotland now lay open to Claverhouse's army.¹⁵ Only one battalion stood in their way: the newly formed and untried Cameronian Regiment that had been posted, some think maliciously, in an exposed position at Dunkeld. They were 'separate from all speedy succour, and exposed to be carried by insult, without the least prospect of advancement to the service by their being posted there; but an assured expectation of being attacked, because the enemy had not such prejudice at any of the forces as at this regiment whom they called the Cameronian regiment' (Mackay 1833:69). Mackay also believed that 'the Jacobite army ... would sense the possibility of an easy victory against the forces most ideologically alien to everything they stood for' (Davidson 2004:25). 'To have annihilated that sacred band ... would have been a sacrifice sufficient in Prelatic eyes to have satisfied the shade of the dead victor ... and restored joy to the implacable haters of the Covenanted particularists' (King Hewison 1913 ii:531).

Alexander Shields (1690:55/6) is more succinct: 'Angus's Regiment ... was sent to Dunkeld (as would seem) on design by some to be betrayed and destroyed.' The general expectation, including that of Mackay, was that the regiment under 'Cleland, a sensible resolute man, though not much of a souldier' (Mackay 1833:71), would be soundly defeated.

7.2.2 The Battle of Dunkeld, 21 August 1689

On 21 August 1689, the Jacobite force attacked Dunkeld with about 5000 men. The Cameronians had approximately 800. Their supporting cavalry had been withdrawn, despite vehement protest by the commander, Lord

¹⁵ Had the Cameronian Regiment not held Dunkeld, the next town *en route* to the Lowlands was Perth - strongly pro-Jacobite. The next stop was Stirling, scene of Wallace's most significant battle in 1297, scene of Bannockburn in 1314 (widely accepted as *the* battle that secured Scottish freedom from the English), and also scene of the *Torwood Excommunication*, where Cargill excommunicated the king. Stirling had more than a strategic significance, it also had an emotional significance, long connected with Scottish freedom. It will be recalled that, if Claverhouse (or his troops) had reached Stirling, the Privy Council planned to flee to England. See map, p xviii.

Cardross,¹⁶ and the Cameronians were left exposed, unsupported and with no hope of reinforcement, with the River Tay¹⁷ to their rear.

The outcome was a resounding victory for the Cameronians after a very hard-fought battle, during which they lost their young Lt-Col William Cleland. The Highlanders withdrew saying that 'they could fight against men, but it was not fit to fight any more against devils' (Crichton 1824:98). The Regiment had lost 15 killed and approximately 30 wounded, of the Highlanders about 300 were killed.

One must not lose sight of the spiritual aspect of the Regiment at Dunkeld. 'The image of the victorious Cameronians singing psalms ... with the burning town of Dunkeld collapsing around their ears, is one of the ... moments of genuine popular heroism in the entire Revolution' (Davidson 2004:26).

7.3 THE CHARACTER OF THE CAMERONIAN MILITARY

Unusually for a freedom movement, the military emerged as an adjunct of the clerical, rather than of the political. It is certain that the Regiment would not have come into being without the co-operation and vision of Shields, the chaplain, and Cleland, the Lieutenant-Colonel. In due course, the Regiment helped to enable a political and ecclesiastical breakthrough, by establishing a secure environment for the Convention of Estates to sit without fear of external threat, whilst carrying out its work - ultimately resulting in Presbyterianism becoming the 'church by law established' in 1690. Initially, the Regiment was composed¹⁸ of members of the United Societies or their adherents, many of whom were second- or third-generation Covenanters. All had suffered under the Stewart persecution. Some had been transported to

¹⁶ Cardross had been imprisoned for his Covenanting principles and became an exile in the Netherlands. Therefore, the loss of his cavalry's support to the Cameronians was a greater blow to their morale than had it been another regiment.

¹⁷ Ironically, some earlier Cameronians, including Cargill, had been banished 'North of the River' [Tay]. Their ultimate vindication was thus to be in the land of banishment.

¹⁸ I am much indebted to Mark Jardine of Edinburgh for biographical notes on the Staff Lists of the Regiment in 1689, contained in the Disbandment Programme 1968, and in Carter 1867:241/2.

the Carolinas or Barbados, and several had been imprisoned. At least one, John Campbell in Overmoor,¹⁹ had been sentenced to death, but reprieved (Wodrow 1833 iv:151). Most had been hunted fugitives, and almost certainly all had attended armed Conventicles, the only possible exceptions being some of the officers appointed by Cleland, with whom the General Meeting was dissatisfied, 'although the only one mentioned is ... Captain George Monro,²⁰ no reason, however, being given' (Johnston 1957:30).

'The Cameronians ... a wholly volunteer infantry battalion ... were unique, [whilst] ... the remainder of the army had to be "raised"' (Childs 1987:104). They were indeed unique, in that they took no oath of fealty to the Crown and were raised more to defend Presbyterianism than King William, although the Declaration that was submitted, but never subscribed to, did say: '*We...offer ourselves with all resolution and readiness of mind to the service of the king and state*' (Shields M 1780:400). 'In the Cameronian was found a new kind of Citizen soldier. Not dull Puritans ... but men of faith whose elders knew what it was to suffer; from whose leaders had risen martyrs to that very faith, and who devoutly believed in freedom of Conscience' (Rev Gordon Bennett quoted in *The Covenanter*, Summer 1977:32). Although the Cameronians had not previously been subject to proper military discipline, they had learned the use of personal weapons for defence. Some had seen action at Drumclog and Bothwell, and some hundreds had formed the Cameronian Guard. But, despite James Taylor's ([1859] s a:757) uninformed remark 'that their military prowess ... was equal to Cromwell's Ironsides,' discipline was an initial problem in this most democratic of regiments. Some, who had occupied senior positions in the Societies, were of junior rank in the Regiment and the independent Covenanting spirit and military discipline did not flow easily together.

7.3.1 'Men whom in conscience they could submit to'

'The officers [although strictly not having any spiritual authority, this being vested in the company elder] had to be men whom in conscience they could

¹⁹ It is not clear whether this is Capt John Campbell Dhu (8th Company) or Capt John Campbell of Moy (9th Company).

²⁰ Capt Monro took command of the Regiment at Dunkeld, after the Lieutenant-Colonel and the Major had been killed.

submit to' (Shields M 1780:395).²¹ This matter came to a head just prior to the Battle of Dunkeld, when Cardross's supporting cavalry was withdrawn by orders from Perth. The Cameronians were left unsupported and cut off by the River Tay. When some soldiers objected that the officers could escape, since they had horses, Lt-Col Cleland 'ordered to draw out all their horses and to be shot dead. The souldiers then told them they needed not that pledge of their honour, which they never doubted; and seeing they found their stay necessar, they would run all hazards with them' (Crichton 1824:93). This set the tone for the officer-soldier relationship for the next 300 years. Possibly, even more significant was the fact that, for the first time ever, a large group of armed Cameronians were genuinely *ad idem*. The result was a signal unity of purpose that had not generally been experienced in the United Societies. Henceforth, whatever the spiritual state of the Regiment, they were to prove an effective fighting force.

7.3.2 Prayer in the Regiment

Prayer was an enduring Cameronian trait, in keeping with one of the conditions contained in *The humble Petition of the Soldiers that desire to serve in the said Regiment*:

8. To be permitted to worship both on and off duty, and to gather weekly for 'fellowship in prayer and Christian conference.'

It is certain that, prior to and during, the battle of Dunkeld, much prayer was offered up. In a letter written on the day of battle, John Blackader, a lieutenant at the time, records: 'The Lord's presence was most visible, strengthening us, so that none of the glory belongs to us, but to His own great name; for we clearly saw, It was not by might, not our power, not by conduct, (our best officers being killed at first, or disabled) so that we have many things to

²¹ This expression originates from a paper that Alexander Shields drew up after the General Meeting of 29 April 1689, the first Article of which commences: 'That all our officers superior and inferior be such as we can in confidence and prudence confidently submit to and follow' (Shields M 1780:395). Shields's paper of 13 May 1689, which required 'That our officers be always of our own choice' (*ibid*:399), took this a step further. Neither paper was ever ratified but, since choosing one's own officers is clearly impractical militarily, the earlier expression has been handed down for 300 years, and has become an accepted Regimental tradition.

humble us, and to make us trust ... him alone' (Crichton 1824:105). 'They fight as they pray and they pray as they fight.... Great numbers have lost their lives, but few or none of them ever yielded' (John Ker of Kersland c1707 quoted in Cameronians 1968 *Disbandment Programme:s p*).

By 1966, a leavening of committed Christians still remained in the Regiment. 'A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump' (I Cor 5:6).²²

7.3.3 Concern for the individual

One unusual aspect of the Regiment was concern for the individual. The 17th century was an age when usually only officer casualties were recorded by name. However, after the Battle of Steenkirk in 1692, Alexander Shields, the chaplain, recorded the Cameronian casualties of all ranks by name in a letter to his brother Michael (Laing MSS iii:350,301). SFH Johnston (1948 SHR xxvi:72) considers this document to be extremely rare, if not unique, for this early period.²³ An indication of a good relationship between officers and men in the earliest days is indicated in a letter (NLS MS 974 quoted *ibid*:71) from James Wilson, wounded at Steenkirk, addressed to Laurie of Blackwood. 'My

²² One such was Maj (later Rev) Donald Cameron.

I found my mind and heart being led in one strong direction - to pray for the safety of our men. It was an insistent thing, and surprising to me, who realised that Christian belief was very far from most of their minds the Padre of the neighbouring battalion ... had the same call ... [and we] met regularly - say three or four times a week.... We did this ... for the nine months we were there [in Aden]. And of course the remarkable thing was that we only had one fatality from the enemy all that time, though some soldiers were wounded. It took some time for me to understand the reason why our prayers were so amazingly answered. I felt the Lord was speaking to me along the lines that he loved all men, and knew that the soldiers were simply doing their duty (and doing it with amazing sensitivity towards the Arab population), and that they had no responsibility for the political aspects of our occupation of Aden. God is a God of law and order. He is also the God mighty in battle! (email 29 January 2007).

These men were doing their duty in terms of Romans 13:4, and the Cameronians *still* had no political agenda. To have 29 wounded, but only one killed, is unusual. The ratio of killed to wounded is usually higher, although it has decreased with time. A ratio of 1 to 29 is unusually low. The Dunkeld casualties were remarkably small, but the ratio was 1 to 2. The figures for two early Cameronian battles [figures for entire Allied army quoted] were: Blenheim 1704, ratio 1 to 1.67; Ramilles 1706, ratio 1 to 3.41 (from Clodfelder 2002, *Warfare and Armed Conflicts* 2nd ed:75/6). In more modern times, from 1 January 2006 to 7 February 2007, the British Army casualties in Iraq were: ratio 1 to 3.29. The figures for Afghanistan over the same period were: ratio 1 to 1.48 (from Op Telic and Op Herrick Casualty and Fatality Tables. www.mod.uk 12 March 2007).

²³ This is exemplified by an unusual memorial in Cameronian Corner, Glasgow Cathedral, in remembrance of the Regiment's service in India and South Africa 1895–1912, which records not only the names of officers, NCOs and men, but also the wives and children who died.

dear Major [Daniel Ker] ... through bloodletting could no longer keep horse ... my head and hand are tottering lying on my syd on floor near the Major' (*ibid*:75). The Colonel, Lieutenant-Colonel, Major, five other officers and 91 soldiers, were killed in this, the Cameronians' first battle on foreign soil. Col Hugh Mackay (letter to the author 28 Nov 2004) recalls how the 20-year-old colonel, the Earl of Angus, sacrificed himself to save some soldiers. 'At one stage, having fought hard ... the Regiment were ordered to withdraw.... We²⁴ were just about 100% successful, apart from a small group of Jocks.²⁵ Angus with two men ran to this point,' and covered the soldiers' withdrawal, being killed in the process. To be a Cameronian colonel or lieutenant-colonel post-1689, was about as dangerous as being a Cameronian clergyman before the Revolution.²⁶

7.3.4 Family

Another factor that welded the Cameronians together was the 'family' nature of the regiment.²⁷ Many were sons²⁸ of men who had suffered, such as, Lt John Blackader, 13th Company (son of Rev John Blackader who died in the Bass Rock prison); Capt Daniel Ker of Kersland, 15th Company (son of the Robert Ker who had given credibility to Robert Hamilton's extreme movement prior to 1679, and whose sisters were married respectively to Capt William Borthwick, 5th Company, and Rev Thomas Lining, now minister of Lesmahagow); and Cleland's brother-in-law, Capt John Haddow who commanded the 11th Company. There were some surprises too. Lt Charles Dalzell, 18th

²⁴ An indication of the 'family' nature of the Regiment is that, at a remove of over 300 years, Mackay refers to the men of Steenkirk as *we*, and not *they*. After 9th Cameronians crossed the Rhine on 24 March 1945, Fyffe Christie records (Cameronians 2003. *Covenanter* :36); 'The Cameronians continued to take punishing casualties as they crossed the River Elbe. To replace them, the reinforcements were no longer veteran Scots but a mixture of troops from other regiments....They fought bravely but the family structure of the Battalion which had stood them in good stead in past engagements was weakened.'

²⁵ Scottish soldiers are generally affectionately called 'Jocks.'

²⁶ Dunkeld 1689, Lt-Col Cleland killed: Steenkirk 1692, Col The Earl of Angus killed, Lt-Col Fullerton killed, Maj Ker of Kersland died of wounds: after Landen 1693, Col Monro died of sickness: Blenheim 1704, Lt-Col Livingstone killed: Ramilles 1706, Col Borthwick killed: Malplaquet 1709, Lt-Col Cranston killed.

²⁷ This does not imply that other Scots Regiments are not 'family' regiments but that, unlike Leven's, also raised in 1689, and which became a 'family' regiment in due course, the Cameronians were already 'family' when raised.

²⁸ Many names that featured on the muster rolls in 1689 still appeared on the rolls of 1968: Campbell, Thompson, Lindsay, Christie - the list is long.

Company, was the youngest son (by a handfasted wife) of General Tam Dalzell, 'one of the scourges of the Covenanters' (Johnston 1957:30).

7.3.5 Extreme restraint

Once the 17th-century Cameronians had achieved their aim, they ceased hostilities. 'What is ... most remarkable ... is the lack of physical violence ... even against those curates who had been instrumental in sending men and women to their deaths' (Davidson 2004:19). There were no attacks on land-owners who had supported the curates; there were no attacks by the Guard on Jacobite supporters in Edinburgh; the Regiment did not even 'follow-up' its victory at Dunkeld. When the job was finished, they stopped and, in the case of the 'rabble' and Guard, quietly went home. 'The Society-men took the precaution to publish a vindication ... on 4 January 1689, clearing themselves of aspersions' (King Hewison 1908 ii:519). Although some hotheads had been involved in the 'rabbling,' as a general principle, the Cameronian leadership neither approved, nor permitted, vindictive retaliation.²⁹

7.3.6 Presbyterian orthodoxy

One aspect that has never been remarked upon by any commentator (as far as the author can establish) is the fact that the Cameronian Regiment at Dunkeld conformed to Chapter XXIII.IV of the *Westminster Confession*, as they were now loyal servants of the King. As such, they also conformed to the Scriptural requirement of Romans 13:4, and were entitled to bear the temporal sword in support of the government, 'For he [the Government] is a minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth

²⁹ The last active service posting of the Cameronian Regiment, 277 years after Dunkeld, merits some comment as an example of how this quality can survive. The First Battalion was posted to Aden town, Yemen, in a peacekeeping role. This was effectively converted into to a *peacemaking* role by the behaviour of the battalion. 'In all the battalion suffered 102 grenade attacks [as well as number of shootings, mortarings, etc] ... A number of men [29] were wounded.... Only one man was killed' (Baynes 1971:199). But, what was quite unique was that the entire battalion, in the whole nine-month tour in Aden town, fired a total of two shots! To modern-day soldiers, experiencing conditions of civil unrest, this seems incomprehensible. 'Collateral damage,' the modern euphemism for innocent civilian casualties, was *zero*. By accepting casualties of their own without retaliating on innocent people, the sight of a Cameronian patrol began to be welcomed by the locals, who then largely got rid of the insurgents themselves, by rejecting them and their methods. This is reminiscent of the extreme restraint shown by the 17th century Cameronians during the "Killing Times", in not exacting vengeance upon their oppressors, even when the opportunity arose.

not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil.' The problem of questionable orthodoxy, which had vexed Richard Cameron and succeeding Cameronian clergy, no longer obtained. The Cameronian Regiment was orthodox in both spiritual and temporal respects. The observation stands that God did not appear to be 'on the side of the big battalions'³⁰ at Dunkeld, possibly, because the weaker force was fighting in obedience to the Word of God?

7.3.7 The religious state of the Regiment after Dunkeld

The fact that Alexander Shields received a Call from the Regiment to be their minister in February of that year demonstrates that the Cameronian Regiment formed a congregation of the Church of Scotland as early as 1691. In his diary, Shields (Wodrow 1842:202) notes: 'A.S. gote a call³¹ to Angus' regiment; and on the 4th [February] was ordeaned [by the Presbytery of Edinburgh] in the Cannongate Meeting-house; and the officers of the regiment received him.' At this point, the regiment was still composed of mainly former United Societies' men, who now fell under the spiritual authority of the Kirk. In keeping with the condition that they not be required to serve furth of Scotland, some did refuse to fight in Europe, but most were prepared to fight for William in the War of the League of Augsburg (1691-1697), more to prevent another Stewart restoration, than to defend the faith at home. In 1697, the Peace of Rijswijck was "the final and decisive defeat of the conspiracy which had gone on between Louis and the Stewarts ... to turn England [and Scotland] into a Roman Catholic country and into a dependency of France." So the Cameronians had perhaps not fought in vain' (Macpherson 1932:124 quoting JR Green, *History of the English People*).

We are dependent on Alexander Shields for most of the available detail on the early days of the Regiment during this first overseas campaign. There was 'ill feeling ... between the regiment and the other Scottish troops in Flanders....

³⁰ *'Dieu n'est pas pour les gros bataillons, mais pour ceux qui tirent le mieux'* (Voltaire's Notebooks vol 2:547).

³¹ The *ODNB* (2004-5, 25302) incorrectly states that Shields 'received an *appointment* ... to serve as chaplain to the Cameronian Regiment. In the following line, it remarks 'he was *called* ... to St Andrews.' In fact he received five calls about this time.

O'Farrells³² mocked them, especially shouting "Presbytery" and "Solemn League and Covenant" and saying that they would get no hills in Flanders to pray and preach upon' (Johnston 1957:47,45). However, the Regiment continued to hold its Conventicles, and the King clearly held it, and its chaplain, in high regard. 'Our regiment ... is little doubted for their honesty and faithfulness to the king' (Johnston 1949 *JSAHR* 27,5). There are other indications of the King's approval of the Cameronian Regiment. Even after Cleland's death at Dunkeld in 1689, the Regiment continued to be as much under the influence of its chaplain as it was of its colonel, a fact recognised by none other than King William himself. Shields's diary entry for 30 March 1691 (Wodrow 1842:203) records: 'The King mett us a litle out of the Camp. He looked pleasantly on us. He enquired also for me, and asked at some whither we prayed as much as we did before, and whither the Lieutenant-Collonel or A.S. [Mr Alexander Shields] had the greatest influence on the regiment.' One is left with the impression that he was pleased to have a unit in his army of such a high moral calibre, and that the chaplain was more influential than the colonel!

Shields had one 'problem which was to be his preoccupation throughout his service, namely the preservation of its special character as a body of chosen people' (Johnston 1949 *JSAHR* 27,5). In December 1693, he wrote to the General Assembly in Edinburgh, stating that it was 'requested by that particular Regiment, which I attend upon, That its vacant numbers may be filled up with Recruits of People of the Presbyterian perswasion, and of a good Conversation Answering that Character' (Shields A 1693:2). He was to have limited success, and his departure for St Andrew's in 1697 'marked a definite stage in the transformation of a body of militant saints into an ordinary regiment of foot' (Johnson 1949 *JSAHR* 27,10). 'Many of the soldiers killed at Steenkirk, 1692, had been in the regiment since its foundation and had already won distinction at Dunkeld' (Johnston 1948 *SHR* 26,73) even though 'the connection between the regiment and the United Societies was now

³² O'Farrell's, who had behaved so badly to Covenanting prisoners after Bothwell Brig, is now The Royal Highland Fusiliers, and shared a Depot at Lanark with The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) in the 1950s and '60s.

much weakened³³ (Johnston 1957:48). Thereafter, although there continued to be a leavening of committed Christians, such as Lt-Col John Blackader,³⁴ despite the fact that ‘the Regiment had been raised initially from among deeply religious men for a specific reason, that task having been successfully completed ... it would have been surprising had the religious nature of the regiment not been diluted by time’ (Cameronians 1968, *Disbandment Programme:s p*).

So, after Shields’s departure to take up a Call to St Andrews in 1697, the unit began to take on an existence independent of any religious aspects and soon became a standard military formation, albeit with certain enduring religious traditions. Although the Cameronian Regiment continued to serve the Crown until 1968,³⁵ it cannot be described as an agent of Cameronianism after 1692.

7.3.8 Later service under William

The regiment, initially raised as a fighting congregation under the United Societies, came under the spiritual authority of the Kirk after 1690 and, thereafter, was rapidly assimilated into the mainstream of the ‘British’ army. It was employed in keeping the peace in Scotland until March 1691, when it embarked for the Low Countries as part of King William’s army engaged in opposing Louis XIV of France.³⁶ Several Catholic monarchs, and even the Papacy itself, were ranged on the same side as William, due to their antagonism to Louis. ‘The fact that Angus’s regiment was used in a campaign in which Papists and Protestants were allies, did not escape the notice of the bitter minority of the Hillmen’ (Macpherson 1932:120).

³³ The United Societies had ceased to exist in their pre-1690 form by this time.

³⁴ Blackader’s diary entry for 30 April 1704 records: ‘A sad place to be in an army on Sabbath, where nothing is to be heard but oaths and profane language’ (Crichton 1824:210). The regimental historian, SHF Johnston (1957:64), bemoans Blackader’s propensity for writing in such a spiritual vein. ‘The historian would willingly exchange some of the confidences of the diarist’s soul for more details about the part played by the regiment in Marlborough’s great battles.’ Fortunately, his diary is of more use to this dissertation.

