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THE ENGLISH POLICY OF JAMES IV OF SCOTLAND, 1488-1513:  
A STUDY IN RENAISSANCE DIPLOMACY

by

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## PREFACE

It has been generally recognized that James IV of Scotland was one of the most politically gifted Stuarts who ever ruled. His efforts to extend royal authority throughout Scotland, to improve his country's economy, and to exert a civilizing influence there were unprecedented in Scottish history. In the area of foreign policy, however, he has been judged a failure. His reign was ended by the battle of Flodden Field, one of the most humiliating defeats ever inflicted upon Scotland. The purpose of this dissertation is to examine James' relations with England and to ascertain why he risked Scotland's military resources in what proved to be a foolhardy venture.

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JAMES IV



MARGARET TUDOR

## CHAPTER I

### THE RÔLE OF JAMES IV IN SCOTTISH HISTORY

There is probably no community of peoples which possesses more national pride than the Scots. Although resigned to a subordinate rôle within a larger, more encompassing political unit since 1707, the inhabitants of Scotland have never lost those native characteristics that are best described by the somewhat ambiguous word Scottishness. Perhaps it is precisely because of these centuries of political domination that the Scots look to the past for national symbols that are no longer north of the Cheviots and the Tweed. Their queen, embodying both the political and religious leadership of Scotland and the remains of what was once an independent Parliament are in London, not Edinburgh. Virtually the only remnants of the Scots' ancient political institutions are the law and the Kirk.<sup>1</sup>

The tool that the Scots use, perhaps subconsciously, to maintain their awareness of their Scottishness is

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<sup>1</sup>Wallace Notestein, The Scot in History: A Study of the Interplay of Character and History (New Haven, Conn., 1947), ix-xiv.

history.<sup>2</sup> But what in Scotland's past is really notable? To the non-Scot this extraordinary affinity for the past might appear to be an extreme example of self-deception simply because there seems to be very little in Scottish history worthy of veneration. It is a history liberally sprinkled with wars and domestic difficulties, with defeat and lost causes.

This paucity of political and diplomatic successes was compounded by a state of mind that can only be described as barbarism. This barbarism was, in reality, partly factual and partly fictional. There is ample reason to consider the Scots a barbaric people in the Middle Ages. Their country had been subjected to numerous attempts at domination by England which made it necessary for them literally to live by the sword. When personal differences with their own neighbors necessitated the use of violence, it was used generously.

The English, through their numerous bellicose encounters with the Scots, were painfully aware of this savage aspect of their northern neighbors' character. One has only to read the lines of Henry VIII's (1509-1547) poet laureate, John Skelton, concerning the Scottish statesman John, duke of Albany, to get a good idea how the English viewed the Scottish people. Skelton wrote:

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<sup>2</sup>Ibid., xv.

For ye be false each one  
 False and false again,  
 Never true nor plain,  
 But fleer, flatter and feign  
 And ever to remain  
 In wretched beggary  
 And mangy misery  
 In lousy loathsomeness  
 And scabbed scurfiness  
 And in abomination  
 Of all manner of nation,  
 Nation most in hate,  
 Proud, and poor of state.<sup>3</sup>

Although virtually every English writer of the sixteenth century who wrote about the Scots must share in the responsibility for this slander, William Shakespeare may have been the most culpable individual involved. Macbeth, for example, is permeated by violence and cruelty virtually from beginning to end.<sup>4</sup> The absence of morality was, of course, not a monopoly of the Scottish monarchy. Shakespeare vividly illustrates King Richard III's (1483-1485) bout with his tortured conscience prior to the battle of Bosworth Field for his usurpation of the English crown.<sup>5</sup> But to the Englishmen of Shakespeare's age Richard III was an exceptional example of an ambitious, grasping and evil king while Macbeth more or less typified the character and morality of his nation from his own time up to the sixteenth century.

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<sup>3</sup>Thomas I. Rae, Scotland in the Time of Shakespeare, Folger Booklets on Tudor and Stuart Civilization (Ithaca, New York, 1965), 1.

<sup>4</sup>Shakespeare Macbeth passim.

<sup>5</sup>Shakespeare King Richard the Third V. iii. 79-206.

The historian Edward Hall, writing in the sixteenth century, said, "An ape although she be clothed in purple, will be but an ape, and a Scot never so gently entertained of an English prince will be but a dissimulating Scot,"<sup>6</sup> to show his disapproval of a Scottish king who had received a hospitable welcome on a state visit to England but later invaded the northern frontier.

To the skeptic it might appear that these representations of the Scottish character are prejudicial since they come from Scotland's ancient enemy, but native writers were aware of their countrymen's restive nature. One of the most significant collections of early historical writings about Scotland is James Dalrymple's Fragments of Scottish History, and in this work the author offers several explanations for this barbarism. Dalrymple was fully aware of the detrimental effect this had upon his country and strove mightily to rationalize this hostility by blaming it upon primarily external forces. For example, he argued that the explanation may be found in the Scottish climate. The toughness required for survival in the cold, harsh weather conditions of Scotland had the residual effect of turning the Scots into a rude and savage people.

This natural factor was augmented by political ones to increase the Scots' barbarity. The frequency of domestic hostility resulted in the use of arms probably

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<sup>6</sup>Rae, Scotland, 1.

even more than the English menace. Long and recurrent royal minorities meant that an important source of authority was absent for many years. The various noble factions in Scotland always sought to take advantage of this by exerting their influence upon the domestic political situation.

Scotland's geographical isolation was influential as well. With the exception of France and Scandinavia, Scotland had few friendly contacts with other nations and thus remained a rather insular country.<sup>7</sup> Even the influence of these ties with the continent was limited. A long economic and political association with France resulted in very moderate advances in the standard of living in Scotland, but countries like Denmark and Norway were not appreciably better off than Scotland. They did assist Scotland, however, through treaties that gave her such lands as the Orkney and Shetland Islands.

With all these negative factors so profusely spread throughout the history of Scotland in the Middle Ages, it is no wonder that when a king with real ability came along Scottish historians seized the opportunity to write in positive terms with obvious delight. Such a king succeeded to the throne in 1488 in the person of James IV (1488-1513). When one reads accounts of this period, be they old narratives or more modern versions, James IV emerges as someone

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<sup>7</sup>John Graham Dalyell, ed., Fragments of Scottish History (Edinburgh, 1798), 23-25.

who possessed the virtues and charisma of King Arthur. Under the leadership of this extraordinary man, says the chronicler Dalyell, Scotland began to emerge from her deep obscurity and to bear some degree of importance, really for the first time in her history.<sup>8</sup>

Other interpretations of James' impact upon Scotland support Dalyell's contention and with ample justification. Don Pedro de Ayala, the Spanish ambassador to Scotland in the last years of the fifteenth century, provided many invaluable comments concerning the character and abilities of James. While echoing the generally accepted opinion that the Scots were a poor, unindustrious and bellicose people, Ayala praised James for the highly civilizing effect he had upon the nation:

. . . since the present king succeeded to the throne they [the Scots] do not dare to quarrel so much with one another as formerly, especially since he came of age. They have learnt by experience that he executes the law without respect to rich or poor . . . .<sup>9</sup>

Ayala's admiration for him is positively glowing. The king possessed the ability to speak Latin, French, German, Flemish, Italian and Spanish, and he combined his

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 25.

<sup>9</sup>William Croft Dickinson, Gordon Donaldson, and Isabel A. Milne, eds., A Source Book of Scottish History, 1424-1567 (3 vols.; London, 1953), II, 4-5.

vast intellectual capacity with a sense of justice that was tempered by his own personal piety.<sup>10</sup>

It might be argued that his laudatory opinions of James were exaggerated in order to increase de Ayala's influence at court, but evidence generally supports the conclusion that James was, in fact, a very extraordinary king. All of the more significant and reliable early Scottish historians leave little doubt that they concurred with de Ayala's assessment. Robert Lindesay of Pitscottie recounts James' work in establishing royal justice throughout the realm, in subduing the rebellious clans in the Western Isles and in the Highlands, and in spreading the fame and prestige of Scotland throughout Europe as it had never been done before.<sup>11</sup>

The great Scottish Latinist and humanist, George Buchanan, speaking of James' tolerant and generous attitude toward supporters of his dead father, James III, who had been defeated at the battle of Sauchieburn, wrote,

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<sup>10</sup>Albert Frederick Pollard, ed., The Reign of Henry VII from Contemporary Sources, University of London Historical Series, No. 1 (3 vols.; London, 1914), No. 133, 197-99.

<sup>11</sup>Robert Lindesay of Pitscottie, The Historie and Chronicles of Scotland: From the Slauchter of King James the First to the Ane thousande fyve hundreith thrie scoir fyftein zeir Written and Collected by Robert Lindesay of Pitscottie Being a Continuation of the Translation of the Chronicles Written by Hector Boece, and Translated by John Bellenden. Now first published from two of the oldest Manuscripts, one bequeathed by Dr. David Laing to the University of Edinburgh, and the other in the Library of John Scott of Halkshill, C. B., ed. by A. J. G. Mackay, Scottish Text Society, XLII (Edinburgh, 1899), 277.

This moderation, so lovely in a youth  
of fifteen years, and a conqueror,  
invested with supreme power, was greatly  
enhanced by his benignity, and condeseension,  
his fidelity to his word, and what chiefly  
captivates the vulgar, his graceful form  
and sprightly manners.<sup>12</sup>

The Scottish chronicler, Jhone Leslie, eulogized James  
with these words, " . . . [he] led his lyfe in piete and  
godlynes, gouernet his Realme sa weil and wislie, that to  
quhat vertues he was naturalie inclyned, eftir war euident  
to all."<sup>13</sup>

In order to examine how these more or less con-  
temporary opinions of James have been revised by the  
passage of time it might be useful to examine some more  
modern views of his reign. James is assigned a seemingly  
infinite variety of kingly virtues in the general accounts  
of the period--energy, ambition, zeal for learning,<sup>14</sup>

<sup>12</sup>George Buchanan, The History of Scotland, Translated from the Latin of George Buchanan with Notes and a Continuation to the Union in the Reign of Queen Anne, ed. by James Aikman (4 vols.; Glasgow, 1827), II, 228.

<sup>13</sup>Jhone Leslie, The Historie of Scotland; Wrytten First in Latin by the Most Reuerend and Worthy Jhone Leslie, Bishop of Rosse, and Translated in Scottish by Father James Dalrymple, ed. by E. G. Cody and William Murison, Vol. XIX, Scottish Text Society (Edinburgh, 1895), II, 107.

<sup>14</sup>James' desire to advance learning is well documented. He founded King's College at the University of Aberdeen, required the sons of freeholders to attend a university after studying Latin and sent the sons of the Western Islanders to college. Perhaps his most significant contribution in this area, however, was the introduction of the printing press. Great Britain, Public Record Office, Rotuli Scaccarii Regum Scotorum, The Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, Vol. XIII, 1508-1513, ed. by George Burnett and A. J. G. Mackay (Edinburgh, 1891), 1. Hereafter cited as Exchequer Rolls of Scotland.

kindness of heart, love of the lower classes, and humility.<sup>15</sup> This veneration deprived some Scottish historians of their objectivity. Certain acts by James III were roundly condemned by historians while these same deeds, when done by James IV, became much more palatable. For example, the infidelity of the elder James to his wife was dealt with severely in the accounts of his rule, but the mistresses of his son were viewed as participants in a glorious spectacle performed before an admiring people.<sup>16</sup>

Lest we get the impression that these commentators on the reign of James IV were partisan, it should be noted that some of them perceived a fatal flaw in the king's execution of Scotland's foreign policy. This shortcoming was owing to a trait in the character of James that was a

<sup>15</sup>Partick Fraser Tytler, History of Scotland, Vol. IV, MCCCCXCVII-MDXLVI (Edinburgh, 1841), 286-87. V, 69. One of the most popular stories involving James helps to explain why he has had such a good press. After a rebellious group of nobles, whom he supported, had killed his father, James III, at Sauchieburn in 1488, James was overcome by remorse and swore to wear an iron belt for the rest of his life, adding to its weight annually. Although most accounts of the period mention the belt, some modern historians, such as Tytler, were skeptical of its existence. The Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, however, include payment for a piece of worsted padding to prevent the belt from chafing the skin. This leaves little doubt as to the authenticity of the story. Great Britain, Public Record Office, Compta Thesaurariorum Regum Scotorum, Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer of Scotland, Vol. I, 1488-1500, ed. by James Balfour Paul (Edinburgh, 1902), ciii, 250. Hereafter cited as Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer.

<sup>16</sup>John Hill Burton, The History of Scotland; from Agricola's Invasion to the Extinction of the Last Jacobite Insurrection, (Edinburgh, 1898-1901), III, 80-81.

combination of impetuosity and weakness of will.<sup>17</sup> These writers argued that James lacked firm control of his foreign policy and, as a result, Scotland was drawn into a war that was decidedly alien to her interests. We are asked to believe that a king with such obvious political gifts as he displayed in his domestic achievements, was devoid of any concrete foreign policy goals.

Precisely the reverse was true. It cannot be denied that James' foreign policy was a failure. One only has to look at the defeat at Flodden Field on 9 September 1513 at the hands of the English to confirm this. The failure, however, was not the result of the lack of foreign policy objectives or the inability of James to prevent his country from being dragged into war against his will, as the vast majority of Scottish historians contend. It was because James did have definite and very grandiose plans for Scotland in the arena of European diplomacy that Flodden came about, plans that simply were not commensurate with Scotland's ability to execute them effectively.

Some examples of this misinterpretation will indicate the dominion of this theory. An early twentieth century biographer of James IV, I. A. Taylor, wrote of his

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<sup>17</sup>Peter Hume Brown, History of Scotland (3 vols.; Cambridge, 1929), II, 307. I. A. Taylor, The Life of James IV (London, 1913), 138-39, 176. Dickinson, Source Book, II, 3. Robert Laird Mackie, King James IV of Scotland: A Brief Survey of His Life and Times (Edinburgh, 1958), 200-02.

popularity, generosity, and love of science, art and music.<sup>18</sup> It should be readily apparent from the preceding pages that this is hardly a startling description, but Taylor went too far when he characterized the reign as one blessed by the absence of hostilities and in which matters of peace took precedence over those of war.<sup>19</sup> As the following pages will demonstrate, the facts simply will not support this conclusion.

Taylor was not alone in his interpretation. James is rather accurately portrayed by Agnes Mure Mackenzie as the most brilliant of the Stewarts and as a unifying force for Scotland, but Mackenzie badly overstepped the bounds of evidence when she said that Scotland alone stood for peace in an age bent upon war.<sup>20</sup> In order to interpret the reign in this manner, Mackenzie must have based her judgment upon what James said and not upon his actions. Based solely upon the diplomatic dispatches of the age it is difficult to see how war broke out in a continent where every monarch so ardently professed his desire for peace, but thousands of men died while these dispatches of peace circulated from capital to capital. James was no less guilty of this duplicity than were his contemporaries, who are generally blamed for dragging Scotland into war.

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<sup>18</sup>Taylor, James IV, 71-72.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., xiii.

<sup>20</sup>Agnes Mure Mackenzie, The Kingdom of Scotland: A Short History (London, 1940), 132-33.

Virtually every other Scottish historian joined Taylor and Mackenzie in their assessment of James' performance in the area of diplomacy. In an article in the Transactions of the Franco-Scottish Society, John Duncan Mackie correctly asserted that France is generally blamed for persuading James to invade England against Scotland's interests, thus becoming a sacrificial lamb on the altar of that traditional Franco-Scottish political agreement, the Auld Alliance.<sup>21</sup> Mackie challenged this interpretation in one significant respect. He agreed with the popular view that James was in a hopeless situation, allied with both England and France at a time when war between these two states was a virtual certainty. It was England, however, that forced the issue by invading Scotland's ally, France, and, therefore, Henry VIII must be given primary responsibility for bringing Scotland into war.<sup>22</sup>

What emerges from these various accounts of the reign is the conviction that James was a champion of peace who, because of his determination to uphold Scotland's treaty obligations, was forced into a war he wanted to avoid. That there was considerable pressure upon James to invade England cannot be doubted, but the rôle this played in precipitating war is questionable.

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<sup>21</sup>John Duncan Mackie, "The Auld Alliance and the Battle of Flodden," Transactions of the Franco-Scottish Society, VIII (1919-1935), 36.

<sup>22</sup>Mackie, "The Auld Alliance," 56.

## CHAPTER II

### ANGLO-SCOTTISH PROBLEMS IN THE MIDDLE AGES

The war of 1513 was not an isolated case of bellicosity between England and Scotland. A combination of factors, rather than any single issue, had resulted in a long history of hostility between the nations, and James was not ignorant of this legacy. Late in his reign when he had decided that war was the best way to achieve his aims, he found a natural target in Scotland's ancient enemy, England, a target that the vast majority of Scots would gladly attack.

This willingness to strike at England was the result of centuries of fear that reached unnatural proportions. It should be made quite clear from the outset, however, that this fear was not without foundation. But when it reached the level that it did in Scotland, judgment and clear thinking suffered in the process. The Scots, later in the Middle Ages, engaged in activities directed against England that were not commensurate with the real extent of the English menace to their country. As will be shown later, this sort of attitude led to the disaster at

Flodden, and the battle, in turn, helped lead to a basic readjustment of Scotland's attitude toward England.

What English actions, then, in the Middle Ages, were responsible for this harsh, vindictive Scottish posture? The basic English policy toward Scotland from the eleventh to the fourteenth century was intervention. Beginning with the political unification of Scotland under Duncan (1034-1040) the English consistently sought to extend their influence over the domestic political situation in the north. To some degree they were successful from the outset. In 1072 William the Conqueror (1066-1087) crossed the border into Scotland and proceeded to march through Lothian to the Firths of Forth and Tay, always supported by a fleet offshore. Meeting little or no resistance, William withdrew after receiving a formal recognition of his overlordship from Malcolm III (1057-1093).<sup>1</sup>

England, however, was not alone in this aggression. Scotland frequently conducted raids into the northern counties of England,<sup>2</sup> and, on occasion, made more elaborate attempts to influence English politics. In 1138, for example, the king of Scots invaded England on behalf of Matilda's quest of undisputed possession of the English

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<sup>1</sup>Reginald Coupland, Welsh and Scottish Nationalism: A Study (London, 1954), 65-66. David C. Douglas, William the Conqueror: The Norman Impact upon England (Berkeley, Calif., 1964), 225-28.

<sup>2</sup>Coupland, Welsh and Scottish Nationalism, 65-66.

throne in her civil war with King Stephen (1135-1154).<sup>3</sup> Naturally it was to Stephen's advantage to oppose any aid to Matilda be it foreign or domestic, but actually he had little to fear from a Scottish force acting alone. Herein lies the essential difference between Scottish fears of England and vice versa. While medieval Englishmen were fearful of Scottish interference in their foreign and domestic affairs, they were never afraid of actual domination. The Scots, on the other hand, despised England primarily because she had tried to deprive them of their national independence on numerous occasions and might try again at any time.<sup>4</sup>

This fear was particularly strong during the reign of Edward I (1272-1307) of England. Edward was responsible for a revival of the policy begun by William I of securing an oath of fealty from the Scottish kings.<sup>5</sup> In the process he also transformed the intermittent bickerings between the two nations into a hatred that lasted for more than three centuries.<sup>6</sup> Before Edward, the Scots for the most part had

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<sup>3</sup>Winston S. Churchill, A History of the English Speaking Peoples, Vol. I: The Birth of Britain (New York, 1966), 198.

<sup>4</sup>Coupland, Welsh and Scottish Nationalism, 73.

<sup>5</sup>For his Scottish exploits, Edward I received the sobriquet, Hammer of the Scots. Robert Laird Mackie, A Short History of Scotland (Oxford, 1930), 115.

<sup>6</sup>Howard Pease, The Lord Wardens of the Marches of England and Scotland being a Brief History of the Marches, the Laws of the March and the Marchmen Together with Some Account of the Ancient Feud Between England and Scotland (London, 1913), 17-18.

resisted attempts to bring their country firmly under English control and hoped to continue to prevent the loss of their independence. As a matter of fact, Scottish determination to maintain their autonomy was so intense that this was the one clear goal in the confused politics of the country.<sup>7</sup>

What Edward wanted was the elimination of the Scottish ability to intervene in English affairs once and for all, and he hoped to accomplish this through a marriage treaty between his son and the Princess Margaret of Scotland, known as the Maid of Norway, who was living with her father, Eric of Norway. At the time this was a truly radical and unique approach to Anglo-Scottish relations. In 1290 a council of Scottish churchmen, barons and commoners approved the form of a proposed marriage treaty that, ironically, contained the same basic features as a more successful proposal, that of 1603. Each state would be free and independent, and all national institutions would be retained. As in 1603, the union was to be a personal one.<sup>8</sup>

These ambitious plans were doomed to failure at this time, however, because of the death of the Maid of Norway while traveling to Scotland. Into the power vacuum

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<sup>7</sup>Conyers Read, The Tudors: Personalities and Practical Politics in Sixteenth Century England (New York, 1936), 94.

<sup>8</sup>Coupland, Welsh and Scottish Nationalism, 69.

that resulted from the demise of the Scottish princess rushed two principal claimants, Robert Bruce (1306-1329) and John Balliol (1292-1296). Since Edward was their overlord, the Scottish magnates called upon him to adjudicate the disputed succession. Balliol's candidacy was supported by Edward at the meeting of the Scottish nobility at Norham. This famous "Award of Norham" resulted in the elevation of Balliol to the Scottish throne. What Edward had been unable to accomplish by treaty he now attempted to do by force. Unfortunately for England, the Scottish nobility who previously supported Edward's suzerainty now grew restive under his heavy-handed methods.<sup>9</sup>

Balliol, who had been seen by Edward I as a puppet-king moving according to his machinations, cut the strings that bound him to London.<sup>10</sup> What followed was a highly successful English expedition into Scotland that forced Balliol's abdication in 1296.<sup>11</sup> After a few years of apparently futile resistance the Scots defeated the English under the command of Edward II (1307-1327) at the battle of Bannockburn in 1314 which produced a new and virulent nationalism in Scotland. The war continued in a desultory manner for a decade or so, but the ultimate issue of Scottish independence was settled. In the 1327 Treaty of

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<sup>9</sup>Churchill, Birth of Britain, 302-07.

<sup>10</sup>Coupland, Welsh and Scottish Nationalism, 69-70.

<sup>11</sup>Churchill, Birth of Britain, 302-07.

Northampton, Scotland received England's formal recognition of her independence under King Robert I.<sup>12</sup>

Few people upon hearing this story of a small nation which waged a heroic battle for its independence against a larger, more powerful antagonist fail to sympathize with the Scottish people. As psychologically reassuring as it might be to believe that an underdog, through his tenacity, might triumph over what appeared to be overwhelming odds, France must share a great deal of the credit for the Scottish victory. This is true for two reasons. First, England was occupied in protecting its vast French territories against the process of the territorial consolidation of the French nation under the Capetian and Valois dynasties.<sup>13</sup> The second reason is more relevant to the problem presently under consideration. It was the evolution of an institution that was greatly influential in all diplomatic problems involving England, Scotland and France from the thirteenth through the sixteenth centuries, namely, the Auld Alliance.

The origins of the Auld Alliance date back to the twelfth century, when Scotland and France were threatened by the power of the Angevin dynasty in England.<sup>14</sup> It came

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<sup>12</sup>Coupland, Welsh and Scottish Nationalism, 72.

<sup>13</sup>Churchill, Birth of Britain, 302-07.

<sup>14</sup>John Duncan Mackie, Henry VIII and Scotland, Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Vol. XXIX, Series 4 (London, 1947), 102.

into being as a practical solution to a concrete political problem. Because Scotland, faced with the loss of her independence, and France, with the destruction of her political and geographic solidarity, it was only natural that they should view their cause as a common one. This is, in fact, what happened.<sup>15</sup> William the Lion of Scotland (1165-1214) and Louis VII of France (1137-1188) had supported the rebellion of the sons of Henry II of England (1154-1189) in 1173 and 1174, a rebellion which eventually led to a reduction of English holdings on the continent in the last years of the twelfth and the early years of the thirteenth centuries.<sup>16</sup>

Although the Auld Alliance did not receive formal expression until 23 October 1295, it was merely an elaboration upon the policy of cooperation begun by William and Louis over one hundred years earlier.<sup>17</sup> The Scots, restless under the obligations imposed upon them by Edward I, saw an opportunity to escape the English yoke by the judicious use of the French alliance. Because of a naval confrontation in the Channel, relations between England and France were worsening, and Scotland, taking advantage of this trend, approached the French for the purpose of

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<sup>15</sup>Mackie, "The Auld Alliance," 37-38.

<sup>16</sup>Mackie, Henry VIII and Scotland, 102.

<sup>17</sup>Dickinson, Source Book, I, 116.

negotiating a commercial corollary to the political ties existing between the two states. The resulting pact was signed on 23 October 1295 by John Balliol, king of Scotland; and Philip IV, king of France (1285-1314). The treaty to be sealed by the marriage of Balliol to Philip's niece.<sup>18</sup>

Balliol was considered an interloper by later dynasties since he was placed on the throne by English pressure. As a result, the treaty sometimes cited as the first formal expression of the Auld Alliance was that pact made between Robert Bruce and Charles IV of France (1322-1328) in 1326.<sup>19</sup> Whether the 1295 or 1326 version was the first formal agreement of the Auld Alliance is really immaterial for the earlier treaty set the style for all later renewals of the Alliance. In virtually every instance later treaties contained not only the essence of the 1295 version, but in most cases the actual wording itself.<sup>20</sup> Most authorities believe, therefore, that it was Balliol who firmly established the tradition of a Franco-Scottish alliance.<sup>21</sup> The Auld Alliance, primarily defensive in

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<sup>18</sup>Ranald Nicolson, "The Franco-Scottish and Franco-Norwegian Treaties of 1295," Scottish Historical Review, XXXVIII (October, 1959), 114-16.

<sup>19</sup>Mackie, Henry VIII and Scotland, 102.

<sup>20</sup>Mackie, "The Auld Alliance," 42.

<sup>21</sup>Peter Hume Brown, History of Scotland, Vol. I: To the Accession of Mary Stewart (Cambridge, 1929), 142.

nature and always directed against England, became an accepted and integral part of the diplomatic machinery at the disposal of all Scottish monarchs in the later Middle Ages and the early years of the sixteenth century.

James IV was no exception. His contacts with France were numerous, and he has been blamed for ignoring Scotland's welfare in honoring an ancient obligation to the French nation. Although this is an oversimplification of the events leading to Flodden, it serves to show the relative merits of this Franco-Scottish cooperation. While Scotland undoubtedly experienced something of a cultural and economic rejuvenation as a result of the Alliance, the practical political gains she derived from it were negligible. In most cases the results of Scottish support for France against England were tragic. The battles of Alnwick, Neville's Cross, and Flodden provide ample testimony to support this conclusion.<sup>22</sup>

France, on the other hand, manipulated the Alliance in such a way as to avoid this type of commitment to Scotland. It never forced France to oppose England for the sake of Scotland. When England's basic interests shifted from Scotland to France in the form of what is undoubtedly one of history's greatest misnomers, the Hundred Years' War, Scotland did what she could to aid her continental ally. She renewed the Alliance in 1372, and a Scottish

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<sup>22</sup>Mackie, "The Auld Alliance," 37.

army defeated an English force at Baugé six years after Agincourt.<sup>23</sup> Such Scottish contributions to French interests by and large were not reciprocated. As Flodden Field made painfully apparent, when there was a direct confrontation between England and Scotland, French aid was usually too scant to be influential.

These two themes, a long history of hostility between England and Scotland and an alliance system which reinforced this antagonism, remained powerful forces in Anglo-Scottish relations through the Middle Ages and into the reign of James IV. If Scotland were in a position of having to choose to support England or France against the other power, supposedly it would be inevitable that she would side with the French against the English. Ostensibly such a situation did exist in the years immediately preceding Flodden, but James' previous failure to fulfill treaty obligations to Denmark, which will be discussed later, showed that he was not forced to aid France as most historians of the period contend. On the contrary, he could have avoided a confrontation with either England or France simply by doing nothing at all. James chose to attack England as a means of achieving his foreign policy goal of enhancing Scotland's reputation among the nations of Europe. He simply used the past as a partial justification for his actions. The long history of English

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<sup>23</sup>Coupland, Welsh and Scottish Nationalism, 73.

injustice to the Scottish people and the legacy of French friendship with, and aid to Scotland made it imperative that he fulfill the moral and legal obligations implicit in the Auld Alliance to aid France against her enemies.

In this elaborate vindication of his invasion of England, James was able to make use of another institution that had long been a source of trouble between that country and his, the Anglo-Scottish border. It will be shown, however, that the border situation did not warrant a war.

### CHAPTER III

#### THE INFLUENCE OF THE BORDER IN ANGLO-SCOTTISH RELATIONS

The focal point of the long history of animosity between England and Scotland quite naturally centered around the border that separated the nations prior to their union under one crown in 1603.<sup>1</sup> Turbulence characterized the Anglo-Scottish frontier during the Middle Ages when the English rulers considered themselves feudal superiors of the Scottish kings. For more than three hundred years before the accession of James VI of Scotland (1567-1625) to the English throne in 1603, the march conflict expressed itself in the form of armed clashes.<sup>2</sup> This always potentially volatile geographical area was made doubly dangerous by the nature of the border and the general character of the inhabitants on both sides.

In some ways it is ironic that the Scots and the English in this frontier area fought as much as they did, for they had a great deal in common-- ancestry, economies

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<sup>1</sup>Rae, Scotland, 2.

<sup>2</sup>Thomas I. Rae, The Administration of the Scottish Frontier, 1513-1603 (Edinburgh, 1966), v.

and life-styles. These traditions, however, reflected the character of a savage and crude people who often engaged in open hostilities among themselves. The beginning of the settlement of what was to become the frontier dates back to the sixth century and helps to show the similarity of the peoples living there. Lothian, the southeast district of Scotland, was settled in that century by Anglo-Saxons while the Highlands and the Western Isles were being infiltrated by Danes and Norsemen, thus drawing sharp lines of distinction between the two areas of the country.<sup>3</sup> The Scottish lowlands continued to be Anglicized for some five hundred years,<sup>4</sup> and were included in the kingdom of Northumbria. Malcolm II of Scotland, as a part of a program of geographic consolidation, wrested Lothian from the English in the eleventh century, and, thus for the first time, created an artificial difference between the borderers. People who had been neighbors were instantly transformed into foreigners, and, when politics demanded it, into enemies.<sup>5</sup>

Despite the fact that a national boundary now separated the inhabitants of this border area, they continued to develop their own unique system of values and

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<sup>3</sup>Coupland, Welsh and Scottish Nationalism, 64.