³⁵ In 1881, the 26th Cameronians were amalgamated with the 90th Perthshire Light Infantry, to form The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles).

³⁶ ‘Louis XIV had played into William’s hands by his enthusiastic espousal of the cause of the exiled James.... Great Britain was involved in a continental war of the first magnitude as a result of the Revolution and, although the leading protagonist on one side was a staunch Protestant and on the other side a bigoted Romanist, the issue was by no means clear cut’ (Macpherson 1932:120).

The Cameronian Regiment survived until disbanded by Government decree in 1968. 'You never yielded yet to enemy swords. You have to yield now to the stroke of a pen in Whitehall' (Maj-Gen FCC Graham 1968. Cameronians video). The last formal duty that members of the Regiment performed, was the handing-over of the Regimental Communion vessels, for safe-keeping, to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland on 23 May 1968.³⁷

7.4 CONCLUSIONS FROM THIS CHAPTER

7.4.1 State of freedom of religion

For both Cameronians and Scotland as a whole

During the period covered by this Chapter, as well as Chapter 8, the nation was in a state of flux, and remained so until the Church Settlement of 1690. Therefore, it is invidious to try to draw conclusions about the state of freedom of religion at this stage. So, Chapter 9 will deal with this in detail.

However, the Cameronians continued their struggle for freedom of doctrine, worship, discipline and church government, but in the additional dimension of temporal warfare.

The Glorious Revolution of 1688/9 marks one of the major periods of Cameronian influence on affairs in Scotland, so conclusions from this chapter are important in answering the question about whether the Cameronian contribution to freedom of religion in Scotland was significant?

Some other questions also emerge as a result of this Chapter:

7.4.2 Did the Cameronians contribute to the initiation of the Revolution?

'The open disapproval of the Cameronians coupled with the failure of the established church to accept their principles could not in themselves have

³⁷ The Moderator (Rt Rev Dr James Longmuir) remarked: "Had it not been for the stubborn and courageous battle ... at Dunkeld ...there might have been ...no General Assembly to receive these Communion Vessels' (1968 *Covenanter* June: 82).

been expected to initiate Revolution' (Cowan 1989:75). The Revolution would probably have occurred, even if the Cameronians had never existed. Aiton's (1821:120) comment that 'they must be ill-acquainted with the history of that period, who imagine that the persecuted remnant ... had any hand in bringing about that revolution, or that they so much as knew of it, till the Prince of Orange was in London,' is rather disingenuous but not entirely off the mark. 'A properly contextualised view of the Cameronian sects might nevertheless still leave us with much to admire in their beliefs and actions ... but it cannot, without massively distorting the evidence, confer upon them a significance which they did not possess' (Davidson 2003:292).

King Hewison (1908 ii:513) would have us believe that 'the Society-men took credit to themselves for inaugurating that successful revolution for which they had long been reproached and persecuted,' using *Faithful Contendings* as his justification, but he is overly hagiographic. True, the document states: 'that the Meeting of Estates having ... declared K. James to have forfeited ... the crown, gave the same reasons for it that the United Societies formerly had given, and for which they protested against his instalment' (Shields M 1780:392), but the Societies, whilst they may claim to have inaugurated the Revolution, were not the catalyst. The critical factor that eventually precipitated the Revolution into being was the behaviour of King James VII, for 'James's belief in his rectitude ... was unshakeable' (Cowan 1989:68). 'James had seriously underestimated the strength of his people's Protestant convictions The Presbyterians ... with the exception of the Cameronians ... proceeded to organise themselves as a dissenting body. But James's rule was near its end. His attack on the privileges of the Church of England³⁸ was his undoing' (Burleigh 1960:251-252). By the late 1680s, virtually the only impact that the Cameronians made outside their own Societies, was as a spur to the conscience of the nation. The main Presbyterian body had, by that stage, virtually all accepted the Royal Indulgences and Tolerations, and the Cameronians were viewed by most as an irritation that just would not go

³⁸ By way of clarification, it must be remembered that parallel events were occurring in England that contributed to the Revolution happening simultaneously in both England and Scotland.

away. By now, the Cameronians were more of a problem to the State than to the Church, but were largely contained by repressive Government measures and, although representing a threat to stability, they never came close to overthrowing the State. 'In isolation the Cameronians were increasingly revealed as a small and insignificant sect, who despite their spirited and sonorous declarations had not possessed the power since 1679 of initiating, far less sustaining war against the State' (Cowan 1968:132). More to the point, they continued to hold to their principle of not setting up a civil magistracy, so, in a sense, they needed to be provided with one from some external source. The main concern was that it should be a magistracy to which they could, in conscience, submit. In this, they were fortunate to get William of Orange.

7.4.3 Contribution to political freedom?

This is outside the scope of this dissertation, since it concerns political, not religious, freedom. Nevertheless, it warrants a brief mention. Although some lay Cameronians, such as Polwarth, had political aspirations, these were not within mainstream Cameronian thinking.

One might argue that the Cameronians did have some influence upon the new political situation in Scotland. 'The Covenanters made a definite contribution to Scottish political theory by way of their literary attacks on the royal prerogative.... The primeval privilege of self-defence remains in every person ... this doctrine is re-emphasized in the Cameronian Alexander Shields's *A Hind Let Loose*.... The practical application of such doctrines At the time of the Cameronian persecution is only too evident' (Cowan 1976:159-160). J Halliday (email 20 November 2006) regards 'Rutherford's *Lex Rex* [as] the fundamental intellectual text for all opponents of the Stewarts and Divine Right.' So, the *proto*-Cameronian Rutherford, and the *ultimo*-Cameronian Shields, as well as many between, addressed the same problem.

Just like the Stewarts, King William's main concern was political, and he was concerned to win over the decision-makers, for 'support from ... merchants and landed interests would evaporate if there was a prospect of rule by the

lower orders. For the moment, however, he needed the Cameronians to fend off the Jacobite threat' (Armstrong 2006:2). The Cameronians still viewed their struggle as religious, whilst the Government, despite a regime change, sought to turn it to political advantage.

7.4.4 The Cameronian military contribution was significant

The Cameronians' most significant contribution to Scotland's history, was due to the outcome of certain events, which could have occurred only during a period of comparative peace and stability. The Cameronians had contributed to this outcome by a timely use of their new-found military capability. This took many by surprise, as they had no previous credible military record.³⁹ Though their effectiveness was untried, their courage and determination had been tested during many years of affliction. They had stood firm in their testimony under brutal persecution, they had submitted to the discipline of the Societies, and - possibly most important - they now saw the years of suffering as being justified, and victory within their grasp. They were, at last, committed to a singularity of purpose, embracing both spiritual and temporal aspects of their behaviour.

At the time of the Revolution, the Cameronians undertook three military-style functions of very different types:

- The 'rabbling' of the Curates.
- The Cameronian Guard.
- The Cameronian Regiment.

The effectiveness of these operations steadily improved in quality from:

Quasi-military, to Para-military, to Professional-military.

People, who had endured years of personal persecution from the curates who had been imposed upon them, carried out the 'rabbling of the curates.' Under the nominal leadership of Daniel Ker of Kersland, it was in truth a rabble, and the Cameronian clergy did not approve. But, it had the effect of striking fear into the hearts of the Episcopal clergy of the South-West, so that many fled their parishes. It should be noted that no one was killed. Even in the heat of

³⁹ Drumclog was a minor skirmish, Bothwell Brig was a disaster and, since then, the Cameronians were involved only in the most minor of skirmishes, and few of these at that.

the moment the 'rabble' maintained a sense of moderation and extreme restraint, all the more commendable after such suffering. 'Certainly it was greatly to the credit of those who organised these rabblings that not a single assassination could be laid to their charge' (Macpherson 1932:81).

There seems little doubt that, in April 1689, the Convention of Estates would not have been able to meet in safety had it not been for the presence of the Cameronian Guard in Edinburgh. This was a significant service to the nation, since the Estates removed King James at that time, and prepared the way for a Revolution Settlement, which would include a considerable improvement in religious freedom in Scotland. But for the Guard, the Convention might not have sat, or even been subjected to a *coup d'état*, since Claverhouse only quit the capital once the Guard had been established.

Opinions vary about the effect of the Battle of Dunkeld on Scottish political and ecclesiastical history. What could hardly be disputed is that it was the decisive military turning-point of the Revolution. 'If the importance of battles is to be estimated by their consequences and the military qualities displayed in them, the defence of Dunkeld should be written larger in Scottish history than Killiecrankie' (Hume Brown 1909 iii:12). Certainly, it was a high point for the Cameronians, for the 'heroic defence of Dunkeld marked the effective end of the rebellion' (Cowan 1991:165), but soon afterwards the Cameronian polity, the United Societies, began to fall apart. Willie Thompson (1978:105) opines that, although 'the Cameronians were to have no part in directing the new settlement, they were still sufficiently well organised and disciplined to form ... a regiment which was crucial in stopping an attempted Jacobite restoration⁴⁰ ... but with that episode their effective role came to an end.' The most critical outcome of the battle was that it engendered a climate in which it was safe for the Scots Parliament to meet, without any threat of a Jacobite intervention. This was ultimately to prove vital to the settlement of the church question, which greatly concerned the Cameronians.

⁴⁰ The final battle of the campaign was not waged until 1 May 1690, when the Jacobite remnant was defeated at the Haughs of Cromdale. However, Dunkeld had broken the back of the Jacobite resistance.

7.4.5 Use of the Cameronian Name by the Regiment

From the early days, the Regiment identified themselves as the [Regimented] Cameronian Presbyterians, and the Commander-in-Chief in Scotland, Maj-Gen Mackay refers to them under this name before Dunkeld: 'this regiment whom they called the Cameronian regiment' (Mackay 1833:69). 'The Cameronians, ... (as they were henceforth called)', (Story sa: 569). In fact, they are the only cohesive group ever to have claimed that name on a formal basis. Originally, they were an adjunct to the Main Body of the United Societies, and subsequently formed a congregation of the Kirk from 1690 until 1968. They were one of the two continuing, identifiable Cameronian entities after the collapse of the United Societies in 1690 but, with the departure of Alexander Shields in 1697, they soon ceased to be a specifically 'religious' unit, although certain aspects of their religious origin endured until 1968.

7.5 OVERALL CONCLUSION TO THIS CHAPTER

It seems clear that, at a most crucial stage, the Cameronian Guard made a critical difference to events in the capital. 'There is no doubt that this action of the "Wild Westland Whigs" as they were called, did something to keep the peace and to allow the Revolution Settlement to be carried through without any violent opposition' (McMillan1948. *RSCHS* Vol 10:144).

'The military campaign [of Dunkeld] achieved little; but the consequent absence of Jacobite leadership in the Convention subsequently dominated by William's supporters achieved much' (Cowan 1991:165). The Scots Parliament of 15 April 1690, that established Presbyterianism, was able to meet without fear of a threat of military incursion or civil war, thanks only to the victory of the Cameronian Regiment at Dunkeld, which broke the back of the Jacobite rebellion and ushered in a period of comparative stability. 'This action, which turned the tide against the Jacobites, secured the protestant revolution in Scotland' (Cowan 1976:144). It is noteworthy that the outcome of the Battle of Dunkeld was contrary to the expectation of virtually all parties:

from General Mackay down to the common soldiers themselves. The spiritual dimension of answered prayer must be taken into consideration.⁴¹

Therefore, it seems clear that the actions of the Cameronians under arms during 1689 did make a significant contribution to future events, in achieving a climate during which the Revolution Settlement could be finalised. This period of comparative security extended into 1690, thus also allowing the General Assembly to pursue its business in peace. Furthermore, it appears certain that the Cameronians contributed in a significant way by securing the climate that led to a general improvement in freedom of religion in Scotland, which started in 1690. 'Only since the Revolution Settlement of 1690 has the course been a straightforward one.... From that time the distinctive features of the Church of Scotland as it is known today are discernible' (Burleigh 1960:420/1).

By their actions during 1689, the Cameronians secured a stability whereby the Convention of Estates was able to declare that James VII had forfeited the crown, and thereafter secured a time of peace, during which the Revolution Settlement was put in place, both for Church and State.

⁴¹ 250 years later, during the Chindit campaign of 1944, 'No one could understand why the Japanese did not close the half-shut trap they had placed around Blackpool, [code-name for a jungle stronghold whose garrison included 1st Bn Cameronians], ... Rhodes-James, [an officer of The King's Own], conscious of almost brushing the Japanese at the water-point with his right shoulder as the column of wounded came out of the block, ascribed it to Divine Providence. That cannot be discounted, ...' (Bidwell S 1979. *The Chindit War*. New York: Macmillan, p240).

CHAPTER EIGHT

RECONCILIATION AND SCHISM:

In the wake of the Revolution, 1690 to 1692

'Trust in God and keep your powder dry.'

(Attributed to Oliver Cromwell)¹

8.1 THE REVOLUTION SETTLEMENT IN SCOTLAND

It now behoves the researcher to consider the outcome of the Scots Revolution Settlement in Church and State, and to consider what influence the Cameronians exercised upon it.

Technically speaking, the sitting of the Convention of Estates on 14 March 1689 was illegal, since the Test Act of 1681 was still in force. However, the meeting was genuinely as representative of the nation as possible, comprising 'nine prelates, forty-two peers, forty-nine members for counties, and fifty representatives for burghs' (Cunningham 1859 ii:268). The election of the Whig Duke of Hamilton as president set the tone for the Convention. On 4 April, James VII was declared to have forfeited the crown, and by the *Claim of Right*, on 11 April, it was offered to William and Mary. The *Articles of Grievances* followed two days later. When the Convention reassembled as a parliament on 5 June 1689, none of the Episcopal bishops attended.

The Claim of Right not only assured religious freedom for Presbyterians, but also removed it from Roman Catholics² and reduced the religious freedom of Episcopalians.³ A number of clauses in the *Claim* had a peculiarly Cameronian flavour: *inter alia*, there were to be no military appointed as judges (unlike

¹ *Oxford Dictionary of Quotations* 4th ed 1996:110 No. 9.

² No Roman Catholic could henceforth ascend the throne or hold office, no Masses were allowed, no Catholic books or education were permitted.

³ Prelacy was declared to be 'a great and insupportable grievance' (Dickinson & Donaldson 1954:205).

Claverhouse); torture was forbidden (Cleland's thesis), as was incrimination of oneself in capital cases (many Cameronians having been convicted on their own testimony); and no military were to be quartered in private homes (unlike the Highland Host of 1678). One clause that the Cameronians would have surely resisted was: 'That persons refusing to discover what are their private thoughts and judgement in relation to points of treason, or other men's actions, are guilty of treason' (Dickinson & Donaldson 1954:205). This was exactly Alexander Shields's defence when he was being tried for treason in 1684 (Shields A 1715:32). Although Cameronian behaviour was no longer treasonous, who was to say what the attitude of future administrations might be?

When they took the coronation oath on 11 May 1689, William and Mary raised an objection over the last clause: 'We shall root out all heretics and enemies of the true worship of God, that shall be convicted of the true Kirk of God of the foresaid crimes' (*Nat.MSS Scot.*, iii, No.cvii, quoted by Dickinson & Donaldson 1954:209). 'William paused and said, "I will not lay myself under any obligation to be a persecutor." It is difficult to see ... how such a negative sense ... can be attached to ... the oath; but William had done enough to exonerate his conscience, and to exhibit his principles. It was a good omen for the future that such sentiments had at length mounted the British [sic] throne' (Cunningham 1859 ii:273). King William was to continue to demonstrate a moderate and conciliatory attitude in religious affairs.

The Estates, which assembled again in Edinburgh on 5 June 1689, promptly declared themselves a parliament, and ratified William and Mary's authority as joint sovereign. 'William showed every sign of letting the past be forgotten' (Halliday 1965:145/146) by including in his Privy Council men with Jacobite inclinations. Although the Cameronians were 'people who for social and economic reasons played no part in Parliament's work ... all but the Jacobites in Parliament respected the shared memory of earlier Presbyterian figures, especially James Guthrie and Samuel Rutherford.... [Yet] Patrick Hume [of

Polwarth] lost his Covenanter principles fairly quickly'⁴ (J Halliday, email, 20 November 2006), as did many others.

Having ratified the sovereign authority of William and Mary, both Parliament and the Crown were keen to settle matters ecclesiastical. But this was delayed by the emergence of a strong opposition party known as 'The Club,' which 'came rapidly to dominate the proceedings of Parliament' (Halliday 1965:147). 'The so-called "Club" [was] formed out of an unexpected alliance of crypto-Jacobites and extreme presbyterians' (Glassey 1989 *RSCHS* 23:326).⁵ Whilst agreeing with William regarding the establishment of Presbyterianism, the Club, 'for tactical reasons ... kept debate away from the church question' (Halliday 1965:147) until they had forced concessions from William in respect of his right to choose his own ministers, thus limiting royal authority. As Halliday (*ibid*:159) remarks; 'Without the Club in 1689, liberty and redress of grievances could have been achieved only as grace and favour gifts of a magnanimous master ... prelacy and royal supremacy had gone, and patronage was to follow.... Church and state alike in future years owe to the Club a greater debt than either has been prepared to acknowledge and of which both are sadly unaware.'⁶

8.1.1 King William's influence

'It seems that William had no clear policy towards, or even reliable knowledge of, the condition of religion in Scotland. William's role in the eventual creation of a presbyterian church of Scotland in 1689 and 1690 is no less elusive' (Glassey 1989. *RSCHS* 23, Part 3:324). Whilst still in the Netherlands, William had come to trust the Scottish exiles more than the English, but had formed the impression that the Scots Church was virtually exclusively Presbyterian. When he reached England, Episcopalianism was quickly settled as the state religion, and he felt he might achieve the same in Scotland since, as he was

⁴ Polwarth 'has been justly described as "a man incapable alike of leading and of following; conceited, captious, and wrong-headed, an endless talker, a sluggard in action against the enemy, and active only against his own allies"' (Taylor [1859] s a:732).

⁵ Whilst clearly it is not possible to claim 'The Club' as a Cameronian appendage, it contained many who sympathised with their point of view.

⁶ Thus, it would appear possible that there may be a claim for some Cameronian influence, however slight, upon the future of political freedom in Scotland.

'a thorough Erastian ... He would not maintain a church hostile to himself,' but neither 'would [he] impose one hateful to the people' (Story1874:164). William was indifferent to forms of Church government as long as the national church polity upheld his own authority. 'He laughed at the idea of any form of polity possessing a divine right ... but ... he was resolute in extending religious toleration to all' (Cunningham 1859 ii:266). Despite Jonathan Israel's (1991:29) assessment that 'William's only real interest in Scotland was that the country should be quiet and submissive and not obstruct his wider, European concerns,' such an attitude was not detrimental to the Scottish situation. It soon became clear to the king 'that the great body of the nobility and the gentry are for Episcopacy, and it is the trading and inferior sort that are for Presbytery' (Cunningham 1859 ii:263). However, the numbers of the latter, which included the Cameronians, 'constituted the great bulk of the people, and were to a man hearty in his [William's] cause' (*ibid*:265), although he was considered latitudinarian by the Cameronians.

As *Stadtholder* of Holland, William was head of a Presbyterian Church, whilst, in England, he was also Head of an Episcopalian Church. William was keen to have the Scots Parliament resolve the ecclesiastical problem of the national church as, by so doing, 'he was saved from giving offence to the English church' (Cunningham 1859 ii:271). And, he also reduced the danger of offending the Cameronians, who would inevitably struggle with any Erastian solution. In 'an era which set little store by majority views' (Cowan 1976:138), it is, therefore, all the more significant that William actually came down on the side of the majority in the matter of the Church Settlement, whilst being deeply concerned with the attitudes of those who had power.

William was tolerant of all types of Christian religious practice, and desired all to be free to worship according to their own conscience. 'As his own sentiments in religion were abundantly liberal, so it was a maxim with him, that, upon religious subjects, every man ought to be left at full liberty to think for himself' (McCormick 1774:43). The decision as to whether Episcopalianism or Presbyterianism was to rule the Church of Scotland was left to the Scots themselves, but the moderation that the Settlement introduced was at

William's insistence.⁷ The author's impression is that William was a supreme pragmatist, and could be very faithful to those who were faithful to him.⁸ Certainly, his desire for all to be free to worship at the dictates of their conscience (admittedly subject to the stability of the kingdom) appeared sincere to the contemporary commentators quoted above, and cannot therefore be dismissed out of hand.

At this time, William's closest adviser was Rev William Carstares, an exiled Scots Presbyterian minister, not of Cameronian persuasion despite having been arrested and tortured by the Stewarts.⁹ 'He was virtually William's confidential adviser ... and wielded greater power than any of the ostensible ministers and officers of state' (Story 1874:160). His influence with the king was so great that he was nicknamed the 'Cardinal.' 'The settlement of the affairs of Scotland was an enterprise that made a sagacious Scottish counsellor especially useful to the Prince of Orange.... The Scots were stubbornly insisting on mixing the secular and the sacred, and were constantly intruding the *odium theologicum* on the conflicts of the senate and the field' (*ibid*:159/160).

At this juncture, Carstares's *Hints to the King* (McCormick 1774:38-39) contain his principal advice to William:

1. 'The episcopal party in Scotland was generally disaffected to the

⁷ Thomas Maxwell (1963. *RSCHS* 15:174-176) disagrees: 'It was a little strange that this man should have achieved a reputation for tolerance and benevolence. Anyone more intolerant of anybody or anything that stood in his way is difficult to imagine.... It is somewhat ironical that tolerance should be attributed to the monarch whose name has become synonymous with religious bigotry in Ireland.... This discussion is ... not to blacken his character, but to question the attributing, to a man so single-minded and ruthless in his opposition to all that stood in his way, of this mild and comparatively modern virtue.'

⁸ Certainly the Cameronian Regiment was treated considerately by him. 'Coming to the camp, the King and his guards did us the honour to meet us three miles off, which he did not before to any other regiment, and smiling upon us, was pleased to recommend us' (*Laing MSS, Cameronian Papers Div 1*, 344 [280]). There are very few references to William smiling! On the battle of Steenkirk 1692, his headquarters was only about 200 metres from the Cameronian front line, and at the battle of Landen 1693, which went badly for the Allies, Ramsey's Brigade (which included the Cameronians) 'was gallantly covered by repeated charges of the English (*sic*) cavalry under the King himself' (Johnston 1957:55).