<sup>4</sup>I. F. Grant, The Social and Economic Development of Scotland before 1603 (Edinburgh, 1930), 55-56.

<sup>5</sup>Coupland, Welsh and Scottish Nationalism, 64.

mores that was duplicated neither in the Scottish Highlands nor in the south of England. Political loyalties were constantly in a state of flux in the Middle Ages, and Malcolm II's wresting of control of the Lothian district from England did not settle the problem. At various times in the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth centuries it was difficult to determine exactly which country had sovereignty over the area. For example, what today are the northern counties of England were not included in the Domesday Book commissioned by William I.<sup>6</sup> This Scottish influence was magnified in the twelfth century. At the time of his death, King David I of Scotland (1124-1153) was in possession of what are now the English counties of Cumberland, Westmorland, Durham, Northumberland, Lancashire and part of Yorkshire. In addition to this he held land farther south as a vassal of the king of England. Largely through the efforts of Henry II of England (1154-1189), his country was able to secure these areas from actual Scottish control in 1174, although the kings of Scotland still held fiefs in England. King Alexander II's (1214-1249) name appears as a signer of Magna Carta in 1215, and when the English barons of the north became further disenchanted with King John (1199-1216) they looked to Alexander for

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<sup>6</sup>George Washington, "The Border Heritage, 1066-1291," Transactions of the Cumberland and Westmorland Antiquarian Society, LXII (1962), 102.

protection, thus showing a strong political affinity for Scotland.<sup>7</sup>

Lest this create the wrong impression, it should be stressed that, on the whole, the northern counties remained loyal to the English crown, but, culturally, they had a great deal more in common with their Scottish neighbors than with their countrymen to the south. The north always remained something of a problem for London. Not until the Tudors initiated a policy of true national unification, a policy enforced by violence on many occasions, was the loyalty of the northern counties finally assured.

What emerges from all of this is a picture of a unique area, an area that in many ways constituted a third "nation." Had the frontier been able to develop independently of pressures from Edinburgh and London, the violence along the border would have had only a localized effect upon relations between the two states. Unfortunately, this was not the case. The normal confrontations between neighbors in that day were not allowed to occur in a political vacuum. Instead, they were magnified far out of proportion by the ill-feelings that existed between England and Scotland. James IV used these frontier difficulties to account for his invasion of England, and, ostensibly, he was justified in his efforts. The years of his reign were filled with incidents of violence between Scots and Englishmen,

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<sup>7</sup>Washington, "The Border Heritage," 110-12.

but violence on the frontier had been a way of life for centuries. Social, political and economic conditions were such that hostilities could hardly be avoided.

When compared to the rest of the country, the English marches were poor both agriculturally and economically. The south of England was making rapid economic advances in the Middle Ages<sup>8</sup> while the north still retained a largely pastoral economy.<sup>9</sup> The relatively small degree to which the land had been developed for cultivation was largely responsible for the depressed condition in the north, thus making it difficult for the common farmer to provide for his dependents.

While the southern half of Scotland was the richest section of the country, it also had not been developed to any large degree. Like northern England, southern Scotland had a pastoral economy, and the cattle and sheep raised on both sides of the border presented a great source of temptation to lawbreakers.<sup>10</sup>

Because of the economically depressed condition of the border area, its inhabitants concerned themselves mainly with making ends meet primarily at the expense of their neighbors on both sides of the international

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<sup>8</sup>Asa Briggs, "Themes in Northern History," Northern History, I (1966), 4.

<sup>9</sup>Rae, The Administration of the Scottish Frontier, 10.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 4.

boundary.<sup>11</sup> This plundering had a long history, reaching its greatest intensity when a state of overt war existed between England and Scotland. During these periods of conflict, the border raids assumed a patriotic aspect and thus enjoyed a certain degree of respectability that they lacked in peace time.<sup>12</sup>

With regard to the type of booty that was sought, the borderers were far from particular. Anything of value was cherished by raiding parties. Obviously, money and precious metals were among the most desired items, but cattle, crops, equipment of all kinds and prisoners were also considered valuable by the raiders.<sup>13</sup>

In addition to these raiding activities that occurred all along the border there was one portion of the frontier that caused its own particular problems. Known as the Debateable Land, this two-square-mile area was located in southwestern Scotland between the Esk and Sark Rivers near the Solway Firth.<sup>14</sup> There was a constant problem of jurisdiction in the Debateable Land arising from the

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<sup>11</sup>Robert Bruce Armstrong, The History of Liddesdale, Eskdale, Ewesdale, Wauchopedale and the Debateable Land; Part I, from the Twelfth Century to 1530 (Edinburgh, 1930), 66.

<sup>12</sup>Denys Hay, "Booty in Border Warfare," Transactions of the Dumfriesshire and Galloway Natural Historical and Antiquarian Society, XXXI, Series 3 (1944), 147.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 149.

<sup>14</sup>W. Mackay Mackenzie, "The Debateable Land," Scottish Historical Review, XXX, No. 10 (October, 1951), 10.

fact that it had been left undivided at the time of the settlement of this portion of the frontier in the early years of the fourteenth century.<sup>15</sup> Given the difficult economic conditions of the marches it was only natural that the English and Scots often quarreled over fishing rights in the Esk River that snaked its way through the Debateable Land. The English had discovered that when they built a type of dam known as a fishgarth the fish would be unable to ascend the river and could easily be netted as they swarmed in the pool which had been dug on the lower side. Of course, what happened in the lower part of the river influenced conditions upstream. If the fish were denied access to the upper reaches of the Esk, the Scots living upstream were deprived of a valuable source of food that was essential to their welfare.<sup>16</sup>

Under normal conditions, *i.e.*, when the rulers of both England and Scotland wanted to maintain a state of tranquillity on the marches, extraordinary efforts were made to work out some type of compromise with respect to the Debateable Land. Provisions to deal with this particular problem area first appeared in the form of a treaty in 1449. This agreement was especially significant because it set a precedent that was followed in subsequent treaties

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<sup>15</sup>Armstrong, The History of Liddesdale, 169.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid., 171-74.

dealing with the borders. Basically it guaranteed free access to all claimers of the land without prejudice to the rights of either the kings of Scotland or England. This was the formula that was included in all of the march treaties that were signed in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.<sup>17</sup>

Even with these elaborate efforts to avoid trouble in the Debateable Land, difficulties still arose. Many commissions of Scots and Englishmen were convened to keep these confrontations from growing into provocations for war.<sup>18</sup> For example, on 26 March 1494 Thomas Dacre; Richard, bishop of St. Asaph; Sir William Tyler, lieutenant of the town and castle of Berwick; and John Heron of Ford, lieutenant of the east and middle marches, were appointed by Henry VII (1485-1509) to meet with a Scottish commission composed of George, bishop of Dunkeld; William, lord Borthwick; and Thomas, abbot of Jedworth at Loughmaben, to put an end to the "Fishgarthe and all debatable lands [sic]" according to guidelines set down in earlier treaties.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Thomas Rymer, ed., Foedera, conventiones, literae, et cujuscunque generis acta publica, inter reges Angliae et alios quosvis imperatores, reges, pontifices, principes, vel communitates, ab ineunte saeculo duodeceimo, viz. ab anno 1101, ad nostra usque tempore habita aut tracta; ex autographis, infra secretiores Archivorum regionum thesaurarias, per multa saecula reconditis, fideliter exscripta (London, 1726-35), XI, 245, 289, 337, 400.

<sup>18</sup>Armstrong, The History of Liddesdale, 171-74.

<sup>19</sup>Great Britain, Public Record Office, Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland Preserved in Her Majesty's

In spite of repeated attempts to come up with a final solution to the problems presented by the Debateable Land and the fishgarth, these commissions met with little real success. In fact, the decisions made by the commissions probably contributed to trouble more than they helped eliminate it. They held that the Scots and Englishmen living in the area in question were not subject to the authority of either Scottish or English officials, since placing these inhabitants under the jurisdiction of either official would necessarily imply sovereignty by one country over the other. The only solution, of course, would have been to establish sovereignty in the area once and for all, but this was the very issue that made the territory debatable, and specific settlement was not forthcoming until the Treaty of Norham was signed on 10 June 1551.<sup>20</sup>

Before this treaty, the two countries had to rely on unofficial compromises to forestall full-scale wars in the Debateable Land. One such compromise held that the building or destruction of a fishgarth should not be considered a casus belli.<sup>21</sup> Another stated that pastureland could be used in common from dawn until dusk, and cattle or

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Public Record Office, Vol. IV, A. D. 1357-1509, ed. by Joseph Bain (Edinburgh, 1888), 418-34. Hereafter cited as Calendar of Documents, Scotland.

<sup>20</sup>Mackenzie, "The Debateable Land," 110, 124.

<sup>21</sup>Armstrong, The History of Liddesdale, 174.

equipment left there at night could be stolen or destroyed with impunity.<sup>22</sup> It is abundantly clear that usually officials of both England and Scotland wanted to keep trouble along the marches confined to that area, and the custom had arisen of doing just that through the use of commissions and the unofficial compromises they implemented. Trouble was always expected in the border areas, and when it happened, it did not provoke a state of panic either in Edinburgh or London. James IV, however, departed from this practice when he cited English aggression in the Debateable Land as contributing to his decision to go to war against England. In light of the border tradition of keeping problems there localized, James clearly was exploiting a situation in order to justify his invasion.

Both countries recognized the fact that violence must be controlled, not only in the Debateable Land, but all along the border as well in the interest of the international policy of each.<sup>23</sup> Borderers, as a whole, were fearless of authority,<sup>24</sup> and the distance from London and Edinburgh to the frontier impeded attempts to control the area and its inhabitants.<sup>25</sup> Despite the difficulties involved, England and Scotland made efforts to meet the

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<sup>22</sup>Mackenzie, "The Debateable Land," 115-16.

<sup>23</sup>Rae, The Administration of the Scottish Frontier, 11.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., 4.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., 11.

demands for order by devising a series of laws which had been referred to, ever since their ratification in 1249, simply as "border laws."<sup>26</sup>

The term border laws was virtually all-inclusive, for it contained provisions to deal with most types of crimes that occurred on the marches. These ranged from treason to the absolutely heinous crime of slaying hares in the snow. In between there were less unusual offenses such as murder,<sup>27</sup> counterfeit, and sorcery.<sup>28</sup> From time to time new border laws were agreed upon. For example, new agreements were negotiated in 1449 and 1464<sup>29</sup> and, although each succeeding set of laws differed from the last in some respects, each carried the same basic provisions. Of the numerous practices declared illegal by the codification of the laws, the most serious, and the one which placed the

<sup>26</sup>G. W. S. Barrow, "The Anglo-Scottish Border," Northern History, I (1966), 39.

<sup>27</sup>Technically there was no law against murder until 1528. Prior to this it was dealt with by consent of the march officials, and redress or punishment was the usual response. Armstrong, The History of Liddesdale, 27.

<sup>28</sup>Peter Hume Brown, ed., Scotland before 1700 from Contemporary Documents (Edinburgh, 1893), 33-34.

<sup>29</sup>William Nicolson, Leges Marchiarum, or Border-Laws: Containing Several Original Articles and Treaties, Made and Agreed upon by the Commissioners of the Respective Kings of England and Scotland, for the Better Preservation of Peace and Commerce Upon the Marches of Both Kingdoms: From the Reign of Henry III to the Union of the Two Crowns, in K. James I, with a Preface, and an Appendix of Charters and Records, Relating to the Said Treaties (London, 1705), 9, 36.

greatest strain upon Anglo-Scottish relations, was known by the rather ambiguous name of "March Treason."<sup>30</sup> A multitude of offenses were classified as treasonable by the laws, but most infractions dealt with aiding fugitives who were involved in illegal border raids.

A few hypothetical cases will help to illustrate this point. Any Englishman who brought a Scotsman into England for the purpose of plundering was guilty of march treason and, therefore, subject to capital punishment. The laws went even further by declaring as treasonous any aid given to a Scotsman who had been guilty of raiding in England. Englishmen were punished by the laws for assaulting, killing, or robbing a Scotsman in Scotland or doing any harm to a Scotsman in England who was traveling under a safe conduct from the top border official, the lord warden, his deputy or deputies. In wartime it was illegal for an Englishman to give intelligence information to a Scot. The net effect of the laws was to eliminate practically all personal contacts between the English and Scots along the frontier without official consent.<sup>31</sup> Similar restrictions

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<sup>30</sup>Semantics cause a bit of a problem here. The offense known as "March Treason" was largely an English one. A charge of march treason was not included as part of a Scottish indictment until 1535, but this does not mean that the Scots ignored acts that might be considered treasonous. On the contrary, these acts were severely punished, but they were placed under the general heading of "assisters with England, resettlers of them and their goods." Armstrong, The History of Liddesdale, 11-13.

<sup>31</sup>Nicolson, Leges Marchiarum, 185-88.

were placed on the citizens of Scotland who lived within the marches.<sup>32</sup>

Although other offenses were dealt with by the laws, it was the illegal border forays that produced the most numerous arrests by the officials in charge of keeping order on the frontier. To escape punishment, it became common practice for a person guilty of raiding to become a fugitive in distant parts of the neighboring country where he would be a relative stranger. Over a period of years Scotland and England achieved a high degree of cooperation in coping with this particular problem. Certain days were set aside when officials from both countries would meet for the orderly redress of any grievances that might have arisen between their nationals.<sup>33</sup>

The earliest of these meetings took place in 1248.<sup>34</sup> Individuals accused of border crimes would be brought to these assemblies and would be judged by a special court composed of officers from both countries.<sup>35</sup> For example, a Scot named John Neilsoune was convicted of

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<sup>32</sup>Great Britain, Public Record Office, The Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland (London, 1814-1832), II, 83-86. Hereafter cited as A. of P. Scotland.

<sup>33</sup>Hay, "Booty in Border Warfare," 156.

<sup>34</sup>Armstrong, The History of Liddesdale, 14.

<sup>35</sup>"The English Border in the Days of Henry VIII, Reprints of Rare Tracts and Imprints of Ancient Manuscripts, etc. Chiefly Illustrative of the History of the Northern Counties (Newcastle, 1849), 7.

horse theft, treasonably being and remaining in England without a license from the king or march warden and for treasonably bringing Englishmen into Scotland. For these offenses Neilsoune was hanged and drawn on 4 November 1510.<sup>36</sup>

Of course, this system of law enforcement was not foolproof. Accused criminals would often flee to avoid prosecution. This tended to be risky, however, because penalties for evasion were especially severe. In 1498, for example, Henry VII commanded the sheriff of Northumberland to proclaim that if William Hedle, his brother Hogge of Hedle and Hob Rede, who were accused of murder of certain Scots during the truce and had failed to appear on the appropriate march days, did not surrender at Berwick within three days after the proclamation, they would be considered felons and outlaws, and would forfeit life, land, and goods if apprehended.<sup>37</sup>

Enforcement of the border laws gradually came to rest with an official known as the warden of the marches. This office had its origins in England during the Scottish wars of 1296 when the defense of the border was entrusted to professional soldiers in place of the local sheriffs

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<sup>36</sup>Robert Pitcairn, Ancient Criminal Trials in Scotland; Compiled from the Original Records and MSS., with Historical Illustrations, etc. (Edinburgh, 1833), III, 63.

<sup>37</sup>Calendar of Documents, Scotland, 331-32.

who had previously conducted the king's business in the north.<sup>38</sup> Its holder assumed the position of administrator of the customs of the marches and also was responsible for the observation of truces between England and Scotland. This extension of functions had been completed by the middle years of the fourteenth century.<sup>39</sup> Prior to 1309 appointment to the office occurred only when the need arose, but in that year the office of warden of the marches became a regular fixture along the border. A similar office was later adopted by the Scots for the administration of their side of the frontier.<sup>40</sup>

It would be difficult to overemphasize the importance of this office. Located in an area remote from London, both geographically and politically, these wardens at times exercised absolute control, and the area almost became their own little kingdom. While it was true that these men received their commissions from the crown, it was equally true that they tended to exercise their power as they saw fit, especially when negotiating with the Scots over border problems.<sup>41</sup> The great border magnates of the

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<sup>38</sup>R. R. Reid, "The Office of Warden of the Marches; Its Origin and Early History," English Historical Review, XXXII (1917), 481.

<sup>39</sup>R. L. Storey, "The Wardens of the Marches of England towards Scotland, 1377-1489," English Historical Review, LXXII (October, 1957), 593-94.

<sup>40</sup>Reid, "The Office of Warden of the Marches," 482.

<sup>41</sup>Calendar of Documents, Scotland, 309.

Middle Ages, such as the Percys and the Nevilles, were among the most prominent and powerful families and they served as wardens, but the Tudors brought a change in this policy. The new dynasty intent on curbing the nobility's threat to the crown. As a part of this broad policy, the office of warden of the marches was taken from the powerful nobility and placed in the hands of members of families who would owe their authority to the crown and not to their own resources.<sup>42</sup> The families most commonly placed in such positions in the north during the period under consideration were the Dacres and the Howards. A commission was granted to Thomas, lord of Dacre, as lieutenant of the west marches "toward" Scotland in 1486<sup>43</sup> and renewed in 1488,<sup>44</sup> while in 1490 Thomas Howard, earl of Surrey and later the English commander at Flodden, was commissioned as subwarden and vice-guardian for the young Arthur, Prince of Wales and warden general of the east and middle marches.<sup>45</sup>

These, then, were the types of officials whose responsibility it was to keep border violence from dragging

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<sup>42</sup>There were certain exceptions to this general plan. On 1 April 1588 Henry VII granted a commission to Henry Percy, earl of Northumberland, as warden general to the east and middle marches and the king's dominion in Scotland with full powers, especially to array the men of Northumberland and the whole march in case of a siege of Berwick. Calendar of Documents, Scotland, 314.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., 311.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., 314-15.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., 318.

their respective nations into a full-scale war, and, for the most part, they performed admirably. The English Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland is full of examples of meetings between the border wardens where the grievances of the various inhabitants were redressed in an orderly manner largely through the efforts of these wardens. The issues settled ranged from the boundaries of the Debateable Land<sup>46</sup> to the negotiation of new treaties.<sup>47</sup> This arrangement greatly facilitated relatively normal intercourse between the two states. Safe conducts, which were required for most official movement from one country to the other, allowed diplomatic, political, and commercial ties. Scottish diplomats were allowed to pass through England virtually at will on their way to European courts,<sup>48</sup> and there are numerous examples of Scottish merchants receiving royal approval to trade in England.<sup>49</sup>

The Anglo-Scottish border, then, was a peculiar institution. On the one hand it was an extremely turbulent geographical and political area, and, on the other, it was one in which a degree of normalcy was maintained through a policy of compromise on both sides of the border. Actually

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<sup>46</sup>Ibid., 324.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid., 418, 309, 310, 313, 317-18, 334.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., 322, 333, 330, 316-17.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., 310, 316, 317, 321, 331.

there was little chance of border skirmishes exploding into warfare as long as both the English and Scottish rulers were committed to a program of peace. They expected difficulties to arise, and, in general, did not view these as blows to the general peace. Just as he used the Debateable Land as a partial explanation for his invasion of England, James IV seized the border situation and exploited it in such a way as to make his actions appear justified. This, however, was definitely contrary to the long tradition of keeping trouble on the marches localized. Historians have generally accepted James' contention that England was guilty of flagrant violations of border laws. There is some justification for this view, but this sort of thing had happened many times before without provoking war. Despite his protestations of peace, James wanted war, and the normal border activities that had been tolerated for years suddenly were intolerable when it became politically expedient.

## CHAPTER IV

### A NEW KING AND NEW HOPES

The winning of Scotland's independence through the Battle of Bannockburn and the Treaty of Northampton in the fourteenth century did not mean that her long history of fighting with England was over. Robert Bruce had been dead only a year when the wars were renewed, but with one significant difference. Earlier, few had doubted that England's overall objective was the subjugation of Scotland to such a degree that all major political decisions would be made in England, not at the Scottish court. Now the English effort lacked the intensity and sense of purpose it had had before. Nevertheless, war continued intermittently through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and up through the first half of the sixteenth. This time, however, there were no grandiose designs for the domination of Scotland. Instead the English military incursions north of the border were little more than plundering expeditions. Concentrating on the area south of the Firth of Forth, the English not only burned small towns and destroyed monasteries, country churches and farm buildings, but even

attacked Edinburgh and other important urban areas.<sup>1</sup> Considering the chaotic situation in Scotland that resulted from the lack of strong leadership combined with a restive nobility,<sup>2</sup> it seems miraculous that she was not completely conquered. Her escape from this fate was not owing to her own determination; rather she was the beneficiary of an English policy that was concerned with territorial expansion at the expense of France. As long as England was embroiled in the Hundred Years' War, Scotland was relatively safe. Even during the numerous truces that permeated that seemingly interminable struggle, England was usually militarily weakened either because of war fatigue, economic difficulties, or internal problems such as the Peasants' Revolt of 1381,<sup>3</sup> and, thus, stood little chance of bringing Scotland firmly under control during these times. When circumstances forced England to abandon any aspirations she might have to re-establish her French empire, another diversion protected Scotland, namely the Wars of the Roses. The effect of these wars was so disruptive that the government ceased to exercise authority.<sup>4</sup> As a result, town life in many areas of England went into a serious decline, and

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<sup>1</sup>Notestein, The Scot in History, 17.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., 9.

<sup>3</sup>Churchill, Birth of Britain, 369-75.

<sup>4</sup>A. R. Myers, England in the Late Middle Ages, Vol. IV: The Pelican History of England (Harmondsworth, Eng., 1952), 114.

trade and commerce were seriously hampered as well.<sup>5</sup> Clearly this type of atmosphere was not conducive to elaborate military campaigns in Scotland.

There was an additional, more fundamental reason for peace between England and Scotland in the early 1480's. They were fortunate to have such kings as James III and Richard III who, in spite of numerous glaring faults, were desirous of peace with one another. Relations were not always cordial during the reigns of these two men, however. Earlier, Richard and, before him, Edward IV had jeopardized the peace by aiding Scottish rebels, led by James III's brother, rebels who later killed the king at Sauchieburn in 1488 and placed his son, James IV, on the throne.<sup>6</sup> But if James III was aware of this connivance he did not let it deter him from seeking peace. Actually the initiative for this peace policy did not lie so much with James as with his chief minister, William Elphinstone, the bishop of Aberdeen.<sup>7</sup> In Scotland, as in most countries in the Middle Ages, there was not an abundance of literate laymen to serve as administrators, and a bishop's most conspicuous duty was as a councillor for the king.<sup>8</sup> James III sensibly

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., 172, 208.

<sup>6</sup>Agnes Conway, Henry VII's Relations with Scotland and Ireland, 1485-1498 (Cambridge, 1932), 2.

<sup>7</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 26.

<sup>8</sup>Burleigh, A Church History of Scotland, 95.

called upon the most able statesman in Scotland to fill this important position, and Elphinstone's credentials were very impressive. After studying in the law schools of Paris and Orleans, he returned to Scotland and entered state service as well as the Church. His rise was meteoric, first as the official of Lothian and then as bishop of Ross and, later, bishop of Aberdeen.<sup>9</sup>

Elphinstone's objective was to guarantee the security of the shaky throne of the unpopular James III by establishing friendly relations with England, and he took the first step in this direction in the late summer of 1484. At the insistence of the bishop, on 30 August James commissioned several Scottish noblemen to enter peace negotiations with England including a provision for the marriage between his son, the future James IV, and Lady Anne de la Pole, the daughter of John de la Pole, duke of Suffolk, and niece of Richard III.<sup>10</sup> The meeting of ambassadors took place on 12 September in the great hall of Nottingham Castle with Richard in attendance,<sup>11</sup> and it proved to be very fruitful. On 21 September 1484, two important agreements were reached. First, a treaty was signed that called

<sup>9</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 25-26.

<sup>10</sup>Calendar of Documents, Scotland, IV, No. 1501, 308.

<sup>11</sup>James Gairdner, ed., Letters and Papers Illustrative of the Reigns of Richard III and Henry VII (London, 1861-63), II, 63-67. The Bannatyne Miscellany; containing Original Papers and Tracts, Chiefly relating to the History and Literature of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1827), II, 38.

for a marriage between Lady Anne and Prince James when they attained lawful age,<sup>12</sup> and, second, a truce between the two nations was proclaimed until 29 September 1487.<sup>13</sup> James ratified the treaties the following 21 October.<sup>14</sup> The Scottish Parliament did not meet until May, 1485, but in that session it approved the truce, and appointed commissioners to confer with England's representatives in York to make plans for the marriage.<sup>15</sup>

If the proposed marriage had been allowed to take place, Anglo-Scottish relations might have been revolutionized through the efforts of James and Richard. Domestic politics in England intervened, however, and these aspirations died with Richard at Bosworth Field. The end of Richard's plans for peace with Scotland was not accompanied by the death of the spirit behind the plans. On the contrary Richard's successor, Henry VII, proved to be as committed to the maintenance of friendly relations with other countries as any king in English history. Several explanations have been offered for this policy. Henry was primarily concerned with insuring the continuance of the Tudor family on the throne, and he saw nothing but peril for the dynasty in foreign entanglements. He was not

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<sup>12</sup>Rymer, Foedera, XII, 235.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 244.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid., 250.

<sup>15</sup>A. of P. Scotland, II, 170.

averse to the use of military force and violence when it suited his needs, for how else could he have gained the throne? But after he became king, Henry exhibited no military ambitions, no desire for conquests and, more than anything else, no desire to spend money. War brought with it uncertainty, a commodity that Henry could not afford in his precarious position as the head of a new dynasty. The possibility of defeat, the development of domestic political factions, and the prospect of increased taxation determined Henry to avoid war if at all possible.<sup>16</sup>

There was, however, a difference between appearance and reality in Henry's foreign policy. For example, if it is readily apparent to us today that Henry was determined to avoid military confrontations with other nations, it was not so clear to his contemporaries. To them there was always the chance that Henry would throw England's weight into continental affairs, and he exploited this apprehension to add to the English treasury.

A classic example is England's involvement in Brittany's attempt to avoid absorption by France. The Duchess of Brittany had requested Henry's aid in her struggle, and she received a small amount which proved to be superfluous as Brittany became part of France in 1492.<sup>17</sup> Brittany's annexation did not damage Henry, for France paid

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<sup>16</sup>W. P. M. Kennedy, Studies in Tudor History (London, 1916), 17.

<sup>17</sup>Pollard, The Reign of Henry VII, liii-liv.

him handsomely to withdraw his support of the province. The Treaty of Étampes of 1492 added fifty thousand crowns a year to the English treasury as long as Henry was on the throne.<sup>18</sup> Even when he was forced to raise an army for England's defense he was able to turn this into financial gain. If there happened to be a threat of a Scottish invasion, Henry would seize the opportunity to levy a tax to meet the potential danger. Invariably the treasury was larger after the threat than before.<sup>19</sup>

This, obviously was not the type of foreign policy that would engulf the nation in a wave of excitement, but the English people had just been subjected to thirty years of baronial warfare, and many could still remember the results of over one hundred years of involvement in continental affairs. They were now content with a much less glamorous and much more sedate national atmosphere. Henry was aware of this and succeeded, as well as or better than any other English sovereign, in recognizing the mood of the people and in acting accordingly.<sup>20</sup> This goes a long way toward explaining how Henry was able to overcome many obstacles and survive as king of England.

All of this, of course, worked to Scotland's advantage. She had already established her willingness to

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<sup>18</sup>Ibid., Nos. 64-65; 91-93.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., lii.

<sup>20</sup>Kennedy, Studies in Tudor History, 2.

work out a truce with England, and the same pre-Tudor policy makers, namely James III and Elphinstone, were still in control after Henry VII's accession. The only uncertainty was Henry's position, for the new English king was not so desirous of peace as to jeopardize his country's security. Realizing how precarious his position on the throne was, Henry feared that Scottish aid would lend strength to the remnants of Richard III's supporters. He took precautions to reduce the threat of Scottish interference to an absolute minimum by sending word to the sheriffs of Suffolk and Norfolk to have all the "defensible men" of their sheriffdoms ready with only an "howre warnyng."<sup>21</sup> Henry did not let his apprehension preclude opportunities to negotiate for peace when they presented themselves, and the mobilization of the north probably worked as a diplomatic lever to move Scotland toward negotiation.

Neither James nor Henry wasted much time before seeking to formalize the friendly relations that existed between the two states. The Earl of Northumberland received a commission from Henry on 30 January 1486 to open negotiations with the Scots.<sup>22</sup> James quickly followed suit by

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<sup>21</sup>James Gairdner, ed., The Paston Letters, A. D. 1422-1509 (London, 1904), II, 89-90.

<sup>22</sup>Rymer incorrectly dated this commission as 1488. Rymer, Foedera, XII, 334.

appointing a commission which included Scotland's best statesmen, such as Elphinstone; John, lord Kennydy; Robert, abbot of Holyrood; Master Archibald Quhitelaw, archdeacon of St. Andrew in Lothian; and John Rosse of Montgrenance.<sup>23</sup> What emerged from this meeting was a "truce" of three years' duration that stipulated the removal of most sources of friction between England and Scotland.<sup>24</sup> Both nations worked hard to make the truce effective. As far as the border was concerned a spirit of compromise prevailed. Clashes in the area were not to be construed as violations of the truce, and no traitors, fugitives or convicted criminals were to be given sanctuary by either nation. The ancient problem of who could rightly exercise sovereignty over the castle and town of Berwick remained unsolved. It was agreed that both English and Scottish commissioners would meet on 8 March 1487 to resolve this difference if at all possible.<sup>25</sup> Once again there was to be an attempt to support the truce with a marriage. The agreement contained a provision that a marriage was to be contracted between James III's second son, James, marquis of Ormond, and Lady Katherine of York, Edward IV's second daughter and younger sister of the queen of England.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Calendar of Documents, Scotland, IV, No. 1520, 311.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., IV, No. 1521, 311.

<sup>25</sup>Rymer, Foedera, XII, 316.

<sup>26</sup>Calendar of Documents, Scotland, IV, No. 1521, 311.