⁹ His father had been 'deprived and briefly imprisoned in 1662 for failing to take the Oath of Allegiance ... [he] was a frequent correspondent of Robert M'Ward, with whom however he did not see eye to eye on many issues' (Maurice Grant, email 20 December 2006).

revolution' whereas 'the presbyterians had almost to a man declared for it, and were moreover the great body of the nation.'

2. Because of the attitude of the episcopal clergy, it would be 'inconsistent with the very end of his [William's] coming, to continue episcopacy upon its present footing in Scotland.'

3. Since it had proved 'impossible for his Majesty to show that favour to the non-conformists in England; here was an opportunity of effectually demonstrating ... that the discouragements they might labour under ... were not owing to any prejudices ... but to the necessity of the times.'

Carstares concludes with two political maxims (McCormick 1774:40-41):

First, he cautions William against giving 'the smallest suspicion' to any party in church or state, that he espouses any 'private animosities or resentments.' 'Mr Carstares, though the best friend ever the presbyterians had at court, knew too well the spirit of the party not to foresee the danger of their abusing ... power.' Also, 'that some, from the narrowness of their principles with respect to church-government' and others, irritated by injuries received from the Episcopal party, 'might be disposed to push matters further against them than was consistent with his Majesty's interest.' This group evidently includes the Cameronians and others of their ilk. 'Carstares was too well acquainted ... with the indiscreet zeal of some ... Presbyterians ... [and] whilst he advised ... the establishment of Presbytery, he was of the opinion that it ought to be of the most moderate kind' (Story 1874:195).

Secondly; he cautions William 'to be extremely cautious in giving up any one branch of the royal prerogative,' especially as he had 'been raised to the throne by the voice of the people.'

William followed this sound advice during the protracted period whilst the final forms of Church and State were being settled in Scotland. He had been proclaimed King on 11 May 1689, but,

a full Presbyterian settlement of the church was not achieved until the abolition of patronage on 19 July 1690. Examination of the reasons for the delay and of the events, which occurred during the year, is essential for an understanding of the Revolution. Failure to make this examination has resulted in major errors of interpretation that have become part of the popular historical tradition in Scotland¹⁰.... Had the Revolution brought about a change of monarch only, or had it changed the nature of the monarchy itself? (Halliday 1965:143)

The latter was very much the case.¹¹

William heeded Carstares's advice not to be partisan to any particular point of view, mainly because it conformed to his own thinking. In his diary entry for 16 October 1690, Alexander Shields remarks on 'The Kings' Letter read [on the first day of the General Assembly] commending moderation, and telling them plainly he would not make his authority a tool to the irregular passions of any party' (Wodrow 1842:198). Joseph McCormick (1774:41 fn) remarks 'that the lenity of government was not owing to ignorance, but to his Majesty's moderation.' William was his own man. When William and Carstares discussed the draft *Act for Settling Church Government*, his 'Remarks,' written in Carstares's hand (*ibid*:44-46) included the following points:

2do. Whereas it is said, their Majesties do ratify the presbyterian government to be *the only government of Christ's church in this kingdom*, his Majesty desires it may be expressed otherwise, thus, To be the government of the church in this kingdom established by law.

In fact, McCormick (1774:47) records that William '*absolutely refused* [italics mine] to give his assent to an act, which was proposed by some of the rigid

¹⁰ This is largely the point of this thesis. The Cameronians in general, and their Regiment and its chaplain in particular, have been sidelined by many current historical commentaries, and therefore denied their rightful place in the history of the Revolution and its aftermath.

¹¹ The Crown moved to a more central position than it had been under the Stewarts, resulting in those who had previously been extreme left-wing (such as the Cameronians), taking up a less extreme leftist position.

Presbyterians asserting that presbytery was the only form of church government agreeable to the word of God.’

4to. Whereas ... ministers do appoint visitors for purging the church, &c, his Majesty thinks fit ... that he may see they are moderate men....¹²

6to. ... It is his Majesty’s pleasure too, that those, who do not own and yield submission to the present church government in Scotland, shall have the like indulgence that the presbyterians have in England.

However, William did wish to retain patronage in resistance to a passage in the draft desiring ‘that the parishes of those thrust out by the people [rabbed] in the beginning of this revolution, be declared vacant, upon this reason, *because they were put upon congregations without their consent*’ (Story 1874:190). This was one of the Cameronians’ major contentions that people should choose their own ministers and William had to concede this point under pressure from Lord Melville, his own parliamentary commissioner.

That ‘William finally decided that the establishment of a moderate Presbyterianism was his most expedient policy in Scotland’ (Hume Brown 1909 iii:13) seems difficult to dispute. However, Glassey (1989. *RSCHS* 23,3:325) disputes it: ‘How far can William be said to have controlled, or even influenced, the settlement of religion in Scotland? Dr Riley has suggested that William’s views had little effect; and the evidence on the whole supports this view.’ However, the author has not reached this conclusion. He considers that the evidence demonstrates otherwise, and that much of the moderation of the Revolution Settlement in Scotland should be attributed directly to the influence and attitude of the new King, and much of *that* attitude can be attributed to the influence of Rev William Carstares, his Presbyterian advisor. Expedient it may have been, but the expediency was to prove beneficial to the Cameronians and to many others.

¹² ‘General Mackay explicitly appealed to William’s desire for moderation when cautioning Ludovic Grant not to act too zealously in the commission for supervising the establishment of presbytery north of the Tay in December 1690’ (Glassey 1989 *RSCHS* 23:328).

8.1.2 Parliament Settles the Church polity

However, Parliament's main concern was to settle the polity of the church in Scotland. This was blatant Erastianism,¹³ but since Episcopal clergy would outvote Presbyterians in the Assembly, the Presbyterian clergy held out for Parliament to decide on church polity. To such a point of expediency had Scottish Presbyterianism sunk at the very point of victory.¹⁴ It was also clear that, unless the struggle between Episcopalians and Presbyterians was decided prior to a General Assembly being called, Episcopalianism would prevail, as they outvoted the non-conformist commissioners six to one. 'If Episcopacy were to continue, the disaffection and fanaticism of the "Hillmen" must continue also and increase. If it were abolished, the whole country might unite in a moderate Presbyterianism Episcopacy must go or the country must gird up its loins for a civil war' (Story 1874:172/3). However, the Club also held out strongly for the establishment of Presbytery, and on 17 July 1690, a draft bill was laid before the Estates regarding the 'government of the church, which may be considered as containing the views of William and his government' (Cunningham 1859 ii:282).

The salient points were:

- The Act of 1592, 'which through all vicissitudes, the Constitutional Presbyterians of Scotland had regarded as the unabrogated and fundamental Magna Charta of the Church' (Story 1874:187), was revived.
- Patronage was retained.
- Ministers had to conform to Presbyterian Church Government.
- Ministers 'outed' after 1662, and ejected after 1681, were to be restored.

¹³ Surprisingly, Robert Buchanan (1863:112), is one who did not consider the Parliamentary intervention as Erastian. 'Had the erastian spirit of the English parliament presided over the settlement of the affairs of the church of Scotland in 1690, the Scottish estates would never have ratified the Westminster confession ... they proclaimed the conviction of the Scottish legislature, that erastianism and the free constitution of the presbyterian church could not stand together. They abolished the one, because they designed to ratify and maintain the other.'

¹⁴ 'This was exacerbated by the ridicule poured on the church by the Cameronians for submitting to Erastian control by the King. This touched the Presbyterians of the Establishment on a tender spot' (Maxwell 1963 *RSCHS* 15:191).

- Ecclesiastical courts were not to meddle in civil affairs.
- A royal commissioner had to sit (as observer) in church courts.

On 22 July 1690, an *Act* was passed abolishing Episcopacy. Parliament was then prorogued on 2 August 1689 without any other order having replaced Episcopacy. Only a week later, the capital was thrown into a state of turmoil by the news of Mackay's defeat at Killiecrankie. All was uncertainty. 'Prelacy was overthrown; but Presbytery was not set up. The Church without any rulers of its own was entirely at the mercy of the State' (Story 1874:174), and the State stood in danger of being at the mercy of the Jacobites.

On 15 April 1690, Parliament met again. The military threat no longer existed as a result of the Cameronian victory at Dunkeld, and matters now proceeded rapidly. The Supremacy Act of 1669 was repealed and the 60 or so surviving ministers 'outed' since 1661 were reinstated. On 7 June 1690, the *Act establishing Presbyterian Government* was passed. This Act:

- Ratified the *Westminster Confession* as the statement of faith.
- Revived the Act of 1592. (See above.)
- Established, ratified and confirmed Presbyterian Church government and discipline by: kirk sessions, presbyteries, synods and general assemblies.

'In this act the Presbyterians gained all that they could desire, as Presbytery was established, and the government of the Church was placed entirely in their hands' (Cunningham 1859 ii:285/6). This is not entirely accurate. Of great concern to the Cameronians was that the "Revolution Settlement" was, of all conceivable settlements, the most "Erastian." Parliament had broken down Presbytery, and set up Episcopacy in 1662. Parliament broke down Episcopacy and set up Presbytery in 1689 and 1690 ... in neither case was the Church, whose fate was decided, a party to the procedure' (Story 1874:187). Also, while the *Westminster Confession* was readopted, the *Covenants* were unceremoniously dropped altogether.

However, of critical importance was the fact that 'while the State had fixed the Church's faith, it had not fixed the Church's worship. The Church may adopt any form of worship she pleases without violating any act of parliament' (Story 1874:187). Since the Act also secured Presbyterian Church government and discipline, and the Act of 1592 laid down that earlier legislation 'sall na wayes be prejudiciall not dirogat any thing to the privilege that God has gevin to the spirituall office beraris in the kirk concerning headis of religioun ... [or anything] groundit and havand warrand of the Word of God' (quoted by Dickinson & Donaldson 1954:49), all four critical freedoms that the Cameronians had striven for were now assured. In handling this concern, the Cameronian clergy were to demonstrate greater discernment than their laity in the realisation that 'the cause of truth and freedom [had] gained by this absolute conduct on the part of the State' (*ibid*).

8.2 THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF 16 OCTOBER, 1690

The first General Assembly since July 1653, was to have a decisive impact upon the future of the Cameronians. Consideration of a letter from the king having been dealt with, substantive business began. An indication of the vital importance attached by the Kirk to reconciliation with the Cameronians, is evinced by the fact that the first Assembly's substantive business, after a gap of 37 years, was the reception into the Kirk of the three Cameronian ministers, Alexander Shields, Thomas Lining and William Boyd. The Cameronian clergy displayed a desire for reconciliation in line with King William's desire to forget the injuries of the past. 'The ministers of the Society people had shown a disposition to forget the differences which had separated them from their Presbyterian brethren, and concur with them in building up the Revolution Church. But the people had become sterner and stricter than the ministers ... and declared they could not join hands with such men till they acknowledged their defections' (Cunningham 1859 ii:290). 'The main body ... had been powerful agents in producing the Revolution. But in the political settlement which followed it [they] had no part' (Story 1874:173). But, their ministers had been received back into the Kirk, and the further workings of the 1690 Assembly were notable for their moderation and reconciliatory approach.

However, the Commissions that the Assembly appointed to 'cleanse' the Church nationwide were not so moderate, and 300 Episcopalian ministers were deprived of their livings, mostly in the North-East (in addition to the 200 who had already been 'rabbed'). The Cameronian Regiment was in the North, the area most sympathetic to Episcopalian (and Catholic) interests, in the area covered by the 'hot' commission that occasionally called in military support to enforce its decisions. 'The reforming of the Church ... by the Cameronian regiment can do no good' (Story 1874:198) and so it proved - the cleansing being carried out sometimes over-zealously. SFH Johnston (1957:40) records that a detachment of the Regiment 'on 21st June ... were reported to have seized a popish altar in Aberdeen itself, and to have burned it with great pomp.' However, Col Hill, commander at Fort William, commends the Cameronian discipline when he remarks of his garrison: 'I have such a parcel of rogues ... except Angus's men, who carry well' (*ibid*). Not until the General Assembly of January 1692, was there a move to come to terms with the more moderate Episcopalians.

Whilst the Church Settlement may not have appealed to all Cameronians, there is little doubt that it was a just and moderate outcome for the country as a whole. 'No rigid order of worship was laid down ... The basis of the Church was essentially liberal; the policy designed for her was a policy of comprehensive tolerance' (Story 1874:200). 'William's achievement was to preside, even if accidentally and unintentionally, over the creation of a national church which did seem to command the allegiance of a majority, while those who remained outside the new establishment presented a less than formidable challenge to it' (Glassey 1989 *RSCHS* 23:329).

In fact, nearly all the people of Scotland, including the most radical Cameronians, were, at last, free to worship according to the dictates of their conscience.

8.3 ATTITUDE OF UNITED SOCIETIES AT THE REVOLUTION

During 1689 and 1690, the situation remained very fluid: the Societies now entered into a period of considerable confusion. Just at the point where all they had suffered for was within their grasp, factional strife threatened to snatch 'defeat from the jaws of victory.' The ministers saw clearly that the best way forward was re-unification with the Kirk, for it must be borne in mind that the United Societies came into being as a temporary measure, forced upon them by 'a time of great danger and extreme necessity' (Shields M 1780:10).

The clergy showed the way. At the Meeting of 25 September 1689 at Douglas, it was resolved to try to put an end to the continual bickering, to acknowledge guilt in this respect, and to resolve to guard against such behaviour in future. The Meeting 'desired that the ministers might do the like, and not to use irritating expressions one to another' (Shields M 1780:414). Reason was beginning to prevail, and when the question, 'What was the business of greatest importance?' was asked, Thomas Lining replied 'union with the ministers' (*ibid*). He informed the Meeting that he, Shields, and Boyd, had already had a meeting with some other Presbyterian ministers on 16 August 1689, to confer on overtures for union. Much heated discussion followed, the conclusion being 'that union could not be considered unless the "rest of the ministers," that is the whole Kirk outside the Societies, acknowledged their defections' (Macpherson 1932:95). The following day (26 Sept 1689), 'Mr Lining and Mr Boyd plainly told they had a mind to unite, though not to settle suddainly' (Alexander Shields quoted in Wodrow 1842:195). Shields counselled prayer and moderation and, at length, 'more calmness and composure' (*ibid*) prevailed.

At this juncture, Robert Hamilton, who had been in exile for 10 years, appeared at the General Meeting of 6 November 1689 at Douglas. 'He was the typical die-hard of the Cameronian party; his policy was everything or nothing ... His return to the counsels of the Hillmen marked the beginning of that cleavage which became final and definitive in the end of 1690' (Macpherson 1932:93). He had already met with Kersland and Alexander Shields on 20 August 1689, and declined to go to London as part of a deputation to see the King, as 'he would not address the King as King, but only as Prince' (Wodrow 1842:192). True to form, Hamilton immediately began to foment discord. 'That

which Sir Robert Hamilton signified to the meeting put a stop to that which they were about, and did occasion debates and heats' (Shields M 1780:419). The matter under discussion was the critical question of re-unification with the Kirk. Hamilton put the meeting in an uproar by raising five points 'which in conscience he could not forbear but shew his dislike of, and protest against' (*ibid*). Hamilton's objections were:

- 1st. The owning of the Prince of Orange to be King upon such conditions as they had done, and without taking the covenants.
- 2dly. The raising of Angus's regiment which was a sinful association with malignants.
- 3dly. The admitting any to be at General Meetings, who came from the regiment, or were for trafficking for union with them.
- 4thly. Mr Boyd his sitting in General Meetings, or being employed by them to go to Edinburgh to treat with the ministers.
- 5thly. Joining with these ministers whom formerly we had withdrawn from, upon the terms which our ministers were desiring to do it in.

(Shields M 1780:419)

Alexander Shields reports the conduct of this Meeting more bluntly than his brother Michael. 'The Meeting was much disturbed, with much heat and rage; resolutely exclaiming against all union on any terms except the Ministers should confess their defections; yea, that they would not hear others ... unlesse we should separate from the rest.' A paper was brought in 'by John Mack, Gavin Witherspoon, and two or three more, who acted very incendiary like.... Alexander Shields answered every word, yet it would not satisfy. We broke up that night very abruptly' (Wodrow 1842:195/6). This was a return to the worst days of 1679. The Societies were now continually insisting that *everyone else* must confess their defections, and that legal vengeance must be taken against their persecutors. This was the rock upon which the concept of a general reunification foundered. King William simply would not permit a climate of vengeance in the courts, and the General Assembly was not about to indulge in a retrospective *mea culpa*, having achieved virtually all they

desired. Cameronian intransigence was the enemy of reconciliation. By now, the rift between moderates and extremists was a major problem.

In fact, the Cameronians had largely achieved their goals: the pity was that few realised this. By the end of 1690, the following items in the Petition drawn up at the General Meeting of 27 March 1690 (Shields M 1780:428-433) had already been achieved:

- Prelacy was abolished.
- Presbyterian Church government was restored.
- Episcopal ministers were 'outed,' (temporarily at least).
- A 'free' General Assembly was called.
- Supremacy and patronage were abolished.
- Laws making Cameronian behaviour rebellion were repealed.
- Restitution of estates (and sometimes fines) took place.

Nevertheless, the Cameronian grievances were never really heeded, impeachment of their former persecutors was denied (indeed, some continued to occupy positions of authority) and, possibly of greatest import, the Covenants were unceremoniously dumped. But 'it is evident that the majority in the Societies ... was not disposed rigidly to maintain the same attitude towards the new Government as towards that which had preceded it; they owned the Government of the king and the authority of Parliament' (Hutchison 1893:100). The clergy realised that the Covenants had fulfilled their essential role, and were no longer necessary to secure religious freedom. In fact, they had won. The *Sanquhar Declaration* had declared war on the Stewarts in 1680 and, nine years later, that dynasty was gone! Furthermore, the *coup de grace* had been administered by a regiment that bore Cameron's name.¹⁵ 'This action (Dunkeld) ... secured the protestant revolution in Scotland, but in no way lessened the ecclesiastical problem of the Societies.... Without

¹⁵ Although the Regiment was officially known as 'Angus's,' after their colonel, they described *themselves* as 'Cameronians' from the earliest days. Only in 1786, was the Regiment officially titled 'the 26th (or Cameronian) Regiment of Foot (Johnston 1957:154), though Millan's unofficial Army List described them as the 26th Cameronians in 1749 (*ibid*:137).

ministers and a clear sense of purpose the Societies might have gradually withered away, but there were some ... who were determined to maintain the covenants and their claim to be the "True Church of Scotland" (Cowan 1976:144). The leader of this movement was Robert Hamilton.

On 16 October 1690, the three Cameronian ministers, Alexander Shields, William Boyd and Thomas Lining, submitted a long paper to the General Assembly Committee on Overtures. Clearly, these three had a deep longing for reconciliation, and when they were pressed for an answer as to what would be the response 'if it wer not received or rejected. We told them, it was for a testimony and an exoneration of our consciences, and if it wer exhibited, houever it wer disposed of, we would submit, seeing nou we might doe it without sin' (Wodrow 1842:198). They were then requested to submit a shorter paper, to which they agreed. In it they 'bind and oblige ourselves Faithfully, to live in Union, Communion and intire Subjection, and due Obedience in the Lord, to the Authority of this Church' (V. Proceedings of the General Assembly, [25 October] 1690, Session 9).

The leader in this movement for reconciliation was Alexander Shields, strongly supported by Thomas Lining, and to a lesser extent by William Boyd.¹⁶ Patrick Walker (1827 i:256) records that Shields had told him to 'cleave to the best, for it is not only dreadfully dangerous to separate from all, but utterly unwarrantable.' The Cameronian clergy made no demands for the Assembly to do anything other than hear their point of view, although they expressed hope that some things might change. The *Account of the Methods and Motives of the Union and Submission to the Assembly* by Alexander Shields, published in 1691, includes the *Short Paper* and the *Larger Paper*, and this comment: 'Tho we had in several places and at several times given a Specimen of our inclinableness to Union and intense and impatient desire of Communion with our Brethren, in joyning with some ... we did not scruple now, to incorporate with them, when the grounds of Separation were taken away' (Lining, Shields & Boyd 1691:16). Unlike Hamilton, they were prepared

¹⁶ Shortly after this, Boyd ceased to play any role in the Societies and took up an appointment in Dalry.

to humble themselves and submit for the sake of the unity of the Body of Christ. On 25 October 1690, the 9th Session of the Assembly accordingly resolved that they 'should be Received into the Fellowship of this Church, on the Terms of Submission and Subjection contained in the Shorter Paper' (*Act V of the General Assembly at Edinburgh 1690*).

Shields had been asked to draft another petition by the laity of the Societies to the General Assembly, which bore a striking similarity to the longer paper submitted by the ministers, and which the Assembly had refused to hear on 25 October. After itemising the classic Cameronian objections, it lays down what the Assembly must rectify: restore the Covenants, purge the church and exercise discipline on former persecutors, etc. Hutchison (1893:101) describes it as 'an able, vigorous production, respectful in tone,' but, although the Assembly consisted of many who had endured much hardship, 'none of them had "endured to the end" ... For all of them had been guilty in more or less degree of what the Cameronians called defection' (Macpherson 1932:104) and, therefore, came under censure in the document itself. So, it is hardly surprising that the Committee on Overtures blocked it on 27 October 1690, before it reached the floor of the Assembly. In fact, the Committee on Overtures sought reconciliation. 'Forgive ye us, and we will forgive you, and so let us unite' (Shields M 1780:456). Despite this, the five men sent to present the petition would not budge, even after the Committee's further plea on 3 November: 'And we hope this will satisfy you ... And that the Lord will incline your hearts to peace, and to guard against any further rent in the church of God' (*ibid*:458). Sadly this was not to be.

8.4 THE CAMERONIAN SCHISM

With the re-entry of the Cameronian clergy into the Kirk, the Cameronians ceased to have any real influence as a body upon the religious state of Scotland. The last General Meeting of the United Societies took place at Douglas on 3 December 1690. William Swanston, one of the five laymen who had presented the petition in Edinburgh 'gave the Meeting a particular account of the whole management ... The Meeting ... were dissatisfied with

the answer' (Shields M 1780:459). Thereafter, to a very mixed reception, Shields and Lining explained how they had reunited with the Kirk. Hume Brown (1909 iii:15) writes that the Cameronians were 'deserted by their own ministers.' Shields himself records: 'The Meeting generally disrelished the whole affair, and objected much against union and communion on these terms; yet some were more sober' (quoted by Wodrow 1842:202). They then encouraged the Meeting (and hence the members of the individual Societies), 'to hear those ministers who were most free and faithful ... and to have a care of running upon extremes on the right hand' (Shields M 1780:459). After discussion, the majority of the Meeting agreed to the drawing up of a paper that individual members might hand to the minister of the parish they chose to attend, or to the Presbytery of the bounds. Shields and Lining undertook to prepare it for discussion on the morrow.

This paper was a justification of the Cameronian testimony during the persecution times, and Shields's personal conviction that the times had indeed changed is manifest in it. There is even a blank space for the sins of the particular minister addressed to be detailed by the individual(s) concerned. It concludes: 'We protest that our present joining may not be interpreted an approving of any of these sins ... nor ... a receding from our former or present testimony against the same' and a request that 'this our testimony may be registered in the books of Session or Presbytery' (Shields M 1780:462).

At this point, Michael Shields's record of the affairs of the United Societies, *Faithful Contendings Displayed* 1780, comes to an abrupt halt. The way had been made clear for individuals to follow their own conscience about whether or not to reconcile with the Kirk and rejoin their local parish. 'Many appear to have followed the example of their ministers and returned to the presbyterian fold leaving the Societies numerically weak and with little cohesion' (Cowan 1976:144). The United Societies had effectively ceased to exist.

It is difficult to understand why anyone could find a reason not to reconcile. Yet, this is what happened. The Societies now split up, the majority (re)joining the Kirk, and the rest following Hamilton into the wilderness. The only group

now officially acknowledging the name 'Cameronian' was the Regiment, but even that rapidly ceased to have any significant impact upon the Church, since it was now an instrument of the State.

Shields's behaviour was consistent. As far back as 1686, he had written to Renwick criticising 'the tendency of the Hillmen to specify "what ministers you will not join with, and not who you will join with." His intense desire was for union among the people of God' (Hutchison 1893:109). Lining was of the same mind, publishing Shields's *Enquiry into Church Communion* in 1706, and setting out his own point of view in the introduction. Sadly, Hamilton was the opposite in both character and intent.

It is not possible to determine what proportion of the United Societies rejoined the Kirk and what proportion followed Hamilton, but it does seem clear that a majority reconciled, from which point they ceased to be a separately identifiable entity. The contemporary, Patrick Walker (1827 i:126), reports; 'All know that it was the fewest Number of the United Societies, that was led off with Robert Hamilton,' whilst the modern Davidson (2004:27) merely remarks that the clergy 'were joined by the majority of the conventiclers.' The general impression that the author gained after discussion with several *cognoscenti*, is that, say, one-third followed Hamilton, and two-thirds re-entered the Kirk, but no one is prepared to make an authoritative statement. Mark Jardine comments (e-mail 14 October 2007), 'There is no % evidence that I know of or any study relating to 1690 or 1692..... I find Walker to usually be a reliable source. He was in charge of the Societies' finances after all.' Maurice Grant (e-mail 10 October 2007) agrees: 'I had thought it was generally accepted that only a minority of the United Societies held aloof from the Revolution Settlement though I do not think anyone has been able to quote figures.... I agree that Patrick Walker's testimony should be seen as authoritative; if anyone was in a position to know, he was!'¹⁷

There appears to have been an attempt to put a different 'gloss' on this

¹⁷ DC Lachman (1993 *DSCHT*:852) confirms that, 'In so far as his [Walker's] work can now be verified, his quotations are substantially accurate and his facts and dates correct.'

situation. In his entry under 'United Societies' (in *DSCHT* 1993:785/6), DC Lachman writes: 'Though some followed them [the ministers] in this [re-entry to the Kirk], a substantial number refused to join an uncovenanted, Erastian church.' Whilst one-third may be substantial, the inherent tone of the comment gives the erroneous impression that the United Societies continued in substantially the same form and numbers. It did neither!¹⁸

8.5 THE EFFECTS OF THE CHURCH SETTLEMENT

8.5.1 A United Presbyterian Front

Although implicit, it seems evident from the fact that the General Assembly of 1690 put the re-acceptance of the Cameronian clergy at the top of its agenda after a gap of 37 years, that the unity of the Presbyterian body was considered to be of the greatest import. At that time, the Kirk stood in the centre of the Church in Scotland, the Cameronians stood on the left, and the Episcopalians held the right. Had William pushed for an Episcopal Church of Scotland, he would have alienated both centre and left. 'Had a General Assembly been invited to decide how the Church was to be governed, the vote of the majority would undoubtedly have declared for Episcopacy; and therefore Parliament took care to put that question out of court before a General Assembly should get leave to sit' (Story 1874:166). Had the Cameronians not been re-accepted by the Kirk, then it would still have been under pressure from two flanks, but if the Cameronians could be reconciled, then the whole Presbyterian body would be united, and the Episcopalians, seeing what had happened in England, would hopefully realise that William was not opposed to Episcopalianism *per se*, but had sought the best outcome for the Church at large for, as already seen, in Story's opinion, 'Episcopacy must go or the country must gird up its loins for a civil war' (1874:173).

¹⁸ *DSCHT* has only one bibliographical reference to the entry on 'United Societies,' namely Hutchison 1893, surely at best a biased observer, yet frequently quoted in this thesis. It seems surprising that *Faithful Contendings Displayed* 1780 (the minutes of the United Societies from inception to the Revolution) by Michael Shields, or Hector Macpherson's published works (1923, 1926, 1932), on the subject, were not consulted.

This, indeed, was blatant Erastianism but, as we have seen, Shields and the other Cameronian clergy had the sense to realise that the end result was beneficial for the Church and the country, and were willing to accept it so that they, and their people, might return to the fold of the Kirk without having to abandon the testimony they had stood for. That not all accepted, was not the clergy's fault, for all were now free to accept, or not, without fear of persecution. Scotland was enjoying greater religious freedom than ever before and the church was now free to decide on her own doctrine, worship, discipline and government. Just what the Cameronians had striven for!

8.5.2 The Cameronian clergy

The Cameronian clergy continued to demonstrate consistent and concerned leadership. They realised that they had achieved the freedoms they had struggled for, and had the wisdom to accept and contribute to a moderate and healing resolution. They sought to make a way for their followers to return to the fold of the Church of Scotland, whilst making it possible for each still to maintain his/her freedom of conscience. This they achieved, and the majority, though not all, took advantage of it.

Shields, Lining and Boyd have been accused of deserting the Covenants and yielding to Erastianism. There is some truth in both accusations. The Covenants had become a sort of 'holy cow' to some, whilst to others they had achieved their aim and purpose. 'The Kirk's 'sovereign must be King Jesus. Take heed that instead it be not King Covenant.'¹⁹ Without in any way seeking to discount the importance of *The Scottish National Covenant* of 1638 and *The Solemn League and Covenant* of 1643, unlike 'the word of our God [which] shall stand for ever' (Is 40:8), the Covenants were of human origin and had served their purpose.²⁰

¹⁹ Attributed to James Graham, Marquess of Montrose, by John Buchan in *Witch Wood* (1927:66).

²⁰ At the Disbandment Conventicle of the Cameronians at Douglas on 14 May 1968, Rev Dr Donald McDonald emphasised such an attitude to documents of human origin which are generally considered authoritative: 'The *Army List*, after all, is a document of temporary significance' (Baynes 1971:226).

That the Church Settlement, which eventuated and the Cameronian clergy had accepted, was due in part to both the King's and the Convention of Estates' Erastian behaviour, is hardly in dispute. But, the particular Erastianism that the Covenanters had been fighting against was that which denied them freedom of doctrine, worship, discipline and government. 'But now these being removed, and the church's freedom and power restored, the doctrine, worship, discipline and government, and all the ordinances of Christ re-established in purity, peace and freedom' (Shields M 1780:461) - they had achieved their desire. 'It cannot be disputed that the cause of truth and freedom gained by this absolute conduct on the part of the State, and by its refusal to concede an independent and autonomous jurisdiction to the Church' (Story 1874:187). In fact, had it not been for the Erastian behaviour of Parliament, the Church Settlement would have surely established Episcopacy and all would have been lost for the Cameronians. As it was, all had been gained. Was this expediency? Probably! Did Shields abrogate his conscience in the process? Probably not!

8.5.3 Freedom to choose one's own minister

One reason for the start of Conventicling was because the Government had decreed which minister people must sit under, either an Indulged minister or, in the 'outed' parishes, an appointed curate. The Covenanters saw this as an infringement of their ancient right to choose their own ministers.²¹ Things had now improved and 'the laity [were] left absolutely free to sit at whose feet they chose' (Hume Brown 1909 iii:16). 'The "calling and entry" of the minister; the entire process from first to last, was to be "ordered and concluded" according to the "judgement and determination" of the church courts ... it is undeniable that...it left the jurisdiction of the church untrammelled and entire' (Buchanan 1863:116). Whilst King William attempted to retain Patronage in Scotland, he had to concede to its removal.²² It does seem likely that the Cameronian stance brought some pressure to bear on this decision, although one cannot say how much.

²¹ As recently as March 2007, Rev Tom Pollock in the Church of Scotland's *Ministers' Forum* comments on a 'congregation exercising their historical and theological right to call their own minister.'

²² Patronage was however reintroduced in 1712, and finally abolished in 1874.

8.6 THE AFTERMATH OF THE SCHISM

After Shields, Lining and Boyd re-entered the Kirk, Cameronian cohesion fell apart, and the main body of the United Societies, having re-entered the Kirk, now disappeared from view as an identifiable entity. What still remained identifiable were two 'rumps,' one of which was the Cameronian Regiment (an infantry regiment of the Scottish army²³), whose members now formed a congregation within the Church of Scotland. The other was the Hamiltonian faction, from which eventually emerged the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland in 1743.

8.6.1 The Main Body re-enters the Kirk

'The great majority of those who had been favourable to covenanting ways returned to the National Church, especially in the parishes where the Curates had either been driven away or gone off on their own' (McMillan 1948 *RSCHS* 10:141). The main body, probably about two-thirds of the Societies' membership, was subsumed into the Church of Scotland, which they rejoined with their ministers, thus effectually disappearing as an identifiable entity. 'A simple process of incorporation took place at the parochial level' (Davidson 2004:27). 'For the majority of presbyterians, grievances about the Covenants and fears for the intrinsic right did not constitute valid grounds for separation from the Church. Complete separation, the path of [the remnant of] the United Societies, was anathema to mainstream presbyterians' (Raffe 2006:V:s p). Thus Shields and Lining encouraged the Society members to take the milder course of reconciliation and moderation.

'It is ... difficult to form a coherent understanding of the former Societies people in the Church. There were a few papers presented around 1690-1691 to various church courts by Cameronians who joined congregations.... these people contributed to fairly widespread lay pressure for more recognition of the Kirk's Covenanting heritage after 1690, while not constituting a distinct

²³ Technically speaking, until the Union of the Parliaments in 1707, there was no 'British' army, only separate Scots and English armies but, for all practical purposes, after 1691, the Cameronian Regiment formed part of a 'British' army.

faction.... Not all ministers agreed with the courses of the general assembly. Moreover, the people who heard Hepburn (and Macmillan to a lesser extent) [also] overlapped with the congregations of the Church' (Alasdair Raffe, email 20 April 2007).

Presumably, the accession of fairly large numbers of committed Christians to the various parishes had a positive and reconciliatory effect on the congregations that they (re)joined. 'Some of whom quickly became elders in the local parish kirk' (Davidson 2004:27). The Cameronian influx into the Church of Scotland was somewhat after the manner of an inverted-diaspora. Rather than being 'scattered abroad' (Acts 8:4) they were now scattered throughout the parishes, mainly of the South-West, yet within the one fold of the Kirk. From this point on, they ceased to be generically identifiable as Cameronians, and became simply members of their individual parish Kirks.

8.6.2 The Hamiltonian faction

After the schism, the Hamiltonians went into a religious *laager*. They cut themselves off from virtually everyone, and retained only the most extreme aspects of United Societies' behaviour. The excellent record of events in the United Societies, maintained by Michael Shields since 1681, ceased abruptly. *The Minutes and Proceedings and Conclusions of the General Meeting of the Witnessing Remnant of Presbyterians in Scotland 1693–1714* [the Hamiltonian 'rump'], which became generally known as the Societies of the South-West, 'are very brief, and in many respects unsatisfactory' (Hutchison 1893:125).

'Without ministers or a clear sense of purpose, the Societies might have withered away, but there were some within their ranks who were determined to maintain the covenants and their claims to be the "True Church of Scotland." Among these was Robert Hamilton' (Cowan 1976:144), who drew up the *Tinwald Paper*, published in 1691 (quoted by Shields M 1780:464-481), which sets out the views of this 'rump.'

A much-reduced General Correspondence was re-organized. 'When they (or some of them) next met in conference it was as another body' (McMillan 1948

RSCHS 10:144). Henceforth, the Societies were to recognise as members only those who:

- Accepted the view of past events thus set forth.
- Were resolved to keep entirely separate from the Church.
- Refused all recognition of the Government and Constitution, and
- encourage or sustain the existing civil authorities of the kingdom, to avoid every act that might seem in any measure fitted to countenance,.

In this way, the newly structured Societies of the South-West were purged, and they committed themselves to a position of isolation²⁴ (after Hutchison 1893:111). ‘How many were removed at the “purging” is ... unknown, but they must have formed a considerable portion of the body’ (McMillan 1947 *RSCHS* 10:145). ‘After 1691, the United Societies²⁵ sought to be a highly exclusive sect, open only to political and religious pariahs’ (Raffe, *AJN* 2006 V:s p). ‘The Societies seem to have done very little without causing controversy in their own ranks’ (McMillan 1948 *RSCHS* 10:145). Their main contention was that the Covenants had been unceremoniously dumped, and in this they were correct, but the Covenants had fulfilled their purpose and were now *de trop*. They issued further Declarations in 1692, 1695, 1703 and 1707, but they had ceased to have any real impact upon the religious or political life of Scotland.²⁶

The *Summary of the Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of*

²⁴ The more extreme position taken up by the Hamiltonians may be compared with the United Societies’ position, see p 148/9.

²⁵ In fact, by this time, they were the Societies of the South-West. However they still continued to be widely referred to as the United Societies, as well as Cameronians.

²⁶ Patrick Walker (1827 i:234/5) later angrily attacks their inconsistency. ‘The fourth, *May* 1707, proclaiming to the World their disowning of the State. *What* ever or *Who* ever moved and stirred them to take up that Way? That Declaration of 1707 was a Popish malignant Contrivance ... Some in the Government allowed the late Laird of Kersland (John Ker of Kersland, brother-in-law to Major Daniel Ker, killed at Steenkirk 1692), to feign himself to be on their side ... they pressed him to go and to persuade the *Cameronians* to proclaim their disowning of the State, and they would persuade the King of *France* that the *Cameronians* would join them ... which Kersland did and conveyed McMillans’s folk with one of their preachers at the Cross of *Sanquhar* and proclaimed the same.’ In other words, the suggestion was that the Cameronians would fight for a Stewart restoration. This is unsustainable, since the Hamiltonians (or McMillanites as they now were) would neither enter military service nor support Popery. This demonstrates how the name ‘Cameronian’ has, at times, been misused.

Scotland (1932 RPC:35) claims: 'The Societies [of the South-West] numbered about 20, with a general membership of about 7 000'. This figure appears improbable, especially after a schism and a purge, considering it was the same as the total United Societies strength in 1683 (reported by Hutchison 1893:63), though the number of individual Societies was now reduced by 75%. The fact that no clergyman was prepared to minister to them, until Rev John McMillan joined them in 1706, perhaps best reveals the extremely radical attitude of the reconvened Societies. Thus, for 17 years, they were without the ordinances of Communion or Baptism. Even at the height of the persecution, the United Societies were never longer than two years without a minister. 'Divisions continued and at least eight²⁷ identifiable parties were to be found by 1725.... The McMillanites however retained their fervour and emerged in 1743 as the Reformed Presbyterian Church' (Cowan 1976:145/6), which continued until most members joined the Free Church of Scotland in 1876, leaving behind a small remnant yet again. Today, there remains but one congregation of the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Scotland, but in other countries, including Ireland and Canada, the denomination continues.

8.6.3 Who were the 'true inheritors' of the Cameronian spirit?

Prior to the Revolution of 1688/9, the name 'Cameronian' was used only as a nickname, frequently in a derogatory manner. The Hamiltonian party repudiated the use of the name Cameronian at the schism of 1690, but they and their descendants have been so generally well-known as Cameronians that it would be invidious, as well as impractical, to deny them the use of the name. *The Summary of their Testimony* records that Rev John Macmillan's 'labours amongst the widely scattered sections of the Cameronian body were richly blessed' (1932 RPC:35). Their list of Ministers and Missionaries is entitled *Cameronian Fasti* (Robb 1926).²⁸ In 1869, the Rev William Sommerville

²⁷ 'Dr Hay Fleming states that in Hutchison's work, *The Reformed Presbyterian Church in Scotland*, one may look in vain even for the names of the small sections whom Patrick [Walker] calls, Adamites, Harlites, Howdenites and Russelites ... These were all small parties who had broken away from the Societies' (McMillan RSCHS 10:146). Cowan is correct in his figure of eight splinter groups for, although McMillan counts a total of ten groups, he includes the Kirk and the RPC in his list.

²⁸ As may be expected, Robb (1926) omits Shields, Lining and Boyd, whereas Hutchison (1893:439) correctly includes Lining, since he was ordained before the Revolution and, for a short period, served as a minister to the United Societies.

(1869:7) of Nova Scotia, in his *Social Position of Reformed Presbyterians or Cameronians*, remarks, 'We are sometimes called by the latter name [Cameronians]; in particular, when it is intended to utter a reproach.'

On the other hand, the Regiment accepted the title of 'Cameronian' from the very earliest days, as evidenced by the two petitions discussed in Chapter 7, both dated 1689:

To his Highness the Prince of Orange, The Humble Address and Supplication of the Cameronian Presbyterians in Scotland, dated 1689 [no month, s] (NLS S.302.42)and:

To His Most excellent Majesty William King of Great Britain, The Humble Address of the Regimented Cameronian Presbyterians, dated 12 December 1689, at Montrose (NLS S.302.43).

Whereas the former is addressed to William, as Prince of Orange, the latter addresses him as King. Since the Convention of Estates proclaimed William and Mary on 11 May 1689, it seems probable that the Regiment accepted the name 'Cameronian' as a formal *soubriquet* from the date of the raising in May 1689. It will be noted that, whilst one petition originates from the 'Cameronian Presbyterians in Scotland' and the other is from the 'Regimented Cameronian Presbyterians,' both clearly indicate submission to William. 'We are your Servants, and will spend our blood' (former), and 'all may see it's a false thing, to say we do not own a King' (latter). Since, during the persecutions, the Stewart regime had made no differentiation between Cameronians and moderate Presbyterians, these Petitions are probably the best evidence available that the first members of the Regiment emerged from the most severely persecuted Presbyterian ranks,²⁹ and that, by accepting military service under King William, and becoming servants of the Crown, they

²⁹ Paul Hopkins (1998:139) states: 'Only half the companies were true Cameronians, the rest being recruited more normally.' This is almost certainly wrong. There is no evidence for this prior to Dunkeld, whereas his remark that 'there were strong Cameronian elements in ... Leven's and Cardross's dragoons' (*ibid*), is correct. The discrepancy between the 1200 mustered at Douglas in May 1689, and the 800 Cameronians at Dunkeld, is accounted for by the detachment of 400 to 'Lorn and Cantire, to guard the west coast' (Crichton 1824: 90 fn).

underwent a radical change of position.

So, there were two ‘rumps,’ both claiming the use of the Cameronian name. The Regiment stands in the line of Shields, Lining and Cleland; whilst the Reformed Presbyterian Church (RPC) stands in the line of Robert Hamilton - both sectors with widely divergent views about almost everything. Perhaps in a question reminiscent of early Cameronian *Declarations*, one needs to ask: Who were the *true* Cameronians? The last leader acceptable to both factions was Rev James Renwick, therefore the question may be phrased as follows: What would Renwick have done after the Revolution, had he lived?

In his Preface to Alexander Shields’s *Church Communion Enquired into: or a Treatise against Separation from this National Church of Scotland 1706*, Thomas Lining opines that, not only would Renwick have been reconciled to the Kirk once it had achieved a settled state, but that Cargill and Cameron³⁰ would also have been reconciled. ‘The Reverend and worthy Mr. Donald Cargill ... often declared that his Soul hated Separation ... And the worthy Martyr Mr. Richard Cameron ... is said often to have had the like expressions. Also there are many alive to this day, who know, when the *Informatory Vindication* was to be Printed that we declared we could never own the Grounds of Separation laid down therein, to justify a Separation from a settled Church, in a peaceable State.... To which also the worthy Martyr Mr. James Renwick ... assented’ (Lining 1706:ii-iii). Patrick Walker records that; ‘Had he been alive at the Revolution, I make no question but he would have come in with Mr. Shields, and join’d with the Establishment of this Church, and might have been a very useful instrument in her’ (Walker 1827 i:274/5). Wodrow (1833 iv:445) confirms this.

8.7 CONCLUSIONS FROM THIS CHAPTER

³⁰ Dr Karin Bowie (e-mail 25 Jan 2007) expresses doubt whether Cameron would have approved of the Regiment. ‘Cameron might have approved the actions of the armed Cameronians in making the Revolution, but I wonder if he would have approved of the regiment as it continued in Williams’ service?’ So it appears that Dunkeld might well have had his approval, but not the Regiment’s actions thereafter.

Since this whole Chapter deals with changes in the condition of religion in Scotland, and covers the early part of the period during which the Cameronians finally achieved their freedom of doctrine, worship, discipline and church government, the state of freedom of religion is discussed in the conclusions below, and is dealt with more fully in Chapter 9.