Additional negotiations with respect to Berwick and the proposed marriage scheduled to take place on 8 March did not come about on that date. Henry was faced with a serious challenge to his newly won authority in the form of the Lambert Simnel plot. Not until he had eliminated the threat from this pretender at the battle of Stoke was Henry able to resume the meetings with the Scots.<sup>27</sup> Richard Fox, then bishop of Exeter and Sir Richard Edgecombe were sent by Henry to the Scottish court in August, 1487 where they met with Elphinstone and Bothwell.<sup>28</sup> James III cautioned Fox and Edgecombe that the Scottish people as a whole were not as receptive to the idea of peace with England as he was personally, and they would not support a long truce.<sup>29</sup> As a result of James' reluctance the truce was extended for three months only until 1 September 1489. There was an important concession by the Scots, however. In addition to the proposed marriage between Ormonde and Lady Katherine, additional marriages were arranged to provide added binding power to the agreements concluded by the commissioners. James, who had been widowed only the year before by the death of Queen Margaret, was to marry Queen Elizabeth, the widow of Edward IV, and James, duke of Rothesay, the heir

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<sup>27</sup>R. L. Storey, The Reign of Henry VII (New York, 1968), 74-76.

<sup>28</sup>Conway, Henry VII's Relations with Scotland, 10.

<sup>29</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 29.

to the Scottish throne, was to take a daughter of Edward IV as his bride.<sup>30</sup>

These were only preliminary agreements, and plans were made to work out the details in future meetings of the commissioners. Such a meeting was scheduled for 24 January 1488 to finalize the marriage plans, and in May the question of Berwick was to be worked out.<sup>31</sup> As in 1485, domestic politics forced the cancellation of projected peace negotiations, but this time the Scottish political situation was the offender. A large body of disaffected nobles had formed with the objective of overthrowing James III with the tacit approval of his son, the duke of Rothesay. The rebellion was a success; James was killed at Sauchieburn on 11 June 1488.<sup>32</sup>

The same old question was raised again. How would the change in leadership affect Anglo-Scottish relations? At this point political and diplomatic decisions in Scotland were being made by the faction which had successfully challenged James III, although it acknowledged James IV as king. Given the benefit of hindsight there seems to have been little doubt that the new regime could not afford a confrontation with the English, but Henry's reaction was

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<sup>30</sup>Calendar of Documents, Scotland, IV, No. 1530, 313.

<sup>31</sup>Rymer, Foedera, XII, 329-30.

<sup>32</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 43-44.

not nearly so certain. Ostensibly relations were as serene as they had been prior to Sauchieburn. On 23 October 1488 Henry ratified a treaty establishing a truce to last for three years, so, on the surface, things looked promising for the continuance of peace under the new Scottish king.<sup>33</sup> But appearances proved to be misleading. Henry was not at all sure of the intentions of Scotland, for the faction in power had used James III's friendly overtures to England as a pretext for its rebellion in 1488.<sup>34</sup> As a precautionary measure following Sauchieburn, Henry issued a proclamation to the officials in Berwick to prepare the city for a possible invasion by the new Scottish government.<sup>35</sup>

No invasion was forthcoming, but this did little to relieve Henry's apprehension. For example, several incidents at sea between Englishmen and Scots occurred which Henry deliberately ignored. Two early chroniclers, Pitscottie and Buchanan, told of a fleet of five English ships that had been sent by Henry in order to harrass Scottish commerce in the confusion that followed the death of James III, particularly in the Firth of Forth. The Scottish response was to send Sir Andrew Wood of Largo

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<sup>33</sup>Calendar of Documents, Scotland, IV, No. 1545,  
315.

<sup>34</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 62.

<sup>35</sup>Calendar of Documents, Scotland, IV, No. 1542,  
315.

with his ships, the Flower and the Yellow Carvel to oppose the English privateers. Wood met with a great deal of success, as he captured the English vessels and transported them to Leith.<sup>36</sup> James IV's complaint to the Holy See in May, 1489, that England was guilty of serious transgressions against Scotland was not groundless propaganda.<sup>37</sup>

It appeared for a while as if James would need Rome to apply all the pressure at its command to get England to cease naval operations against Scotland, for Henry wasted no time in sending ships to rid the seas of Andrew Wood. This new fleet was commanded by Stephen Bull. In early August of 1490 Bull was anchored off the deserted Island of May<sup>38</sup> waiting for the return of Wood from Flanders. Contact between the two groups of ships was made on 10 August, and a two day fight ensued. Initially the advantage appeared to be with the English since they had superior firepower, but Wood exhibited the better seamanship and was able to close the enemy to negate the latter's longer ranged guns.<sup>39</sup> In the fierce fighting

<sup>36</sup>Buchanan, The History of Scotland, II, 225; Pitscottie, The Historie and Chronicles of Scotland, I, 226-27.

<sup>37</sup>Great Britain, Public Record Office, Calendar of State Papers and Manuscripts Relating to English Affairs, Existing in the Archives and Collections of Venice and in Other Libraries of Northern Italy, 1202-1509, ed. by Rawdon Brown (London, 1864-), I, No. 568, 188. Hereafter cited as Calendar of State Papers, Venice.

<sup>38</sup>Buchanan, The History of Scotland, II, 226.

<sup>39</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 63-64.

that followed the ships drifted onto the sand bars at the mouth of the Tay River, where the larger English vessels ran aground and were forced to surrender. James must have been well pleased with the outcome, since he released the ships to the English sailors and permitted them to return home.<sup>40</sup>

In addition to these flagrant attempts to intimidate the new government in Scotland, Henry used more subtle methods. There are several entries in the Calendar of Documents Relating to Scotland that show payment to several Scottish courtiers such as John Ramsey, lord Bothwell; Thomas Turnbull; Thomas Todd and James, earl of Buchan.<sup>41</sup> The most sizable payment of money was in the form of a loan of £226 13s 4d to Buchan and Todd, but in return they became involved in a fantastic plot to turn James IV and his younger brother, James, the duke of Ross, over to Henry, or at least the former if both could not be delivered. Lest we become confused by this foolhardy expenditure of money by the normally frugal Henry on a scheme that had practically no chance of success, it should be noted that, if James were not in English hands by Michaelmas, Todd and Ramsay of Balmain would guarantee repayment of the loan.<sup>42</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>Buchanan, The History of Scotland, II, 226.

<sup>41</sup>Calendar of Documents, Scotland, IV, Nos. 1549, 1551; 316; No. 1570, 319.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., No. 1571, 319-20.

To what extent the Scottish traitors seriously tried to fulfill their part of the bargain probably never will be determined. Nothing concerning the arrangement is to be found in the English records either before or after the references mentioned.<sup>43</sup> Henry could not have really expected this scheme to succeed, but he had little to lose. If he could have gained control of James' person it certainly would have been worth the price of the loan. The prize would have more than compensated for the gamble. In one last attempt to foment rebellion in Scotland, Henry persuaded the earl of Angus in the summer of 1491 to use his castle in Liddesdale to this end. James became aware of the plot, however, and forced Angus to surrender by placing his castle under seige.<sup>44</sup>

Henry, seeing all of his efforts to influence directly Scottish domestic politics fail, sought at least to reduce the threat of Scots causing trouble in England. On the preceding 22 May 1490 Thomas Howard, the earl of Surrey, had been directed to see that all Scots and strangers being "suspecte and no wele disposed" who indulged in "idernes and beggyng" in York, Northumberland, Cumberland and Westmorland left the country immediately. Exceptions were to be made for household or "menyall"

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<sup>43</sup>Conway, Henry VII's Relations with Scotland, 36-37.

<sup>44</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 65.

servants of Englishmen who were known to be loyal to the government.<sup>45</sup> Later the restrictions against Scots in England were tightened even more, for on 17 October 1491 Parliament ruled that since Scotland could not be trusted, all of them who were not made citizens of England within forty days must leave the country at that time.<sup>46</sup>

Despite these affronts to Scotland by Henry VII, James wanted to maintain a friendly posture toward England. On 21 December 1491 representatives of both countries concluded a truce which was to last five years.<sup>47</sup> Perhaps James did not trust Henry to keep the peace for that long a period because he ratified the treaty only until 20 November 1492.<sup>48</sup> He soon had second thoughts about this limitation of the truce, however. Faced with increased trouble from the Highland and Island clans which manifested itself in the sacking and burning of Inverness, James began to see the value of a protracted peace with England. Likewise, Henry now wanted to be free from worry about the old enemy for he was now becoming involved in the previously mentioned Breton campaign.<sup>49</sup> With this mutual desire for

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<sup>45</sup>Calendar of Documents, Scotland, IV, No. 1563, 318.

<sup>46</sup>Conway, Henry VII's Relations with Scotland, 38.

<sup>47</sup>Rymer, Foedera, XII, 465.

<sup>48</sup>Calendar of Documents, Scotland, IV, No. 1580, 321.

<sup>49</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 67.

an extended truce it was not difficult to conclude such an agreement. On 17 October 1492 James, while at Linlithgow Palace, appointed a commission headed by William Elphinstone to meet with Henry's delegation at Coldstream or Hadington to negotiate the redress of injuries and abrogation of the truce.<sup>50</sup> The pact was confirmed at Coldstream on 3 November and would be in effect until 30 April 1494.<sup>51</sup>

For all his earlier machinations designed to stir up trouble in Scotland, Henry was now filled with the spirit of accommodation. Evidently having a serious bout with insecurity, he sought to go even farther than the truce recently concluded. Once again he turned to the device often proposed in the middle of the 1480's, a marriage treaty, hopefully to provide genuine security for any peace agreement between England and Scotland. On 28 May 1493 he commissioned Richard, the bishop of St. Asaph; Sir William Tyler, lieutenant of Berwick-on-Tweed; Henry Eynsworth, secondary of the Privy Seal Office; and John Cartington to treat for peace with Scottish representatives, and also for a marriage between the king of Scots and Henry's cousin, Lady Katherine, daughter of Alianora, countess of

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<sup>50</sup>Calendar of Documents, Scotland, IV, No. 1585, 322.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., No. 1586, 322.

Wiltshire.<sup>52</sup> While James was receptive to the idea of peace, he balked at the idea of marrying an English woman who was not a member of the immediate royal family. As a result, the treaty that evolved from the meeting of ambassadors at Edinburgh in the summer of 1493 was for seven years duration and contained no provisions for a marriage.<sup>53</sup> One aspect of the treaty indicates how anxious Henry was for peace. When the ratifications were exchanged he empowered John Carre, janitor of Berwick and William Hungate, one of the tellers of receipt, to pay one thousand marks to the Scots for damages suffered at the hands of Englishmen before the treaty.<sup>54</sup> For Henry this was quite a concession. The pact was ratified by Henry on 8 July 1493,<sup>55</sup> and by James on 20 July.<sup>56</sup>

The next episode in Anglo-Scottish relations is difficult to explain, especially since James had recently concluded the seven year truce with England. James joined in a plot against Henry in an area where the English king was most vulnerable, namely, his right to sit on the throne. The conspiracy revolved around a potential usurper,

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<sup>52</sup>Rymer, Foedera, XII, 529.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., 545.

<sup>54</sup>Calendar of Documents, Scotland, IV, No. 1591, 323.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid., No. 1590, 322-23.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., No. 1592, 323.

Perkin Warbeck, who pretended to be Richard, duke of York, the younger brother of the deceased Edward V. Looking back at the circumstances surrounding the event it seems preposterous that anyone could have believed Warbeck's tale, as James seems to have done,<sup>57</sup> but the real fate of the duke of York was known to only a few, and, judging by most accounts, Warbeck had been thoroughly schooled in the ways of a prince.

Pretenders and plots against Henry's throne were nothing new. Ample testimony for this is given by the revolt of Sir Francis Lovell in the north of England,<sup>58</sup> and Lambert Simnel's impersonation of Edward, earl of Warwick.<sup>59</sup> But Warbeck's pretense proved to be the most formidable challenge to Henry since, at various times, he had strong support in Ireland, France, Burgundy and Scotland.

From his confession--apparently freely given after his capture by the English in 1497--and other sources historians have been able to piece together what is probably a fairly accurate account of Warbeck's activities. Perhaps Buchanan was trying to be charitable to James for believing Warbeck to be genuine when he wrote that the pretender was

<sup>57</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 78.

<sup>58</sup>Eric N. Simons, Henry VII: The First Tudor King (New York, 1968), 84-85.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., 89-90; Conway, Henry VII's Relations with Scotland, 35-36.

born in Tournay " . . . of such elegance of form, commanding stature, and dignity of countenance, that he was easily believed to be of royal origin."<sup>60</sup> Even allowing for patriotism, Buchanan's assessment seems to be reasonably accurate, for most who came into contact with Warbeck were impressed by his manners and bearing.

The pretender's anti-Tudor education began early, as he spent part of his youth in the service of the wife of a strong supporter of the house of York, Sir Edward Brampton.<sup>61</sup> After leaving this position, Warbeck entered an apprenticeship with continental traders, particularly a Breton merchant named Pregent Memo who was responsible for transporting Warbeck to Ireland. Here the idea of posing as a Yorkist pretender was first suggested to him.<sup>62</sup> While at Cork in 1491 he met the Irish earls of Desmond and Kildare, who encouraged him to assume the identity of Richard, duke of York, and it was here, not in Burgundy as once believed, that he began to be groomed in the manner of a prince.<sup>63</sup> Charles VIII of France, upon hearing of a Yorkist pretender in Ireland, dispatched agents to seek him

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<sup>60</sup>Buchanan, The History of Scotland, II, 230.

<sup>61</sup>James Gairdner, History of the Life and Reign of Richard the Third, to Which is Added the Story of Perkin Warbeck from Original Documents (Cambridge, 1898), 267-268.

<sup>62</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XI, liv-lv.

<sup>63</sup>Gairdner, History of the Life and Reign of Richard the Third, 267-69.

out and bring him to France. Lured to Paris by what Buchanan described as "magnificent promises,"<sup>64</sup> Warbeck became a rallying point for disaffected Yorkists. Although treated royally while residing at the French court, Warbeck's stay was short. Charles had brought him there, not because he felt the pretender's claim was justified, but rather to be used as a tool with which he could prise Henry's support away from the Bretons who were resisting political consolidation with France. Warbeck no doubt was aware of this, for when Henry and Charles settled their differences through the Treaty of Étapes in 1492 and Charles recognized Henry as the rightful king,<sup>65</sup> Perkin left the French court for Flanders.<sup>66</sup>

In the Low Countries Warbeck came under the influence of the most consistent opponent of Tudor rule, Margaret, dowager duchess of Burgundy and sister of Edward IV. Margaret worked hard to enlist wide support for her new protégé. She persuaded her stepson Maximilian, the future Holy Roman Emperor, to back Warbeck's projected invasion of England<sup>67</sup> and appealed to the Pope on behalf of the

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<sup>64</sup>Buchanan, The History of Scotland, II, 230.

<sup>65</sup>Pollard, The Reign of Henry VII, lv.

<sup>66</sup>Gairdner, History of the Life and Reign of Richard the Third, 274.

<sup>67</sup>Polydore Vergil, The Anglica Historia of Polydore Vergil, A. D. 1485-1537, II, ed. by Denys Hay, Camden Society (London, 1950), LXXIV, 1508.

pretender as well.<sup>68</sup> With the help of Maximilian, Margaret was able to raise an army of dubious quality composed of Yorkist sympathizers and others who were simply out for plunder, according to Vergil. This sixteenth century historian, writing from a pro-Tudor point of view, only slightly exaggerated in his description of the poor quality of the army that sailed for England in early July of 1495.<sup>69</sup> Soon after Warbeck landed in southwest England on 3 July his force was routed by a band of peasants. His luck was no better at his next stop, Ireland, where his attempt to capture Waterford failed.<sup>70</sup>

At this point James and his councillors expressed an interest in aiding Perkin's cause in return for certain concessions if he were successful. William Elphinstone and other ambassadors were at the court of Maximilian seeking an alliance at the time of Warbeck's defeats in England and Ireland. An integral part of such an agreement would be Scottish aid for the duke of York, and in return, Scotland wanted control of Berwick if and when Warbeck became king of England.<sup>71</sup> Shortly after Warbeck's arrival

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<sup>68</sup>James Gairdner, ed., Historia Regis Henrici Septimi, A Bernardo Andrea Tholosate Conscripta; necnon alia Quaedam ad Eundem Regem Spectantia (London, 1858), 393-99.

<sup>69</sup>Vergil, The Anglica Historia, II, 1508.

<sup>70</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 79.

<sup>71</sup>Calendar of State Papers, Venice, I, Nos. 645, 647; 220.

in Scotland with the remnants of his army in November, 1495, James began to support him in a variety of ways. On 20 November James welcomed him with a great banquet in Stirling Castle on the royal plate.<sup>72</sup> The following January, James not only arranged for the marriage of Warbeck with a member of his own family, Lady Katherine Gordon, daughter of the Earl of Huntly and granddaughter of James I,<sup>73</sup> but also gave "Prince Richard of England" and his attendants £253 17s 10½d to cover their expenses.<sup>74</sup> As if these acts were insufficient to show his intentions of support, James granted the pretender a yearly income of £1344 per year.<sup>75</sup>

This direct financial aid was supplemented by a great deal of indirect assistance in the form of tax concessions granted to Scots who contributed supplies, transportation or the like to Perkin's campaign. The Scottish records of the period are full of such transactions. In the account of the chamberlain of Stirlingshire rendered in August, 1496, he was allowed to reclaim payment for

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<sup>72</sup>Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, I, 256, 263, 267.

<sup>73</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, X, lvi.

<sup>74</sup>Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, I, 263.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., 335, 340, 342. M. Livingstone, ed., Registrum Secreti Sigilli Regum Scotorum. The Register of the Privy Seal of Scotland, Vol. I, A. D. 1488-1529 (Edinburgh, 1908), No. 405, 57. Hereafter cited as Privy Seal of Scotland.

wheat given to the duke of York in the preceding November.<sup>76</sup> When in Edinburgh the pretender resided in the Dominican monastery which received two chalders of barley in compensation for its providing lodging for him.<sup>77</sup> A merchant of Brittany, Johnne Peidzoun, was allowed to ship goods to Scotland duty-free for two years "for his gude service done to the king, and specialie for the furnishing of his [schip?] in the Duke of Zorkis service."<sup>78</sup> Andrew Wood of Blairtoun was paid twenty pounds for services rendered in collecting a general subsidy levied in order to finance Perkin's plot,<sup>79</sup> and Wood, as chamberlain of Fettercain, was allowed ten pounds in his accounts of 1497 for the duke of York's expenses.<sup>80</sup>

Even the minor expenditures of Warbeck were assumed by James. For example, £ 8 25s 6d was paid for stable fees for the pretender's horses at Falkland, and 15 6s 6d was expended for fodder for these horses.<sup>81</sup> In all of his travels Warbeck surely had no more ardent champion than James IV.

<sup>76</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, X, 555.

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., XI, 153-54.

<sup>78</sup>Privy Seal of Scotland, II, No. 99, 13.

<sup>79</sup>Ibid., No. 405, 57. Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, X, 49.

<sup>80</sup>Ibid., 4.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid., XI, 39-40.

Henry, of course, was not ignorant of the pretender's presence in Scotland, and he realized that there was a very good chance that James and Warbeck hoped to bring off an invasion of England and deprive him of the throne. Orders were given to bring the north of England to a state of military preparedness in anticipation of just such an invasion. On 22 March 1496 a commission was granted to Thomas Howard, earl of Surrey, in his capacity as vice-warden of the west and middle marches to array all the defensible men who lived in the area between the Trent and Tweed rivers to resist any attack upon England by the Scots. A similar commission was given to Richard Fox, bishop of Durham, that applied to the county of Northumberland, the bishopric itself and to the bishop's lordships of Tynedale and Redesdale.<sup>82</sup>

At the same time these military preparations were taking place, Henry continued to hope for a negotiated settlement of any misunderstanding that might persuade James to invade England on behalf of Warbeck. On 5 May 1496 the Bishop of Durham was named by Henry to treat with James for marriage with Henry's daughter, Margaret, thus offering a solution that was not accepted until 1502.

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<sup>82</sup>Calendar of Documents, Scotland, IV, No. 1608, 325.

Three similar commissions made the journey to Scotland in the summer with no visible signs of success.<sup>83</sup>

Henry was receiving help in his efforts to persuade the Scots to come to terms with the English. An ambassador from the Spanish court, Don Pedro de Ayala, was also in Edinburgh in what proved to be a vain attempt to prevent a Scottish attack upon England. The invasion of Italy by France in 1494 threatened to upset the balance of power in Europe, and the other powers, namely Spain, the Papacy, the Holy Roman Empire and the rulers of Milan and Venice, joined together in a Holy League directed against France.<sup>84</sup> Members of the League felt that English support was essential to the success of their opposition to France. They also realized that Henry would hardly provide any support for the League so long as England was threatened by a Scottish invasion. If Spain could persuade James to surrender Warbeck, Henry would be free to join the alliance system, and this was Ayala's objective.<sup>85</sup>

Ayala's mission was not entirely hopeless at that time for the Scottish Council had not yet given its approval for the proposed invasion. The Council was divided in its

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<sup>83</sup>Conway, Henry VII's Relations with Scotland, 99-100.

<sup>84</sup>Simons, Henry VII, 176-77.

<sup>85</sup>Gairdner, History of the Life and Reign of Richard the Third, 302-03.

reaction to Warbeck's story. A minority opposed the idea of aiding him either because they thought he was lying or because they regarded the venture too risky, but the faction which favored Warbeck won the day.<sup>86</sup> These advisors hoped to take advantage of the existence of a Yorkist party that remained in England, but, as they found out, anti-Tudor sentiment was not as widespread as they thought.<sup>87</sup> The decision had been made. James would furnish Warbeck with an army, and England would be invaded. The army was provided with conditions attached, however. The earl of Bothwell, Henry's Scottish agent at the court of James IV, informed the English king that Warbeck was bound to deliver to James the castle and town of Berwick and fifty thousand marks within two years.<sup>88</sup>

The first few days of September were occupied with getting the army and supplies together. Men, guns and the necessary road laborers met at Ellem Kirk on 19 September 1496,<sup>89</sup> and the next day a crossing into England was made.<sup>90</sup> James was cautious at first, half expecting to be

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<sup>86</sup>Buchanan, The History of Scotland, 231-33.

<sup>87</sup>C. H. Williams, The Making of Tudor Despotism (New York, 1967), 42.

<sup>88</sup>Conway, Henry VII's Relations with Scotland, 104-05.

<sup>89</sup>Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, I, 296-99.

<sup>90</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 83-84.

challenged by an English army, but when no serious opposition developed his men dispersed to plunder the countryside.<sup>91</sup> Warbeck became disgusted after a couple of days and returned to Scotland.<sup>92</sup> The raid ended with the siege of a small castle, after which James recrossed the Tweed.<sup>93</sup> The biggest surprise came when the popular support Warbeck expected failed to materialize, and the expedition that was supposed to have been carried to London by a wave of enthusiasm died a miserable death along the border.

The Warbeck episode undoubtedly was an embarrassing one for the Scots. One old Scottish chronicle failed to even mention James' support of the pretender.<sup>94</sup> James ended this support after the Ellem fiasco, and provided Warbeck with transportation to Ireland. He sailed from Ayre in July, 1497, in the ship Cuckoo commanded by Robert Barton, and landed shortly thereafter at Cork.<sup>95</sup> Not content with his first escape from England, he soon mounted another invasion. A landing was made at Whitesand Bay near Land's End, Cornwall, on 7 September, and his prospects

<sup>91</sup>Buchanan, The History of Scotland, 234.

<sup>92</sup>Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, I, 299-300.

<sup>93</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XL, lx, 141.

<sup>94</sup>John W. Mackenzie, A Chronicle of the Kings of Scotland, from Fergus the First, to James the Sixth, in the Year MDCXI (Edinburgh, 1830), 80.

<sup>95</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XI, lxi-lxxi, 43.

appeared good initially. The southwest of England, historically one of the most conservative areas of the country, had yet to accept completely Henry as king, and the people greeted Warbeck enthusiastically. His good fortune was short-lived, however. His forces were defeated at the Battle of Tauton, but he managed to escape temporarily. Later, he surrendered in return for his safety and confessed publically to being a pretender. One last escape was fruitless; he was recaptured, brought to trial, and hanged on Tyburn Hill on 23 November 1499.<sup>96</sup>

Today it seems ridiculous that James could have believed that Warbeck was the duke of York, but, of course, he did not have the advantage of a complete knowledge of the facts. There was no proof that Edward V and his younger brother were the victims of foul play, for Richard III, it could be argued, would hardly have murdered his own nephew. The popular conception of Richard has changed radically since his reign, primarily as the result of Tudor propagandists such as William Shakespeare, Polydore Vergil and Raphael Holinshed. Shakespeare, in many of his histories, sought not only to glorify the Tudors, but also to justify Henry VII's usurpation of the throne. To accomplish this, Shakespeare mythologized Richard in such a way

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<sup>96</sup>Gairdner, History of the Life and Reign of Richard the Third, 326-35. Charles Wriothesley, A Chronicle of England During the Reigns of the Tudors, from A. D. 1485 to 1559, Vol. I, Camden Society (London, 1875), XI, XX, 4.

as to make Henry appear as the savior of the English nation from a man who misused his powers.

If James seemed to be naive in his acceptance of Warbeck's story, his backing of the pretender was a good risk. Henry was constantly faced with rebellions at home and interference from abroad until 1498, and there was a very real chance that he would be overthrown. James erred in failing to push the invasion with more vigor if he hoped for any degree of success. Henry was vulnerable at the time of the invasion, but 1498 proved to be the watershed of his reign. By that year most of his serious problems were solved. The throne was safe, for there were no more serious attempts at usurpation; financial security had been obtained; the power of the nobility had been checked; and the governmental machinery was functioning smoothly. Henry's vulnerability had decreased to the point where James could not expect to influence English domestic politics. The popularity of his son, when he came to the throne as Henry VIII in 1509<sup>97</sup> meant that if James had ever hoped to be a factor in the internal affairs of England, his opportunity was gone.

What is so clear to us today was not as evident to James after he dismissed Warbeck in 1496. The king of Scots wanted to continue the war, and Henry was resigned

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<sup>97</sup>Edward Herbert, Lord of Cherbury, The Life and Reign of King Henry VIII, Together with a General History of those Times (London, 1741), 13.

to it now that he felt that the peace had been irreparably broken. In a commission of array of 13 February 1497 granted to Dacre for the counties of Cumberland and Westmorland Henry stated:

Our enemy of Scotland, with a great array of our rebels and traitors, has hostilely invaded our kingdom of England, and cruelly slain our subjects, neither sparing age nor sex and has burned and destroyed without remorse, castles, fortalices, and towns and intends further mischief.<sup>98</sup>

James, meanwhile, had received authority from his council and Parliament for borrowing £40,000 and a grant of £120,000 which would allow him to continue the war.<sup>99</sup> He wasted little time in putting some of this money to use in the restoration of Dunbar Castle, which would fulfill the dual purpose of protecting the Scottish border and serving as a base from which attacks upon England could be launched.<sup>100</sup>

England's preparations were not proceeding as smoothly. Henry, as was his custom, sought to use the threat of war to his financial advantage by raising taxes, but this time there was trouble. A contingent of Cornishmen, rebelling against the taxes assessed for the purpose

<sup>98</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XI, lx. Calendar of Documents, Scotland, IV, No. 1628, 328.

<sup>99</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 85.

<sup>100</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XI, 75, 76, 149, 151, 153, 156, 214. Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, I, 306 et passim.

of defense, marched upon London. The English army in the north was forced to return to London to put down the rebellion.<sup>101</sup> Realizing that James would undoubtedly seek to take advantage of England's domestic discomfort of the moment, Henry issued a new commission to increase his country's military might in the border area. On 24 June 1497 the sheriffs of York, Northumberland, Cumberland, Westmorland, Lincoln, Nottingham and Derby were told to array the able-bodied men of these counties from sixteen to sixty on an hour's warning to fight the "ancient enemies."<sup>102</sup>

Henry still held out the hope that a Scottish invasion could be avoided. James had just dispatched two ambassadors, lords Hume and Angus, to England to tell Henry's representatives of the terms they must meet to prevent an invasion. Henry immediately responded by sending Richard Fox, the bishop of Durham, to Scotland with a counter proposal. War could be avoided if James would surrender Warbeck, who at that time was still in Scotland, and send ambassadors, namely the bishop of Moray, the earl of Angus, and lord Hume, for additional negotiations. Fox was given secret instructions to the effect that even if

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<sup>101</sup>Conway, Henry VII's Relations with Scotland, 109-10. Kennedy, Studies in Tudor History, 17.

<sup>102</sup>Calendar of Documents, Scotland, IV, No. 1633, 328.

Warbeck were surrendered he was to ask James to come to Newcastle-on-Tyne to meet with Henry personally to discuss peace terms.<sup>103</sup>

This obvious desire for peace on the part of the English king whetted James' appetite for war. Upon hearing of the Cornish revolt he had pushed ahead with plans for a renewed attack upon England<sup>104</sup> by levying a new tax. His financial base was considerably strengthened when a number of towns, including Leith and Dundee, paid extra money to keep from sending men to war.<sup>105</sup> Preparations having been completed, James and his army crossed the border in early August. This attempt proved to be as feeble as the earlier one made in support of Warbeck. Scottish activity was limited primarily to the sacking of castles and looting the countryside. As soon as James heard that the earl of Surrey was leading an army of approximately twenty thousand soldiers to meet him, he returned to Edinburgh. Surrey followed James into Scotland and began his own campaign of looting in the area just north of Berwick, whereupon James reassembled his army and marched to meet Surrey. The armies came to within a mile of each other at the castle of Ayton where all sorts of medieval challenges for personal hand-to-hand combat between the leaders of the two armies

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<sup>103</sup>Pollard, The Reign of Henry VII, No. 11, 37-42.

<sup>104</sup>Buchanan, The History of Scotland, 235-36.

<sup>105</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XI, 245. Privy Seal of Scotland, No. 112, 15.

would be used to settle any differences between England and Scotland. Nothing came of this as both armies tired of the lengthy mobilization and gradually disbanded.<sup>106</sup>

At this point the influence of Ayala and William Elphinstone over James seems to have been substantial, for they prompted him to send ambassadors to meet the English representatives still at Ayton Castle.<sup>107</sup> On 5 September Henry appointed the bishop of Carlisle, Lord Dacre, and William Warham to meet the Scots with full powers,<sup>108</sup> and the result was a truce for seven years beginning with 30 September 1497.<sup>109</sup> Ayala once again used his considerable influence on James to extend the treaty promptly, and a new agreement altered its duration to one year after the death of the longest survivor, either Henry or James.<sup>110</sup>

This agreement ushered in a new era in Anglo-Scottish relations. A new spirit of compromise prevailed, and in this heady atmosphere the two states began searching for a "final solution" to the problems that had plagued them for centuries. What evolved was an idea that, while not entirely new, promised a greater chance for lasting peace than ever before.

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<sup>106</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 87-88.

<sup>107</sup>Ibid., 88.

<sup>108</sup>Calendar of Documents, Scotland, IV, No. 1636, 330.

<sup>109</sup>Rymer, Foedera, XII, 673.

<sup>110</sup>Ibid., 673-80.

## CHAPTER V

### THE FINAL SOLUTION: THE MARRIAGE AND TREATY OF PERPETUAL PEACE, 1498-1503

As was nearly always the case in Anglo-Scottish history, the road to peace was a rocky one. It would appear that two countries whose kings had just concluded a treaty to last through both of their lifetimes could expect a degree of tranquility to exist for a short while at least. In this case, the peace lasted for five months.

In the early summer of 1498, trouble erupted after an apparently innocent visit to an English castle at Norham by a group of young Scots. Judging from Buchanan's account of the incident the young men intended no harm for they " . . . mingled as familiarly as at home with their neighbors, from whom they were separated only by the river, not very broad at that place."<sup>1</sup> Polydore Vergil was not so sure of the Scots' innocence. He wrote that they gave the impression of looking over the castle's defenses, and when they returned the following day the inhabitants did not let

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<sup>1</sup>Buchanan, The History of Scotland, 238-39.

the Scots go unchallenged. In the ensuing fight four of the invaders were killed, the remainder escaping into Scotland with their wounded.<sup>2</sup>

The news of the altercation at Norham did not take long to reach James, and when it did he was quick to act. A herald was dispatched to the English court with a demand for the redress of the new grievances. The messenger was also to announce that if redress were not forthcoming James would not consider himself bound by the treaty recently concluded with England.<sup>3</sup> Not wishing to jeopardize peace with Scotland on account of the youthful exuberance of the men involved in the Norham incident, Henry assumed an extremely conciliatory position. He promised to investigate the incident, and to punish any of his subjects that acted illegally.<sup>4</sup> He also declared to James that, since the events at Norham had occurred without his connivance, he considered the peace to be unbroken, and he would conduct his affairs with Scotland accordingly.<sup>5</sup>

James was not appeased. He informed the Spanish ambassador, Ayala, that if it were not for his oath to uphold the treaty with England he would settle the issue

<sup>2</sup>Vergil, The Anglica Historia, 112-13.

<sup>3</sup>Hubert E. H. Jerningham, "An Affair at Norham Castle and its Influence on Scotch and English History," Scottish Antiquary; or, Northern Notes and Queries, XV (1901), 181.

<sup>4</sup>Buchanan, The History of Scotland, 238-39.

<sup>5</sup>Vergil, The Anglica Historia, 113.

"by the sword rather than by prayers."<sup>6</sup> It is probable that the memory of his recent attempts to exercise Scottish military power in England on behalf of Perkin Warbeck motivated James' prudent behavior rather than concern for his oath. Scotland could stand only so many "thrashings" of England. In any event, the peace was preserved for neither James nor Henry really wanted to go to war.

Since Norham Castle was within the jurisdiction of Richard Fox, bishop of Durham, he took it upon himself to do what he could to soothe the angered James.<sup>7</sup> Fox contended that the Norham affair was nothing more than an unfortunate accident, and he appealed to James to act benignly so that the peace would not be imperiled by the impetuous youths of the border area.<sup>8</sup> The bishop succeeded better than he knew. James, looking for the first opportunity to resolve the issue in a peaceful manner, was sufficiently impressed by Durham's letter to want to continue the dialogue, but in person rather than by letter. An invitation was extended to the bishop to come to Melrose to talk over the Norham incident and other matters.<sup>9</sup>

Fox knew an opening when he saw one, and when James mentioned a discussion of "other matters" the bishop saw

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<sup>6</sup>Calendar of State Papers, Venice, I, No. 769, 269.

<sup>7</sup>Buchanan, The History of Scotland, 238-39.

<sup>8</sup>Vergil, The Anglica Historia, 113.

<sup>9</sup>Jerningham, "An Affray at Norham," 182.

this as an opportunity not only to reaffirm the lifetime treaty recently concluded between James and Henry, but also, according to Buchanan, to advance a suggestion which could possibly eliminate all future hostility between the two countries, namely a marriage between James and a member of the immediate royal family of England.<sup>10</sup> There is some question as to whether James or Fox first advanced the idea of a marriage between the Scottish king and Margaret Tudor, daughter of Henry VII. As indicated above, Buchanan stated that Fox was the prime mover behind the marriage plans, but Vergil took the opposite position. Vergil wrote that James revealed to Fox that it was his dearest wish to marry Margaret if Henry would not oppose the match.<sup>11</sup>

Actually it is immaterial who advanced the idea at the Melrose meeting, for the concept was not unique. James III had contributed to his own downfall at Sauchieburn by concluding agreements with Henry VII that called for a marriage between James and the widow of Edward IV as well as between various Scottish princes and daughters of Edward.<sup>12</sup> Other marriages were proposed in succeeding years, and only the preceding summer Henry had specifically suggested that James marry Margaret.<sup>13</sup> What is significant

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<sup>10</sup>Buchanan, The History of Scotland, 238-39.

<sup>11</sup>Vergil, The Anglica Historia, 113.

<sup>12</sup>Robert S. Rait, The Parliaments of Scotland (Glasgow, 1924), 37.

<sup>13</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 92.

is that on this occasion both kings were receptive to the idea of a treaty cemented by a royal marriage, and though the negotiations were tedious at times, such an agreement was reached.

Much had to be done before the treaty of marriage could be concluded since there was formidable opposition to the idea in England. Both Henry's wife and his mother balked at sending the nine-year-old Margaret to become the bride of a twenty-five-year-old man who maintained a host of mistresses.<sup>14</sup> Personal considerations aside, there were sound political reasons for resisting the marriage. It was obvious to all concerned that once the marriage took place the possibility would exist that James or subsequent rulers of Scotland could become kings of England as well. In fact only three lives, those of Henry VII and his two sons, Arthur and Henry, would stand between James and the political control of England. Henry discounted these objections by pointing out that if the two nations were joined in a personal union, Scotland would be drawn to England instead of the other way around since the greater power always dominates the weaker. England's own history proved this, he said. After the Norman Conquest it was England, not Normandy, that became the dominant force in the relationship between the two.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XII, xliii-xliv.

<sup>15</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 93.

Most of the original opposition came to support the proposition for a marriage treaty, but some segments remained unconvinced. The most famous case was Thomas More's effort to reduce Parliamentary funding of the wedding. Henry, according to feudal custom, was able to demand an aid on the occasion of the marriage of his eldest daughter. He requested approximately ninety thousand pounds from Parliament in keeping with the custom, but More argued that this sum was excessive. He spoke so persuasively that Parliament reduced the grant to some forty thousand pounds. Henry's reaction was to strike back at More through his father, John More, by incarcerating him in the Tower on false charges until he paid a hundred pounds fine.<sup>16</sup>

More's actions notwithstanding, the way was now clear to begin the negotiations for the marriage treaty. These negotiations were immediately preceded by a reaffirmation of the peace concluded at Stirling on 12 July 1499.<sup>17</sup> James' ratification came on 20 July and Henry's on 8 September. One significant addition was included in hopes of making the treaty a lasting one. A clause stated that rebels or traitors against one of the princes would not be allowed to seek refuge in the other's country and thus become a potential source of friction between James

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<sup>16</sup>R. W. Chambers, Thomas More (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1958), 87.

<sup>17</sup>Rymer, Foedera, XII, 722.

and Henry.<sup>18</sup> Three days after his affirmation of the treaty, Henry commissioned James' new-found friend, the bishop of Durham, to begin the marriage negotiations.<sup>19</sup>

Despite the mutual desire for a marriage treaty, there were diverging opinions with respect to the specific provisions of such an agreement. Citing the tender age of the English princess, Bishop Fox told James he must not expect the marriage to take place immediately. James agreed to this stipulation, but he added that he must receive the same dowry that he would have received from Spain if he had married an infanta, as had been suggested in earlier years. Although Henry wanted the marriage to take place, he was not the kind of man to be threatened, especially when a sizable amount of money was involved. He promised James only one half of the amount demanded.<sup>20</sup>

One obstacle to negotiations was easily removed, however. James and Margaret had a common ancestor in their great-great grandfather, John of Beaufort, marquis of Dorset,<sup>21</sup> and thus the relationship stood within the area prohibited by canon law. On 28 July 1500 Henry applied for a papal dispensation to remove the impediment, and

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<sup>18</sup>Calendar of Documents, Scotland, IV, No. 1657, 333.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., No. 1658, 333.

<sup>20</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 93.

<sup>21</sup>See Appendix A.

such a dispensation was issued by Pope Alexander VI.<sup>22</sup> Now that the necessary preliminary groundwork had been laid, the negotiation of the actual marriage treaty proceeded smoothly.

The next twelve months or so were taken up with the comings and goings of English and Scottish heralds and ambassadors of relatively minor stature between the two states,<sup>23</sup> and on 8 October 1501 James commissioned his most favored representatives, Robert, archbishop of Glasgow; Patrick, earl of Bothwell; Lord Halis, warden of the west marches; and Andrew Forman, postulate of the See of Moray, to contract a marriage with Margaret.<sup>24</sup> This commission gave Andrew Forman his first chance to put his extraordinary abilities to use in the diplomatic field. Forman's career is strikingly similar to that of Thomas Wolsey in that his rise from common origins was extremely rapid and that both came to be numbered among the most powerful figures in their respective countries. In the person of Forman we can see the best example of the clerical diplomat and careerist in all of Scottish history. After graduation from St. Andrews, he attached himself to the household of the earl of Angus in 1479. Forman made a significant step

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<sup>22</sup>Rymer, Foedera, XII, 765.

<sup>23</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 94.

<sup>24</sup>Rymer, Foedera, XII, 777. Calendar of Documents, Scotland, IV, No. 1675, 335.

in 1490 by joining the service of James IV, and fulfilled several functions at court before he became engaged in the marriage treaty negotiations.<sup>25</sup> In return for these services, James secured the bishopric of Moray for Forman, and the new bishop also received the rectory of Cottingham in England from a grateful Henry VII.<sup>26</sup> Forman's most formidable task was ahead of him, however. In 1511 James sent him to various European capitals in an effort to avoid a premature war. These efforts failed, but Forman benefited personally. James rewarded him with the commendatorships of Kelso and Dryburgh, while Louis XII of France secured for him the archbishopric of Bourges in 1513.<sup>27</sup> One of the few men of any political significance to survive the disaster at Flodden, Forman continued to serve Scotland into the reign of James V (1513-1542).

England's ambassadors, Henry Dean, archbishop of Canterbury and keeper of the great seal; Richard Fox, now bishop of Winchester and keeper of the privy seal; and Thomas Howard, earl of Surrey and treasurer of England, received their commission from Henry on 28 November 1501. Their orders were specific. In addition to negotiating a marriage treaty, they were also to reach agreements with

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<sup>25</sup>Burleigh, A Church History of Scotland, 110-11.

<sup>26</sup>Calendar of Documents, Scotland, IV, No. 1671, 335.

<sup>27</sup>Burleigh, A Church History of Scotland, 110-11.

the Scots with respect to the dowry, Princess Margaret's transfer to Scotland, and all other matters pertaining to the marriage, such as the Scots' ratification of the papal dispensation that permitted the marriage despite the consanguinity that existed between Margaret and James.<sup>28</sup>

The Scottish ambassadors arrived in London late in 1501, and the atmosphere there was certainly conducive to amicable negotiations. Only a few days earlier Arthur, Prince of Wales, had been married to the Spanish infanta, Catherine of Aragon; the city was still staging tournaments and banquets in honor of the occasion. The ambassadors and their retinue of one hundred or so people visited these events with regularity before retiring to their quarters at Smithfield. It was not all entertainment, however, for they, along with their English counterparts, soon plunged into the negotiations.<sup>29</sup>

Everything must have gone exceedingly well for, on 24 January 1502, less than two months after the ambassadors met, the treaty was completed. It called for Princess Margaret to be brought to Lamberton Kirk at Henry's expense at least by 1 September 1503, and the ceremony was to take place within fifteen days from the meeting at Lamberton. James obligated himself to endow his bride with a marriage gift by 1 July 1503 consisting of lands which had an annual

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<sup>28</sup>Calendar of Documents, Scotland, IV, No. 1678, 336.

<sup>29</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 94-95.

rental value of two thousand pounds sterling or six thousand pounds Scots. In addition to her Scottish retainers, Margaret would be provided with twenty-four English attendants, and James was to grant her a yearly pension of a thousand pounds in Scottish money which she could dispose of according to her own wishes. As Margaret's dowry, the treaty called for the payment of thirty thousand gold English "angell nobillis" with ten thousand falling due on the marriage day and the remainder to be paid in two subsequent annual installments. If Margaret died within three years without issue, however, Henry would be allowed to keep the unpaid balance.<sup>30</sup> The Scottish Parliament accepted these financial arrangements on 13 March 1503.<sup>31</sup>

At Richmond Palace on 25 January Margaret formally pledged to marry James, and the earl of Bothwell, speaking for the Scottish king, returned the vow.<sup>32</sup> Now that the union of the Thistle and the Rose was assured, barring the death of one of the intended marriage partners, the city of London was engulfed by a wave of celebrations that seemed to indicate that its inhabitants had grown tired of the long history of animosity towards Scotland and welcomed the possibility of permanent peace. The exchange of vows was proclaimed by a clergyman at St. Paul's Cross, while a

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<sup>30</sup>Calendar of Documents, Scotland, IV, No. 1680, 336-37. Rymer, Foedera, XII, 797.

<sup>31</sup>A. of P. Scotland, II, 240.

Te Deum was being sung in the cathedral. Great fires were lighted that night throughout the city, and huge quantities of Gascon wine were consumed by the Londoners to mark the occasion.<sup>33</sup>

All of this revelry was not intended to celebrate the marriage proposal alone, for another, very significant treaty was signed as well, the Treaty of Perpetual Peace. This treaty was to serve as the diplomatic basis of Anglo-Scottish relations during the period leading up to Flodden,<sup>34</sup> so a close examination of it is essential. The treaty went to great lengths to neutralize the always troublesome marches. It expressly stipulated that minor altercations were not to be construed as breaches of the entire treaty. Both nations realized that difficulties were inevitable, and they made it clear that such problems should be resolved according to a formula set down in the treaty. Only in the event that one of the rulers had vainly sought redress for six months was he to have the right to issue letters of reprisal against the offending person. In no case was the ruler to use these troubles as a pretext for war. Another portion of the treaty provided a system of mutual defense for England and Scotland. In the event that either country was attacked by foreign or

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<sup>33</sup>William Grafton, The Chronicle of Briteyn, beginning at William the Conqueror endeth wyth our most dread and soueraigne Lady Queene Elizabeth (1568), 936-37.

<sup>34</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 96.

domestic enemies, the other would send such aid as was requested by the victim of the attack. More significantly, if one of the contracting parties made war upon an ally of the other contracting power, the latter agreed not to invade the former country and only to aid the ally in a defensive manner.<sup>35</sup> This was the clause that James would violate in 1513 by invading England and attacking the earl of Surrey's army at Flodden.

The question of the sovereignty of Berwick was left unanswered, but the treaty said that the town, castle, and ancient bounds were not to be attacked by the Scots. Nor could the area be used by the English as a base for attacks against Scotland. The treaty would not be invalidated by the death of either James or Margaret before the princess was due to arrive in Scotland for the ceremony, and future kings were to renew the pact within six months of their accession. Finally, in an effort to make the treaty as binding as possible, James and Henry had it confirmed by a papal bull of Pope Alexander VI issued on 28 May 1503. Seeking papal sanction of treaties was a common practice of this period, and violation of a treaty so confirmed by Rome carried with it the excommunication of the guilty party.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup>Dickinson, Source Book, II, 58-60.

<sup>36</sup>Rymer, Foedera, XII, 793, 800. Calendar of Documents, Scotland, IV, Nos. 1681-1682, 337.

Only the ratification of the treaty by the two kings was necessary to make it binding, but this proved to be more than a mere formality. On 31 October 1502, Henry appointed Sir Thomas Darcy, captain of the town of Berwick, and Henry Babington, a professor of theology, as his special commissioners to witness the oath of James to uphold the marriage and peace treaties.<sup>37</sup> At first, James swore to the treaty on 10 December, but when he noticed that Henry was referred to as king of England and France he withdrew his approval. Once the word "France" was deleted James swore to uphold the treaties, and would never request that the pope release him from his oath.<sup>38</sup> Although the pragmatic Henry would not have been disturbed by this deletion, it did make a difference to Thomas Darcy. Probably out of respect to his king, Darcy refused to accept the treaties after James' ratification, and they had to be taken to London by the herald, Lyon King-of-Arms.<sup>39</sup> The entire treaty process was finally completed on 6 June 1503 when Lyon obtained papal confirmation of the agreements.<sup>40</sup>

Once the marriage was assured, James authorized vast expenditures, which Scotland could ill afford, to

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<sup>37</sup>Ibid., No. 1686, 338.

<sup>38</sup>Rymer, Foedera, XIII, 48-50.

<sup>39</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 101.

<sup>40</sup>Calendar of Documents, Scotland, IV, No. 1719, 341.

ready his country for the coming ceremony. Flemish merchants came to Scotland with cargoes of silver plate, velvet, tapestries, damasks, taffetas, cloth of gold, and furs as ordered by James to furnish his new palace, Holyroodhouse.<sup>41</sup> Most of the imported cloth was destined for the new queen's chamber. Some £955 were expended for the hangings and canopies alone.<sup>42</sup> The wearing apparel of everyone connected with the Scottish court was to be equally luxurious. James had two gowns made for himself of cloth of gold lined with fur which cost in excess of £600 each. His pages and even the master cook received new gowns made of cloth of gold and velvet.<sup>43</sup>

It would be unfair, of course, to judge James according to a system of values other than that which existed in the sixteenth century. In that age when a country's importance was measured in part by the pomp and pageantry that accompanied its significant events, even the most frugal king could not afford austerity on such occasions. Henry VII was a living example of this maxim. James, however, obviously went too far. He probably privately admitted as much when he financed an alchemist's efforts to isolate the philosopher's stone, that legendary substance which could turn ordinary metal into gold. The

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<sup>41</sup>Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, II, 214.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., II, 208-10.

search ended in failure in June, 1503, when the alchemist was paid eighteen shillings from the royal treasury.<sup>44</sup> James' feverish activities, which were designed to make his court appear as wealthy as any in Europe, were incongruous reflections on his foreign policy pretensions through the rest of his life. He sought in vain to make Scotland play the role of a major European power no matter what the cost.

In order to fulfill his part of the treaty, James assigned certain Scottish properties to Margaret on 24 May 1503. Included in the grant were Ettrick Forest, Newark Castle, the lordships of Dunbar and Cockburnspath with the exception of Dunbar Castle, Linlithgow Palace and shire, the castle and shire of Stirling, the earldom of Methven, and the lordship and castle of Doune.<sup>45</sup> Between 26 May and 1 June, Thomas Dacre, acting as Margaret's attorney, visited the various palaces and lands mentioned in James' grant and took charge of them in the name of the princess.<sup>46</sup>

All was set for Margaret's arrival which was not far away. On 30 June Margaret and her party, which was of considerable size, left Richmond Palace.<sup>47</sup> In addition to King Henry, Margaret's entourage included the earl of

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., 362, 374.

<sup>45</sup>Rymer, Foedera, XIII, 62.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid., 64-73.

<sup>47</sup>Grafton, The Chronicle of Briteyn, 941.

Northumberland; the archbishop of York; Thomas, lord Dacre and Thomas Howard, earl of Surrey.<sup>48</sup> Henry accompanied his daughter only as far as Colliweston where his mother, the countess of Richmond, was buried, and from that point the English procession was under the command of the earl of Surrey. They went to Berwick and then into Scotland where the earl of Morton and a delegation of Scottish noblemen received them at Lamberton. Judging by William Grafton's narrative, the Scots must have been impressive. He wrote, "The Scottes that day, I assure you were not behind the Englishemen, but farre aboue in apparell and riche Jewels and many Chaynes."<sup>49</sup> Morton conducted the entire party to Dalkeith and then to Newbattle where James met his future bride for the first time.<sup>50</sup>

During the next few days James talked with the young princess in a sincere effort to relieve her apprehensions and make her feel at home. All along the route to Edinburgh he showered her with gifts such as horses and tame deer, while staging various entertainments in her honor.<sup>51</sup> After all the negotiations, debates, and work that had gone into the marriage treaty, the ceremony itself seems rather anticlimatic. If so, it was not because of

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<sup>48</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XII, liii.

<sup>49</sup>Grafton, The Chronicle of Briteyn, 941-42.

<sup>50</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XII, liii.

<sup>51</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 107-09.

the lack of embellishments. After the ceremony had been performed on 8 August by the archbishop of Glasgow in the abbey church of Holyrood,<sup>52</sup> there came five days of banquets, balls, and other such entertainments. At one great dinner, fifty or sixty different dishes were served, including condiments, wines, and provisions of all kinds from all parts of the kingdom: deer from Falkland, woodcocks from Kilmarnock and swans and partridges from Kinclavin.<sup>53</sup> James awarded £28 to five minstrels who particularly pleased him,<sup>54</sup> and there followed much music and dancing while the commoners celebrated by building great bonfires in the streets. Next came days filled with entertainments by acrobats and jousting in the palace courtyard, and not until 13 August did the revelry come to an end.<sup>55</sup>

The Scots were overwhelmed by the whole affair. James ordered his poet laureate, William Dunbar, to compose some appropriate lines, and the result was The Thistle and the Rose.<sup>56</sup> The king was so taken with Surrey, Margaret wrote to her father, "that he cannott forber the companey off hym no tyme off the day,"<sup>57</sup> but, of course, this

<sup>52</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XII, liii.

<sup>53</sup>Ibid., 164, 165, 181, 182, 205, 228, 234.

<sup>54</sup>Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, II, 387.

<sup>55</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 111-12.

<sup>56</sup>Coupland, Welsh and Scottish Nationalism, 76.

<sup>57</sup>Pollard, The Reign of Henry VII, No. 166, 232-34.

affinity had dissipated by the time the two men faced each other at Flodden.

That development was one James could not foresee in 1503. He was about to enter a period that was undoubtedly the zenith of his career. In addition to accomplishing something virtually unheard of in Scottish history, the signing of a treaty of perpetual peace with England, James was in the midst of an ambitious program of forcing royal authority upon the historically rebellious Scottish nobility and generally strengthening the power of the crown. More to the point for James, Scotland was beginning to make her influence felt in continental affairs. These years gave James a chance to show that he had real abilities, that he was his own man in foreign affairs, and not the lackey of France, as he is usually depicted.

## CHAPTER VI

### PEACE AND POWER, 1503-1509

James' task of bringing peace to Scotland was only half finished in 1503. While it is true that the Treaty of Perpetual Peace generally insured Scotland's safety from foreign dangers, there was another threat to the peaceful conduct of her affairs, and this threat came from within. If James expected Scotland and himself to wield power and influence in continental affairs, it was essential that he require obedience from the rebellious Scottish nobility. This very difficult process was also a very gradual one, since James had begun long before the new treaty with England had been concluded, but he realized his greatest success in the years between 1503 and 1509. This achievement helped to give him confidence to assert his power against England in 1513, but events were to prove that he was weaker than he thought.

The Scottish monarch knew the danger presented by a powerful faction of nobility hostile to royal authority. He had benefited from just such a faction, since it was a rebellion that had brought him to the throne in 1488. James' role in that rebellion probably never will be

determined with any degree of accuracy, but it is reasonably certain that he was not completely innocent.<sup>1</sup> The rebels' success did not end the problem for factions still remained. In addition, England was always ready to seek gain in Scotland's misfortune. Henry VII had agreed to aid the party of the now dead James III, and went so far as to place the earl of Bothwell on the English pension list for life. In 1489 he paid three Scots, John Ramsey, Sir Adam Forman, and John Ledell, to go to Dumbarton with a cargo of munitions for their party, but there is no proof that the ship reached its destination.<sup>2</sup> Henry was prevented from involving England further in Scotland's domestic troubles by a rebellion in his own country. In May 1489 some northern noblemen led by a former supporter of Henry, John a Chambre, killed the earl of Northumberland in their attempt to establish their own authority in the north. The earl of Surrey was responsible for the crushing of the rebellion, and the hanging of Chambre at York as well.<sup>3</sup>

This entire matter made a very distinct impression upon James. A rebellion had brought him to the throne; he was aware that another could remove him. James was intent upon ruling Scotland with as little interference as was possible. For example, great parliamentary gains were made

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<sup>1</sup>Tytler, History of Scotland, IV, 286-87.

<sup>2</sup>Conway, Henry VII's Relations with Scotland, 27-29.

<sup>3</sup>Pollard, The Reign of Henry VII, No. 55, 79-80.

during his minority, since the conspirators had used the Scottish Parliament to justify their deposition of James III. Parliament also appointed the necessary councilmen for the young king, so until he reached legal age, that body was one of the most powerful forces in Scotland. Once James was no longer bound by the restrictions of royal minority, constitutional government fell by the wayside, as he virtually ruled without Parliament.<sup>4</sup>

It was not quite so easy to remove the other great obstacle to royal absolutism in Scotland, namely, the nobility. James was well aware that there were great areas of his land where his authority was ignored, places such as remote valleys in the Highlands and islands off the western coast, where the word of the local clan chieftain carried far more weight than his own.<sup>5</sup> The relative inaccessibility of these areas to the large body of troops necessary to enforce the authority of the crown hindered the efforts of Scottish kings to subdue the clans for centuries. As great as the geographic obstacles were, the social structure of the clans proved to be just as formidable a hindrance. The Highland and western clans were a world apart from most other Europeans, even from their own countrymen in the Lowlands. Life in the Scottish Lowlands in the Middle Ages was notorious for its feudal anarchy, murderous

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<sup>4</sup>Rait, The Parliaments of Scotland, 36-38.

<sup>5</sup>Mackie, A Short History of Scotland, 184.

nobility, corrupt church, and virtual economic stagnation, but, as turbulent as this existence was, the plight of the Highland Scots was even more so. They still spoke Gaelic, retained their clannish ways, and generally maintained an attitude of extreme social conservatism.<sup>6</sup>

This hostility to new ideas was virtually universal in the Highlands in that the clans retained their language, their church based in large part upon Irish Catholicism and, most significantly from a political point of view, their Celtic tribal system. The intruder in the Highlands who sought to challenge traditional Celtic institutions was particularly hated, and on more than one occasion the clans united in arms to expel such threats to their way of life.<sup>7</sup> To the Highlanders, royal government constituted the greatest danger to their institutions. The Scottish sovereigns had broken Celtic laws in their attempts to subdue the clans, and, therefore, the clans did not consider obedience to their authority to be obligatory.<sup>8</sup> In some cases the various kings actually compounded the lawlessness of the Highlands through their own inefficiency. The deeds of the Highlanders which were outside the law were often merely attempts to redress wrongs that had been done them,

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<sup>6</sup>Coupland, Welsh and Scottish Nationalism, 75-75.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 64, 68.

<sup>8</sup>Frank Adam, The Clans, Septs and Regiments of the Scottish Highlands (Edinburgh, 1908), 31.

or were attempts to gain personal justice when there was little hope of obtaining that justice through regular legal channels.<sup>9</sup>

For the most part, the Highlanders had little respect for authority of any kind, which quite naturally led to a glaring lack of discipline. They often failed to pay rents on crown lands they occupied, and conducted raids on neighboring estates with such frequency as to render them unprofitable. The government even went so far as to build a series of castles in Aberdeenshire to guard the passes into the hills and hopefully to prevent descents by the Highlanders, but this measure generally proved to be ineffective.<sup>10</sup> This independence that was so characteristic of the Highland Scots not only resulted in the disobedience of royal authority, but often clan authority as well. In most Scottish clans there were instances where clansmen refused to obey a chieftain they disliked, and even deposed or killed him. In addition to all these problems with the clans, the kings of Scotland were always faced with the possibility that in every struggle at least one disgruntled Scottish lord would be actively pro-English.<sup>11</sup>

Every Scottish king who had aspirations to rule in an effective manner realized that the Highlands and the

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<sup>9</sup>Grant, The Social and Economic Development of Scotland, 528.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., 526.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 180, 516-17.

equally hostile Western Islands would have to be subdued even if their loyalty could not be won. They sought to persuade the clan chieftains to support the idea of a centralized authority by conducting royal progresses into the north parts. Usually any headway made in this area was wiped out by the royal minorities that occurred all too frequently in Scottish history, and the process had to be begun all over again.<sup>12</sup>

Some of the royal activities in the Highlands were quite paradoxical and tended to nullify any progress made in bringing this area more in line with national priorities. The more powerful Scottish kings in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries subjected the Highlands to a degree of feudal control, and they enjoyed a limited amount of success. The clan and clan loyalties remained the dominant facts of life in the north, although these attempts at feudalization somewhat curtailed the desire for autonomy. Just when this progress appeared to be taking hold the monarchy began to make large land grants to the nobility, and enormous powers accompanied these grants. For example, a grant of barony made the landowner the military leader of the men on his land; he could also dispense justice and had the power of life and death in his court cases. Another grant, a grant of regality, gave the grantee absolute sovereignty on his estates. Even as late as the reign of James

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 531-32.

IV there were thirty-five great barons, some of them so powerful that they could easily raise a private following of five or six thousand men.<sup>13</sup> These were formidable obstacles to any king whose domestic objective was the enforcement of royal power throughout the kingdom. James knew this and sought to remove these obstacles if at all possible. It is true that his efforts did not have any lasting influence after his death, but while he lived he achieved more results in this area than almost any of his predecessors.