8.7.1 The Cameronian clerics vindicated

The clerics had been the driving force of Cameronianism since 1680, giving the movement a sound ethical base from which to operate. The Cameronian cause had prospered more under clerical than under lay leadership. The clergy saw the struggle as one for freedom of religion, certainly with political overtones, but consistently striving for freedom of doctrine, worship, discipline and church government. No Cameronian divine ever advocated permanent severance from the Kirk. Indeed, reconciliation with the Kirk, once the Church had achieved a state of peace and normality, was always their desire. Further, the clergy took the Word of God as their supreme authority, not the *Covenants* or the *Westminster Confession*. In this attitude, they were strictly orthodox Presbyterian.³¹ They were prepared to question the *Westminster Confession* in its particulars, but not to reject it *in toto*, thus exercising their authority and freedom to question man-made documents on points of individual conscience.³² 'The weapons of [their] warfare [were] nor carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds' (II Cor 10:4). Even after declaring war against the Crown, the struggle centred on prayer and fasting, with the use of temporal arms confined almost exclusively to defensive measures.

Whilst it is impossible to assess the effect of prayer in an empirical sense, there is no disputing the fact that the final outcome was a resounding vindication of all that the Cameronian clergy, since Cameron himself, had hoped and prayed for. The regime was changed, the Kirk recovered her right to decide

³¹ 'The Uniting [Presbyterian] Church [in Southern Africa] acknowledges the Word of God in the scriptures ... to be the only final rule of faith and life' (UPCSA Interim Manual of Law & Procedure [ML&P] 1999:93).

³² In the way the *Preamble to The Faith of The Church of the Uniting Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa* still lays down today: 'The UPCSA recognises liberty of conscience on all points of doctrine which are not fundamental to the faith' (UPCSA 1999:93).

on her own form of worship, most Scots³³ gained the freedom to worship according to the dictates of their conscience, including Robert Hamilton and his 'rump.' If history denies the Cameronians a catalytic role in this outcome, the undeniable fact is that not only had they won what they had struggled for, but their stance was ratified by the whole Scottish nation in 1690. 'It was the final vindication of Cameron's action that day in 1680. The Sanquhar Declaration had shaken the throne of Britain' (Grant M 1997:288).

Cameronian authors, such as Samuel Rutherford in *Lex Rex*, and Alexander Shields in *A Hind Let Loose*, demonstrated Cameronianism to be essentially a religious movement, not a political one, despite concerns for the Rights of Man. When the Cameronians ventured into the political arena, as some of the laity did from time to time, the outcome was usually failure - one might even say disaster. After 1690, they played no significant role in the political life of Scotland.

Hector Macpherson (1926 *RSCHS* 1:224) disagrees quite strongly. 'The Covenanters are singled out for special censure because they – the contemptible, implacable fanatics – dared to interfere in politics.... The writers of this utterly jaundiced estimate of the Covenanters ... have missed the true inwardness of the Covenanting struggle ... it is a profound mistake to contend that the struggle was a religious one, or even an ecclesiastical one in its essence.' Whilst accepting Macpherson's pro-Cameronian position, the point is that the Cameronians were *always* in pursuit of their four religious freedoms, and *never* made any attempt to set up any form of civil government over themselves or anyone else. Their struggle was neither political nor ecclesiastical, but religious.

8.7.2 The schism sundered the Cameronian body

³³ Initially, Roman Catholics were not granted freedom of worship, demonstrated by a commentary from Harry Conroy (ed, 2003:73): 'The thought of celebrating ... in the dead of night in an open field or farmyard barn, in all weathers and in all seasons, must seem to us bad enough, but add to this the threat of raids by soldiers and the certainty of imprisonment and you have the reality of ... life in Scotland in post-Reformation times.' This is not, as it might appear, a description of Covenanters being persecuted, for the two words missing are 'mass' and 'Catholic,' not 'communion' and 'Covenanting.'

The schism that resulted after the reconciliation of the Cameronian clergy to the Kirk, sundered the United Societies into three factions:

The Main Body followed their ministers into the Kirk and were assimilated into individual parish congregations. Henceforth, they ceased to have any distinct identification with Cameronianism. Whilst it can be presumed that they made a contribution to the life of the parishes they joined, such Cameronian leanings as they had were now a matter of individual, and not corporate, conscience.

The Regiment initially formed a congregation of the United Societies, but became a congregation of the Kirk by 1691 when Alexander Shields was ordained as chaplain. Those in the Regiment who followed Hamilton, and were not prepared to accept the spiritual authority of the Kirk, left the Regiment prior to its going overseas in 1691.

The Hamiltonians were the followers of (Sir) Robert Hamilton (of Preston), who refused to be reconciled either to Church or State. They attempted to extend the life of the United Societies, but failed, instead developing an attenuated form known as 'The Societies of the South-West' and describing themselves as *The General Meeting of the Witnessing Remnant of Presbyterians in Scotland*. Henceforth, although still widely described as 'Cameronians' (in the original nickname sense), they ceased to make any impact of moment on Church or State, even to being described as 'religious pariahs' (Raffe 2006, V:s p). Ultimately, in 1706, they attracted a minister in the person of Rev John McMillan and, in 1743, formed The Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland, of which 'only a tiny remnant [is] now left' (Burleigh 1960:end-paper).

8.7.3 Cameronianism had now run its course

After the schism in 1690, despite two identifiable 'rumps,' Cameronianism had run its course. Henceforth, there was to be no significant pressure or influence on either Church or State from any Cameronian source. Emanations by the

Hamiltonians, such as the *Tinwald Paper* 1691, or a letter in 1693 to the General Assembly from Shields, pleading for Presbyterian recruits for the Regiment, were not of major historical importance. The Cameronian movement had ceased to be a force to be taken seriously by Church or State.

8.7.4 The “true” inheritors of the Cameronian spirit were the reconcilers, not the schismatics

In the opinion of the author, the ‘true’ inheritors of the Cameronian spirit are those who reconciled with the Kirk. If Cameron, Cargill, Renwick, Shields and Lining were all for reconciliation once the Church in Scotland had achieved a peaceful state, there seems little doubt that their followers, who became reconciled to the Kirk in 1690, stand foursquare in the footsteps of the most ‘true’ Cameronian forebears. This sector certainly includes the Regiment, at least at the start, and arguably later as well. ‘It is our Regimental spirit which has inspired all our devotion, all our valour and all our sacrifices’ (Lt-Gen Sir George Collingwood, 1968 Cameronians video).

Yet, Robert Hamilton cannot be dismissed out of hand, for he forcefully launched Cameronianism into being by the *Rutherglen Declaration* of 1679. He commanded Cameron’s bodyguard for a while (though he became an embarrassment), and was a close friend of Renwick right up the end. Whilst he was Commissioner for the United Societies on the Continent, he arranged for Renwick and Lining’s ordinations. Nevertheless, he was constantly an embarrassment and out of step with mainstream Cameronian policy.

8.7.5 A new united Presbyterian front: A significant contribution to Freedom of Religion?

This action of the Cameronian clergy, in reconciling with the Kirk, set an example of moderation emerging from the sector heretofore considered the most radical in the national church. Despite this, feelings in ecclesiastical circles continued to run high for some years afterwards. It may be overstating the case to say that the Cameronian clergy’s behaviour cleared the way for the King to pursue his ideal of religious toleration for (nearly) all in Scotland. But, it would certainly have proved more difficult if the established Church in

the land had to deal with a vociferous protesting minority still claiming to be the *True Presbyterians of the Church of Scotland*, particularly as they now possessed a notably successful fighting regiment.

Therefore, the reconciliation of Shields, Lining and Boyd, in a true spirit of Christian humility and reconciliation, was a significant factor in the healing of the Church of Scotland from 1690 onwards. One should also remember that it was only as a result of the reconciliation of Shields, Lining and Boyd that the main body of Cameronians ceased (grudgingly) to insist on repentance before forgiveness. 'The supreme need of the times, Shields perceived, was reconciliation (Macpherson 1932:226). 'And if this reconciliation cannot be obtained any other way, there must be mutual forgiveness' (Lining 1706:4).

Cameronianism has now run its course and, whilst certain tenets that its proponents laid down still endure, it but remains to assess whether the Cameronian contribution to religious freedom was significant, or not.

CHAPTER NINE

THE CAMERONIAN CONTRIBUTION: A new Era of Freedom of Religion Dawns

*'By Oppressions woes and pains!
By your sons in servile chains!
We will drain our dearest veins,
But they shall be free!'*

Bruce's address to his troops before Bannockburn, 1314
(Robert Burns 1759-1796)

9.1 GENERAL FORMAT

9.1.1 Central Research Problem

This Chapter addresses the conclusions to the central research problem stated on page 11, namely:

What contribution did the Cameronians make to freedom of religion in Scotland?

9.1.2 Hypothesis

The aim is to establish whether the hypothesis, stated on page 26, that:

The development and actions of the Cameronian movement made a significant contribution to Freedom of Religion in Scotland

is sustainable, or not.

9.1.3 The format of this Chapter

The format of this Chapter will be:

Definition of a Cameronian, and the defining aspect of their struggle.

Resumé of the development of the Cameronian movement.

Significant themes identifiable during the development of the Cameronian movement.

Significant Cameronian contributions to Freedom of Religion:

For their own time.

For modern times.

Acceptance of hypothesis.

Final observations.

9.2 DEFINITIONS

9.2.1 Definition of Cameronian

This already appears on pages 18/19. 'For the purpose of this dissertation the definition of a Cameronian is taken to be:

Proto-Cameronians:

- the 'forefather' (Rev Samuel Rutherford);
- the 'fathers' (Revs John Brown of Wamphray and Robert M'Ward).

Cameronians proper:¹

- the 'initiators' ([Sir] Robert Hamilton and his early followers);
- the 'progenitors' (Revs Richard Cameron and Donald Cargill and their followers);
- the members of the United Societies from 1681 to 1690 (during the time that Rev James Renwick and, subsequently, Alexander Shields, led them);
- the *original* members of the Cameronian Regiment (Lt-Col William Cleland, his officers, and men).'

9.2.2 The defining aspect of the Cameronian struggle

The defining aspects of the Cameronian struggle for their own freedom of religion may be reduced to just one point, a steadfast refusal to accept Erastian interference in matters of:

¹ There were peripheral sympathisers, such as the Revs Alexander Peden and John Blackader who, for various reasons (e.g. illness or imprisonment) are precluded from inclusion in the above definition.

- doctrine,
- worship,
- church government,
- church discipline.²

Cameronianism was never a political movement,³ despite efforts by Robert Hamilton and others⁴ to make it so at times. The essential stance of the Covenanters was that the Head of the Church must be Christ and not any earthly king. To this end, the four essential religious freedoms identified above had been designated in *The Solemn League and Covenant* of 1642, and confirmed as Cameronian doctrine in *Article Sixth* of the *Queensferry Paper* of 1680. *'To preserve the **doctrine, worship, discipline, government, liberties and privileges of the same from all corruptions or encroachments.**'* Whilst the Cameronians were engaged in a struggle for religious liberty, their enemies were involved in a struggle for political domination. Even when the authorities used ecclesiastical pressure, their aim was political. So, the struggle was really a dichotomy, one side religious, and the other political.

The simple fact is that Cameronianism and the United Societies developed because of the refusal of the Crown to allow them these freedoms, and significant numbers of Scottish Christians preferred to risk captivity, or even death, to ensure their retention. They were not prepared to abrogate them at any stage of their development, and these are the freedoms that they eventually achieved as a result of the Church Settlement in 1690.⁵

² Set out in Article Sixth of the Queensferry Paper 1680.

³ Today, there are some modern left-wing political organisations who claim the Cameronians as their political antecedents, including the Scottish Socialist Party, which describes 'the Cameronian Regiment [as] the Red Army of 1690' (Armstrong 2003:3). There is little doubt that Alexander Shields and some other Cameronians had republican leanings, and that subsequent political movements have, or could have, used Cameronian documents to good effect in developing their policies, but it is unsustainable to view the Cameronian movement as essentially political.

⁴ Despite Hector Macpherson's (1926 *RSCHS* 1:224) disagreement, the Cameronians *never* departed from their pursuit of the four religious freedoms above, and *never* made any attempt to set up any form of civil government over themselves or anyone else. Their struggle was religious, neither political nor ecclesiastical.

⁵ Freedom of Religion for others was not a major concern in Cameronian thinking. In fact, they were quite prepared to force others to conform to Presbyterianism. However, whilst not embracing all the modern requirements for religious freedom, Cameronianism facilitated a

9.3 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CAMERONIAN MOVEMENT

The historical narrative that has been a continuum throughout this dissertation has set out the development of the Cameronian movement from pre-inception, until dissolution. (The principal events are indicated in bold and in italics in the short narrative below.)

9.3.1 A brief history of events during the development of the Cameronian movement

The Question from Chapter 1 (1.7.7.): ‘How did the Cameronian movement originate and develop?’ is implicit in this section. (Significant events are in ***bold italics***).

The movement gets under way

By 1679, some of the more extreme Covenanters felt that matters had to come to a head, resulting in the (unpremeditated) ***murder of Archbishop Sharp*** of St Andrew’s on 3 May 1679. On 29 May 1679, Robert Hamilton and some companions published the ***Rutherglen Declaration***, which effectively repudiated royal authority. This infuriated the Crown and led in short order to a ***Covenanting victory over a royal force at Drumclog*** on 1 June 1679, and a ***disastrous Covenanting defeat at Bothwell Brig*** on 22 June 1679. The outcome of these events was a ***serious split in Presbyterian ranks***, the moderates accepting the royal Indulgences offered, and the more radical ***leadership elements fleeing to Holland***, leaving the common people to endure great persecution, particularly as the Government did not differentiate between moderates and extremists.

The Revs Richard Cameron and Donald Cargill

At this stage, two men critical to Cameronianism, the ***Revs Richard Cameron and Donald Cargill***, were ***profoundly influenced by the exiled Revs John Brown of Wamphray and Robert M’Ward***, the ‘fathers’ of Cameronianism

climate whereby religious freedom could, and did, develop, thereby achieving the freedoms they sought both for themselves and others.

who, in turn, **had been influenced by Rev Samuel Rutherford**, the 'forefather.' In late 1679/early 1680, Cameron and Cargill both returned to Scotland and **recommenced field preaching at Conventicles**, particularly attacking the Royal Indulgences and those ministers who had accepted them. Their preaching was so effective that they attracted a large following, particularly in the South-West. **These followers became known, in due course, as Cameronians**, and were continually harried by government troops.

The Queensferry Paper, the Sanquhar Declaration, and the Torwood Excommunication

On 3 June 1680, the **Queensferry Paper** was seized whilst in Cargill's possession and, on 22 June 1680, Cameron published the **Sanquhar Declaration**. Both documents repudiated the Stewart regime and, shortly afterwards on 22 July 1680, **Cameron was killed in a skirmish. Cargill then exacerbated the situation by excommunicating the King and others at Torwood** on 12 September 1680. In July 1681, **he was captured and executed**, leaving the Cameronians without a significant leader. But they proceeded to organise themselves into a **formal polity to become known as the United Societies** (also known as Cameronians) and, by September 1683, they had a **new leader in Rev James Renwick**, newly ordained in Holland.

The 'Killing Times' (c 1684–1687)⁶

Severe persecution continued, which the Societies members bore with great stoicism, very rarely reacting violently even when attacked. In 1685, the **'Killing Times'** climaxed, coinciding with the **Revocation of the Edict of Nantes** in France. The future of Protestantism in Europe looked bleak. In Britain, **James VII of Scotland (and II of England) had succeeded to both thrones** on the death of his brother Charles II on 6 February 1685. However, **Conventicling continued** in the face of increasing evidence of James's policy to impose Roman Catholicism. In October 1686, **Alexander Shields**, a licensed preacher who had been imprisoned and escaped, **joined the**

⁶ Various dates are attributed to the 'Killing Times.' The worst period was 1684/5.

Cameronians in the field. He immediately **came alongside Renwick as co-leader**, and when **Renwick was captured and executed** in February 1688, **Shields assumed leadership**. By now, King James's intention to enforce Roman Catholicism on his kingdoms was manifest, and the Cameronians cautiously welcomed an **invasion by William, Prince of Orange** on 5 November 1688, in the hope that their situation might improve.

Expanding the Cameronians' area of effectiveness

Up to this point, the Cameronians had fought mostly by spiritual means, but sometimes also with the use of defensive arms, to maintain their own freedom of doctrine, worship, discipline and church government, as far as they could in the face of considerable persecution. **To a significant degree, they had succeeded** in this for, despite being hunted and harried, imprisoned and executed, they had maintained their Conventicling, and their own polity in the United Societies, even though the number of ministers available was frequently only one, and rarely more than two.

However, **from this point forward, they were to exercise an influence beyond their own Societies**. By their behaviour and actions at the Revolution, especially during 1689 and 1690, they were to be **influential in achieving a climate conducive to a new freedom of religion nation-wide**. In this, they were **to obtain complete freedom in the areas they sought for themselves, but an era of new religious freedom was also ushered in for Scotland as a whole**. 'The heralds of it were the Cameronians' (Macpherson 1932:85).

The Glorious Revolution 1688/9

Now the Cameronians did indeed begin to come into their own. They were involved in a series of quasi-military actions that developed both in intensity and effect. The **'Rabbling of the Curates'** removed many of the imposed Episcopalian clergy from the Covenanting districts with no loss of life. Thereafter, the **'Cameronian Guard'** provided protection for the sitting of the Convention of Estates in Edinburgh, the **outcome of the sitting being the removal of both James VII as king, and Episcopacy as the form of**

church government for Scotland. But, before Presbyterianism could be declared, John Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee (in support of the deposed Stewarts), defeated William's forces at **Killiecrankie** on 27 July 1689, throwing Edinburgh into a panic, despite Claverhouse being killed in the battle. Nothing now lay between Dundee's victorious army and the heartland of Scotland, save a single regiment of Cameronians. However, on 21 August 1689, **the Cameronians decisively defeated the Jacobite force at Dunkeld, thereby securing a peace that would ultimately enable the establishment of Presbyterianism as the form of Scottish church government**, without the danger of an external Jacobite threat.

Reconciliation and Schism

Thereafter, all the Cameronian clergy rejoined the Kirk, bringing most of the United Society people with them. However, **a minority**, under the leadership of Robert Hamilton, **refused to be reconciled**, and formed a breakaway group, which eventually became the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland in 1743. **The only body that now formally acknowledged the title 'Cameronian' was the Cameronian Regiment**, which continued to exist until 1968.

Ultimate condition of the Kirk

After the Revolution, the Kirk became entirely Presbyterian and, despite taking note of King William's expressed desires, **was free in all religious matters. A 'free' General Assembly was called**, supremacy and patronage were abolished, laws were repealed concerning behaviour, which had previously been considered rebellion, and restitution of estates (and sometimes fines) took place.

9.4 SIGNIFICANT THEMES DURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CAMERONIAN MOVEMENT

The following were important themes during the development of the Cameroonian movement.

9.4.1 Orthodox Presbyterianism

The question from Chapter 1 (1.7.3): ‘Did the Cameronians remain within Presbyterianism, or were they sectarian to the point that they fell outside the mainstream of Scottish Presbyterianism?’ is implicit in this answer.

We have seen that the Cameronians considered themselves, in every sense, to be orthodox Scots Presbyterians throughout the period of their separation (1679–1690). Hector Macpherson (1932:229) considers that all Covenanters were handicapped ‘by two principles rigidly held. The first was that the theology of the Reformation was the last word in Divine truth, and that dissent from the findings of orthodox Calvinism was of the nature of a moral offence.’⁷ This never wavered and, at no time, did any Cameronian cleric advocate final separation from the Kirk. Quite the reverse! They always considered themselves invested with the full spiritual authority of the Kirk, even to the point of excommunicating the King. The moderates, who ran the Kirk during the Cameronian epoch, resisted this attitude, but the Cameronians were clearly presbyterial in behaviour and organisation. The only reason they were not entirely Presbyterian in structure was due to the times in which they lived.

9.4.2 The Westminster Confession and Standards

The *Westminster Confession* and its Standards ‘are in full harmony with the ecclesiastical polity of the Church of Scotland from the reformation downwards’ (Hutchinson 1893:19), and identify a number of important themes evident during the development of the Cameronian movement. For the Covenanters in general the following were the salient principles:

⁷ David Wright (2007 Rutherford House Newsletter, Spring: sp) concurs. ‘We have no warrant for believing that the Reformation or any subsequent era, including the twentieth century, furnished all the wisdom we need’.

1. The Scriptures are the supreme standard of faith and practice.
2. Christ is the exclusive head of the Church.
3. The Church is free and has spiritual independence.
4. The rights of Christian people are above the rights of the king.
5. The civil power owes allegiance to Christ.
6. Laws must be framed in accordance with God's word.
7. Magistrates have duties toward religion and the church, not just secular matters.

(after Hutchison 1893:19)

However, one point upon which their orthodoxy is open to question, is their attitude to Chapter XXIII.IV of the *Westminster Confession*. '*Infidelity ... doth not make void the magistrate's just and legal authority, nor free the people from their due obedience to him.*' The Cameronian argument, stated in the *Informatory Vindication* and elsewhere, was that the House of Stewart itself had abrogated its own right to lawful magistracy through its tyranny; thus, the people were obligated to rebel in order to protect 'the freedom that forms the basis of their existence as Christians [and which] is non-negotiable' (Coertzen 2005:351). In March 1689, the Convention of Estates adopted this same attitude when it declared that James VII had forfeited the Crown.

9.4.3 The Word of God and the Headship of Christ

The *supreme* Cameronian rule was the Word of God. Humanly inspired documents were *subordinate* and might be questioned in matters not pertaining to the heart of the faith. Closely relating to this was the Headship of Christ over His church.

From the first the Headship of Christ over the Church and its direct subjection to His authority was recognised and acted upon. It belonged to the Church under the guidance of Christ speaking in his Word, to decide as to doctrine, worship, discipline and government ... the Church claimed to be independent of civil control, owning no authority but that of Jesus Christ. As to the relation between Church and State

... the early reformers held that civil rulers had duties to discharge toward religion and the Church ... and while refusing to recognise the interference of the State *in sacris*, they were prepared to allow it a considerable sphere *circa sacra* (Hutchinson1893:6-7).