James hoped to bring some degree of order to the Highlands by conducting progresses into the hills as his predecessors had done. One such visit was made in 1490,<sup>14</sup> and others in 1494 and 1495. He did more than just pass through the Highlands, however. In order to establish royal authority in the West Highlands, for example, James commissioned the rebuilding of the castle at Tarbet and the construction of a similar stronghold on Loch Kilkerran.<sup>15</sup> Such preventive measures did not always work, and when the Highlanders' hostility burst into rebellion, it was James' duty to suppress these outbursts. One such rebellion occurred in 1491 when Andrew of Lochaber, a leader of the

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid., 150-51, 174-76.

<sup>14</sup>Eric Linklater, The Survival of Scotland: A New History of Scotland from Roman Times to the Present Day (New York, 1968), 151.

<sup>15</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XI, lxxv.

MacDonald clan, seized the castle of Inverness and conducted punitive raids into the surrounding areas in what was probably an attempt to recapture the earldom of Ross, recently had been forfeited to the crown. The magnitude of the problem increased when the MacDonalds, as a result of their raiding activities, ran afoul of the MacKenzies of Kintal. In subduing this inter-clan warfare, James was able to bring the Western Highlands to a state of relative peace for a short time only. A year later a MacDonald from Islay recaptured a castle he formerly had owned at Dunaverty in Kintyre, and he hanged the king's governor from the ramparts in the process. James was quick to act. He sent an expedition into the area to apprehend the guilty MacDonald and his four sons, who also served as leaders of the rebellion. Immediately following their capture, all five of them were executed.<sup>16</sup>

The king employed another tactic to bring peace to the north, namely, the granting of royal lands to the more powerful of the Highland lords in an effort to win their loyalty. He often sent agents northward to expel rebellious noblemen from crown lands and lease the lands to others who swore to keep the peace. Through these actions James managed to persuade men like the Gordons of Huntley, the Sutherland earls of Sutherland, the Mackays of Strathnaver, and the Sinclairs of Orkney and Caithness to become steady

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<sup>16</sup>Linklater, The Survival of Scotland, 151-52.

supporters of the crown.<sup>17</sup> This re-leasing of crown lands resulted in the reduction or destruction of many of the great earldoms of Scotland such as those of Fife,<sup>18</sup> Strathean and Menteith,<sup>19</sup> Moray,<sup>20</sup> and the greater part of Mar.<sup>21</sup>

The Western Isles were equally troublesome, and James was extremely active here as well. The administration of justice by royal representatives such as justicars and sheriffs had not reached the Western Isles before the reign of James IV, and the feudal leader of this section of Scotland, called the "Lord of the Isles," was, for all practical purposes, independent of the crown.<sup>22</sup> At first the title lord of the isles was self-assumed, but the crown had later confirmed it. Invariably the title was held by the head of the MacDonald clan, and since it was one of the most powerful in all of Scotland, the lord of the isles was a formidable obstacle to the extension of royal authority.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XII, lvi; XIII, xlvii-xlviii.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., XIII, 1.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid., 30.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., 10.

<sup>21</sup>Ibid., 73.

<sup>22</sup>Dickinson, A Source Book, II, 20-21.

<sup>23</sup>Grant, The Social and Economic Development of Scotland, 532.

The rebellion of 1491--led by Alexander of Locharber, nephew of John, lord of the isles, and crushed by the earl of Huntley--resulted in the forfeiting of the title. James went to the isles in 1493 to receive the submission of the lord and his vassals.<sup>24</sup> This revocation of the lord's title did not mean, of course, that his own personal power was revoked as well. It did mean peace for a time since the chronic spirit of revolt among the petty chiefs in the Western Isles was restrained by the lack of a leader and feuds among themselves, but the leadership of the former lord soon reasserted itself.<sup>25</sup> The discontent of the isles was greatly increased in 1498 by James' revocation of all charters he had granted to the vassals in the area within the past five years.<sup>26</sup> It was only a matter of time until the isles exploded into open rebellion.

This inevitable rebellion was postponed for a time by the prospect that new crown lands would be leased. On 22 April 1500 James granted a commission under the privy seal to Archibald, earl of Argyle; lords Montgomery and Drummond; Campbell of Glenurquhard; Stirling of Cragbernard; and Henry Allan, archdeacon of Dunblane, to lease the lands of the lord of the isles for terms of three years, with the

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<sup>24</sup>Dickinson, A Source Book, II, 20-21.

<sup>25</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XII, lvi-lvii.

<sup>26</sup>Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, I, clxv.

exception of the island of Islay and North and South Kintyre.<sup>27</sup> The reprieve from rebellion was only temporary.

At Christmastime in 1503 the first significant uprising occurred as Donald Dubh led a raid which plundered and generally devastated Badenoch. So great was the destruction that James allowed crown tenants in the area to have their rents of the past three years remitted to them in an effort to provide as much relief as possible.<sup>28</sup> As far as the rebellion itself was concerned, James put it down as quickly and as ruthlessly as he had the earlier ones in the Highlands. On 19 January 1504 a royal army under the command of the earl of Huntley began operations in the north,<sup>29</sup> while a naval expedition, complete with the necessary artillery, was launched from Dumbarton with the objective of reducing the strong island fortress of Carneburgh Castle located on the west coast of Mull.<sup>30</sup> The crushing of this rebellion and subsequent generous land grants persuaded powerful families in the Western Isles, such as the Macleans of Mull, the MacIans of Ardnamurchan, the MacLeods of Skye, and the Stewarts of Appin, to submit to the authority of the crown.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>27</sup>Privy Seal of Scotland, II, No. 513, 73.

<sup>28</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XII, 247-48.

<sup>29</sup>Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, II, 416.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., 430-33. Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XII, lix.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid., XIII, xlvii-xlviii.

The new land grants came as the result of a commission issued on 5 April 1506 to the bishop of Aberdeen and the earls of Huntley, Argyle, and Lennox to lease all the crown lands in Kintyre and the island south of the Point of Ardnamurchan for money and grain rents for a period of three or five years. Along with the commission went extensive powers which were to be used for the re-establishment of tranquillity.<sup>32</sup> These grants, the capture and confinement of Donald Dubh in Stirling Castle,<sup>33</sup> and the submission of minor chieftains of the isles to royal authority succeeded in establishing a degree of tranquillity.<sup>34</sup> R. L. Mackie, the most recent biographer of James IV, has correctly pointed out that the king actually brought little permanent change to the Highlands and Western Isles.<sup>35</sup> These areas were not to be finally and permanently subdued until the massive efforts of the Hanoverians resulted in the opening up of the Highlands to royal influence for the first time during the years following 1746.<sup>36</sup> This, however, does not detract appreciably from James' accomplishments. It would be unfair to judge James according to a criterion of complete success or failure

<sup>32</sup>Ibid., XII, 704-06.

<sup>33</sup>Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, III, 415.

<sup>34</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XII, 709-10.

<sup>35</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 198.

<sup>36</sup>Coupland, Welsh and Scottish Nationalism, 76.

as Mackie seemed to be doing. Relatively speaking, his contribution was undeniable. He brought his considerable political talents to bear on the problem of rebellion in the north, and he succeeded in subduing the clans to a greater extent than any of his predecessors, given a comparable political and diplomatic situation.

At times even the relatively docile border nobility gave James trouble. He was interested in the proper administration of his entire kingdom, and this meant persuading the border lords as well as the Highlanders to attach themselves to the crown and to the cause of order.<sup>37</sup> The most outstanding example of this extension of authority to the border area came in 1504 when James launched what became known as the "Raid of Eskdale." Eskdale being in a state of rebellion, James made provisions for an expedition to put down the trouble, an expedition he led personally.<sup>38</sup>

He obviously did not consider the problem to be of the same magnitude as rebellion in the Highlands, because the expedition had elements of a holiday outing. He even took along four Italian minstrels to provide entertainment.<sup>39</sup> In fact, the king's party had little trouble. By 17 August 1504 the protagonists had been apprehended, and James paid eight pence for the "raip to hing thaim in" as

<sup>37</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XI, 1-li.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., XII, 314.

<sup>39</sup>Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, II, 452-54.

well as thirteen pence to the hangman.<sup>40</sup> There followed the same procedure that James had used on occasion in the Highlands, the reduction of rebellious earldoms. He confiscated some of the best portions and strongest castles of the border such as the lands of the earls of Dunbar and March.<sup>41</sup> These efforts proved to have a more lasting influence than those undertaken in the north.

James carried out several other projects that had the cumulative effect of bringing Scotland closer together politically and administratively. At the beginning of his reign there was no capital as such, and the administrative center of the country was considered to be either where the royal court happened to be or where the exchequer accounts were audited. In the latter case there were three such places, Stirling, Linlithgow, and Edinburgh. James established Edinburgh as the permanent seat of government, and this led to further centralization of power there, such as the establishment of the Supreme Civil Court.<sup>42</sup>

In the area of legal reform, James succeeded in spreading royal justice into many sections of the country where it had never before been exercised. He discovered something Henry VII had long realized in England, that royal courts of justice could be formidable, and in many

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid., 453.

<sup>41</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XIII, 17.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., xxxix-xl.

cases, necessary weapons in establishing law and order throughout the land, since they could not be easily intimidated by the powerful nobility or bribed by the wealthy.<sup>43</sup>

In 1504 the Scottish Parliament passed an act that sought to extend the king's law into the outlying parts of the kingdom. The act told of the

. . . great abusione of justice in the north partis and west partis of the realme sic as the northt Ilis and south Ilis for lak and falt of justice airis justicis and shreffis and thar throu the pepill ar almaist gane wilde.<sup>44</sup>

To remedy this situation the legislation provided that a sheriff and a justice sit either at Inverness or Dingwale and preside over the North Isles. A similar number would be sent to the South Isles and sit at Tarbart or Loch Kinkerane. The principal lords and nobles would be held responsible for all breaches of the peace that occurred within their districts.<sup>45</sup> The lawless sections of the borders were also kept somewhat in check by the frequent sending of royal justices to Jedburgh, Lochmaken, and Dumfries in the south.<sup>46</sup>

In spite of James' elaborate efforts to establish and maintain a system of "justice-ayres," the principal

<sup>43</sup>G. R. Elton, Star Chamber Stories (London, 1958), 12.

<sup>44</sup>A. of P. Scotland, II, 249.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., 239-54.

<sup>46</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XIII, xlvii-xlviii.

hope of redress for an individual who had failed to obtain justice in the feudal courts was still as it had been during the Middle Ages the king or the church courts.<sup>47</sup> The power of tradition was simply too great to be overcome within the span of years that James occupied the throne. It was not because of a lack of effort that he failed.

James wisely established and maintained a strong connection between the church and the state; thus he gained a strong political and economic ally. The great ecclesiastics during his reign were his principal advisors, men like Robert Blackader, archbishop of Glasgow, and his successor, James Beaton, abbot of Dunfermline; William Elphinstone, the bishop of Aberdeen; Andrew, bishop of Caithness, and Andrew Forman, bishop of Moray.<sup>48</sup>

The king was able to turn his close relationship with the church into financial gain through certain judicious appointments. His younger brother, James, duke of Ross, was named archbishop of St. Andrews, and the king used the income from the archbishopric to augment the royal revenues. When Ross died in 1504 James secured the archbishopric for his bastard son, the eleven-year-old Alexander Stewart, and thus was able to keep the revenue from the archdiocese. Alexander was put to good use in other ways.

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<sup>47</sup>"Justice-ayres" were itinerant judges. T. B. Smith, The British Commonwealth: The Development of its Laws and Constitution, Vol. XI: Scotland: The Development of its Laws and Constitution (London, 1962), 16.

<sup>48</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XIII, xlix-1.

James received additional revenue when he acquired the abbey of Dunfermline and the priory of Coldingham for his illegitimate son. He also used other benefices to reward faithful servants of the crown, and this practice had the natural effect of enhancing his own authority.<sup>49</sup>

This use of the church to increase royal revenue points out one of the major problems James had as king. In order to carry out his ambitious domestic programs and to play the role he desired in foreign affairs, he had to have money. The problem was compounded by the poverty that constantly haunted his country. In the Scotland of the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, there were three primary sources of royal revenue: the accounts of the sheriffs, the accounts of the customars<sup>50</sup> and bailies of the burghs, and the accounts of the king's property and ward lands which were on the increase under the Stuarts. James could not always count on the revenue to which he was entitled, however. There were numerous instances during his reign when some burghs and sheriffs paid only a portion of their accounts or paid nothing at all. Apparently there

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<sup>49</sup>Robert Laird Mackie, ed., The Letters of James the Fourth, 1505-1513, Publications of the Scottish History Society, Series 3 (Edinburgh, 1953), XLV, xxxvi. Hereafter cited as Letters of James IV.

<sup>50</sup>Customars were the lessees of burgh customs and dues. Alexander Warrack, ed., Scots Dictionary, serving as a glossary for Ramsay, Fergusson, Burns, Scott, Galt, minor poets, kailyard novelists, and a host of other writers of the Scottish tongue (University, Alabama, 1965), 120.

was little James could do about the situation, since the records of the period show no penalties levied against the offenders.<sup>51</sup>

He continued to try, with limited success, to increase the general prosperity and resources of Scotland by promoting the growth of such things as overseas trade, fishing, and shipbuilding, all of which promised to increase royal revenue, but beyond this he could do little.<sup>52</sup> This insufficient economic base should have been enough to persuade James to be grateful for peace with England and to keep Scotland out of continental diplomatic affairs, but this would have been directly counter to what he had in mind for his country. Now that he had a relatively firm grip on domestic affairs, James was now ready to become more active abroad.

The first step that had to be taken if Scotland were to grow influential was the improvement of her navy. A respectable navy was essential to James' policy, for it would be a source of pride in itself, and, if he wanted to increase Scotland's prestige through war, the navy would be a necessary military weapon. In building a navy to play this role, James had to reverse a long Scottish tradition of neglect of maritime interests. In this period of

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<sup>51</sup>Athol Murray, "The Procedure of the Scottish Exchequer in the early Sixteenth Century," Scottish Historical Review, XL (October, 1961), 99.

<sup>52</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XII, xxiv. Coupland, Welsh and Scottish Nationalism, 75-76.

history, merchant shipping provided an important means of training for seamen, and the small scale of Scottish commerce restricted the number of experienced sailors.<sup>53</sup>

This lack of commerce had another restrictive effect on the growth of the navy. In the later Middle Ages the transition from merchant ship to warship was a simple one. All that had to be done was to construct two small towers fore and aft upon which man-killing, not ship-destroying, guns could be mounted. The return to merchant duty was easily accomplished by the removal of the gun mounts.<sup>54</sup>

This bit of naval technology would become important for Scotland only if she could acquire or build ships, and this is what James set out to do. During the first decade or so of his reign, he acquired several ships from various sources. In 1489 he authorized the purchase of a ship for £130 from the Lord of Laucht; and in 1496 and 1497 the payment of an additional £85 for two vessels.<sup>55</sup> Even as late as March, 1504, a ship was purchased from Lord Seton for £200,<sup>56</sup> but James did not want to depend upon sources over

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<sup>53</sup>Dalyell, Fragments of Scottish History, 15.

<sup>54</sup>Michael Lewis, The Navy of Britain: A Historical Portrait (London, 1948), 71-74.

<sup>55</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XII, xxxv. Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, I, ccxxvi-ccxxvii.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid., II, 146-47.

which he had no control. Therefore, it became his policy to support actively the native shipbuilding industry.

In 1493 an act of Parliament required that ships be built in all the seaport towns and that officers of the burghs use all idle men within their jurisdiction to provide the necessary crews.<sup>57</sup> Although the act was primarily intended to build up Scotland's fishing industry, it had a direct military application as well. A fishing ship could also be converted to a man-of-war, and the fishing industry served the additional purpose of providing trained seamen for the navy.<sup>58</sup> Several Scottish ports became centers for shipbuilding, the more important being Ayr,<sup>59</sup> Leith, Glasgow, Dumbarton, and Newhaven.<sup>60</sup>

Now that the necessary authority and building sites were available, James addressed himself to the more difficult problem of securing the materials needed in the construction. In his early shipbuilding efforts he made good use of the native woods. A great row-barge and two small boats were built in 1494 and 1495 with wood secured from the area of Loch Lomond, the forests of Luss, and from the Sallach and Inch Cailleach.<sup>61</sup> In later years native timber

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<sup>57</sup>A. of P. Scotland, II, 235.

<sup>58</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XII, xxxv-xxxvi.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., XI, 271.

<sup>60</sup>Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, IV, xlv, 1.

<sup>61</sup>Ibid., I, ccxxvii.

was obtained from Strathearn, Kincardine, Alloa, and Caithness,<sup>62</sup> and even as late as 1509 the forests of Darnaway were being felled for the construction of ships.<sup>63</sup>

Scottish resources, however, could not keep up with the demands of the royal shipwrights. When the need arose, James looked to his long time continental ally, France, for these supplies. A letter of 13 August 1506 from James to Louis XII thanked the French king for allowing Scotland to import timber.<sup>64</sup> Although this arrangement usually provided Scotland with ample supplies of timber,<sup>65</sup> occasionally James encountered difficulty in his dealings with the French. He once wrote Louis that dishonest Frenchmen were taking advantage of Scotland's need for shipbuilding materials, and that they were hindering the shipment of beams and oakwood which Louis had promised.<sup>66</sup> Such occasions were exceptional, however, for France continued to provide Scotland with shipwrights<sup>67</sup> as well as timber, and the Scots purchased cordage and other materials from Flanders, enabling her shipbuilding activities to proceed at an unprecedented pace.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., III, 132, 134, 190.

<sup>63</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XIII, 12, 209.

<sup>64</sup>Letters of James IV, No. 42, 30-31.

<sup>65</sup>Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, III, 295.

<sup>66</sup>Dickinson, A Source Book, II, 78.

<sup>67</sup>Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, III, 295.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., 136.

The peak of these activities came on 12 October 1511 with the launching of the Great Michael,<sup>69</sup> the largest ship ever built up to that time in the British Isles or France, according to Pitscottie. He wrote that the ship was 243 feet long and 34 feet wide and cost James some £30,000 to build, excluding artillery. She could carry 1,000 soldiers<sup>70</sup> in addition to the 295 seamen of her crew.<sup>71</sup> Pitscottie may have been guilty of exaggeration with respect to the cost of the Great Michael. The Treasurer's Accounts listed the total expenditures on ships between September 1511 and August 1512 as £14,327, and not all of this amount was spent on the Great Michael.<sup>72</sup> Her construction, of course, was begun a few years earlier, but it is doubtful that her total cost approached the figure of £30,000.<sup>73</sup>

For all his efforts James failed to build and equip a large navy. The greatest number of ships under his command at any one time was twenty-six, sixteen larger vessels and ten smaller ones.<sup>74</sup> In addition, he failed to achieve his ultimate goal, to use the navy in such a way as to give

<sup>69</sup>Ibid., IV, 313.

<sup>70</sup>Dickinson, A Source Book, II, 79-80.

<sup>71</sup>Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, IV, 502-05.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid., xli.

<sup>73</sup>Ibid., III, xxxix.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid., IV, xlv. Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XIII, clxxxiv-clxxxv.

Scotland influence on the continent. Like so many other grandiose plans of James', the Scottish navy came to naught. After his death at Flodden the Great Michael was sold to France by the regent of Scotland, the duke of Albany, for 40,000 francs. The fate of the other ships remains unknown.<sup>75</sup>

One other area of military affairs occupied James' attention and his finances as well. He sought to import foreign gunsmiths to make artillery which would complement the Scottish army. The majority of these artificers were brought over from France to cast guns either at Edinburgh or Stirling.<sup>76</sup> The demand for foreign artillery was so great that the buying of guns became quite competitive, especially between England and Scotland. England had the edge in the Flemish market,<sup>77</sup> but Scotland's long friendship with France gave her the advantage there, and many of her guns were purchased from the works of Robert Borthwick at Dieppe.<sup>78</sup>

Since the king's efforts expended in the area of military affairs made Scotland stronger than perhaps at any other time in her history, the time had come to put this new-found power to use. One way in which James felt

<sup>75</sup>Ibid., clxxxvi.

<sup>76</sup>Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, IV, lxxv, 276.

<sup>77</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XIII, cxxvi.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., 488.

he could impress the rulers of Europe was to organize one of those great vehicles of personal and national egoism, a crusade against the infidels. In May, 1490 James had declined a request from the Pope for a contribution to a crusade against the Turks claiming that since his accession he had been plagued with trouble with England,<sup>79</sup> but he had changed his mind by 1507. To every monarch in Western Europe, a crusade was a bit of diplomatic jargon that could be dragged out whenever it was expedient to do so.<sup>80</sup> To the Scottish king, however, it was something far different. Judging by James' energetic pursuit of his goal, it was to be a genuine attempt to rid the Holy Land of the Moslems. Unfortunately for James, he was king of Scotland at the wrong time. Had he ruled in the eleventh or twelfth century before the idea of a crusade had become the plaything of cynical Christian diplomacy, or had he lived in the last of the sixteenth century when the Turks threatened to expand farther to the west, he might have been one of the most influential men in Europe. As it was, his efforts in this area came to nothing.

It may appear that James was so eager to become involved in continental affairs that he would welcome any opportunity to do so, but this was not the case. Beginning in 1502 he had repeated chances to intervene in Danish

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<sup>79</sup>Calendar of State Papers, Venice, I, 568.

<sup>80</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 202.

internal troubles, but involvement in Scandinavian civil strife would hardly bring the prestige to Scotland that James sought, so he refused to become entangled. John, king of Denmark and uncle of James IV, was ruler of the three states of Denmark, Norway, and Sweden which had been united under one monarch since the Union of Kalmar of 1397, but he encountered trouble enforcing his authority in all three states. Norway and Sweden revolted early in the sixteenth century, and although the rebellion in Norway had been suppressed, the uprising in Sweden was still raging. The problem increased when the Hanse city of Lübeck supported the Swedes in order to reduce Danish power in the Baltic.<sup>81</sup>

Earlier in his reign James had concluded a treaty of mutual defense with his uncle, and John called upon his nephew to fulfill his obligation by sending ships and men to help him suppress the Swedish revolt.<sup>82</sup> On 4 April 1505 James wrote John explaining that he would not be able to send the requested ships, as they were still in the builders' yards or being repaired, and he also cautioned his uncle to take a more lenient attitude toward the rebels.<sup>83</sup> This, of course, was not the response expected, since James had a legal obligation to send aid because of the mutual defense

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<sup>81</sup>Letters of James IV, xxxix-xl.

<sup>82</sup>Taylor, James IV, 175.

<sup>83</sup>Letters of James IV, No. 3, 3.

treaty. In September, 1506, John again asked for Scottish help, pointing out that Lubeck and other Hanse cities threatened to command the Baltic in favor of the rebellious Swedes.<sup>84</sup> James once again sought to avoid involvement in his uncle's troubles by sending Robert Forman, dean of Glasgow, and the Lyon King-of-Arms to preach restraint and caution in both Denmark and Lubeck.<sup>85</sup> This procrastination seems to have succeeded because on 8 March 1507 James was able to write John saying that he had learned that a Danish agreement with Lubeck had resulted in the isolation of the Swedes. Feeling very confident, James bravely assured his uncle that if the agreement had not been concluded, he would have sent the Scottish fleet with sufficient troops to force Lubeck out of the war.<sup>86</sup>

The Scot's reprieve was a short one, however. In a letter of 10 January 1508 John told his nephew that Lubeck and the other Hanse cities had broken their agreement not to aid Sweden, and he asked that two armed ships be sent to Denmark before Easter.<sup>87</sup> James bluntly refused to send the ships until John had supplied additional information concerning the recent outbreak of fighting. He did, however, send letters by the same envoy to Louis XII and Henry VII

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<sup>84</sup>Ibid., No. 46, 33.

<sup>85</sup>Ibid., xl.

<sup>86</sup>Ibid., No. 86, 61-62.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., No. 151, 95-96.

recommending his uncle's cause to these rulers.<sup>88</sup> At about the same time James informed the council and people of Lubeck that the breach of their agreement with Denmark was threatening to involve them in a war, not only with Scotland, but with England and France also.<sup>89</sup>

The Lubeckers undoubtedly realized that France and England were not going to go to war against the Hanse simply because James asked them to, for they continued to apply pressure upon Denmark through Sweden. Every time the fighting started anew John would send more requests to James for ships and men. On 21 December 1508 the Danish king asked his nephew to declare what Scottish aid he could expect the following spring.<sup>90</sup> Similar letters were sent from Copenhagen to Edinburgh on 20 July 1509<sup>91</sup> and on the following 23 November, but, as always, James ignored his treaty with Denmark and refused to dispatch either ships or men to the Baltic area.<sup>92</sup>

During the years 1510 to 1512 King John sent four additional pleas to James to no avail.<sup>93</sup> The latter must have been one of the most relieved men in Europe when, on

<sup>88</sup>Ibid., No. 169, 106-07.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid., No. 170, 107.

<sup>90</sup>Ibid., No. 210, 131-32.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid., No. 259, 152.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., Nos. 278, 279; 158-59.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., No. 321, 178; No. 322, 178; No. 330, 181; No. 411, 226.

28 May 1512, he was finally able to congratulate his uncle on the negotiation of a treaty with both the Lubeckers and the Swedes.<sup>94</sup> Through a policy of procrastination, evasion, and outright deceit, James was able to avoid his obvious legal and moral obligation to go to the assistance of his uncle. This extensive and somewhat repetitious correspondence with Denmark shows that James did not consider himself bound by treaties of mutual defense when they did not suit his purpose. In the months preceding Flodden, James would lament to most of the crowned heads of Europe that his treaty with France forced him to invade England, but the Danish correspondence indicated that he used the French treaty only as a justification of the invasion.

After the first years of the sixteenth century James could take justifiable pride in the state of his country. He had managed to restore order to the Lowlands, defeat the rebels on the western edges of Scotland, and reduce the islands to a reluctant peace. In the area of foreign affairs, he had negotiated a treaty with England that held great promise for a long peace. Both England and France were courting his friendship, his plans for a crusade were still a possibility, and his aid and advice had been sought by the king of Denmark. Surely the king of Scotland had never been so strong at home and so influential abroad.

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<sup>94</sup>Ibid., No. 452, 247-48.

## CHAPTER VII

### THE DETERIORATION OF ANGLO-SCOTTISH

#### RELATIONS, 1509-1513:

#### INTERNAL INFLUENCES

The year 1509 was a significant one in English history, not simply because Henry VII was succeeded by his son, but also because of the fundamental changes in England's foreign and domestic policy that followed Henry VIII's accession to the throne. Despite the obvious fact that Henry VIII's reign came later than his father's, it was a return to old policies in many ways. He led England into what amounted to a renewal of the Hundred Years' War, into new antagonisms toward Scotland, into a depleted financial situation, and into a general policy that rejected Henry VII's emphasis upon compromise, accommodation and moderation.<sup>1</sup>

The English people, judging by their enthusiastic reception of Henry VIII, were ready for a change after twenty-four years under the colorless Henry VII. His son came to power determined to bury the mood of the old regime with the dead king. The new reign opened with an explosion

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<sup>1</sup>J. J. Scarisbrick, Henry VIII (Berkeley, Calif., 1968), 21.

of spectacular balls, plays, tournaments and general frivolity.<sup>2</sup> These activities were not new to England, for Henry VII had used them on certain occasions when it was politically advantageous to do so. Especially at the beginning of his reign, Henry VII had sought to dazzle his subjects and add to the lustre of his kingship, but once he felt secure on the throne, the parsimonious side of his personality took over, and this type of activity declined significantly.<sup>3</sup> He conducted his foreign policy in the same careful, austere way, taking no unnecessary chances, and he was guided by a concern for the safety of the nation and the dynasty instead of prestige.

Henry VIII, however, sought to extend the showmanship he displayed in his domestic activities to the realm of foreign policy. But there were certain obstacles between Henry and his wish to alter England's policy in the area of foreign affairs. England was safe abroad,<sup>4</sup> and many powerful men on the council that Henry inherited from his father wanted to keep her that way. The great ecclesiastics, William Warham, Richard Fox and John Fisher were of the age of Henry VII and saw the merit of his approach to foreign policy. This faction won small victories in the

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<sup>2</sup>Sidney Anglo, Spectacle, Pageantry, and Early Tudor Policy, Oxford-Warburg Studies, ed. by T. S. R. Boase and J. B. Trapp (Oxford, 1969), 108-09.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., 52.

<sup>4</sup>Herbert, The Life and Reign of Henry VIII, 12-13.

next two or three years such as the treaty with France signed in March, 1510,<sup>5</sup> but Henry VIII was not the type of individual to tolerate opposition. He gradually became indifferent to the council and attended very few of its meetings. Thomas Wolsey was the great benefactor of Henry's rejection of the dull routine of the day-to-day affairs of state. More and more Wolsey assumed control over the council, a body that Henry felt might impede his grandiose plans for England.<sup>6</sup> It should be pointed out that Henry did not plunge immediately into the tricky diplomatic currents of Europe. On the contrary, the first two years of his reign seemed to be a basic continuation of his father's policy, but the change was inevitable given Henry's personality, and soon England was another thread in the web of continental diplomatic intrigue.

The four-year period that extended from Henry VIII's accession to the English throne to the death of James IV of Scotland at the battle of Flodden Field is characterized by a steady deterioration of amicable relations between the two countries. This trend cannot be explained by any single event, but rather it was the result of several incidents that assumed more importance than they

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<sup>5</sup>Scarisbrick, Henry VIII, 25-27.

<sup>6</sup>William Huse Dunham, Jr., "The Members of Henry VIII's Whole Council, 1509-1527," English Historical Review, LIX (May, 1944), 187.

would have under conditions other than those prevailing on the diplomatic climate of Europe at this time.

The degree of importance these events assumed is another question. James sought to persuade anyone who would listen that Scotland was the victim of unprovoked aggressions at the hands of England and that war was the only way to gain relief, since peaceful redress had been sought in vain. Relations undoubtedly were strained by these events, but not to the degree that war was the only possible solution. In fact, warm, personal letters were exchanged by the two monarchs during the early part of this four year period,<sup>7</sup> and prospects for continued peace appeared excellent after the treaty of perpetual peace was renewed on 29 August 1509.<sup>8</sup> Despite this promising beginning, certain incidents soon altered the pacific nature of Anglo-Scottish relations.