9.4.4 Personal Osmosis (see Annexure B)

Personal osmosis was one of the most critical aspects in the development and survival of the Cameronian movement. At any one time, there were rarely more than two or three theologians in the movement and, although those that were there, were frequently men of great intellectual ability and education, the personal inspiration and encouragement that each generation received from the one before, probably had more influence upon the continuance of the movement, and its survival during the 'Killing Times,' than any other factor.

Samuel Rutherford, whom (as far as can be ascertained) no-one has ever before laid claim to as a proto-Cameronian, seems the logical person with whom to start. He had a close personal relationship with Robert M'Ward, his *amanuensis* at Westminster (also his first biographer and publisher of his Letters). Donald Cargill was one of his students at St Andrews (and possibly at Aberdeen), whilst John Brown of Wamphray's mother was one of Rutherford's correspondents. He left a significant imprint on some who were to become catalytic in the future development of the Cameronian movement. As commented on page 57: '... there is little doubt that Rutherford did leave a significant imprint on some who were to become catalytic in the future development of the Cameronian movement. His influence over M'Ward, Brown and Cargill, and his identification of the authority of the Word of God above individual conscience, as well as the danger of Erastianism in the Kirk, both strong Cameronian themes, would seem to justify a claim for him to be viewed as the forefather of Cameronianism.'

Robert M'Ward and John Brown of Wamphray are generally considered to be the 'fathers' of Cameronianism. Whilst Hector Macpherson (1932:8) remarks that 'Brown may with some justice be called the father of Cameronianism,' it would be invidious to separate Brown and M'Ward in this respect. Both had a

profound effect upon Cameron and Cargill when they fled to Holland during the period around Bothwell. They both officiated at Cameron's ordination, and M'Ward presented most challenging 'charges,' for Cameron and Cargill to return to Scotland, and once more take up the lonely task of field-preaching. This encouraged both men greatly during the momentous last year of their lives. Brown and M'Ward's influence upon Alexander Shields and his *magnum opus*, *A Hind Let Loose*, has been commented upon (in Chapters 2 and 6), as well as their influence upon more peripheral Cameronian *personae*, such as Cleland and Hamilton (in Chapter 4) - relations with the latter not always being cordial!

Cameron and Cargill had a wider audience than previous Cameronian divines. However, in the critical field of personal osmosis, in passing on the baton of Cameronian leadership, Cargill's greatest single influence was at his execution. One of the witnesses was 19 year-old James Renwick, 'who set the seal on his resolve to identify himself ... with the cause for which Cargill ... had laid down [his life]' (Grant M 1988:205). Alexander Shields heard him preach only once, and seems to have been impressed. It is interesting to note that, whilst Cameron had a widely inspirational ministry, there is no evidence of any direct personal contact between him and future clerical leaders of the Cameronians. In the matter of personal osmosis, he seems to be the 'odd man out.'

Renwick was inspired by Cargill, and Alexander Shields, the clerical leader of the Cameronians at the Revolution, had a close relationship with Renwick from 1686, until the latter's capture and execution in 1688. This brought to an end the personal osmosis factor, so evident amongst Cameronian clerical leaders.⁸

⁸ This osmosis was to continue in the Cameronian Regiment, and has been discussed under 'Family' in Chapter 7 (7.3.4.). That this was an enduring trait, is evidenced in Lt-Col Leslie Dow's acrostic to Lt-Col William Cleland (*L'Envoi*), 'Each generation shaping up the next.'

9.4.5 Cameronian attitude to the Church

The Cameronian attitude to the Church remained consistent throughout the period 1679 to 1689. They considered:

- Although separated from the Kirk, such separation was temporary.
- They retained the full authority of the Kirk to act in ecclesiastical matters such as excommunication and acceptance of ordination by foreign presbyteries.
- They were the *Suffering Remnant of the True Presbyterian Church of Scotland*.
- Once the Kirk regained her freedom, they were required to reconcile, otherwise they would themselves become schismatics.

The Cameronian clergy played a critical healing role in 1690, due to their reconciliation with the Kirk, thereby ensuring a[n almost] united national Presbyterian front, and ending the isolation of the Cameronian main body.

9.4.6 Cameronian attitude to the State

Opposition to the Cameronian struggle was politically motivated, even though ecclesiastical pressure was often used to further this political aim. The Cameronian attitude to the State changed quite substantially from 1679 onwards. Previously, whilst standing firm in their testimony for religious freedom, especially that of conscience, they accepted the authority of the State as divinely ordained. After 1680, they began to repudiate that authority, claiming that the Crown had abrogated its own right to rule as a result of its tyranny. The despotic Stewart regime collapsed in 1688. When tyranny ceased, most Cameronians once again submitted to the authority of the State. The war declared by Richard Cameron in 1680, and pursued by his followers, was entirely vindicated at the Revolution in 1689/90 when the entire nation subscribed to the same reasons that the United Societies had given in 1682 - to justify King James VII's removal.

9.4.7 Cameronian Documents and Declarations

In an era when it was difficult to disseminate opinions and views widely, the Cameronians used documents, such as *Declarations* and *Vindications*, to publish (usually at market crosses) whatever they wanted to bring to public and government attention. These publications not only had a vindictory role, but also a prophetic one, troubling the conscience of the nation, whilst infuriating the persecutors, and informing the local people.

9.4.8 Warfare on two fronts: Spiritual and temporal

Spiritual Warfare from 1680 to 1688

Many have uncritically accepted Cameron's Declaration of War in the *Sanquhar Declaration* of 1680 as a call to temporal arms. This is probably the general impression in Scots society to this day. But, we have seen in Chapter 4, how Cameron and other Cameronian clergy's Declaration of War was intended as a call to spiritual warfare. Maurice Grant's (1997:215) opinion that; 'It was, then, a spiritual warfare to which Cameron was calling his hearers – a warfare by prayer and witness-bearing, leaving the issue to God⁹ is supported by Michael Sixsmith' (2007:11): 'In their minds they were fighting a spiritual war.' If this were not the case, then their followers could only be described as a dismal failure at prosecuting the war. Whilst the United Societies were at pains to ensure that temporal weapons were used virtually exclusively for defensive purposes, and reacted vigorously against any who overstepped the mark, the declared war continued to be, for the most part, spiritual not temporal, up to 1689. This principle was applied with extreme rigour.¹⁰

We have also noted how, at no time, did the Cameronians seek to set up an independent state, or even a judiciary. 'The Cameronians and

⁹ The *Informatory Vindication*, Head 3, later confirmed this attitude.

¹⁰ Whilst the Covenanters demonstrated restraint, the same does not apply to government actions. Cowan (1976:132) remarks that, 'In terms of human life the final toll ... does not greatly exceed 160.' Johnston (1887:597-601) records 171 Covenanters killed, excluding those killed in skirmishes. Therefore, the average score of violent deaths was; Cameronians 3 - Government 165. Somewhat disproportionate! (See discussion in Chapter 5.)

society people did not pretend to vindicate every expression in this paper [the *Queensferry Paper*] ... they expressly disown it, in as far as it does in any way import any purpose of assuming to themselves a magistratical authority' (Wodrow 1833 iii:208/9).

Self defence

Traditionally, at Drumclog, Rev Thomas Douglas ended his sermon with the words: 'Self defence is always lawful'. Although doubt has been cast upon the authenticity of who made this pronouncement, there is no doubt about the justification of the principle in Cameronian eyes. Such behaviour is implicit in the *Queensferry Paper* 1680 (Cargill), *Sanquhar Declaration* 1680 (Cameron), *Admonitory Declaration* 1685 (Renwick), *Informatory Vindication* 1687 (Renwick & Shields) and, in *A Hind Let Loose* 1687, Alexander Shields discusses it at length. There is no doubt that this was approved Cameronian policy, even to Cameron dying sword in hand.

Although, at the outset, it might appear that the movement was to be based on belligerence of the type that Robert Hamilton applied, and with a readiness to participate in temporal warfare, this is a false premise. Hamilton may have set the tone for Drumclog and Bothwell Brig with his pugnacious behaviour (even to the extent of killing an unarmed prisoner at Drumclog),¹¹ [but] Cameron never countenanced the brand of militancy which Hamilton advocated' (Grant M 1997:101). Therefore, Hamilton's attitude did not prevail long, and was never recognised as Cameronian policy.

¹¹ 'There is considerable evidence that in ... 1678, both he [Hamilton] and Kersland sought to influence the younger field-preachers to adopt an increasingly militant tone in their preaching' (Grant M 1997:100). The 'Bluidy Banner' inscribed 'No Quarter for Ye Active Enemies of Ye Covenants' (currently in the Cameronian Regimental Museum, Hamilton), 'belongs to post-Revolution times' (McMillan 1948, *RSCHS* 10:143), and may well be an attempt at justifying Hamilton's behaviour several years *post-factum*.

Extreme Restraint: The principle of minimum force

The extreme restraint shown by the Cameronians has been commented upon in Chapter 7. ‘Once the Cameronian activists, whether ‘rabble,’ Guard or Regiment, had achieved their aim, they ceased hostilities.’¹² ‘What is ... most remarkable ... is the lack of physical violence ... even against those curates who had been instrumental in sending men and women to their deaths’ (Davidson 2004:19). The moderation shown by the Cameronians throughout the entire period of persecution from 1680 to 1688, particularly at the time of the ‘rabbling of the curates’ and of the Cameronian Guard in 1689, is remarkable. Even Dunkeld was a defensive action; the Cameronians were attacked and held their ground as a result of spirited self-defence. The extreme restraint shown by the 17th-century Cameronians during the ‘Killing Times’ in not exacting vengeance upon their oppressors, even if the opportunity arose, has an enduring value. The Cameronians’ restrained behaviour under persecution troubled the conscience of the nation more and more.

9.4.9 Who were the ‘true’ inheritors of the Cameronian spirit?

The question from Chapter 1 (1.7.5): ‘Who were the “true” inheritors of the Cameronian spirit?’ is answered here.

The ‘true’ inheritors of the Cameronian spirit were the reconcilers, not the schismatics. This includes the Regiment, at least initially. In his Preface to Alexander Shields’s *Church Communion Enquired into: Or a Treatise against Separation from this National Church of Scotland* 1706, (ii-iii), Thomas Lining considers that Cameron, Cargill, Renwick and Shields would all have reconciled once the Church in Scotland had achieved a peaceful state. Lining himself was of the same opinion. There seems little doubt that those who became reconciled to the Kirk in 1690, stand foursquare in the footsteps of the most ‘true’ Cameronian forebears. Patrick Walker agrees that Renwick

¹² The use of minimum force is a widely misunderstood principle. Many are upset at the use of force, yet a military unit’s effectiveness depends on either the threat, or use, of force. But any unit of moral standing must *always* avoid violence, i.e. gratuitous force,. That is why the Cameronian example is so important.

'would have come in with Mr. Shields, and join'd with the Establishment of this Church, and might have been a very useful instrument in her' (Walker 1827 i:274/5).

9.5 SIGNIFICANT CAMERONIAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO FREEDOM OF RELIGION

General

By now, it will be clear to the reader that, whilst the Cameronians were not single-handedly responsible for the Revolution and the Settlement that followed it, neither did they play no part at all. The Cameronians 'had done their work. Their injuries, their martyrdoms, their passionate protests, their inextinguishable vitality, their armed resistance ... had been powerful agents in producing the Revolution. But in the political settlement that followed it the remnant of the Covenanters and the Protesters had no part' (Story 1874:173). This is quite correct for, despite becoming necessarily enmeshed in the political situation, their aim continued to be exclusively religious.

The Cameronians made four significant contributions to Freedom of Religion in Scotland:

Firstly, they made a significant contribution to their own freedom of religion by their struggle to protect the right of maintaining their own freedom of doctrine, worship, discipline and church government, resisting every effort to remove these by force. In 1690 they secured these freedoms.

Secondly, by their new-found military effectiveness, they secured a climate of comparative peace and stability, during which both Parliament and General Assembly were able to legislate without any external threat during the latter half of 1689 and 1690.

Thirdly, through the reconciliation of their clergy with the Kirk, the Cameronians were catalytic in the establishment of a [virtually] united

Presbyterian front in Scotland,¹³ thereby ensuring that the Kirk was strong enough to accept the existence of other denominations without feeling unduly threatened.

Fourthly, Rev Alexander Shields stands out as catalytic in the achievement of the Second and Third significant contributions. It can be argued that his behaviour was a significant contribution to Freedom of Religion, in itself.

9.5.1 The First Significant Cameronian contribution to Freedom of Religion: The Achievement of Religious Freedom for themselves

The question from Chapter 1 (1.7.2): 'Were the Cameronians essentially a politico-ecclesiastical movement, a movement of genuine religious conviction, or both?' is implicit in this answer.

We have frequently seen that, throughout their struggle, the Cameronians sought to make a significant contribution to their own freedom of religion by seeking to protect their freedom of doctrine, worship, discipline and church government. Cameronianism was never a political movement, despite the efforts of Robert Hamilton and others to make it so at times. The essential stance of the Cameronians was that the Head of the Church must be Christ and not an earthly king. To this end, the four essential religious freedoms were designated in *The Solemn League and Covenant* of 1642, and confirmed as Cameronian doctrine in *Article Sixth* of the *Queensferry Paper* of 1680. '*To preserve the **doctrine, worship, discipline, government, liberties and privileges of the same from all corruptions or encroachments.***' In 1690, Alexander Shields demonstrated the consistency of this Cameronian point of view and, after the Revolution, identifies these same four freedoms as having been achieved. 'The Church's freedom and power restored, **the doctrine, worship, discipline and government** ... re-established' (Shields M

¹³ The Kirk's future problems came rather from within, with the First and Second Secessions of 1733 and 1761, which lie outside the scope of this dissertation. Most of the RPC joined the Free Church in 1876, and there was general re-unification in 1929, when most of the United Free Church joined the Kirk (after Burleigh 1960).

1780:461). Cameronianism and the United Societies developed because of the refusal of the Crown to allow them these freedoms and many Covenanters preferred to risk captivity or death, to ensure their retention.

We have already seen how the Declaration of War, by Cameron and other Cameronian clergy, was intended as a call to spiritual warfare. We have also noted how, at no time, did the Cameronians seek to set up an independent state, or even a judiciary. 'The Cameronians and society people did not pretend to vindicate every expression in this paper [the *Queensferry Paper*] ... they expressly disown it, in as far as it does in any way import any purpose of assuming to themselves a magistratical authority' (Wodrow 1833 iii:208/9).

The heart of the answer to the question (at 1.7.2) lies in the fact that, whilst the Cameronians were engaged in a struggle for religious liberty, their enemies were involved in a struggle for political domination. Even when the authorities applied ecclesiastical pressure, the aim was political. So, the struggle was indeed a dichotomy, one side religious, and the other political.¹⁴ In 1690, they secured these sought-for religious freedoms, not merely for those of their number who rejoined the Kirk, but for all Cameronians, including those who went their own way at the schism.

¹⁴ Today, there are some modern left-wing political organisations who claim the Cameronians as their political antecedents, including the Scottish Socialist Party, which describes 'the Cameronian Regiment [as] the Red Army of 1690' (Armstrong 2003:3). There is little doubt that Alexander Shields and some other Cameronians had republican leanings, and that subsequent political movements have, or could have, used Cameronian documents to good effect in developing their policies, but it is unsustainable to view the Cameronian movement as essentially political.

9.5.2 The Second Significant Cameronian contribution to Freedom of Religion: A climate of comparative peace and stability, wherein Parliament and General Assembly might legislate without any external threat

The two questions from Chapter 1 (1.7.6): ‘How did a number of Rebellious Cameronians form a loyal Regiment?’ and ‘Did they retain their freedom of conscience in the process?’ are implicit in this answer.

Cameronianism had developed a polity of its own in the United Societies, but made no really significant impact outside its own community, other than being an irritation and of nuisance value. They were largely introspective, desiring to be left in peace to pursue their own religious freedoms. However, the Cameronians were unique in that they attended their Conventicles under arms and, whilst the aim was self-defence, they were not afraid to fight hard if attacked (Richard Cameron himself having set the example). However, they generally sought to avoid provocation. They were also prepared to fight to secure the release of any of their number who had been taken captive. But they lacked any proper military discipline or organisation.

The United Societies were divided on the issue of military service. The general opinion changed considerably from time to time. In early 1689, the Revolution seemed in danger of being reversed. If the Revolution were to fail, all would be lost for all the Cameronians, whatever their view of military service.¹⁵ To that end, many were prepared to volunteer to defend William’s cause,¹⁶ which was perceived as essential to the success of the Cameronian aim of securing their own freedom of religion. But the conditions, which the General Meeting attempted to set for entry into the Regiment, were quite impossible for any military formation to sustain, if it were to function with any degree of discipline and efficiency. Consequently, these conditions were tacitly understood, but never formally adopted.

¹⁵ Claverhouse had raised the Highlands, the Irish were threatening invasion, and many of the upper class were sitting on the fence, waiting to see how events would turn out.

¹⁶ No oath of fealty was required at the original mustering. The Cameronians had had bitter experience of enforced oaths during the persecution and, wisely, this matter was not raised.

In fact, the conditions that the recruits accepted were contained in a declaration of just six lines. 'To declare that you engage in this service ... to recover and establish the work of reformation in Scotland ... till the government in church and state be brought to that lustre and integrity which it had at the best of times' (Maxwell 1918:246). Shortly after William landed in Torbay on 5 November 1688, a power vacuum occurred in Scotland, and the only people who could immediately fill this vacuum were the Cameronians. When the Convention of Estates met on 14 March 1689, the Cameronians offered their services, and the Convention accepted this offer with some trepidation as it was nervous of the possibility of a *coup d'état*. With the arrival of the Scots Brigade of the Dutch army on 27 March 1689, the Cameronians were dismissed with the thanks of the Convention.

At best, the Cameronian 'Guard' might be described as a para-military unit. Be that as it may, the Cameronians filled the gap, and provided protection for the Convention whilst it made 'the important resolution [that] ... King James VII ... had forfeited his right to the crown ... [and] that William and Mary ... should be declared King and Queen of Scotland' (Cunningham 1859 ii:270). This was a most significant step in Scotland's history.

A more vital contribution was to follow as a result of the Battle of Dunkeld, the effect of which has been assessed in Chapter 7. This was a high point of Cameronianism. 'To the Cameronian regiment ... belongs the prestige of consummating the rebellion with a victory for Protestantism, which could never have been achieved unless these "bonny fighters" had been unified in an invincible legion by the spirit of the Covenant' (King Hewison 1908 ii:532). True, if rather hagiographic¹⁷ for, within two years, the Cameronians had

¹⁷ Assessments of the combined Killiecrankie and Dunkeld *duo* of battles will forever be plagued with one unanswerable 'if.' What would have happened 'if' Claverhouse had *not* been killed at Killiecrankie? The reply will almost certainly be partisan, depending upon whether the person asked refers to him as 'Bonny Dundee' (Jacobite), or 'Bluidy Clavers' (Presbyterian). We have seen Hume Brown's opinion that Cleland was the only person Claverhouse feared. T.B. Macaulay (1855 iii:276) concurs: 'The enemy whom Dundee had most reason to fear was a youth of distinguished courage and abilities named William Cleland.' He was certainly the only person ever to defeat him. Today, Cleland is mostly forgotten, whereas Claverhouse remains an iconic Scottish folk-hero. Even in Dunkeld, where Cleland is buried in the cathedral nave, one hears only about 'Bonnie Dundee.'

ceased to play any significant role in Church or State. It is important to realise that the Cameronian Regiment was not militaristic. 'It is evident that to adduce even the militant Covenanters in support of the whole theory of the individual's relation to the State, conveniently called "militarism," is quite illegitimate' (Macpherson 1932:190).

The Cameronians are still something of an irrelevance north of the River Tay, the land of exile of some of their leaders,¹⁸ being neither fashionable nor Highland!¹⁹ Dr John Young (email 12 July 2007), senior lecturer in Scottish history at the University of Strathclyde, has this to say: 'In modern-day Scotland the historical importance of Scotland's covenanting heritage has been somewhat marginalised and it does not have the profile that Jacobitism has.... This extends to the 1666 and 1679 risings of the Restoration period, in addition to the earlier seventeenth-century Covenanting period, and also includes the importance of the Cameronians.'²⁰ However, in 2006, the BBC (news.bbc.co.uk 19 July 2007) conducted a survey of the top ten events of Scottish history. The Covenanters feature in both the popular list and that drawn up by a panel of history professionals, whilst the Jacobites feature in neither!

It is a pity that Claverhouse did not live to command the Highlanders at Dunkeld, for then history would know whether the Cameronians did indeed save the Kirk for Presbyterianism, and whether Cleland would have outfought him once more. Had Claverhouse's army been victorious at Dunkeld, many would agree that a Stewart restoration was a real danger, in which case the Kirk would probably have been Episcopalian (or even Roman Catholic), and the Cameronians would have become hunted fugitives yet again. Instead, they

¹⁸ Such as Rutherford and Cargill.

¹⁹ For example, whilst crediting the Regiment with being the 'saviours of the Revolution' (www.clan-cameron.org 5 May 2007), this Clan Cameron website also remarks that it 'had absolutely no connection [underlined!] to the Clan Cameron' (*ibid*). This antipathy is not entirely one-sided. As late as '1916 the 6th Cameronians would lodge "a formal protest at being brigaded with Highlanders, on the grounds that their [forebears] had fought against the Highlandmen"' (*The Trench Diary of Brigadier-General JL Jack DSO 1964:246* quoted in Cockburn 2004).

²⁰ For instance, Karin Bowie, Glasgow University (discussion 26 June 2006), commented on a 'modern spin,' that it was Cameronian intransigence that pressurised the Government to offer the Indulgences.

won a decisive victory that provided a climate of comparative peace and security, during which both Parliament and the General Assembly were enabled to bring in, not only Presbyterianism as ‘the government of the church established by law,’ but the dawn of a new era of religious freedom.