Strangely enough, one of the first incidents occurred at a meeting of the march wardens from both sides of the border. The objective of these meetings, of course, was to bring about the orderly redress of any grievances between Englishmen and Scots that had arisen since the previous meeting, but this particular gathering was a source

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<sup>7</sup>L. and P. Henry VIII, No. 161, 23.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., No. 474, 63.

of friction, not solutions.<sup>9</sup> The principal personality involved was the Scottish warden of the middle march toward England, Sir Robert Ker of Fernihirst. Ker's diligent adherence to the duties of his position as warden soon earned him a reputation for harshness to Scots and Englishmen alike.<sup>10</sup>

At the meeting in question, three Englishmen named Lilburn, Starhed, and John Heron fell upon the Scottish warden and killed him.<sup>11</sup> Of the three murderers, only Lilburn was apprehended immediately, while Heron and Starhed escaped into the interior of England. In an attempt to satisfy the Scots, John Heron's brother, the lord of Ford and warden of an English march, was delivered to them as a hostage until the guilty Heron could be apprehended. The Englishman was imprisoned in Fastcastle<sup>12</sup> while James IV

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<sup>9</sup>Walter Scott, The Border Antiquities of England and Scotland Comprising Specimens of the Architecture, Sculpture, and Other Vestiges of Former Ages, Accompanied with Descriptive Sketches, Biographical Remarks, and Original Poetry and a Brief History of the Principal Events That Have Occurred in This Interesting Part of Great Britain (London, 1815), cxv.

<sup>10</sup>Henry Weber, The Battle of Flodden Field: A Poem of the Sixteenth Century with the Various Readings of the Different Copies; Historical Notes, a Glossary, and an Appendix Containing Ancient Poems and Historical Matter Relating to the Same Event (Edinburgh, 1808), 139.

<sup>11</sup>George Douglas, A History of the Border Counties: Roxburgh, Selkirk, Peebles (Edinburgh, 1899), 246.

<sup>12</sup>Ridpath, The Border History of England and Scotland, 332.

unsuccessfully sought redress from Henry VII and, after 1509, from Henry VIII.<sup>13</sup>

Perhaps due to the inactivity of his sovereign, Starhed came out of hiding in 1510 near York, where he had been in seclusion since the murder of Ker.<sup>14</sup> Word of Starhed's activities soon spread to the borders, and eventually to Andrew Ker, son of the murdered Scot.<sup>15</sup> The fierce loyalty to the clan chief that was so characteristic of the Scottish families proved to be fatal for Starhed. Immediately after hearing of Starhed's whereabouts, the younger Ker sent two of his retainers into England to avenge his father's death. The retainers traveled the approximately ninety miles to Starhed's home and decapitated him.<sup>16</sup> The head of the Englishman was brought to Andrew Ker who had it displayed at the Cross of Edinburgh so all could see that his father's death had been avenged.<sup>17</sup>

This murder of one of his subjects by Scots, being a flagrant violation of the treaty of perpetual peace, enraged Henry VIII, while the continued freedom enjoyed by

<sup>13</sup>William Croft Dickinson, A New History of Scotland, Vol. I, Scotland: From the Earliest Times to 1603 (Edinburgh, 1961), 285.

<sup>14</sup>Pease, The Lord Wardens, 31.

<sup>15</sup>Ridpath, The Border History of England and Scotland, 332.

<sup>16</sup>Douglas, A History of the Border Counties, 246.

<sup>17</sup>Pease, The Lord Wardens, 31.

John Heron made James less receptive to friendly overtures emanating from London.<sup>18</sup> Both kings were justified in their anger to some degree, but of the two Henry VIII took the more sensible approach to the problem. He seemed content to let the machinery set up for the redress of grievances do its work. James, on the other hand, violated the long established practice of keeping border troubles confined to that area by using the Ker incident to increase tension in Anglo-Scottish relations. He would die at Flodden before this incident could be satisfactorily resolved.

The activities of a Scottish seaman named Andrew Barton intensified the tension created by the incident.<sup>19</sup> The Barton clan first became an influential force in Scottish foreign relations in the reign of James III.<sup>20</sup> John Barton, the father of Andrew,<sup>21</sup> commanded a merchant ship, and, while on a voyage to the Low Countries, was attacked near the port of Sluys by two Portugese ships.<sup>22</sup> James III, after seeking redress through normal diplomatic

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<sup>18</sup>Douglas, A History of the Border Counties, 246-47.

<sup>19</sup>Edward Phillips Statham, Privateers and Privateering (New York, 1910), 19.

<sup>20</sup>Ridpath, The Border History of England and Scotland, 331. Gordon Donaldson, Scottish Kings (London, 1967), 102.

<sup>21</sup>Statham, Privateers and Privateering, 19.

<sup>22</sup>Abercromby, The Martial Achievements of the Scots Nation, 552.

channels, had retaliated by issuing a letter of marque in 1476<sup>23</sup> to Andrew, John, and Robert Barton, sons of the Scot who had been attacked by the Portuguese. The Bartons now possessed a legal device through which they could carry out reprisals against Portuguese shipping.<sup>24</sup>

Upon his accession, James IV suspended the letter of marque in an attempt to gain compensation for his subjects in an orderly manner. These efforts did not bring results, so the letter was renewed.<sup>25</sup> After this renewal, James, perhaps due to his desire to make Scotland a maritime power, placed few restrictions on the activities of the Bartons, who had extensive maritime experience.<sup>26</sup> The results of this freedom of action enjoyed by the Bartons could have been anticipated. Robert Barton, after capturing

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<sup>23</sup>The letter of marque was a device whose objective was the recovery of property approximately equal in value to that taken by the offending party from the holder of the letter. The holder of the letter was usually given a relatively free hand in regaining his property or its equivalent value and it was this freedom that was most often abused with international repercussions being the result. A letter of marque was usually issued by the monarch of the offended party and only after exploration through regular diplomatic channels had proved fruitless. Statham, Privateers and Privateering, 19, 21. Percy Cross Standing, "Henry VIII's Lord High Admiral," The United Service Magazine, XXIII (1901), 449.

<sup>24</sup>Abercromby, The Martial Achievements of the Scots Nation, 523.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

<sup>26</sup>W. Stanford Reid, "Seapower in the Foreign Policy of James IV," Medievalia et Humanistica, XV (1963), 99.

a Portuguese ship in 1508, was arrested in the port of Veere and was released only after James protested to Maximilian I, to the duchess of Savoy, and to the bailiff of Veere. James argued that the Bartons were immune from arrest while under the protection of a letter of marque.<sup>27</sup>

Despite the existence of the letter, the Portuguese case was not without its strength in international law. The Portuguese asserted that the protection provided by the letter was at an end when the holder of the letter had taken plunder approximately equal in value to his original loss. The Bartons had been plundering Portuguese shipping for over thirty years.<sup>28</sup>

In view of the increasing international disfavor of the activities of the Bartons, James once again suspended the letter of marque in hopes of gaining restitution from Portugal.<sup>29</sup> Andrew Barton refused to acknowledge the revocation by James and sailed for Denmark. His stay in Danish waters was short, as he sailed into the narrow seas and continued what amounted to the illegal seizure of Portuguese shipping.<sup>30</sup>

Unfortunately for Scotland, Andrew Barton failed to limit his plundering to Portuguese merchant vessels and

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<sup>27</sup>Letters of James IV, Nos. 206-08; 129-31.

<sup>28</sup>Statham, Privateers and Privateering, 21.

<sup>29</sup>Letters of James IV, No. 315, 173-74.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid., liii.

seized English ships as well on the pretext that Portuguese goods were on board.<sup>31</sup> It did not take long for the news of the loss of English shipping to reach Henry VIII. With a characteristic disregard for the consequences, the English king ignored the procedure to be followed for the orderly redress of grievances between the two countries as outlined in the treaty of perpetual peace.<sup>32</sup> Instead of waiting the prescribed six months, Henry called upon his lord high admiral, Edward Howard,<sup>33</sup> and his brother, Thomas, to seek out Barton and put an end to his piracy.<sup>34</sup>

At his accession to the throne, Henry had inherited a royal navy consisting of only four ships. Because of the diminutive size of his navy, Henry resorted to the commissioning of private vessels for royal use in case of

<sup>31</sup>Ridpath, The Border History of England and Scotland, 331-32.

<sup>32</sup>Letters of James IV, liii.

<sup>33</sup>According to a popular ballad of the sixteenth century concerning the encounter between the Howards and Barton, the English ships were under the command of Lord Charles Howard. This is an obvious error since Charles Howard had not been born at this time. The ballad was a product of post-Armada England and, therefore, the reference was, in all probability, intended to praise the hero of the defeat of the Armada, Charles Howard of Effingham. A True Relation of the Life and Death of Sir Andrew Barton: A Pyrate and Rover on the Seas (No Date, No Place), 1. Hereafter cited as True Relation. Lacey Baldwin Smith, The Horizon Book of the Elizabethan World (New York, 1967), 280. A Collection of Old Ballads. Corrected from the Best and Most Ancient Copies Extant. With Introductions Historical, Critical, or Humorous (London, 1732), I, 162. Hereafter cited as Collection of Old Ballads.

<sup>34</sup>Letters of James IV, liii.

emergencies.<sup>35</sup> Such was the nature of the Barton menace, for the Howards outfitted two ships at their own expense to use in the hunt for Barton.<sup>36</sup>

The fact that Henry called upon a family of the landed nobility such as the Howards gives the deceptive impression that England lacked experienced combat seamen. In sixteenth century England most sailors who fought for the crown were also merchant seamen in peace time, therefore they were far from being novices. Actually, as far back as the 1460's members of the Howard family had either served with or commanded war fleets, so they were not lacking in experience.<sup>37</sup>

Because of unfavorable weather conditions, the Howard expedition was detained at the dockyards of Deptford and Woolwich near London<sup>38</sup> for more than a month, finally setting sail in June of 1511. Even after their embarkation

<sup>35</sup>Geoffry Callendar, "The Evolution of Sea Power Under the First Two Tudors," History, V (October, 1920), 157.

<sup>36</sup>John Campbell, Lives of Admirals and Other Eminent British Seamen Containing Their Personal Histories and a Detail of All Their Public Services Including a New and Accurate Naval History from the Earliest Account of Time and, Clearly Proving By a Continued Series of Facts Our Interrupted Claim to, and Enjoyment of the Dominion of Our Seas. Interspersed with Many Curious Passages Relating to Our Discoveries, Plantations and Commerce. The Whole Supported Throughout by Proper Authorities (London, 1742), I, 321-22.

<sup>37</sup>G. V. Scammell, Shipowning in England: c. 1450-1550, Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Series 5 (London, 1962), XII, 121.

<sup>38</sup>H. Halliday Sparling, "The Mariners of England Before the Armada," English Illustrated Magazine, VIII (1891), 649.

the weather continued to hinder the Howards' search for the Scot, and their ships soon became separated.<sup>39</sup>

Fortunately for the Englishmen the weather also prevented Barton's vessel, the Lyon, from joining his other ship, the Jenny Pirwyn. As it was, Thomas Howard encountered the Lyon after a few days at sea.<sup>40</sup> Barton attempted to avoid a battle by pointing out that England and Scotland were not at war. When this failed, he tried to escape, but finding himself outsailed, the Scot had no alternative but to stand and fight.<sup>41</sup>

The ensuing battle involved both naval ordnance and archers.<sup>42</sup> At first, the two ships were content to

<sup>39</sup>Statham, Privateers and Privateering, 22.

<sup>40</sup>True Relation, 1.

<sup>41</sup>Statham, Privateers and Privateering, 22-23.

<sup>42</sup>The legend connected with the Barton affair states that the Scot's ship was armed with eighteen pieces of ordnance on each side. True Relation, 1. In view of the size of the Lyon, one hundred and twenty tons, the amount of fire power carried by Barton has been declared excessive by more recent authorities although no new figures are given. William Laird Clowes, The Royal Navy: A History from the Earliest Times to the Present (London, 1897), I, 448. Since I have mentioned the size of the Lyon, a word of explanation might be in order concerning the meaning of the term "tonnage" in this period of naval history. Tonnage did not refer to weight or displacement of a particular vessel, but rather meant her capacity to hold wine "tuns" or casks. Samuel Eliot Morison, Admiral of the Ocean Sea: A Life of Christopher Columbus (Boston, 1942), I, 114-45. Morison states that a tun was roughly equivalent to forty cubic feet, but another authority indicates the measure to be two hundred and fifty-two gallons or about sixty cubic feet. Elaine W. Fowler, English Sea Power in the Early Tudor Period, 1485-1558, Folger Booklets on Tudor and Stuart Civilization (Ithaca, New York, 1965), 27.

exchange volleys at close range, but soon Howard attempted to come alongside the Lyon and board her. This initial attempt was repulsed, but the English were later successful in placing a small landing party on the deck of the Scottish ship. Hand to hand fighting followed during which Barton's leg was shattered by a cannon shot, and he and the majority of his men were killed.<sup>43</sup> The Lyon was taken as a prize.

While his older brother was disposing of Barton, Edward Howard had encountered the smaller companion of the Lyon, the Jenny Pirwyn.<sup>44</sup> The success of Lord Thomas Howard was repeated by the lord high admiral, and the Jenny Pirwyn was taken.<sup>45</sup>

Henry's navy was enlarged by the addition of the captured ships when they arrived at Blackwall<sup>46</sup> on 2 August

<sup>43</sup>Statham, Privateers and Privateering, 23. The somewhat romanticized legend of Andrew Barton declared that the Scot died next to his mast, encouraging his men and urging them to stand by St. Andrew's Cross to the death. Lord Thomas Howard was supposed to have cut off the Scot's head and later presented it to Henry VIII. True Relation, 2. Collection of Old Ballads, 167-68. Charles Harding Firth, ed., Naval Songs and Ballads, Publications of the Navy Record Society (London, 1908), XXXII, 12-14.

<sup>44</sup>The size of the Jenny Pirwyn was about seventy tons. Clowes, The Royal Navy, I, 448.

<sup>45</sup>Gerald Brenan and Edward Phillips Statham, The House of Howard (London, 1907), 84.

<sup>46</sup>In the early years of the sixteenth century Blackwall was a port down the Thames from London. William R. Shepherd, Historical Atlas (9th ed.; New York, 1964), 75. The Lyon and Jenny Pirwyn were the smallest ships in the Royal Navy but were important due to the small size of

1511.<sup>47</sup> The Scottish survivors of the encounter were imprisoned in London<sup>48</sup> where they were visited by the bishop of Winchester, an emissary from Henry VIII.<sup>49</sup> Judging from the ensuing events, the Scots apparently were brought to London for propaganda purposes. A confession of piracy was obtained by the bishop, whereupon the Scots were pardoned by Henry on the condition that they leave England within twenty days.<sup>50</sup>

Henry's ostentatious display of clemency did little to soothe the irate James. His anger was probably due more to the fact that the damage had been done by an English ship than that Barton had been killed. In the last months of the pirate's life, the Scottish king had had little control over Barton, who had caused him much embarrassment.<sup>51</sup> James, using Barton as a pretext for gaining concessions,

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Henry's navy in 1511. Michael Oppenheim, A History of the Administration of the Royal Navy and of Merchant Shipping in Relation to the Navy: From MDIX to MDCLX with an Introduction Treating of the Preceding Period (Ann Arbor, Mich., 1961), 49.

<sup>47</sup>Brenan and Statham, The House of Howard, 84.

<sup>48</sup>Statham, Privateers and Privateering, 25.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., 24-25. Another account of events stated that the prisoners were brought into the presence of Henry VIII where he pardoned them. Buchanan, The History of Scotland, 248.

<sup>50</sup>Abercromby, The Martial Achievements of the Scots Nation, 523.

<sup>51</sup>C. S. Goldingham, "The Warships of Henry VIII," The United Service Magazine, LIX (1919), 457.

wrote to his English counterpart demanding redress in accordance with the procedure outlined in the treaty of perpetual peace.<sup>52</sup> James' protests concerning the Barton affair were ignored by Henry,<sup>53</sup> who replied that the treaty should not be jeopardized simply because justice had been administered to a pirate.<sup>54</sup>

Though a military confrontation was avoided during this period of tension, James obviously did not consider Barton a pirate and, therefore, remained deeply resentful.<sup>55</sup> Efforts were made on 26 July 1511 to settle the Barton affair when safe conducts were granted for a meeting of English and Scottish commissioners.<sup>56</sup> Henry moved English troops toward the north about the same time that the safe conducts were issued just in case negotiations were fruitless and Scotland wanted to press the issue.<sup>57</sup>

Judging from James' angry protestations to London, there can be little doubt that the Barton affair assumed the appearance of a casus belli, but there was a precedent

<sup>52</sup>Letters of James IV, liv.

<sup>53</sup>Richard Bruce Wernham, Before the Armada: The Growth of English Foreign Policy, 1485-1588 (London, 1966), 82-83.

<sup>54</sup>Dickinson, A New History of Scotland, 285.

<sup>55</sup>Ridpath, The Border History of England and Scotland, 332.

<sup>56</sup>L. and P. Henry VIII, No. 1820, 274.

<sup>57</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 211.

for a naval battle between Englishmen and Scots that failed to lead to war. Twenty-one years earlier when Andrew Wood and Stephen Bull met near the Firth of Forth, the confrontation produced little more than the expected denunciations. The essential difference between the Wood and Barton affairs was that in the latter case, James wanted war, and in the former, he did not. Had he been of a different frame of mind, the Barton incident would have remained a problem, but one that could have been resolved to the satisfaction of both parties instead of becoming a building block in James' justification for war.

In addition to these problems, the very device that Henry VII had hoped would cement the peace between England and Scotland, the marriage between James and Margaret, was actually contributing to the difficulties of the two nations. Margaret wrote her brother asking for her share of the family jewels willed to her by Henry VII.<sup>58</sup> This request, combined with the failure of Henry VIII to complete payment of the marriage dowry to James, strained relations even further.<sup>59</sup>

Even if the events just described had taken place in a diplomatic vacuum, it is improbable that the diplomatic problems they fostered could have been resolved

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<sup>58</sup>Ellis, Original Letters, Illustrative of English History, I, Series 1, NO. 25, 64-65.

<sup>59</sup>Ridpath, The Border History of England and Scotland, 327. Leslie, The Historie of Scotland, II, 141.

without a military confrontation between England and Scotland, because James wanted war. If these points of contention were not enough for his justification of war, others were soon to appear, for the alliance system that was a product of the Holy League of 1511 drew both countries into continental politics, and the result was the battle of Flodden.

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE DETERIORATION OF ANGLO-SCOTTISH RELATIONS, 1509-1513: CONTINENTAL INFLUENCES

If, after one year upon the throne, Henry had any plans to deviate from his father's policy of maintaining peaceful relations with other European nations, they were not evident from his actions. The treaty with France was renewed on 23 March 1510,<sup>1</sup> and a similar action was concluded with Spain on 24 May 1510 by the Spanish ambassador to England, Louis Carroz, and Henry's representative, Thomas Ruthal, the bishop of Durham.<sup>2</sup>

England's diplomatic waters were calm at this time, and Henry wanted them to remain that way. Even Scotland, despite the hostile nature of her border subjects toward England, did not appear to pose a serious threat to peace. In a letter written to Henry in 1510 or 1511, James

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<sup>1</sup>Great Britain, Public Record Office, Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII, Preserved in the Public Record Office, the British Museum and Elsewhere, ed. by J. S. Brewer (London, 1862-1932), I, No. 963, 145. Hereafter cited as Letters of Henry VIII.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., No. 1059, p. 158.

expressed his devotion to his brother-in-law and his hope that peace would continue between their countries.<sup>3</sup>

Henry concurred in this desire for peace. Nicholas West, dean of Windsor, became Henry's special emissary to the Scottish court in November 1511, with instructions to deal with all quarrels with Scotland.<sup>4</sup> On this particular mission West went no farther north than York,<sup>5</sup> but he was to be pressed into service later on when Henry attempted other reconciliations with Scotland. Immediately following this commission came a pardon from Henry to all subjects of James for criminal acts committed against Englishmen.<sup>6</sup> Both acts show an apparently genuine concern for the friendship of Scotland by the English king. During the early years of his reign, Henry's foreign policy was aimed at the promotion of England's prestige in continental affairs.<sup>7</sup> Peace with Scotland would enable him to give Europe both his undivided attention and his country's undivided military resources.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Great Britain, Public Record Office, Facsimilies of National Manuscripts of Scotland Selected Under the Direction of the Right Honorable Sir William Gibson Craig, Bart. Lord Clerk Register of Scotland and Photozincographed by Command of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, by Colonel Sir Henry James. R. E. Director of the Ordnance Survey (Southampton, 1871), III, No. 9, viii. Hereafter cited as National MSS Scotland.

<sup>4</sup>Letters of Henry VIII, No. 1926, 292.

<sup>5</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 212.

<sup>6</sup>Letters of Henry VIII, No. 1932, 293.

<sup>7</sup>Read, The Tudors, 91.

<sup>8</sup>Letters of James IV, lvii.

Since both nations were allied by a treaty of perpetual peace and since their kings desirous of continued peace, the question naturally arises why war ensued. Much of the answer lies in the nature of sixteenth century diplomacy itself.

Despite the outward signs of peace displayed by Henry and James, there still existed the ancient enmity between the nations that caused Scotland to view England's misfortune as her opportunity. If England became embroiled in continental campaigns, the Scots could be expected to take advantage of the situation. Scotland was, therefore, a major bridge across England's moat and could be exploited if the diplomatic conditions in Europe remained volatile.<sup>9</sup>

On the continent, the end of the fifteenth and the beginning of the sixteenth centuries were dominated by the Italian wars. These wars were an outgrowth of a French invasion of Italy in 1494 and provided continental diplomacy with a central theme that would extend into the second half of the sixteenth century.<sup>10</sup> In speaking of the diplomatic chaos prevalent in these times, Garrett Mattingly stated:

The wars of Italy and the diplomatic negotiations connected with them rested upon no fixed principles whatever. Neither national interest, nor public

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<sup>9</sup>Wernham, Before the Armada, 19.

<sup>10</sup>Garrett Mattingly, Renaissance Diplomacy (Boston, 1955), 133-37.

morality, nor religious zeal had any place in them. Personal ambition, rivalry or resentment was their only spring of action.<sup>11</sup>

The only general principle even remotely related to the idea of national interest was that of trying to maintain a balance of power.<sup>12</sup> The military alliances of the period took the form of leagues of partition, protection, attack and defense, and always had one basic goal. That goal was to manipulate the balance of power to the advantage of the contracting party.<sup>13</sup>

One of these alliances, the Holy League of 1511, eventually precipitated the final rupture of peaceful relations between England and her neighbor to the north. An alliance in which nearly every formidable military power in Europe eventually participated either offensively or defensively, was more of a storm than the Treaty of Perpetual Peace could weather. Henry VIII, because of his continental ambitions, and James IV, because of his own desire for foreign adventure and an alliance with France, were both drawn into the political disorder precipitated by the Holy League. This involvement culminated, so far as joint Anglo-Scottish participation was concerned, in the battle of Flodden Field.

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid., 162.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., 163.

<sup>13</sup>Calendar of State Papers, Venice, viii.

The protagonist in the formation of the Holy League as well as the center of nearly every diplomatic maneuver on the continent of Europe in the early years of the sixteenth century was Pope Julius II (1503-1513).<sup>14</sup> Julius II proposed to extend the boundaries of the papal lands, a goal that would be difficult to attain so long as France was active in the Italian peninsula.<sup>15</sup> France, therefore, was the indirect motivating force behind the schemes of Julius. Charles VIII of France (1483-1498) had been persuaded in 1492 by a group of Italians at the French court to intervene in Italy to prevent the domination of the peninsula by any single power.<sup>16</sup> Quite naturally, continued French involvement in Italian politics filled Julius with fear, and it was for the purpose of expelling the armies of Louis XII, king of France, that the Holy League was formed.<sup>17</sup> Julius reckoned quite correctly that his

<sup>14</sup>Julius II was the former Cardinal della Rovere. Valerie Pirie, The Triple Crown: An Account of the Papal Conclave from the Fifteenth Century to Modern Times (London, 1965), 43.

<sup>15</sup>Leopold von Ranke, History of the Popes: Their Church and State, The World's Greatest Literature: The Masterpieces of the World's Greatest Authors in History, Biography, Philosophy, Economics, Politics; Epic and Dramatic Literature, History of English Literature, Oriental Literature (Sacred and Profane), Orations, Essays, trans. by Elaine Fowler (New York, 1901), LIV, 39.

<sup>16</sup>David Jayne Hill, A History of Diplomacy in the International Development of Europe, Vol. II: The Establishment of Territorial Sovereignty (London, 1914), 164-66.

<sup>17</sup>G. R. Potter, ed., The New Cambridge Modern History, Vol. I: The Renaissance, 1493-1520 (Cambridge, 1957), 81.

hopes for the expansion of the dominions of the church stood the greatest chance of success if a general war swept Italy.<sup>18</sup>

Even though the true purpose of the Holy League was generally known, the goal of the alliance was stated in such a way as to warrant the title "Holy." On 4 October 1511 the League was proclaimed in Rome,<sup>19</sup> with the stated purpose of the alliance being,

The conservation of the Holy Church and the dignity of the Holy Papal see and the recovery of Bologna and other territories of the holy Roman church which are now occupied by its enemies.<sup>20</sup>

With these words, the personal ambitions of the Holy Father were transformed into the objectives of a crusade against the French. All Europe, with the exception of France, was invited to rally behind the pope's banner<sup>21</sup> though at its inception only the Papacy, Aragon and Venice were members.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>18</sup>Ranke, History of the Popes, LIV, 40.

<sup>19</sup>Calendar of State Papers, Venice, No. 133, 53.

<sup>20</sup>Theodor E. Mommsen, "The Accession of the Helvetian Federation to the Holy League: An Unpublished Bull of Pope Julius II of March 17, 1512," Journal of Modern History, XX (1958), 123.

<sup>21</sup>Ludwig Pastor, The History of the Popes from the Close of the Middle Ages, Drawn from the Secret Archives of the Vatican and Other Original Sources, ed. by Frederick I. Antrobus, Ralph F. Kerr, et al. (St. Louis, 1923-), VI, 373.

<sup>22</sup>R. W. Seton-Watson, Maximilian I: Holy Roman Emperor, Stanhope Historical Essay, 1901 (Westminster, 1902), 63.

Venice, being exposed to the French forces in Italy, instructed its ambassador at the papal court to sign as speedily as possible any treaty that should be devised for the protection of Italy.<sup>23</sup> Because of his diligence, Venice was an original member of the alliance, and its Senate officially ratified the treaty on 26 November 1511.<sup>24</sup>

The desire for territorial conquest was responsible for the entrance of Aragon into the Holy League. Aragon was under the rule of Ferdinand II (1479-1516), who had long desired the extension of his territory northward to its natural boundary of the Pyrenees Mountains. Such an extension would necessitate the conquest of the mountain kingdom of Navarre, which, in turn, could not be accomplished without a confrontation with the French. When the European nations prepared to turn the soldiers of Louis XII out of Italy, Ferdinand was undoubtedly overjoyed since, if the French were completely isolated, his chances of attaining Navarre would be very greatly enhanced.<sup>25</sup>

Historians have generally attributed England's entrance into the Holy League to a combination of Henry's political and diplomatic inexperience and the long history

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<sup>23</sup>Calendar of State Papers, Venice, No. 115, 48.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid., No. 133, 53.

<sup>25</sup>Roger Bigelow Merriman, The Rise of the Spanish Empire in the Old World and the New, Vol. II: The Catholic Kings (New York, 1918-1934), 338-39.

of English disaffection for the French. Concerning Henry's lack of experience, he entered the arena of European diplomacy as an impulsive young man who was forced to deal with men--Ferdinand; Maximilian I, Holy Roman Emperor (1493-1519); Louis XII, and Julius II--who were all nearly three times his age.<sup>26</sup> Henry was also handicapped by his over-estimation of England's importance in European affairs. He believed that whatever country or league of countries England supported would prevail despite the fact that England was considered to be the weakest of the major powers.<sup>27</sup>

Ferdinand, Henry's most persistent advisor in the early years of his reign, sought to induce his son-in-law to join the alliance.<sup>28</sup> He pointed out that England could regain her lost lands in France with the aid of continental allies. Persuasion on the part of Ferdinand was really unnecessary, for France's invasion of northern Italy did much to bring England into the League. Nearly all Englishmen of this period were hostile to everything French.<sup>29</sup>

Despite the preponderance of factors that pushed Henry toward an alliance with the pope, there was an influential minority in his council who advised against

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<sup>26</sup>Wernham, Before the Armada, 79-81.

<sup>27</sup>Scarisbrick, Henry VIII, 31-34.

<sup>28</sup>Henry's wife, Catherine of Aragon, was Ferdinand's daughter.

<sup>29</sup>A. F. Pollard, Henry VIII (London, 1919), 50.

England's joining the League. Bishop Fox was the leader of this group of advisors who counselled Henry not to forsake the cardinal rule of the foreign policy of his father, Henry VII. France was not to be provoked or actively opposed unless the welfare of England itself was threatened. Obviously England's interests were not involved in the power struggle taking place in northern Italy, since the likelihood of the French king becoming the de facto ruler of Christendom was remote indeed.<sup>30</sup>

During this period when Henry was outwardly undecided as to what course England would take with respect to the Holy League, Louis XII was trying to maintain England's friendship. The French king faithfully continued the payments due the English king by virtue of the Treaty of Étapes,<sup>31</sup> hoping thereby to conciliate Henry.<sup>32</sup> Louis did not want to face the concentrated power of Europe alone, and at this time he apparently believed that an Anglo-French alliance was possible.

The hopes of Louis concerning the English alliance, or least England's neutrality, were not realized. Without suspecting her father's true motives in seeking a treaty

<sup>30</sup>Wernham, Before the Armada, 82.

<sup>31</sup>Ibid.