The Cameronians might have had no say in formulating the legislation that brought this about, but had it not been for the Guard in Edinburgh, and Regiment at Dunkeld, that legislation might well never have appeared on the statute books at all. ‘Relieved in this way from the danger which threatened them, the Convention of Estates was now in a position to proceed with the consideration of the questions regarding the Church’ (Story sa: 569). The Cameronian victory at Dunkeld deserves better from history than it has received. Whilst in no way comparing the outcome quantitatively, the author considers that the Battle of Dunkeld in 1689 was as vital qualitatively to securing religious freedom in Scotland, as Bannockburn in 1314 was to securing Scottish independence. This may be a ‘hard bullet to chew,’ but any objective assessment of the Cameronian contribution at Dunkeld, must surely agree that it was highly significant for the future of both Church and State?

9.5.3 The Third Significant Cameronian contribution to Freedom of Religion: A (virtually) united Presbyterian front

The question from Chapter 1 (1.7.4): ‘Did the Cameronians strictly maintain their freedom of conscience, or did they succumb to expediency or intransigence at the time of the Glorious Revolution 1688?’ is implicit in this answer.

The three Cameronian clergy who rejoined the Kirk after the Revolution, together with those members of the United Societies who followed them into the Kirk, have been variously commended or denigrated, depending upon the position of the commentator. ‘It was to be expected that some ... would be content if permitted to hold their own opinions regarding the Covenanted Reformation ... while others would be satisfied with nothing short of ... an acceptance of the Testimony in all its parts’ (Hutchison 1893:108). James Taylor ([1859] s a:756) is of the opinion that the Cameronian three were reconciled to the Kirk ‘not because they were disposed to abandon their

principles, but in the hope that they might be able, as members of the church, to promote her reformation.’

Rejoining the Kirk impacted, not only on those who re-entered, but on the whole church situation, particularly in the South-West, with the accession of many committed Christians to the parishes. We have seen the importance the General Assembly attached to this matter and that, had it not happened, the Church Settlement might have been quite different, perhaps to the point of the Church of Scotland having a parallel Presbyterian/Episcopalian polity, or even civil war breaking out (Story 1874:173).²¹

The Cameronian clergy themselves were convinced that they took not only the correct course, but the honourable one. On 27 March 1690, Alexander Shields drafted a Petition on behalf of *The Persecuted People of the West and Southern Shires*: ‘We never thought anything too dear to be expended for adherence to the least point of truth or duty bound upon our consciences by the word of God, or any part of the church’s established Reformation, in Doctrine, Worship, Discipline and Government’ (Shields M 1780:428). Howie complains: ‘... how contemptuously this petition was by the committee [of Overtures] rejected’ (*ibid*:437fn), but ‘it is only fair ... to record that at this very time Parliament was engaged in removing some of the most serious grievances complained of’ (Macpherson 1932:101). In fact, by the end of 1690, all the grievances in this Petition had been removed from the statute books, save those relating to the Covenants and the exacting of revenge. To all intents and purposes, the Cameronians had achieved all that they had suffered for, and the outcome was a Presbyterian Church of Scotland that has endured for more than 300 years.

On the other hand, detractors accuse the Cameronian clergy of having given in to the Erastianism against which they had struggled all through the 1680s. ‘The Cameronians, deserted by Shields, Linning [*sic*] and Boyd, were left with-

²¹ ‘The great object which the king had in view [was] the amalgamation of the Presbyterians and Episcopalians’ (Cunningham 1859 ii:299).

out a minister.... Shields ... succumbs to the pressure of the time and enters the charmed circle.... *One honest dupe is disposed of*" (Sommerville 1869: sp). In a sense, they are quite correct in that the Church Settlement was largely an Erastian production. This is why it is critical to understand the *type* of Erastianism that the Cameronians opposed. It concerned **doctrine, worship, church discipline and government**. This was not always clear to the laity of the Societies, who often failed to grasp the finer nuances of their struggle. Robert Hamilton and his followers would not only have nothing to do with the new regime or the church established by it, but were intransigent to the point where it seems unlikely that any church or regime could have met their criteria. Even Matthew Hutchison (1893:111), inclining somewhat towards approval of Hamilton, remarks of the *Tinwald Paper* of 1691, that henceforth the rump of the Societies 'resolved to keep entirely separate from the Church, to refuse all recognition of the Government and Constitution, and to avoid every act that might seem in any measure fitted to countenance, encourage or sustain the existing civil authorities.' They were indeed still in the wilderness, whereas those who returned to the Kirk were once more within the fold.

The author's opinion is that the Cameronian clergy did not succumb to expediency by seeking their own welfare, as Patrick Walker ([1727]1827 i:228) accuses them of doing: 'Masters Linnen (*sic*) and Boyd had too much influence upon him [Alexander Shields], being in haste for Kirks, Stipends and Wives.' Even if there is an element of truth in this accusation, the three clergy accepted that they had won the victory they sought, and believed the conditions, upon which it was achieved (even if this involved a considerable degree of Erastianism), were not in conflict with their confessional stance. 'Shields was perfectly consistent with his own general attitude in making his protest and resuming fellowship with those from whom he had been separated by circumstances which no longer existed' (Macpherson 1932:117).

In his Introduction to Shields's *Church Communion Enquired into 1706*, Lining has also argued that not only would Renwick have been reconciled, but that Cameron and Cargill probably would have been as well. Wodrow (1833

iv:445) supports this attitude in Renwick: 'I make no question but he [Renwick] would have come in with Messrs Shields, Linning [*sic*], and Boyd, to join with the establishment of this church.' Walker (1827 i:274/5), for his part, surmises that, had Renwick survived, 'there is Ground to conclude, that he would have taken Part with the humble Pleaders for the good old Way.'²² But, it does seem sustainable that the surviving Cameronian clergy did not act in their own interests at the Revolution, but rather from deep inner conviction, and that such intransigence as there was, lay with Hamilton and his followers. The discussion continues to the present day.

Despite their position of separation from the Kirk during the period 1679 to 1690, the long-standing Cameronian intent, stated in the *Informatory Vindication* and elsewhere, was always ultimate reconciliation. 'We deny & altogether disown a Separation from communion with this Church [the Kirk] in her Doctrine, worship, discipline and Government, as she was in her best & purest days' (Renwick 1687:64). Hutchison (1893:59) agrees: 'They regarded this position [of separation] as merely temporary and forced upon them by the broken and disordered state of things in both Church and State.' Approximately two-thirds of the United Societies were reconciled and, in so doing, once more enabled a virtually united Scottish Presbyterian front to be presented to the world.

Had there been no reconciliation, the Cameronians would have rejected the freedoms that they had sought, and eventually gained. It is hard to see how those who refused to reconcile with the Kirk, could reconcile their consciences with such a course of action. From 1690 onwards, the Hamiltonians and several other splinter groups survived for a season, but henceforth they made no significant impact upon the political or religious state of the nation.

This action of the Cameronian clergy, in reconciling with the Kirk, set an example of moderation, emerging from the sector that, heretofore, had been

²² 'He is referring here to the "Hebronites," the party led by John Hepburn, whose *Humble Pleadings for the Good old Way* was published in 1713. The Hebronites occupied a position somewhat between the Revolution Church and the Hamiltonians, accepting the Revolution Settlement but not the authority of the civil government' (M Grant, email 6 July 2007).

the most radical in the national church. As already remarked (8.7.5): ‘Despite this, feelings in ecclesiastical circles continued to run high for some years. It may be overstating the case to say that the behaviour of the Cameronian clergy cleared the way for the King to pursue his ideal of religious toleration for (nearly) all in Scotland, but it would certainly have proved more difficult if the established Church in the land had to deal with a vociferous protesting minority still claiming to be the *True Presbyterians of the Church of Scotland*, particularly as they now possessed a notably successful fighting regiment.’

One should also remember that it was only as a result of the reconciliation of the clergy that the main body of Cameronians ceased (grudgingly) to insist on repentance before forgiveness. Therefore, the reconciliation of Shields, Lining and Boyd, in a true spirit of Christian humility and reconciliation, was a factor in the healing of the Church of Scotland from 1690 onwards, and should thus be seen as a significant contribution to freedom of religion.

9.5.4 The Fourth Significant Cameronian contribution to Freedom of Religion: The behaviour of Rev Alexander Shields

During 1689/90, Rev Alexander Shields was a necessary catalyst in the enabling of the Cameronian actions, which led to an improvement in the state of freedom of religion in Scotland.

Firstly, had it not been for his personal influence (and that of William Cleland), it seems quite clear that the Cameronian Regiment would never have come into being. The majority of the General Meeting in Douglas were opposed to its raising, and one might almost say that Shields and Cleland raised the Regiment by sleight of hand. Shields formulated the *Declaration* and *Petition* prior to the raising (neither of which were implemented), but it was Shields’s words of encouragement, after the reading of Polwarth’s very short *Declaration* at the head of each company on 14 May 1689, that swung the feelings of the recruits into an acceptance mode, thus enabling the Captains to march their companies off afterwards. As its chaplain, Shields was to continue a close association with the Regiment until 1697, and was a strong Christian influence upon it. He was one of those rare individuals who were able to

understand both the military and ecclesiastical situations, without devaluing either.²³ He might justifiably be called the ‘father’ of the Regiment.

By now, the reader will surely realise that, had the Cameronian Regiment not stood in the path of the Jacobite army at Dunkeld, a distinct probability exists that both political and ecclesiastical histories of Scotland would have been significantly different. Therefore, Shields’s action in helping the Regiment into existence, so that they might ‘stand in the breach’ to prevent the possibility of a[nother] Stewart restoration was significant.

Secondly, at the General Assembly of 1690, Alexander Shields again demonstrated his leadership, as well as a reconciliatory attitude. ‘The Church’s freedom and power [was] restored, the doctrine, worship, discipline and government ... re-established’ (Shields M 1780:461). Shields was the initiator of the clergy’s reconciliation with the Kirk. Not only that, but he stood firm in the General Meeting of the United Societies, until he had opened the door for all who wished to re-enter the Kirk. That about two-thirds decided to do so, was a most significant event, glossed over by some historians.²⁴ It was principally due to Shields that the Cameronians, who had struggled for their religious freedom, were now able to enjoy these freedoms, either within the fold of the Kirk, or outside, whichever the individual chose.²⁵ Fortunately, ‘Shields showed a sure instinct for peace and reconciliation; and he emphasised the principle of mutual love’ (Macpherson 1932:226) and his attitude carried the day.

As well as displaying a consistency of behaviour in reconciling with the Kirk once the freedoms sought had been assured, Shields stood foursquare in the steps of the earlier Cameronian clergy. As we have seen, Thomas Lining (1706:ii-iii) was of the opinion that not only would Renwick have been reconciled, but that Cargill and Cameron would have been as well. Therefore,

²³ Others that come to mind are: Ignatius of Loyola (c1495-1556); John Bunyan (1628–1688); and Charles de Foucauld (1858–1916). This ability was notable in several Cameronian chaplains, from Alexander Shields in 1689, to Rev Dr Donald MacDonald in 1968.

²⁴ See fn 9, p 12.

²⁵ The irony was that those who stayed out also enjoyed these same freedoms, though ‘enjoyed’ possibly is the wrong word!

the argument is advanced that Alexander Shields played two significant roles during 1689 and 1690: in the formation of the Cameronian Regiment (thereby bearing some credit for its subsequent actions), and in opening the way for the majority of United Societies members to re-enter the Kirk. In fact, his input was more than significant - it was vital.

9.6 THE CAMERONIAN CONTRIBUTION TO THE MODERN CONCEPT OF FREEDOM OF RELIGION

It has been argued that the Cameronians sought four specific religious freedoms for themselves: Freedom of doctrine, worship, discipline, and church government. John Witte (2000:37ff) identifies six 'Essential Rights and Liberties' of Religion (pp21-23): (i) Liberty [freedom] of conscience, (ii) free exercise of religion, (iii) religious pluralism, (iv) religious equality, (v) separation of church and state; and (vi) disestablishment of religion' by the state (Witte 2000:37). 'Most influential writers embraced this role of "essential rights and liberties" of religion' (*ibid*:55). In order to assess the Cameronian contribution to each, they are examined individually below.

9.6.1 Freedom of Conscience

We have seen how Alexander Shields demonstrated this principle at his trial when he 'endeavoured to plead before the Council ... that Priviledge common to Mankind, *the freedom of the thoughts*' (Shields A 1715:32). Nevertheless, in order to save himself from the gallows, he was persuaded to take the Abjuration Oath, but sought to salve his conscience by inserting the phrase '*in so far as*' (*ibid*:46), thereby seeking to limit its scope. He could have accepted death, as Renwick did later. This is not intended to judge Shields, for he regretted that oath till the end of his life, (as did Cameron his promise to desist speaking against the Indulgences for a period), but the point is that the choice was his to make. Robert M'Ward made this abundantly clear at his own trial, as did some Cameronian martyrs on the scaffold. One might say that this was their principal motivation for enduring such suffering. They believed Christ to be Lord of all, and no one and nothing could take that conviction away from

them.²⁶ 'God alone is Lord of the conscience' (*Westminster Confession: Chapter XX*).

But Rutherford's *Free Disputation Against Pretended Liberty of Conscience* 1649 also has relevance for the present day. In his understanding of true freedom of conscience, Rutherford points out the danger of 'put[ting] conscience in the place of God and the Bible' (Cross & Livingstone 1978:213). 'Conscience is hereby made every man's Rule, Umpire, Judge, Bible and *his* God, which if he follow, he is but at the worst, a godly, pious, holy Hereticke, who feareth his conscience more than his *Creator*' (Rutherford 1649:ii, quoted previously:41). Thus, in Cameronian theology, freedom of conscience is acceptable only if God governs that conscience, and His Word directs it. Otherwise, there is no infallible plumb-line against which to test one's conscience.²⁷ This danger is self-evident, particularly in today's secular society.

Whilst the Cameronian contribution to freedom of conscience is difficult to establish quantitatively, qualitatively there is little doubt that the Cameronian courageous insistence upon it contributed to the degree of liberty of conscience ushered in at the Church Settlement of 1690. Although Cameronians were really only concerned with their own freedom of conscience, this concern impacted upon the whole nation. Henceforth, most Scots were free to follow their consciences in the four freedoms that the Cameronians sought, as well as some others discussed below. 'The gulf which separated die-hard Covenanters and the most moderate of presbyterians was never so great as may have been imagined. In the last resort the Cameronian was ... prepared to die

²⁶ Viktor Frankl makes the same point. 'In a position of utter desolation ... [a man's] only achievement may consist in enduring his suffering in the right way – an honourable way' (www.rjgeib.com 3 May 2007). 'Even in the degradation and abject misery of a concentration camp, Frankl was able to exercise the most important freedom of all – the freedom to determine one's own attitude and spiritual well-being. No sadistic Nazi SS guard was able to take that away from him, or control the inner life of Frankl's soul.'

²⁷ In this, Alexander Shields was at variance with Rutherford. 'Shields contended [it is] quite unnecessary to have Scriptural precedents for every line of action.... He gets behind Scriptural tradition to the moral order itself' (Macpherson 1932:185).²⁷ In Shields's own words: '*Many things may be done, though not against the law of God, yet without a precedent of the practice of the people of God.... Every age in some things must be a precedent to the following, and I think never did any age produce a more honourable precedent, than this beginning to decline a yoke under which all ages have groaned*' (Shields A 1797:321). There seems a possibility that Shields used some Scriptures expediently in *Hind*. (See Chapter 6.)

for his beliefs, whereas the more moderate presbyterian ... was prepared to suffer deprivation of liberty and other ... penalties' (Cowan 1976:147). Since 1688, no one in Scotland has been executed for their religious convictions.²⁸ In this achievement, the Cameronians played their part.

9.6.2 The free exercise of religion

It is clear that the Cameronians practised the free exercise of religion as far as they possibly could in the circumstances. Whilst freedom of worship, religious speech and education were denied them, a steadfast refusal to sit under the authority and teaching of those ministers who had accepted any Indulgence went a long way to maintain these freedoms in the face of persecution. All Cameronian preachers insisted on their freedom under God to preach and teach without let or hindrance. Their freedom of religious assembly was maintained through Conventicles, which continued to be proscribed right up to 1688. The Cameronians also formed their own internal order in the United Societies, imposing discipline on their own members and defending their right to create their own internal order and rules of discipline. Therefore, even at the height of the persecution, the Cameronians were able to achieve a more genuine freedom in the exercise of their religion than those who sat under Prelatic or Indulged clergy, despite all efforts to deny it to them. The persecuted were actually *more free* in Christ than the persecutors!

The Church Settlement of 1690 attempted to ensure free exercise of religion for virtually all in Scotland, for William 'was resolute in extending religious toleration to all' (Cunningham 1859 ii:266) - the notable exception being the Roman Catholics. William's 'Remarks upon the *Act for settling Church-government* [include] ... it is his Majesty's pleasure too, that those who do not own and yield submission to the present church-government in Scotland shall have the like indulgences²⁹ that the presbyterians have in England'

²⁸ There is one exception, though, in the strictest sense, 'religious conviction' does not quite apply to the case. In 1696, Thomas Aikenhead was sentenced to hang for blasphemy. Despite his recanting, the sentence was carried out. 'It is a painful incident in the history of intolerance, but it is the last of the kind which happened in our country' (Cunningham 1858 ii:313/4).

²⁹ The irony was that Hamilton and his followers were now protected by this 'indulgence.'

(McCormick 1774:49). It took some time for this freedom to become effective for all, but the course was set in 1690.

9.6.3 Religious pluralism

The very existence of the Cameronians was a demonstration of the existence of religious pluralism in Scotland. On joining the movement, virtually every Cameronian had perforce left some other branch of the church. They were also successful in winning converts. 'As the conventicles multiplied, so did the number that forsook the Episcopal church increast like wayes [*sic*]; and whenever a minister came, multitudes at lest [*sic*] left the curat, and in many places people really changed their conversation, and became real converts' (Kirkton 1817:364). At the Revolution, the regrettable 'Rabbling of the Curates' and the Regiment's burning of a 'popish altar in Aberdeen' (Johnston 1957:40) could not have happened if pluralism had not existed. The problem was that it was not a free pluralism.

It is tempting to say that the Cameronian contribution to religious pluralism was nil! Samuel Rutherford set the tone in his *Free Disputation against Pretended Liberty of Conscience* 1649. 'Many religions suffered, must be contrary to the true religious liberty of Christian States and Churches' (Rutherford 1649:268). The Cameronians insisted on religious freedom for themselves, but they were quite prepared to enforce Presbyterianism upon others. That they did not do so to any effective degree was mainly due to the fact that they were too busy just surviving, to pressure other denominations. Yet their very existence did bring considerable pressure to bear on many areas.

The salient point is that, whereas Cameronian theology was opposed to the concept of religious pluralism, they did in fact contribute to it vicariously, through the pressures they brought to bear on the King, not only at the time of the Revolutionary Settlement of 1689/90, but also through the numerous small churches which splintered from the Hamiltonian faction after the schism. So, whilst religious pluralism might be theologically considered a *non sequitur* for Cameronianism, Scotland today, as well as many parts of the world, which the

descendants of the 17th-century churches in Scotland influenced,³⁰ enjoy a considerable degree of both confessional and social pluralism. The watershed year was 1690.

9.6.4 Religious equality

‘The efficacy of liberty of conscience, free exercise of religion, and religious pluralism depended on a guarantee of equality of all peaceable religions before the law’ (Witte 2000:45).

The Cameronians might have had some difficulty accepting this comment *in toto*. The Cameronians *possessed* freedom of conscience as discussed above. No one could take this away from them, even though the Stewarts tried very hard to do so, for to decide whether to exercise or to yield up for him/herself was an individual and God-given right that each person had. The other religious freedoms, including exercise of religion and religious pluralism, are corporate freedoms dependent, to some degree, upon their being granted or protected by whatever authority exists in a society. Individuals may try to insist upon them - the Cameronians certainly did - but if the governing authority does not grant or protect them, they are not empirical, but subjective freedoms.

For example, if the service of worship that one would choose to attend has been proscribed as a result of Erastian persecution, and if the leaders of that church have submitted to that proscription, one cannot choose to attend a service which will not happen! This is not equality of religion. One still has the freedom to decide whether to attend another service or not, for one’s freedom of conscience is still intact. The Stewarts endeavoured to deny even that freedom to Covenanters by making it obligatory, under penalty of law, to

³⁰ There was a South African postscript 150 years later. ‘The ecclesiastical dispute that raged in Scotland between those who favoured and those who abhorred the state establishment of the Presbyterian Church had an immediate effect upon the Scottish ministers at the Cape and, through them, on the Dutch Reformed Church (DRC). Robert Shand was the very first person to protest to the Governor against the interference of the State in matters purely spiritual. His courageous stance ... gave new courage to the whole DRC in her fight for freedom from State interference’ (Sass 1956:253/4), ‘although the so-called freedom granted in 1843 by *Ordinance 7* was very limited’ (Coertzen P, email 31 May 2007).

attend Indulged or Episcopal services. Despite there being no freedom of equality of religion, one's liberty of conscience remains. Admittedly, Witte does refer to the 'efficacy of freedom of conscience, exercise of religion, and religious equality' being interdependent, but it is questionable whether 17th-century Cameronians, or modern-day persecuted Christians, say in China, would subscribe to this opinion.

Having made that point, the Cameronians did not consider all denominations, let alone all religions, as equal. Of course, in 17th-century Scotland, there were no obvious religions other than Christian.³¹ So, despite themselves being severely discriminated against, the Cameronians made no effort to contribute to religious equality in the modern understanding of the expression. However, once again, we must realise that the climate that enabled religious equality to develop in Scotland commenced in 1690, so the Cameronians may claim a vicarious, if small, contribution.

9.6.5 The separation of Church and State

Andrew Melville's comment (quoted at the head of Chapter 1) sets out the Scottish Reformers' understanding of Luther's 'two kingdoms.' Certainly, the Headship of Christ was a Covenanting *sine qua non*. Since the Head of the State, the King, was subject to God, the State was also under God. In pre-1690 Scotland, the State was not subservient to the Church, but after the Revolution, neither was the Church subservient to the State, since it was now free in the areas that Coertzen (2007:4) identified as a 'community of people who are ... organised in respect of their confession, their worship, their teaching, discipline, pastorate, diaconate, mission ... etc.'