<sup>32</sup>Marguerite Wood, ed., Flodden Papers: Diplomatic Correspondence Between the Courts of France and Scotland, 1507-1517, Publications of the Scottish History Society, Series 3 (Edinburgh, 1933), XX, xxv. Hereafter cited as Flodden Papers.

with England, Catherine of Aragon readily encouraged her husband's hostility toward the Valois.<sup>33</sup> The advice of the peace faction of Henry's council was outweighed by the other considerations, and on 13 November 1511 England joined the crusade for the recovery of the lands of the Holy See.<sup>34</sup>

The last monarch to agree to the concert sworn to aid the Holy Father was Maximilian I, Holy Roman Emperor. Maximilian was allied with France by virtue of an earlier treaty, but throughout the early stages of the holy war he remained inactive. The death of the extremely able French marshal, Gaston de Foix, at Ravenna on 11 April 1512 caused the Emperor to reconsider his position, and the result was a shift in allegiance from Louis XII to Julius II. Maximilian resisted pressure from Rome for some eight months, but the awesome array of power assembled by Julius was more than the Emperor could withstand. In November 1512, the Holy League added the Holy Roman Emperor to its membership.<sup>35</sup>

In addition to the six countries directly involved, there was a seventh strong military power whose services were very much in demand--the Helvetian Federation. The Swiss mercenaries, considered to be the most proficient

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<sup>33</sup>Garrett Mattingly, Catherine of Aragon (New York, 1941), 133.

<sup>34</sup>Letters of Henry VIII, No. 1967, 299.

<sup>35</sup>Seton-Watson, Maximilian I, 63-64.

soldiers of that time, had fought with the French ever since the Valois invasion of Italy in 1494. Louis XII failed to renew his treaty with the Federation in 1510, and Julius immediately negotiated an agreement with the Swiss. The failure of the Papacy to fulfill its financial obligation to the mercenaries allowed them to ally with the highest bidder in the holy war.<sup>36</sup>

French negotiations with the Swiss were halted when the price of the mercenaries exceeded what Louis' representative was authorized to pay. While the French diplomats returned home for additional instructions, Julius took full advantage of this moment of indecision on the part of the French to bring into play the Papacy's ancient and once powerful weapon--the threat of excommunication. In a bull issued on 17 March 1512, Julius stated that if the French did not withdraw from Italy within six days of the promulgation of the bull, the invaders would be excommunicated.<sup>37</sup>

More importantly for the Swiss, the Holy Father warned the Helvetian Diet, with expulsion of the Swiss from the church as the alternative, not to ally with the French. The bull achieved one of its goals, for the Swiss were soon fighting under the banner of Julius.<sup>38</sup>

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<sup>36</sup>Mommsen, "The Accession of the Helvetian Federation," 125.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., 126-27.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., 131.

Throughout the negotiations that culminated in the Holy League, James IV of Scotland attempted to settle the differences among the princes of Europe that threatened to split that continent into two warring factions. James was motivated in his peace efforts by his desire to lead a crusade against the infidels<sup>39</sup> and by the traditional alliance with the French.<sup>40</sup>

The Scottish king really was not so interested in peace itself as in becoming a force in continental politics. If he could be instrumental in the maintenance of peace in Europe and lead a crusade, then his objective would have been achieved. Only when it became apparent that fighting would break out on the continent did James decide to seek his goals through war.

His obsession with a crusade provides an illuminating insight into the character of the Scottish king. Despite the fact that James was twice the age of his eighteen-year-old counterpart on the English throne, it was Henry who was the realist while James seemed like a moon-struck romantic so far as sixteenth century diplomacy was concerned.<sup>41</sup> Julius attempted to take advantage of this apparent weakness in James' character by reminding the

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<sup>39</sup>Flodden Papers, xv.

<sup>40</sup>John S. C. Bridge and Seargeant Cyprian, A History of France from the Death of Louis XI, Vol. IV: Reign of Louis XII, 1508-1514 (Oxford, 1929), 212-13.

<sup>41</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 201.

Scot that his country's recent quarrel with England was impeding the vindication of the honor of the Holy See and, indirectly, James' crusade. The king refused to be swayed. He countered that the Pope could not overrule him in temporal matters, which James interpreted this "holy" war to be. The Scottish monarch would continue to execute his country's foreign policy according to Scotland's best interests and not the Pope's.<sup>42</sup>

Scotland was in a difficult diplomatic situation, since she was committed by treaties to aid both England and France, enemies by virtue of tradition, and, more recently, the Holy League. Even before the formation of the alliance of 1511 James could foresee the approaching crisis and attempted to avoid war at that time.<sup>43</sup>

Andrew Forman, bishop of Moray, was pressed into service as the personal ambassador of James. Forman traveled throughout the continent in an effort to reconcile Louis XII and Julius II.<sup>44</sup> The king of Scots worked hard to make the mission of Forman a success. In one seven-day period in February, 1511, James wrote seven leaders in

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<sup>42</sup>Patrick Abercromby, The Martial Achievements of the Scots Nation: Being a Full, Complete, and Genuine History of Scotland from the Year of God 1329, to the Year 1514; with a Clear and Demonstrative Confutation of the Errors of Former Writers, Whether Domestick or Foreign; and a Survey of the Military Transactions Wherein Scotland or Scotsmen Were Remarkably Concerned During That Period of Time (Edinburgh, 1715), 525.

<sup>43</sup>Mackie, Henry VIII and Scotland, 107.

<sup>44</sup>Letters of James IV, No. 332, 181-82.

Europe trying to enlist their aid in maintaining peace on the continent, but his efforts were unsuccessful.<sup>45</sup> In a Europe in which almost every major power was allied against him, Scotland was the only quarter from which Louis could hope to secure active support.

Scotland's participation was not assured so far as the rest of Europe knew. There was still hope in England that Henry's earlier gestures of peace would neutralize Scotland. Less than two weeks after the West commission<sup>46</sup> Henry announced his entry into the Holy League. Another step was taken when England and Spain, already allies in the Holy League, concluded a private treaty on 17 November 1511 which called for a joint invasion of France the following spring.<sup>47</sup>

Ostensibly the treaty was to check French designs on northern Italy, but the true motives were not defensive in the least. Ferdinand, relying on Henry's eagerness to enter the European arena, enticed the English king by pointing out that England had an excellent claim to her old possession on the continent, the French duchy of Guienne. As for himself, Ferdinand had plans unknown even to Henry

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<sup>45</sup>The personalities receiving letters from James were the Pope, the Cardinal of St. Mark, the Marquis of Mantua, the Duke of Savoy, the Holy Roman Emperor, the King of Hungary, and the College of Cardinals. *Ibid.*, Nos. 349-59; 189-94.

<sup>46</sup>13 November 1511, *Letters of Henry VIII*, No. 1967, 299.

<sup>47</sup>*Ibid.*, No. 1980, 302.

and his wife.<sup>48</sup> While the English army held the French at bay, Ferdinand would fulfill his old ambition to extend the northern boundary of Aragon to its natural limits, the Pyrenees, by conquering the southern half of the undefended kingdom of Navarre.<sup>49</sup>

Catherine played an important part in the negotiations that resulted in the treaty of 17 November. At this time, she was highly favored by Henry and exerted some degree of influence over him. The queen, completely unaware of her father's deception, innocently presented Ferdinand's arguments concerning Guienne to her husband. Here Henry's inexperience hurt him and England, for he accepted Ferdinand's proposals at their face value and signed the treaty.<sup>50</sup> With this promise to invade France in 1512, Henry abandoned his father's policy of semi-isolationism<sup>51</sup> in favor of the traditionally popular policy of war with France.<sup>52</sup>

England was busy in the winter of 1511-1512 preparing for her forthcoming invasion of France. Henry reissued the Statute of Winchester of 1285 to remind everyone

<sup>48</sup>Pollard, The Reign of Henry VII, No. 17, 75-78.

<sup>49</sup>Mattingly, Catherine of Aragon, 142.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

<sup>51</sup>Wernham, Before the Armada, 82

<sup>52</sup>Melvin J. Tucker, The Life of Thomas Howard, Earl of Surrey and Second Duke of Norfolk, 1443-1524 (The Hague, 1964), 99.

of the weapons, armor, and horses each class must possess.<sup>53</sup> Commissioners of array were told to call the militia to see if the statute was being obeyed. Failure to maintain the level of armament specified in the statute entailed the levying of a fine.<sup>54</sup>

During this period, Scotland became active diplomatically due to her precarious position with respect to England and France. James IV, allied to each power by treaty, realized that if war broke out, Scotland would have to choose between the two, and his crusade would be jeopardized.<sup>55</sup>

Judging by his country's military preparations,<sup>56</sup> James obviously was not so averse to the idea of war with England as is sometimes suspected by historians of the period. Several factors, however, dictated a cautious policy on the part of Scotland. First of all, war with England would result in the excommunication of the pious James due to a clause in the Treaty of Perpetual Peace.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Paul L. Hughes and James F. Larkin, eds., Tudor Royal Proclamations, Vol. I: The Early Tudors, 1485-1553 (New Haven, Conn., 1964), 85-93.

<sup>54</sup>Norman and Pottinger, Warrior to Soldier, 147.

<sup>55</sup>Donaldson, Scottish Kings, 133.

<sup>56</sup>Scotland, evidently fearing the worst, was conducting feverish military preparations. James' new ship, the Great Michael, was ready for sea, guns and gun metal were being imported from Flanders, and guns were being cast by French craftsmen in Edinburgh Castle. Mackie, King James IV, 212.

<sup>57</sup>Dickinson, A Source Book, II, 58-60.

In addition, Scotland could not face the entire military might of England alone, and at this time Louis XII was still intent on maintaining friendly relations with the English if at all possible.<sup>58</sup> Finally, James had not abandoned his desire to lead a crusade against the infidels. If war broke out, the crusade would be an impossibility.<sup>59</sup>

James, realizing that war on the continent was a probability, sought to terminate his country's treaty with England. In a letter of 5 December 1511, the Scottish king asked Pope Julius II to free him from the threat of excommunication for the severing of the treaty with England. James contended that Henry had not honored the treaty and that the English had attacked Scots by land and sea without redress.<sup>60</sup> Because Henry had not honored the provisions of the treaty, James said that he assumed both monarchs had been freed from the sanctions of the agreement.<sup>61</sup> These efforts were unsuccessful, for Julius maintained an ambiguous silence concerning the request.<sup>62</sup>

While chances were better that James would honor the ancient French alliance, it was not a certainty at this

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<sup>58</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 213.

<sup>59</sup>Letters of James IV, xlvi.

<sup>60</sup>Obviously referring to the Barton incident. Ridpath, The Border History of England and Scotland, 331.

<sup>61</sup>Letters of James IV, No. 394, 218-19.

<sup>62</sup>Dickinson, A New History of Scotland, 285-86.

point. The Scots hoped that they would not be forced to choose between England and France. In an effort to avoid this dilemma, James conducted his own campaign to keep war from breaking out on the continent. The main individual used by James in this attempt at mediation was Andrew Forman, bishop of Moray.

Forman was sent, in the last weeks of 1511 and the early weeks of 1512, on a diplomatic mission to Rome, Blois, and London to see if peace could be preserved.<sup>63</sup> Julius II thanked James for sending Forman, but contended that France was not interested in peace, therefore the Papacy must take measures to defend itself. James was urged to join the Holy League or at least to abstain from aiding Louis.<sup>64</sup>

After his failure in Rome, Forman went to the French court at Blois. Louis XII, with a powerful military concert allied against him, was doing everything possible to preserve the peace short of abandoning his Italian campaigns. The French king contended in a letter to Forman of 17 January 1512 that it was Julius who did not desire peace. Louis expressed the hope that the Scottish ambassador would be able to reason with the Pope.<sup>65</sup>

The following day, 18 January, Louis wrote James and implored the Scot to preserve friendly relations with England

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<sup>63</sup>Letters of James IV, No. 394, 218-19.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., No. 399, 220-21.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., No. 403, 222.

and to resist the efforts of Julius to bring Scotland into the Holy League. Taking advantage of James' obsession to lead a crusade, Louis promised that one year after peace was made France would help to supply the expedition.<sup>66</sup> Judging by these two letters, Louis was still hopeful of avoiding a war with the Holy League.

Before returning to Edinburgh, Andrew Forman visited the English court in hopes of persuading Henry to forget his differences with Louis and continue their friendly relations.<sup>67</sup> This mission proved to be crucial, for Forman's return to Edinburgh was followed by a distinct change in Scotland's foreign policy. During his stay at the English court, Forman came to the conclusion that Henry had placed England among the enemies of France. This information, when reported to James, ended Scotland's vacillation. No reconciliation with England then seemed possible, and the treaty with France must be renewed.<sup>68</sup>

The nobles and prelates of Scotland were summoned on 29 February 1512 for the purpose of hearing Forman's report and deciding what action would be taken in regard to their country's foreign policy. After the council meeting, James, seeing only the promises of French aid for his crusade and an opportunity to increase further Scotland's

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<sup>66</sup>Flodden Papers, No. 6, 19-20.

<sup>67</sup>Letters of James IV, No. 410, 225-26.

<sup>68</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 215-16.

standing in Europe by a successful campaign against England, decided to offer to renew the Auld Alliance. He sent the royal herald, Unicorn Pursuivant, to France on 10 March with a draft of the treaty.<sup>69</sup>

While the treaty was in the process of being affirmed by both parties, James was visited by an envoy of Julius, Octavian Olarius.<sup>70</sup> The envoy presented a letter from the Pope urging the Scots to come to the aid of the Holy See by joining the League against France.<sup>71</sup> A similar request came from Ferdinand via his ambassador to London, Leonardo Lopez, but these attempts proved to be futile, for Louis was able to exploit James' great weakness by promising ships and money for the Scot's crusade.<sup>72</sup> James sent letters to both Julius and Ferdinand urging a negotiated settlement of the grievances between France and the church but steadfastly refused to desert Louis.<sup>73</sup>

In late February and early March of 1512, Louis still did not know what course Scotland would follow if

<sup>69</sup>This decision was made on 6 March 1512. The actual treaty was a copy of a 1491 agreement which, in turn, was derived from a treaty of 1371 between Robert II of Scotland and Charles V of France. *Ibid.*, 216-17.

<sup>70</sup>*Ibid.*, 216.

<sup>71</sup>The letter was written on the 6th or 7th of January, 1512, but was not delivered to James until March. Letters of James IV, No. 399, 220-21.

<sup>72</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 216-17.

<sup>73</sup>Letters of James IV, Nos. 429, 430; 236-38.

England invaded France, an event he now fully expected. Jehan de la Motte was sent by Louis to Edinburgh to inform James of Louis' fear of an impending invasion from England and to determine if France could rely on Scottish aid. A large "post-dated" check was also sent to remind James that his best hope for financing his crusade lay with France and not with the Holy League.<sup>74</sup>

De la Motte left Scotland to return home on 25 March 1512 and took with him James' reply to Louis' inquiry. In a confidential letter, the Scottish monarch pointed out that since Henry VIII was childless, his own marriage to Henry's sister, Margaret, made him heir to the English throne. An open break with England would virtually destroy his chances for a peaceful succession if Henry's throne should become vacant. Under these circumstances James asked Louis not to abandon him in his quest for the English throne. He also put Louis' promise of aid to the test by requesting not only money and arms, but troops and the pension of 50,000 crowns<sup>75</sup> paid annually to Henry by France.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>74</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 217.

<sup>75</sup>This was the payment due to the English king by virtue of the Treaty of Etaples. Wernham, Before the Armada, 37.

<sup>76</sup>This particular letter has not been preserved but James' demands are recapitulated in Louis' reply given to the bishop of Ross. Scottish ambassador to France, in April, 1512. Flodden Papers, No. 9, 38-43.

Louis, in a letter of 4 April 1512, expressed the opinion that a conflict between England and France was inevitable and once again appealed to James to intervene as an ally of France.<sup>77</sup> In a later correspondence, Louis replied to James' request of 25 March. Louis agreed to support any legitimate claim that James might have to ascend to the English throne and not to make peace with Scotland's enemies without her consent. The question of men and munitions was another matter. Because of the impending invasion of France by England, Louis said he could send neither troops nor arms.<sup>78</sup> By this time Louis had received the draft of the treaty sent by James, and this commitment from Scotland seemed to put France in a somewhat stronger position, but the fact remained that the treaty had not yet been confirmed by either state.<sup>79</sup>

During the early months of 1512, England, obligated to invade France by her agreement with Spain of November, 1511, was making preparations for war. Parliament, in a session of 25 January 1512, called for the formal declaration of war against France<sup>80</sup> and followed this action in

<sup>77</sup>Ibid., No. 7, 27-32.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid., No. 9, 38-43.

<sup>79</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 218.

<sup>80</sup>Alfred Spont, ed., Letters and Papers relating to the War with France, 1512-1513, Publications of the Navy Records Society (London, 1897), X, x. Hereafter cited as L. and P. War with France.

February by granting Henry two fifteenths and tenths<sup>81</sup> to finance the war. Henry, after combining this grant with his father's considerable savings, had little trouble raising and paying for an army capable of fighting in both France and Scotland if it became necessary to do so.<sup>82</sup>

It was not the policy of the Tudors to create a large standing army to serve abroad and enforce their supremacy at home, but, rather, they relied on the national levy to support the crown.<sup>83</sup> In this particular instance, Henry issued commissions of array in order to raise the number of troops necessary to carry out the invasion of France and to defend England against any Scottish attempts to enter his country while the main army was on the continent.<sup>84</sup>

Such a commission was issued on 20 February to Thomas Howard, earl of Surrey, empowering him to raise an army from the countries of York, Northumberland, Cumberland,

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<sup>81</sup>The fifteenth and tenth was a grant of the fifteenth part of the value of movable property belonging to persons outside the royal demesne and the tenth part of such value in case of persons living on the royal demesne, in cities and boroughs. Frederick C. Dietz, English Government Finance, 1485-1558, 2nd. ed. (New York, 1964), 13. This practice originated in 1188 and became a regular, non-feudal source of revenue for the crown. Sigfrid Henry Steinburg, ed., A New Dictionary of British History (London, 1963), 230.

<sup>82</sup>Wernham, Before the Armada, 84.

<sup>83</sup>Gladys Scott Thomson, Lords Lieutenants in the Sixteenth Century: A Study in Tudor Local Administration (London, 1923), 12.

<sup>84</sup>Ibid., 16.

Westmorland and Lancaster for the defense of north England against the Scots.<sup>85</sup> Surrey was aided in his efforts by the fact that in the north, because of the constant danger of a Scottish invasion, many land tracts were leased in return for mixed rents of military service and money.<sup>86</sup> This retention of certain aspects of feudal society by many great families meant that the north possessed formidable military resources that could be readily called to arms.<sup>87</sup> The gathering of an army occupied Surrey in the spring and early summer of 1512, but since England and Scotland were still at peace and all was quiet in the north, he returned to London in August.<sup>88</sup> Although this mustering of the northern troops appeared to have been for nothing, this was not the case. It constituted a full dress rehearsal for the upcoming Flodden campaign.<sup>89</sup>

The fact that peace still existed between the two countries greatly disturbed Surrey. There were several reasons behind his desire for war with Scotland, first and foremost of which was that a Scottish war might enable the earl to exert a powerful influence over Henry. Surrey's

<sup>85</sup>Letters of Henry VIII, No. 3024, 326.

<sup>86</sup>Norman and Pottinger, Warrior to Soldier, 147.

<sup>87</sup>John Duncan Mackie, ed., The English Army at Flodden, Publications of the Scottish History Society, Vol. XLIII, Series 3 (Edinburgh, 1951), 53-55.

<sup>88</sup>Tucker, The Life of Thomas Howard, 100-01.

<sup>89</sup>Mackie, "The Auld Alliance and the Battle of Flodden," 55.

familiarity with the north of England<sup>90</sup> would make him indispensable to the king. Some believed that France, having to contend with the Holy League on the continent, would not be in a position to aid Scotland. These factors, combined with the obvious danger of leaving England virtually defenseless while an invasion army was in France, made a strong case on behalf of a Scottish war, but Henry's eyes were on the continent and there his army would be also.<sup>91</sup> If Scotland wanted war with England, Henry, of course, would respond, but the initiative would have to be Scotland's.

Preparations for the invasion of France were taking place simultaneously with those undertaken for the Scottish threat to English security. These preparations proved to be one of the first important missions in the brilliant career of Henry's royal almoner, Thomas Wolsey.<sup>92</sup> It was somewhat risky for Wolsey to stake his reputation on an extremely hazardous foreign adventure, but the gamble proved to be a wise one.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>90</sup>The present Howard family home is at Arundel Castle, Sussex, but in the sixteenth century, it was located in Northumberland. Merle Severy, ed., This England (Washington, 1966), 200-01.

<sup>91</sup>Tucker, The Life of Thomas Howard, 100-01.

<sup>92</sup>George Cavendish, Thomas Wolsey, Late Cardinal: his Life and Death (London, 1962), 41.

<sup>93</sup>Tucker, The Life of Thomas Howard, 98-99.

Henry's desire for a swift victory over the French was enhanced in March when the Pope drew up a bull that transferred the lands of Louis XII to the English king. The bull would not be published or become operative until Louis was actually defeated, but it still served to spur Henry and his war effort.<sup>94</sup>

In April the English fleet was ready for operations in the Channel. On the seventh day of that month Surrey's son, Sir Edward Howard was appointed commander of the Channel fleet, which was composed of seventeen ships besides Howard's flagship, the Regent.<sup>95</sup>

The objective of the fleet was to clear the Channel in order to facilitate the transfer of fifteen thousand troops to northern Spain in the summer. Howard met with immediate success, but the fleet's effectiveness was soon restricted by organizational and tactical problems. French resistance in the Channel stiffened, and Sir Edward Howard was killed the next year in a battle between the Regent and the French warship Cordelie.<sup>96</sup> Sir Edward's elder brother, Thomas,<sup>97</sup> was named by Henry to succeed the fallen admiral.<sup>98</sup>

<sup>94</sup>Scarisbrick, Henry VIII, 33.

<sup>95</sup>Letters of Henry VIII, Nos. 3115, 3117; 343-44.

<sup>96</sup>Geoffrey Jules Marcus, A Naval History of England, Vol. I: The Formative Centuries (Boston, 1961), 35.

<sup>97</sup>The Howard brothers had previously served Henry by destroying Andrew Barton. See pages 129-135 above.

<sup>98</sup>Campbell, Lives of Admirals, 323.

While the fleet was preparing the way for the English invasion, Henry tried to neutralize Scotland's forces in the upcoming campaign. Nicholas West and Thomas, lord Dacre, were commissioned on 15 April 1512 to go to Scotland and treat with James for the settlement of grievances between the two countries.<sup>99</sup> The ambassadors' mission was hampered when James learned of the activities of the English fleet in the Channel. James gave a commission to Andrew Barton's brother, Robert, to attack English shipping, and Barton came back to port with thirteen prizes.<sup>100</sup> West and Dacre returned home in mid-June with nothing more than a promise from James that he would send ambassadors to England for further discussions.<sup>101</sup>

The English expedition to the continent in the summer of 1512 proved to be a fiasco of the first order.<sup>102</sup> Ten thousand troops under the command of the marquis of Dorset spent the summer sweltering in Spain waiting to join some seventeen thousand Spanish soldiers under the duke of Alva, soldiers that Ferdinand never intended to send. While the Spanish turned toward Navarre, the mere

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<sup>99</sup>Letters of Henry VIII, No. 3128, 345.

<sup>100</sup>Ridpath, The Border History of England and Scotland, 332-33.

<sup>101</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 222.

<sup>102</sup>Wernham, Before the Armada, 84-85.

presence of Dorset's men prevented the French, who were nearby at Bayonne, from interfering with Ferdinand's plans for Navarre.<sup>103</sup>

By September the English troops were near mutiny and the officers willingly complied with the demands of the men to return home. A messenger, one Dr. Knight, was sent ahead to break the news to the English king. Henry's order for his troops to join Ferdinand despite their condition did not arrive in time to be put into effect.<sup>104</sup> Thomas Howard ferried home in December<sup>105</sup> the remainder of the army, greatly reduced in number by illness.<sup>106</sup> England paid a heavy price for Henry's inexperience and his eagerness to make his presence felt on the continent--two thousand men, two hundred thousand ducats, plus an immeasurable loss of prestige.<sup>107</sup>

France had weathered the first military threat from England, but Louis knew the menace remained. The position

<sup>103</sup>Mattingly, Catherine of Aragon, 142-43.

<sup>104</sup>Scarbrick, Henry VIII, 30.

<sup>105</sup>Campbell, Lives of Admirals, 323.

<sup>106</sup>"The Wars and Causes of Them between England and France, from William the First to William the Third with a Treatise of the Salique Laws by D. J. and revised by R. C. Esq. MDCXCVII," Vol. I: The Harlein Miscellany or, a Collection of Scarce, Curious, and Entertaining Pamphlets and Tracts, As Well in Manuscript as in Print, Found in the Late Earl of Oxford's Library. Interspersed with Historical, Political and Critical notes. With a Table of Contents and an Alphabetical Index (London, 1744), 310.

<sup>107</sup>Mattingly, Catherine of Aragon, 144.

of France was strengthened on 10 July 1512 when the Auld Alliance was officially renewed by James in Edinburgh.<sup>108</sup> Final confirmation came from Louis at Blois on 12 September 1512.<sup>109</sup>

The winter of 1512 passed quietly enough, but the new year brought renewed danger for France. Julius II's death in February, 1513, and the subsequent election of Leo X (1513-1521),<sup>110</sup> did nothing to alleviate Louis' problem. The Holy League was clearly a political weapon for the defeat of France.

Henry made one last attempt to insure the neutrality of Scotland when England invaded France. In March, Nicholas West once again went to Scotland in an effort to persuade James to refrain from attacking England. West's instructions were explicit: to be sure that James was not stalling for the purpose of sending the Great Michael, Scotland's greatest ship, to France, and, with respect to redress of grievances, to secure for England larger recompense.<sup>111</sup> In a letter to Henry, West stated that he received the impression from interviews with James that the Scot felt that any great French defeat would have dire

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<sup>108</sup>Letters of Henry VIII, No. 3303, 376.

<sup>109</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 218.

<sup>110</sup>Pirie, The Triple Crown, 46-47.

<sup>111</sup>Letters of Henry VIII, No. 3811, 512.

consequences for Scotland.<sup>112</sup> Any chance for peace was destroyed by the uncompromising attitude of both rulers, and it appeared that war, undesirable though it may have been at that time, was inevitable.<sup>113</sup>

A new Anglo-Spanish treaty was signed by Henry on 20 April 1513,<sup>114</sup> and with this treaty, war became a certainty.<sup>115</sup> There were factors other than desire for French territory that prompted Henry to agree to a new alliance with Spain, despite Ferdinand's deceit of the previous year. Ferdinand made it appear that the English had been idle in the summer of 1512 while his troops under Alva had done the heavy fighting. This accusation hurt Henry's pride, and war with France was England's only hope for redemption. In addition, Catherine was one of her husband's most influential advisors, and constantly pushed Henry toward the new alliance.<sup>116</sup>

According to the new agreement, Ferdinand, financed by an English subsidy of one hundred thousand crowns, was

<sup>112</sup>Ellis, Original Letters, No. 26, 65-75.

<sup>113</sup>W. Mackay Mackenzie, The Secret of Flodden with 'The Rout of the Scots,' a Translation of the Contemporary Italian Poem, La Rotta de Scocesi (Edinburgh, 1931), 33. Ridpath, The Border History of England and Scotland, 333. Letters of Henry VIII, Nos. 3811, 3812; 512.

<sup>114</sup>Hughes and Larkin, Tudor Royal Proclamations, 103-05.

<sup>115</sup>Tucker, The Life of Thomas Howard, 102.

<sup>116</sup>Mattingly, Catherine of Aragon, 144-45.

to invade southern France while an English expedition, personally commanded by Henry, marched from Calais.<sup>117</sup> As Henry should have learned from his previous dealings with Ferdinand, the Spanish king felt no moral obligation to honor the provisions of an agreement. England would not be able to count upon the support of the Spanish, for Ferdinand had signed a secret treaty with Louis prior to the Anglo-Spanish agreement. Thus the English army had to face the French virtually alone.<sup>118</sup>

James used this peace between France and Spain as a tool by which he hoped to avoid war with England at this time. In a letter to Henry, he asked his English counterpart to join Scotland in the general peace. The time had passed for such pleas, for the redemption of English pride demanded war.<sup>119</sup>

Despite the Spanish abandonment of England, Henry continued his plans for war by making provisions for the governing of the realm in his absence. Catherine was proclaimed governor of the realm and was to be advised by a skeletal council headed by William Warham, archbishop of

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<sup>117</sup>Ibid., 145-46.

<sup>118</sup>England could expect little help from the other members of the Holy League. The Venetians had signed a separate peace with France and Maximilian could not be depended upon for much aid. The Swiss were too far away to be influential at this point so what Henry would be able to achieve depended upon his own efforts. Wernham, Before the Armada, 85.

<sup>119</sup>Ellis, Original Letters, No. 27, 76-78.

Canterbury, and including the earl of Surrey.<sup>120</sup> Thomas Wolsey, fearing the influence the already prominent Howards might gain over Henry if they were instrumental in English successes abroad, arranged for Surrey to be left behind to supervise the Treasury<sup>121</sup> and the defense of the northern border.<sup>122</sup> This proved to be one of the few errors in judgment that Wolsey ever made, for Surrey was to lead the English to a memorable victory at Flodden.

Henry, along with the English army, left England for Calais on 30 June 1513.<sup>123</sup> For all practical purposes, amicable Anglo-Scottish relations were at an end. James, on 26 July 1513, wrote Henry a last letter which listed Scotland's grievances against England such as the destruction of Barton and the harboring of the fugitive Heron, reiterated James' determination to support his French ally, and ordered Henry to terminate his campaign against Louis.<sup>124</sup>

In a return letter, Henry rejected James' demands and stated that he would remain in France until he saw fit

<sup>120</sup>Mattingly, Catherine of Aragon, 148.

<sup>121</sup>Surrey was lord high treasurer. Brenan and Statham, The House of Howard, 96.

<sup>122</sup>Ibid.

<sup>123</sup>Letters of Henry VIII, No. 4306, 631-32.

<sup>124</sup>Letters of James IV, No. 560, 311-13.

to leave.<sup>125</sup> James did not expect nor want any results from the correspondence, for before Henry's negative reply of 12 August 1513<sup>126</sup> could be delivered, James had initiated military action against England which resulted in his death at Flodden.<sup>127</sup>

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<sup>125</sup>Byrne, The Letters of Henry VIII, 17-19.  
Gordon Donaldson, Common errors in Scottish History (London, 1956), 10.

<sup>126</sup>Letters of Henry VIII, No. 4397, 656. Letters of James IV, No. 563, 314-15.

<sup>127</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 245.