On this theme, there is some ambivalence in Cameronianism. Whilst Cameronians rejected Erastian interference in their religious freedoms, they never rejected (despite accusations to the contrary) the *principle* of the State as having responsibilities to the Church as laid down in Chapter XXIII of the

³¹ Until quite recently, certain British government forms asked people to state their 'Religion,' when they really meant 'Denomination.' This situation has now changed with the influx of immigrants of various faiths.

Westminster Confession. However, in the *Sanquhar Declaration* 1680, Cameron repudiated the authority of the House of Stewart over the State, for having itself abrogated its right to rule, due to its tyrannous behaviour, thereby tacitly repudiating the authority of the existing State, but without denying the possibility of accepting a State with a different agenda at some future point.

'It is suggested that in their relation to the state, Reformed churches move away from both the Constantinian and theocratic models for the formulation of the relationships between Church and society as well as the relationship between Church and State ... by way of [a] ... principled recognition of institutional plurality in society, including the institution of the state.... The state is ... not allowed to coerce especially its religious convictions onto an associational and directional plural society with guaranteed freedom of religion' (Coertzen 2007:13). In the light of this comment, it seems that the Revolution Settlement, in respect of relationship of Church and State, was surprisingly modern in concept; neither Constantinian nor theocratic, but a balanced relationship of mutual support to each other. 'It can be argued that the Revolution Settlement was not novel in this respect, but merely re-asserted in a more formalised way the principles of church/state relationships established at the Scottish Reformation' (M Grant, email 6 July 2007).

However, one Cameronian faction, the Hamiltonians, insisted on total separation of their Church from the State from 1690 onwards, what Hiemstra (quoted by Coertzen 2007:9) calls '*the Christian separationist model*,' thus carrying the principle to an extreme. The critical point is that they were permitted to do so. After Hamilton's publication of a *Declaration* in 1692, 'in which the king and his government were disowned ... Hamilton [was] arrested and imprisoned.... He refused to own the jurisdiction of the court.... After some time the authorities, persuaded that they had nothing to fear from such men, ordered his release' (Hutchinson 1893:137/8). The difference from the Stewart reaction to earlier Cameronian *Declarations* is manifest. The State did not trouble Hamilton again.

Whilst Cameron's interpretation of the *Westminster Confession's* intent may be open to question, at the Revolution of 1688/9 the Cameronians (excluding the Hamiltonians) found themselves, *ipso facto*, once more correctly aligned with the *Confession*. So much so, that a number of them became servants of the State and freely served in a regiment under royal command. By the Church Settlement, for which the Cameronian Regiment had obtained a secure climate, Church and State in Scotland assumed a more balanced relationship with one other. The outcome was a Church more free from State interference than ever before. 'An incalculable debt was ... owed to the more extreme groups who ensured by their sheer determination that state interference in the affairs of the church would be minimal' (Cowan 1976:147).

After the Revolution, Alexander Shields (Laing MSS, Div 1, 344:292 quoted by Macpherson 1932:119) expressed this same concern. 'I had great fear that the work of God in the land should be marred, stopped and hindered ... by the machinations of enemies and the mismanagement of friends.... I had a great fear ... that Erastianism should encroach more and more on the Church's liberties, that the generality of ministers should not have counsel or zeal to contend against that course of tentation, but should be either hectored or flattered out of their duty.' 'The maintenance of this principle, and not the extension of presbyterianism furth of Scotland was the real issue behind the later covenanting struggle.... If this principle was only partially attained in the presbyterian settlement of 1690, the ideal was never to entirely vanish' (Cowan 1976:147). This can, in part at least, be attributed to the concern of men like Shields. Therefore, to the Cameronians, especially the clergy, the 'Guard' and the Regiment, must go considerable credit for facilitating such an outcome.

9.6.6 The Disestablishment of Religion by the State

After the Revolution, the Presbyterian form of church government was declared to be 'the government of the church in this kingdom established by law.' It should be noted that 'established' has a small 'e'.³² 'The expression

³² It is important to understand that the Church of Scotland was not Established in the same way as the Church of England. 'Under Henry VIII [of England] the Convocations acknowledged the King to be the Supreme Head on earth of the Church of England' (Cross &

“the Church as by law established” is not of ecclesiastical provenance. It was a novelty in 1690, and the Church was not happy about it as it seemed to deny its true nature’ (Burleigh 1960:404). John Witte Jr (2000:51) makes the point that ‘the term “establishment of religion” was an ambiguous phrase – in the 18th century, as much as today ... to “establish” meant “to settle firmly” ...”to enact,” to “set up.”’ Presumably, this was the understanding in 17th-century Scotland and was King William’s intent when he coined the phrase?

‘The Cameronians [meaning the Hamiltonians] made use of it as a reproach against those who accepted the Revolution Settlement ... Samuel Rutherford’s *Lex Rex* asserted the supremacy of the law over the king, but said nothing of its supremacy over the Church’ (Burleigh 1960:404). Clearly, such a situation would have been repugnant to all Scots Presbyterians, and most especially the Cameronians, who had resisted the claims of ecclesiastical supremacy by the monarch *via* the *Act of Supremacy* of 1669 with all their strength and, at times, their blood. When William of Orange arrived to become King William II of Scotland, he hoped to establish Episcopacy as the national church, thereby himself becoming the Head of the Church of Scotland. As we have seen, that did not happen, and the fact that the Church of Scotland is ‘Presbyterian, national, endowed and free’ (Cross & Livingstone 1974:1251), and not ‘Established’ in the Church of England’s sense, is certainly due in some measure to the pressure that the Cameronians brought to bear on the new King.³³

9.6.8 General Comment

Livingstone 1974:291). Queen Elizabeth II is still the Head of the Church of England and described as *Fidei Defensor*, but only in her capacity as Queen of England, not as Queen of Scotland. In 1689, William of Orange, as King William III of England, assumed that role and title. ‘The C[hurch] of E[ngland] settled down from 1689 ... and the alliance of Church and State became a mutually defensive pact against all subversive forces’ (*ibid*:292).

³³ One point of note is that the Episcopal Church in Scotland that developed ‘from those who adhered to Episcopacy at the Revolution settlement (1690) ... after years of repression and suspicion, largely owing to its Jacobite predilections ... is in full communion with the C of E, [but] is autonomous’ (Cross & Livingstone 1974:1251). The Toleration Act of 1712 gave protection to Episcopalians who were prepared to forsake the Jacobite cause, but many supported the rebellions of 1715 and 1745. Not until 1792, was a Bill passed that ended oppression of the Scottish Episcopal Church (after www.scotland.anglican.org 29 April 2007).

The Revolution Settlement of 1690 affected religious freedom in Scotland to the extent that, whereas Presbyterianism was declared to be the Church government that the State established (small 'e'), Episcopalianism found itself still under attack, and Roman Catholicism was outlawed. Faiths other than Christian were not considered, as they were of no account in 17th-century Scotland. Therefore, despite the *Claim of Right*, religious freedom, in the modern understanding of the word, still did not fully exist. However, a climate in which religious toleration was able to grow and ultimately flourish was established. 'The Revolution settlement brought problems which were not fully resolved until the abolition of patronage in 1874 and the final concession of spiritual independence by the state in acts of 1921 and 1925. Nevertheless, the Revolution settlement pointed firmly in that direction and was in the upshot to have more lasting consequences than the more ephemeral political concessions' (Cowan 1991:183). William did all he could to reconcile Presbyterianism and Episcopalianism and, in Scotland today, one finds not only Roman Catholic chapels, but mosques, Hindu temples, and other evidences of a religious freedom that demonstrate broad acceptance of a plurality of religions.

The Cameronians were facilitators, rather than protagonists, in helping to secure a great advance in religious freedom in Scotland, both for themselves and others. This advance in religious freedom is still with us today. In the achievement of this, they had fought on two fronts, spiritual and temporal, a claim that cannot be made by many.

9.7 ACCEPTANCE OF THE HYPOTHESIS

As a result of the foregoing, it is considered the hypothesis that:

The development and actions of the Cameronian movement made a significant contribution to Freedom of Religion in Scotland

is more than adequately sustainable, and should be accepted as proven.

9.8 FINAL OBSERVATIONS

The Cameronians played out their role on a small parochial stage on the extreme north-west corner of Europe. Even when the Regiment became involved in William's European war, their contribution was minor, military, and non-religious. But the part the Cameronians had played in the outcome for the Church in Scotland in 1690 was to have an influence wherever in the world Presbyterianism has become established. Had the Church of Scotland not become Presbyterian in 1690, almost certainly Presbyterian history world-wide would have been different.

'The Lowland Scots ... have the dour attitude of those who live in a hard land' (Baynes 1967:108). Although some Cameronians undoubtedly were of a saintly disposition, for the most part they were simple people, just 'plain bodies,' doing the best they could in very difficult circumstances. All of them paid in suffering for their part in history, and some paid in blood. If indeed 'the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church,'³⁴ then they will not have suffered in vain.

The Church in Scotland has had a long and turbulent history.... Through the many changes that have taken place it seems impossible to trace institutional continuity ... only since the Revolution Settlement of 1690 has the course been a straightforward one. From that time the distinctive features of the Church of Scotland as it is known today are discernible, though only after much contention and schism have its principles at last been vindicated, in a Church at once national and free, a Church and not a sect, acknowledging Christ as its only King and Head, and seeking to advance his Kingdom (Burleigh 1960:420/1).

In the achievement of this, the Cameronians played their part.

³⁴ Common rendering of '*semen est sanguis Christianorum*' (Tertullian *Apologeticus* ch 50 sect 13).

L' ENVOI

LAST POST: The Cameronians' Last Conventicle

14 May 1968

'Be strong and of a good courage'

(Joshua 1:9)

(At this point please watch the DVD inside the back cover. 21 minutes.)

The Situation

On 14 May 1968, at Castle Dangerous, Douglas, the last regular battalion of Cameronians (Scottish Rifles) was disbanded at a Conventicle beside the Douglas Water. The Conventicle service was held on the same spot and on the same day as the Regiment had been raised in 1689. Two thousand people were expected, eight thousand came!

Much was the same as in 1689: the Chaplain, the Colonel and the Lieutenant-Colonel. Yet, one thing was quite different: The Roman Catholic officers and soldiers (about 40% of the battalion) had asked to worship together with their Presbyterian brothers-in-arms on this, the last day of their Regiment. This evidence of the oneness of the Visible Church would surely have rejoiced the heart of Alexander Shields, the first chaplain.¹

The Chaplain (Rev Dr Donald MacDonald)

'Cameronians, this is a grievous day for you.... We may well say that it is a grievous day for Scotland, seeing that your roots have been so closely intertwined with the history of church and state in this land.... It has however never been the habit of Cameronians to whimper, and we shall not whimper now....

¹ Lt-Col G.A.Cole, a retired Cameronian makes this comment: 'Their struggle for religious tolerance was what the Cameronians were ready to fight and die for. In making this statement it is apt to observe that I, a Catholic, was nurtured by the Regiment and I look back with pride to the fact that the tolerance they demanded for themselves, they insisted upon for others' (Cameronians 1968 *The Covenanter*, March :16).

Therefore “be strong and of a good courage, be not afraid, neither be thou disheartened, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go!”

The Colonel (Lt-Gen Sir George Collingwood)

‘When the Battalion marches away to lay down its arms, part of all our hearts will go with it.’

The Lieutenant-Colonel (Lt-Col Leslie Dow)

The last word goes to Leslie Dow in this poem, an acrostic on the name of William Cleland, the first Lt-Col, whose sword lay on the Communion Table.

*Would you approve of how the tree has grown?
I like to think so. You bequeathed your own
Love of a harassed land and honest cause,
Love which without advertisement or pause
Inspired a hundred Clelands less renowned
And warms platoons of Thompsons in the ground,
Men who have walked this road and shared this view.*

*Campbell and Lindsay forged the sword with you.
Lit by your pride they handed on the text,
Each generation shaping up the next.
Lindsay and Campbell finish it today.
Axed lies the tree. Now put the sword away.
No old forgetful age will end our story.
Death cuts our days, but could not stain our glory.*

(Written to the first Commanding Officer by the last at Douglas 1968.)

1. Spoken quotations are taken from Cameronians 1968 Video.
2. The Poem *Another Acrostic upon his Name* is taken from Cameronians 1968 *Disbandment Programme*.
3. Excerpts are taken from The Disbandment Video/DVD ‘The Cameronians (Scottish Rifles)’ available from The Museum, Muir Street, Hamilton, ML3 6BJ, Scotland.

ANNEXURE 'A'

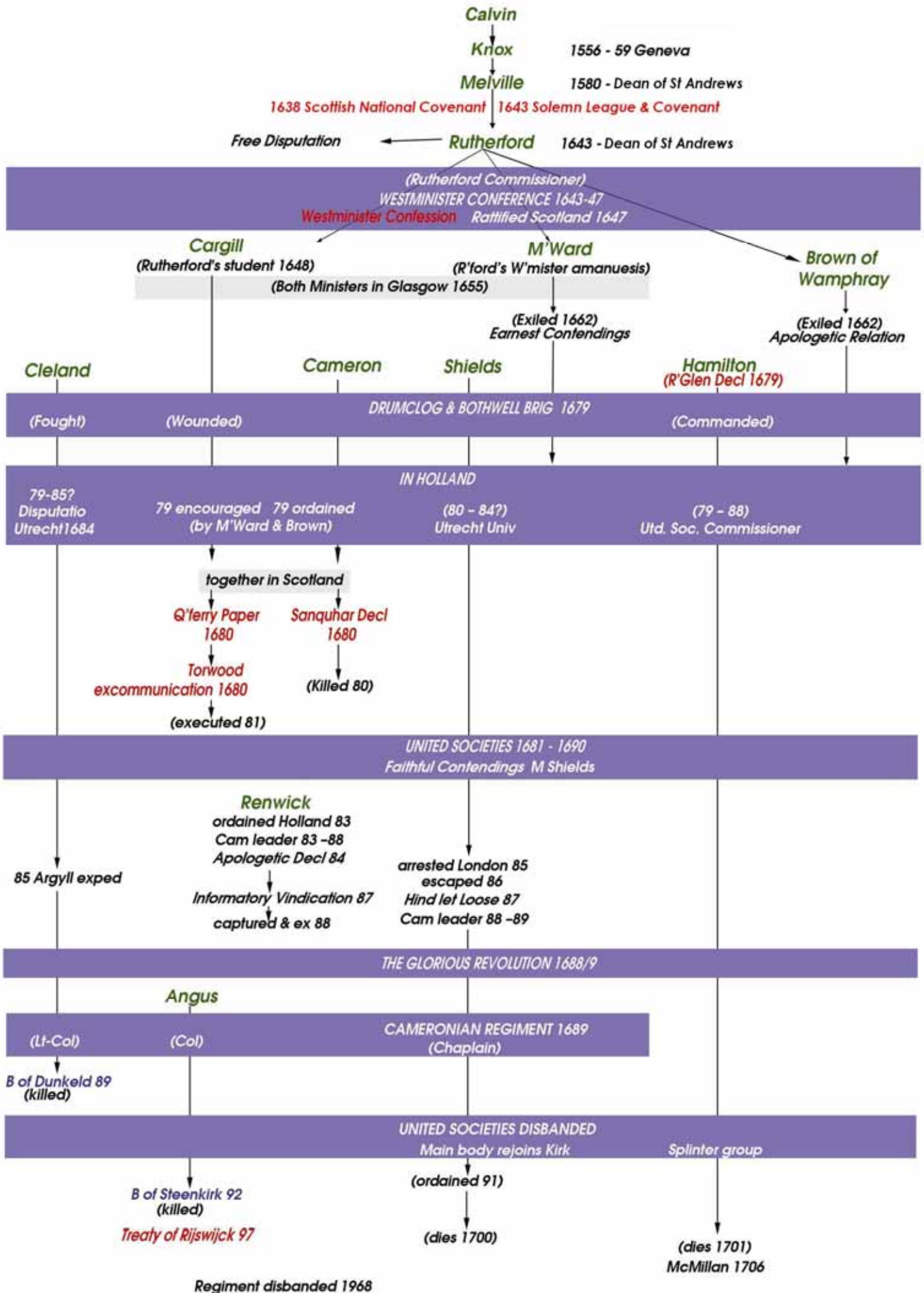
CHRONOLOGY

1556-59	Knox with Calvin in Geneva
1560 Aug 17	<i>Scot's Confession</i> approved by Scottish Parliament
1598 Apr 30	<i>Edict of Nantes</i>
1603 Mar 24	James VI of Scotland becomes James I of England
1625 Mar 27	Charles I succeeds
1637 Jul 23	<i>Laud's Liturgy</i> read in St Giles
1638 Feb 28	<i>Scottish National Covenant</i> signed
1638/39	1 st and 2 nd Bishops' Wars (English Puritans v Scots Presbyterians)
1640 Jun 6	General Assembly ratifies <i>National Covenant</i>
1642 Aug 22	English Civil War commences
1643 Jul 1	Westminster Assembly meets
Aug 17	General Assembly approves <i>Solemn League and Covenant</i>
1647 Aug 27	General Assembly approves <i>Westminster Confession</i>
1649 Jan 30	Charles I executed
1658 Sep 3	Cromwell dies
1660 May 29	Charles II restored
1661 Jan 1	Parliament adopts <i>Oath of Allegiance</i>
Mar 28	<i>Act Rescissory</i> annulling legislation since 1633
Mar 29	Rutherford dies
Jul 12	M'Ward banished
1662 Oct 1	Act of Glasgow; 274 ministers 'outed'
Dec 11	Brown of Wamphray exiled
1663 Jul 10	Field Conventicles started
1665 Dec 7	Conventicles forbidden
1666 Nov 28	Pentland Rising. Defeat of Covenanters at Rullion Green
1667 Oct	Amnesty for those involved in Pentland Rising
1669 Nov 16	<i>Act of Supremacy</i>
Jun 7	<i>First Indulgence</i> . 43 ministers accept
	Wave of spiritual fervour in Scotland

- 1670** Aug 13 'Clanking' Act. Death for field preachers
Armed Conventicles on wider basis
- 1672** Sep 3 *Second Indulgence*, 91 ministers accept
Sep 4 *Act of 1670* re punishment of Conventicles confirmed
- 1674** Mar 24 General Indemnity
Jun 18 *Proclamation 'Heritors and Masters'* to keep their people from
Conventicles
- 1675** New repression phase
Aug 6 *Letters of Intercommuning* issued
- 1677** Feb 6 Brown, M' Ward and Wallace expelled from Holland for a year
Communions at Conventicles commence
- 1678** Spring Highland Host ravages the South West
- 1679** May 3 Archbishop Sharp murdered
May 29 *Declaration of Rutherglen*
Jun 1 Battle of Drumclog
Jun 22 Battle of Bothwell Brig
Jun 29 *Third Indulgence*. 15 ministers accept (total Indulged now 149)
Jul/Aug Cameron ordained Rotterdam
- 1680** Jun 3 *Queensferry Paper* seized
Jun 22 *Declaration of Sanquhar*
Jun 22 Cameron killed at Aird's Moss
Sep 12 *Torwood Excommunication*
- 1681** Jul 27 Cargill executed
Aug 31 *Test Act*
Dec 15 First United Societies General Meeting
- 1682** Jan 12 Lanark Declaration
- 1683** May 10 Renwick ordained in Groningen, Holland
- 1684** Nov 8 *Apologetical Declaration* published
Nov 25 *Abjuration Oath* framed
- 1685** Jan 11 A Shields arrested
Feb 6 James VII and II succeeds
May/Jun Argyle Rebellion
May 28 *Sanquhar Protestation*
Oct 22 *Revocation of Edict of Nantes*

- 1686** Oct 22 A Shields escapes and joins Hillmen in Galloway
- 1687** Feb 12 *Toleration Act*
 Mar 31 *Toleration Act Part II*
 Jul *Informatory Vindication* published
 Jun 28–Jul 5 *Toleration Act, Part III*
 Dec *Hind let Loose* published
- 1688** Feb 17 Renwick executed
 Aug 5 Lining ordained by Embden Classis, Holland
 Nov 5 William of Orange lands in Torbay, England
 Nov 23 James II and VII flees
 Dec/Jan Rabbling of the Curates
- 1689** Mar 3 Covenants renewed at Borland Hill
 Mar 14 Cameronian Guard in Edinburgh
 Mar 25 Scots Regiments from Holland arrive in Edinburgh
 Apr 4 Convention of Estates declare James VII forfeits throne
 May 11 William and Mary take Coronation Oath
 May 14 Cameronian Regiment raised at Douglas
 Jul 22 Parliament declare Episcopacy annulled
 Jul 27 Battle of Killiecrankie; Claverhouse killed
 Aug 21 Battle of Dunkeld; Cleland killed
- 1690** Jun 7 Parliament settles Presbyterian form of Church Government
 Oct 16 First General Assembly since 1653
 Oct 25 A Shields, Lining and Boyd received into Kirk
 Dec 3 Final meeting of United Societies
- 1691** Feb 4 A Shields ordained
- 1692** Aug 3 Battle of Steenkirk
- 1697** Sep 11 *Treaty of Rijswijck*
- 1706** Rev John McMillan joins Hamiltonians
- 1707** Union of the Parliaments of Scotland and England
- 1715** Jacobite Rebellion. The Old Pretender, James Stewart
- 1745** Jacobite Rebellion. The Young Pretender
 Charles Stewart (Bonnie Prince Charlie)
- 1746** Apr 16 Battle of Culloden, last battle on British soil. Final defeat of Jacobites

THE DEVELOPMENT OF CAMERONIANISM



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Abbreviations:

<i>DSCHT</i>	Dictionary of Scottish Church History and Theology
<i>ECCO</i>	Eighteenth Century Collections Online
<i>EEBO</i>	Early English Books Online
<i>JAHR</i>	Journal of Army Historical Research
<i>JSAHR</i>	Journal of the Society for Army Historical Research
NAS	National Archives of Scotland
NLS	National Library of Scotland
<i>ODNB</i>	Oxford Dictionary of National Biography
PCSA.	Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa
RPC	Reformed Presbyterian Church
<i>RSCHS</i>	Records of the Scottish Church History Society
<i>SHR</i>	Scottish Historical Review
SWRB #	Still Water Revival Books: Reformation Bookshelf Vol (CD) No. (Photographic image of the original document on CD)
UPCSA:	Uniting Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa

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