## CHAPTER IX

### THE FLODDEN CAMPAIGN

The military action initiated by James took the form of the dispatch of a Scottish fleet to France. He had ignored a previous request from Louis XII for this naval support, but relented and ordered the fleet to sail on 25 July 1513.<sup>1</sup> The Scottish Parliament had voted for war only the day before.<sup>2</sup>

The fleet, under the command of the earl of Aran,<sup>3</sup> did not go immediately to France, but rather sailed for Ayr on the western coast of Scotland from which raids were launched against Ireland. Earlier that month the Irish chieftain O'Donnell had been in Scotland, and the idea of creating a diversion in Ireland to occupy England evolved as a result of his visit. What went wrong with the plans

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<sup>1</sup>An eighteenth century Scottish historian, Patrick Abercromby, places the date of the sailing as 26 July. Abercromby, The Martial Achievements of the Scots Nation, 528. Modern authorities indicate the date to have been 25 July. Mackie, King James IV, 242-43.

<sup>2</sup>Reid, "Seapower in the Foreign Policy of James IV," 105-06.

<sup>3</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 243. Reid, "Seapower in the Foreign Policy of James IV," 106. Abercromby, The Martial Achievements of the Scots Nation, 527.

has yet to be determined,<sup>4</sup> but they were abandoned and the fleet reached its original destination, Brest, in mid-August.<sup>5</sup>

Now that the decision to attack England had been reached, James did not hesitate to put pressure on the military forces that remained in England. A detachment of some eight to ten thousand Scots led by the chamberlain, Lord Hume, invaded Northumberland where they did extensive damage.<sup>6</sup> On the return trip to Scotland, Hume's expedition was ambushed by an English contingent of about a thousand

<sup>4</sup>Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, IV, 416.

<sup>5</sup>Authorities differ over the size of the fleet. W. Stanford Reid says eleven ships were involved while R. L. Mackie, admitting his estimate may be erroneous, states that the fleet was composed of six ships. Reid, "Seapower in the Foreign Policy of James IV," 106. Mackie, King James IV, 242. The ultimate fate of the ships likewise is uncertain. In October the Scots received word that five ships had been sunk. The pride of the Scottish navy, the Great Michael, was eventually sold to France for forty thousand francs. Ibid.

<sup>6</sup>Raphael Holinshed, The Third Volume of Chronicles, Beginning at Duke William the Norman, Commonlie Called the Conqueror; and Descending by Degrees of Yeers to All the Kings and Queens of England in Their Orderlie Successions: First Compiled by Raphael Holinshed, and by Him Extended to the Yeare 1577. Now Newlie Recognised, Augmented, and Continued (with Occurances and Accidents of Fresh Memorie) to the Yeare 1586. Wherein Also Are Contained Manie Matters of Singular Discourse and Rare Obseruation, Fruitfull to be Such As Be Studios in Antiquities, or Take Pleasure in the Grounds or Ancient Histories. With a Third Table (peculiarlie seruing this third volume) Both of Names and Matters Memorable (London, 1808), III, 591. Abercromby, The Martial Achievements of the Scots Nation, 530. M. St. Clare Byrne, The Letters of King Henry VIII: A Selection with a Few Other Documents (London, 1968), 20-21.

men commanded by Sir William Bulmer.<sup>7</sup> The English body, composed mainly of archers, hid in the tall grass of Milfield Plain southeast of Flodden Hill and killed about five hundred Scots in addition to taking about four hundred prisoners.<sup>8</sup>

The failure of Hume's expedition, referred to as the Ill Raid by the Scots,<sup>9</sup> did not deter James who now devoted his energies to the task of assembling a full-fledged invasion army. An invasion of England by Scotland was certainly nothing new. If James had been an ardent student of history he might have hesitated, for most previous attacks had turned out badly for the Scots. On this occasion, however, there was reason for optimism. In a contemporary poem, Scotish Ffeilde, a Scottish agent in

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<sup>7</sup>Henry VIII to Maximilian Sforza, duke of Milan, from Tournai. Great Britain, Public Record Office, Calendar of State Paper and Manuscripts, Existing in the Archives and Collection of Milan, ed. by Allen B. Hinds (London, 1912), I, No. 655, 397-98. Hereafter cited as C. S. P. Milan. James Howell, Bella Scot-Anglica: A brief of all the battells and martiall encounters which have happened 'twixt England and Scotland from all times to this present (London, 1648), 10.

<sup>8</sup>Floddan Field in Nine Fits being an exact history of that famous memorable battle fought between English and Scots on Floddan Hill in the time of Henry the Eighth Anno 1513. Worthy the Perusal of the English nobility (London, 1664), 13. Douglas, A History of the Border Counties, 247. Lewis Butler, "The Battle of Flodden Field, 1513," The United Service Magazine, XVIII (1899), 400. Holinshed, Chronicles, 591. Peter Young and John Adair, Hastings to Culloden (London, 1964), 93.

<sup>9</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 246.

England allegedly reported that none "But millners and masse preistes" remained in England since Henry VIII had the bulk of the English army with him in France.<sup>10</sup> Unfortunately for James, the situation in England was not as it was reported in Scotish Ffeilde. Still, the advantages seemed to lie with Scotland. Against what constituted a rear guard army in England, James could throw the best soldiers Scotland had to offer. The existing machinery for raising troops for the defense of the realm was simple in the extreme and feudalistic in nature. The most important duty of vassals in the feudal system was military service, and this was true in Scotland later than it was in most areas of Europe. In fact, Scottish kings employed no mercenaries until the last years of the sixteenth century.<sup>11</sup>

This meant that, in general, Scotland could expect to field a less experienced army than her foe, but this was not the only handicap of the feudalistic method of providing an army. The king could count on having his levies for a maximum of forty days at any one time, which worked a particular hardship on James. All of his efforts to use force in the execution of his foreign policy were really raids instead of wars.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>J. P. Oakden, ed., Scotish Ffeilde (Manchester 1935), 4.

<sup>11</sup>Grant, The Social and Economic Development of Scotland, 178-79.

<sup>12</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XIII, clxxxvi-clxxxvii. A. of P. Scotland, I, 494.

As an example of this system in action consider the case of John Grant of Freuchy. Under a charter granted him on 8 December 1509, he was obligated to supply, at the command of the king, three horsemen for each ten pounds of rentable land in his possession along with all men living on his land who were capable of fighting.<sup>13</sup> While the terms of his obligations were fairly explicit, this was not always the case. In many instances there seems to have been no requirement to provide a fixed number of men or arms, thus making it difficult for the king to know precisely how many soldiers he could count on in time of war.<sup>14</sup>

The ultimate weakness of the system was that its success depended primarily on the strength and popularity of the crown. If the king were not forceful enough, the vassals could simply ignore the royal summons, leaving him without an army. This did not hurt James very badly in the Flodden campaign, but he was constantly aware that the only real factor that bound his army to him was his own ability of persuasion.<sup>15</sup>

In addition to this source of manpower, James could expect to receive troops from the various towns and cities

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<sup>13</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XIII, 329.

<sup>14</sup>Mackie, The English Army at Flodden, 43.

<sup>15</sup>Grant, The Social and Economic Development of Scotland, 180.

in Scotland. By virtue of a series of laws codified in the reign of David I, the burghs of Berwick, Roxburgh, Edinburgh, and Stirling were under an obligation to the monarch to provide troops when the need arose. A similar duty was placed upon every burgh that subsequently received a charter of incorporation from the king.<sup>16</sup> Obviously, this system did not provide a Scottish king in need of an army with a host of professional troops. To make this ill-trained force as effective as possible, it became customary to use soldiers of the royal household as the nucleus of the army.<sup>17</sup>

The summons for the army to assemble was issued to the shires on 24 July<sup>18</sup> ordering the levies to gather at Ellem Kirk. For some obscure reason the muster took place at Burgh Muir near Edinburgh, the traditional mustering place for royal armies, rather than at the site designated in the order.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Herbert Maxwell, The Lowland Scots Regiments: Their Origin, Character and Services Previous to the Great War of 1914 (Glasgow, 1918), 7. Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XIII, clxxxvii.

<sup>17</sup>Mackie, The English Army at Flodden, 44.

<sup>18</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 242.

<sup>19</sup>J. D. Mackie, citing the Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, indicates Ellem Kirk as the meeting place of the army designated in James' mobilization order to the shires. Mackie states also that, in fact, the army mustered at Burgh Muir. Mackie, The English Army at Flodden, 46. In writing of the Flodden campaign, Charles Oman states that Burgh Muir was the original site of the muster making no mention of Ellem Kirk. Charles Oman, A History of the Art of War in the Sixteenth Century (London, 1937), 298.

Mobilization of the Scots was probably completed by 18 August, the date upon which the Scottish artillery, seventeen guns in all,<sup>20</sup> was moved from Edinburgh Castle and prepared for the journey to the English border.<sup>21</sup> These guns were the pride of the Scottish army. As early as 1511 James had imported gun metal and smiths from France for the forging of artillery pieces in Edinburgh Castle.<sup>22</sup> These earlier efforts to bolster the number of Scottish arms paid dividends in 1513 for James had at his disposal five large guns and twelve smaller ones. Each of the large guns was drawn by a team of thirty-two oxen attended by eight drivers and fired a ball weighing sixty pounds. The twelve smaller guns were drawn by thirty-six oxen attended by nine drivers. Six of the pieces were known as "culverin moyanes" and fired four- or five-pound shots. There were four "culverin pikmoyanes" and two "gros culverins" firing ten and twenty pound shots respectively. The size of the entourage was increased by the addition of squads of twenty men each which accompanied every gun. These men, armed with picks and shovels, were responsible for necessary repairs in the roads to make it possible for the oxen-drawn

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<sup>20</sup>T. J. Hunt, "Where the River Ran Red: The Field of Flodden," Country Life, CXXXIV (5 September 1963), 560.

<sup>21</sup>Oman, A History of the Art of War, 299.

<sup>22</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 212.

guns to travel toward the south.<sup>23</sup> Scottish armament was augmented by two shiploads of weapons from Louis XII which included four hundred arquebuses, six thousand spears, six thousand pikes, and numerous maces.<sup>24</sup>

Despite these elaborate military preparations, the desire to attack England was not universally held by James' advisors. While the Scottish artillery was being readied for the forthcoming journey, James was advised to abandon the campaign by the bishop of Elphinstone and others of his councillors who opposed the invasion of England on behalf of Louis XII.<sup>25</sup> Another attempt was made to persuade James to halt the expedition while he was at Linlithgow Castle hearing vespers.<sup>26</sup> Here he was approached by a man who warned that a continuation of the planned invasion would result in a great tragedy for Scotland. This mysterious emissary was probably sent by a segment of the Scottish nobility who opposed the war<sup>27</sup> and serves to indicate that while James enjoyed widespread support,

<sup>23</sup>Gladys Dickinson, "Some Notes on the Scottish Army in the first half of the Sixteenth Century," Scottish Historical Review, XXVIII (October, 1949), 138.

<sup>24</sup>Young and Adair, Hastings to Culloden, 93.

<sup>25</sup>James Mackinnon, The Constitutional History of Scotland from Early Times to the Reformation (London, 1924), 216. J. H. S. Burleigh, A Church History of Scotland (London, 1960), 110.

<sup>26</sup>Abercromby, The Martial Achievements of the Scots Nation, 530.

<sup>27</sup>Notestein, The Scot in History, 80-81.

elements of dissent did exist in Scotland. The opposition of this minority, however, was outweighed by pro-war councillors.<sup>28</sup> After placing his son, the future James V (1513-1542), in the care of the bishop of Elphinstone, James was ready for the march to England.<sup>29</sup>

Coldstream was reached on 21 August and the following day James led his army across the Tweed.<sup>30</sup> After the crossing had been completed,<sup>31</sup> the Scots camped at Twizelhaugh and here presented James with an unusual request. They asked their king to exempt from payment of the casualties of wardship and marriage the heir of anyone who died as a result of the invasion of England.<sup>32</sup> James issued such an ordinance on 24 August, an ordinance much in use in the months following Flodden.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>28</sup>James Maidment, ed., Nugae Derelictae: Documents Illustrative of Scottish Affairs MCCVI-MDCCXV (Edinburgh, 1822), Sec. VIII, 12.

<sup>29</sup>A Diurnal of Remarkable Occurents That Have Passed within the Country of Scotland since the Death of King James the Fourth Till the Year MDLXXV: From a Manuscript of the Sixteenth Century in the Possession of Sir John Maxwell of Pollock, Baronet (Edinburgh, 1833), 4.

<sup>30</sup>Butler, "The Battle of Flodden Field, 1513," 401.

<sup>31</sup>W. R. Kermack, Historical Geography of Scotland (Edinburgh, 1913), 27.

<sup>32</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 248. According to feudal law, a wardship was exercised by the king when minors inherited a fief. Marriage of the heir usually accompanied the wardship regardless of the wishes of the heir. Steinberg, A Dictionary of British History, 383-84.

<sup>33</sup>A. of P. Scotland, 278.

Almost immediately after entering England, James set about seizing several castles located near the Scottish border. The first of these fortresses attacked was Norham Castle which belonged to Thomas Ruthal, bishop of Durham.<sup>34</sup> After a seige of some five days,<sup>35</sup> Norham surrendered on 29 August, after which James ordered the castle to be razed because most of the structure lay in ruins.<sup>36</sup>

In addition to Norham, James succeeded in capturing the castles of Wark, Etal, and Ford.<sup>37</sup> At Ford Castle, James entered into an infamous relationship with Lady Heron, wife of the man who had become a prisoner of the Scots when Robert Ker of Fernihirst was murdered. Pitscottie intimates that the Scottish defeat at Flodden can be largely blamed on James' activities at Ford. He accuses James of dallying at Ford until the Scottish army ran low on food which affected its performance in battle.<sup>38</sup> In retrospect,

<sup>34</sup>Thomas Ruthal, bishop of Durham, to almoner Wolsey, Great Britain, Public Record Office, Facsimilies of National Manuscripts from William the Conqueror to Queen Anne, Selected under the Direction of the Master of the Rolls and Photozincographed by Command of Her Majesty Queen Victoria by Colonel Sir Henry James, R. E. Director of the Ordnance Survey, Part 2 (Southampton, 1865), No. 4. Hereafter cited as National MSS England.

<sup>35</sup>Floddan Field in Nine Fits, 22.

<sup>36</sup>James Logan Mack, The Border Line: From the Solway Firth to the North Sea, Along the Marches of Scotland and England (Edinburgh, 1926), 304.

<sup>37</sup>Abercromby, The Martial Achievements of the Scots Nation, 531.

<sup>38</sup>Robert Lindesay of Pitscottie, The Historie and Cronicles of Scotland: From the Slaucher of King James

however, it does not appear that James' stay at Ford materially affected the Scottish effort, for it was not his infatuation with Lady Heron that prevented him from advancing farther into England. A period of wet and stormy weather coupled with a large amount of illness resulted in a loss of desire to fight on the part of hundreds of untried Scottish soldiers, and mass desertions followed. James felt that to penetrate England farther with an army growing smaller by the day would be too risky.<sup>39</sup>

A re-examination of the purpose of the Scottish invasion reveals that this additional penetration was unnecessary. Ostensibly, both James IV and Louis XII hoped that the mere presence of a Scottish army in England would cause Henry VIII to return the whole, or the greatest part, of his army to combat the invasion. The return of the entire army would not place James and the Scots in any great danger, for it would be too late in the year for the English to make the long march to the border counties. When it became evident that Henry would not withdraw from France, it made no sense for James to march any farther south. Even

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the First to the Ane thousande fyve hundreith thrie scoir fyftein zeir Written and Collected by Robert Lindesay of Pitscottie Being a Continuation of the Translation of the Chronicles Written by Hector Boece, and Translated by John Bellenden. Now first published from two of the oldest Manuscripts, one bequeathed by Dr. David Laing to the University of Edinburgh, and the other in the Library of John Scott of Halkshill, C. B., The Scottish Text Society (Edinburgh, 1899), XLII, 262-64.

<sup>39</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 250.

if the realization that James could not bring Henry home had not deterred the Scot from a march southward, another factor would have: an English army commanded by the earl of Surrey was in the field.<sup>40</sup> Now James would have the opportunity to realize his own secret goal, a heroic confrontation with an English army which would lead to victory and a corresponding increase in his and Scotland's reputation at the courts of Europe.

For this combination of reasons James stayed at Ford Castle during the early days of September. His army was encamped on Flodden Hill, within sight of Ford, awaiting the approach of Surrey.<sup>41</sup>

The earl, having heard of the Scottish preparations for war from Lord Dacre, the march warden,<sup>42</sup> left London for the north on 22 July and called out the militia of the northern counties which consisted of levies from Northumberland, Durham, Cumberland, Lancashire, Westmorland and Cheshire.<sup>43</sup> The army hastily assembled the preceding year had been disbanded in October, 1512, after it became apparent that the Scots would not invade England at that time, thus making it necessary for Surrey to resummon the levies.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>Ibid.

<sup>41</sup>Hunt, "Where the River Ran Red," 559.

<sup>42</sup>Floddan Field in Nine Fits, 17.

<sup>43</sup>Butler, "The Battle of Flodden Field, 1513," 401.

<sup>44</sup>Donaldson, Common errors in Scottish history, 10.

As in 1512, Surrey relied upon the semi-feudal military system of northern England for the defense of the border region.<sup>45</sup> The phrase "semi-feudal" is important here for most of the English soldiers were professionals.<sup>46</sup> As far back as the reign of Edward III (1327-1377) England had seen that the feudal army was unsuitable for war because the period of obligation, namely forty days, was too short for substantial operations and discipline was unsatisfactory. Gradually the practice arose of substituting paid service for feudal obligations<sup>47</sup> and this proved to be extremely beneficial at Flodden.

The troops were ordered to meet at Newcastle, and after stops at Pontefract and Durham, Surrey arrived at the appointed site on 30 August.<sup>48</sup> Here he joined the great northern lords, their men and the artillery which

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<sup>45</sup>Norman and Pottinger, Warrior to Soldier, 147. Mackie, The English Army at Flodden, 53-55.

<sup>46</sup>Young and Adair, Hastings to Culloden, 92.

<sup>47</sup>H. J. Hewitt, The Organization of War under Edward III, 1338-62 (New York, 1966), 33-34.

<sup>48</sup>Edward Hall, Hall's Chronicles; Containing the History of England, During the Reign of Henry the Fourth, and the succeeding Monarchs, to the End of the Reign of Henry the Eighth, in Which Are Particularly Described the Manners and Customs of Those Periods. Carefully Collated with the Editions of 1548 and 1550 (London, 1809), 557. Donaldson, Common errors in Scottish history, 10. Pontefract is located on the Aire River in north central England. Shepherd, Historical Atlas, 127. The earl heard mass while at Durham and then continued north. Mackie, King James IV, 251. Mackie, The English Army at Flodden, 56.

had been transported north from the Tower of London under the command of Nicholas Appleyard, master of ordnance.<sup>49</sup>

Three days were spent at Newcastle waiting for the various troops to arrive. Especially important were those soldiers Henry VIII had spared from his French campaign<sup>50</sup> under the command of Surrey's son, Thomas Howard, the lord high admiral, who had accompanied Henry to France. On 3 September, Surrey, hesitating to postpone his campaign longer than necessary, moved his army northward to Alnwick without the admiral and his soldiers.<sup>51</sup> Here considerable reinforcements joined Surrey's army<sup>52</sup> as did the long awaited admiral, who arrived on 4 September with some one thousand troops.<sup>53</sup> With the arrival of his son, Surrey's army was virtually complete.

<sup>49</sup>Floddan Field in Nine Fits, 25. Donaldson, Common errors in Scottish history, 10. Hall, Chronicles, 556.

<sup>50</sup>Brenan and Statham, The House of Howard, 97.

<sup>51</sup>Mackie indicates that 3 September was the date of Surrey's departure from Newcastle while Oman states that the English moved northward on 2 September. Mackie, King James IV, 251. Oman, The History of the Art of War, 303-04. I found no other authority to support Butler's contention that it was as late as 5 September before Surrey reached Alnwick. Butler, "The Battle of Flodden Field, 1513," 401.

<sup>52</sup>Floddan Field in Nine Fits, 25-26.

<sup>53</sup>Both the size of the admiral's contingency and the date of his arrival appear open to conjecture. Most earlier authorities give the size of Howard's contribution of men as about a thousand, a number that Mackie and Oman agree with. Holinshed, Chronicles, 592. Howell, Bella Scot-Anglica, 10. Mackie, King James IV, 251. Oman, The

Now that almost all the troops Surrey could count on were at hand, he divided the army into its battle formations. His soldiers were split into a vanguard and rearguard, each of these segments being further divided into a center and two wings. The center of the vanguard, composed of men from the bishopric of Durham,<sup>54</sup> was placed under the command of Admiral Howard<sup>55</sup> while the right wing, consisting of fifteen hundred men from Cheshire and Lancashire, was led by Edmund Howard, the admiral's younger brother. One thousand men from Northumberland and Lancashire made up the left wing of the vanguard and were commanded by an old Yorkshire knight, Sir Marmaduke Constable.<sup>56</sup>

Lord Dacre commanded the fifteen hundred men from Bamburghshire, Tynemouth, and the border area that composed the right wing of the rearguard.<sup>57</sup> The left wing, led by

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History of the Art of War, 304. Other estimates run from two thousand to five thousand troops. Flodden Field in Nine Fits, 28-29. Campbell, Lives of Admirals, 324. Butler, "The Battle of Flodden Field, 1513," 402. Brenan and Statham, The House of Howard, 97. Oman and Mackie also agree that Howard arrived at Alnwick on 4 September while others place the date either on 6 September or 8 September. Mackie, King James IV, 251. Oman, The History of the Art of War, 304. Brenan and Statham, The House of Howard, 97. Butler, "The Battle of Flodden Field, 1513," 402.

<sup>54</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 251.

<sup>55</sup>Brenan and Statham, The House of Howard, 98-99.

<sup>56</sup>Oman, The History of the Art of War, 305.

<sup>57</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 251.

Sir Edward Stanley, consisted mainly of additional levies from Lancashire.<sup>58</sup> Men from Yorkshire and from the estates of the abbot of Whitby and the bishop of Ely joined Surrey's personal retinue of five hundred soldiers to form the center of the rearguard.<sup>59</sup> Altogether Surrey appears to have had an army of some twenty thousand men. Earlier accounts of the battle indicate that Surrey's army numbered about twenty-six thousand men, and this figure is adopted by some later authorities. A very thorough investigation into this matter was conducted by J. D. Mackie, the result of which placed the size of the English army at around twenty thousand troops. Using the account of expenditures of the Flodden campaign compiled by Sir Philip Tilney, treasurer of the king's wars, Professor Mackie deduced that Surrey and his lieutenants received funds sufficient to pay for the services of 19,950 men. The rough figure of twenty thousand is further substantiated by the fact that Surrey is known to have paid off 18,689 soldiers after the battle. By adding to this figure Surrey's own retinue which was paid separately, English casualties, and English gunners, Mackie indicates the total number to be in the vicinity of 20,789 men. Thus taking the most recent evidence into consideration, the figure of twenty thousand seems to be more

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<sup>58</sup>Floddan Field in Nine Fits, 49-50.

<sup>59</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 251.

accurate than the traditional one of twenty-six thousand.<sup>60</sup>

The English were now in a position to challenge the Scots still camped in the Flodden area, but there was no certainty that a battle would be forthcoming. It was feared in the English camp that the Scots would withdraw across the border into their country, remain there a few days, and after the English army had dispersed, renew the invasion.<sup>61</sup> Appealing to the romantic side of James' personality, Surrey sent the herald Pursuivant, Rougécroix, to the Scottish camp to challenge James and his army to battle at noon on Friday, 9 September.<sup>62</sup>

Monday, 5 September, was spent moving the English army from Alnwick to Bolton in Glendale, a position closer to the Scots at Flodden.<sup>63</sup> The following day Surrey knew that his challenge to James had been accepted. Islay, a messenger from the Scottish camp,<sup>64</sup> informed the English

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<sup>60</sup>Holinshed, Chronicles, 592. John Skelton, A Ballade of the Scottyssh Kynge: Written by John Skelton, Poet Laureat to King Henry the Eighth. Reproduced in Facsimilie with an Historical and Bibliographical Introduction, ed. by John Ashton (London, 1882), 63. Howell, Bella Scot-Anglica, 10. Butler, "The Battle of Flodden Field, 1513," 401. Oman, The History of the Art of War, 305. Mackie, The English Army at Flodden, 60-69.

<sup>61</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 253.

<sup>62</sup>State Papers Henry VIII, No. 1, 1.

<sup>63</sup>Skelton, A Ballade of the Scottyssh Kynge, 65.

<sup>64</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 253.

commander that the king of Scots would wait until Friday at noon for the English to appear.<sup>65</sup>

Upon hearing James' answer, Surrey immediately moved his army from Bolton to Wooler Haugh, which was about six or seven miles from Flodden.<sup>66</sup> From his new position, the earl discovered that the Scottish position on Flodden Hill was virtually unassailable. James had chosen his spot carefully. It was protected to the west by a marshy plain<sup>67</sup> and to the east by the Till, a river then swollen by heavy rains, which was about a mile from the Scots.<sup>68</sup> Because of the excellent defensive position the Scottish army occupied, it appeared that any English assault upon Flodden would have to be a frontal one directly into the Scottish artillery.<sup>69</sup>

The English dilemma was complicated by the condition of Surrey's army. The earl had not counted on a protracted delay before a battle with the Scots, and provisions for his soldiers were very low. In a few days, supplies would be non-existent, and there was no adequate supply of food nearer than Berwick or Newcastle-on-Tyne,

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<sup>65</sup>Mackenzie, The Secret of Flodden, 37.

<sup>66</sup>Butler, "The Battle of Flodden Field, 1513," 402.

<sup>67</sup>Mackenzie, The Secret of Flodden, 37.

<sup>68</sup>Butler, "The Battle of Flodden Field, 1513," 402.

<sup>69</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 254-55.

both being some fifty miles away. English soldiers were most disturbed by the shortage of beer, which forced them to drink only water.<sup>70</sup> Surrey had to engage the Scots as soon as possible, but a frontal assault into the muzzles of the Scottish ordnance would have invited disaster. Clearly, daring strategy was called for.

England's best chance for victory depended upon Surrey's ability to bring the enemy down from the slopes of Flodden Hill. On 7 September Surrey wrote James a second letter that accused the Scot of choosing a position similar to a fortress, and challenged him to bring his army down to the plain of Milfield. The earl stated that the English would be at Milfield the following afternoon between twelve and three awaiting the appearance of the Scots to do battle.<sup>71</sup> Surrey's strategy failed, for James refused to abandon his favorable position. It now seemed that the English would be forced to hurl themselves into the Scottish guns if they hoped to reach the enemy firmly lodged on Flodden Hill.<sup>72</sup>

Since Surrey's challenge to James of 7 September did not bring the Scots down, the earl hoped that a different plan would achieve this goal. On 8 September the

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<sup>70</sup>Oman, The History of the Art of War, 306-07.  
National MSS England, No. 4.

<sup>71</sup>Ellis, Original Letters, No. 31, 85-87.

<sup>72</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 255-56.

English abandoned their camp at Wooler Haugh, crossed to the right bank of the Till and marched to the northeast, camping for the night in a wooded area known as Bar Moor.<sup>73</sup> During the English march, the Scots, from time to time, sighted Surrey's army, but assumed that the earl would attempt to force them to leave Flodden by conducting raids in the Merse, the southeastern corner of Scotland.<sup>74</sup> The veteran Scottish officers, especially the earl of Angus, tried to persuade the king to attack at this point, but all requests were denied.<sup>75</sup> James failed to fathom Surrey's real intention, to lure the Scots from their position by threatening to cut off their avenue of retreat.<sup>76</sup>

To place his army between James and Scotland, Surrey first had to recross the Till. At five o'clock in the morning on Friday, 9 September, the English army split into two divisions and began a long flank march.<sup>77</sup> The vanguard, led by Admiral Howard, crossed the Till around eleven o'clock<sup>78</sup> at a bridge named Twizel, a structure that could support the artillery carried by Howard.<sup>79</sup> When,

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<sup>73</sup>Mackie, The English Army at Flodden, 39.

<sup>74</sup>Shepherd, Historical Atlas, 128.

<sup>75</sup>Tytler, History of Scotland, V, 61.

<sup>76</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 256.

<sup>77</sup>Mackie, The English Army at Flodden, 39.

<sup>78</sup>State Papers Henry VIII, No. 1, 1.

<sup>79</sup>Oman, A History of the Art of War, 307.

about a mile upstream, Surrey led the rearguard across the river at a ford near Heton Mill, both divisions swung to the south and began to march toward Flodden.<sup>80</sup>

When James became aware that the English had crossed the Till and were marching southward, he ordered his army to abandon Flodden and occupy Branxton Hill.<sup>81</sup> Branxton was about a mile north of Flodden, and, if it were occupied by the English, the Scots would be forced to attack a virtually impregnable position in order to return to Scotland.<sup>82</sup> As the Scots left Flodden, James ordered his men to set fire to the rubbish that had accumulated in their camp. The result was a great deal of smoke that served to screen the movements of each army from its opponent.<sup>83</sup> The Scottish army won the race to Branxton, and thus retained the tactical advantage of occupying the higher ground.<sup>84</sup>

Immediately upon reaching the northern slope of Branxton Hill, James deployed his army of approximately thirty thousand men.<sup>85</sup> The size of the Scottish army has

<sup>80</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 257.

<sup>81</sup>Oman, The History of the Art of War, 308.

<sup>82</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 259.

<sup>83</sup>Thomas Hodgkin, The Battle of Flodden, *Archaeologia Aeliana: Or Miscellaneous Tracts Relating to Antiquities* Published by the Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle-upon-Tyne (Newcastle-upon-Tyne, 1894), 25.

<sup>84</sup>Floddan Field in Nine Fits, 70.

<sup>85</sup>Donaldson, Common errors in Scottish history, 10.

been one of the most controversial items connected with the battle of Flodden. The figure of one hundred thousand men has been generally ascribed to James' army by historians who wished to add to the stature of the English achievement.<sup>86</sup> More reasonable are the lower estimates such as fifty thousand,<sup>87</sup> but more realistic yet is the figure of thirty thousand troops; for the latest research indicates that, while the Scots were superior in numbers to the English, this superiority was slight.<sup>88</sup> Borderers supplied the main strength of the Scottish left and were under the command of Alexander Hume, James' lord chamberlain. Next to Hume's men came those of the earls of Crawford and Montrose who, in turn, were flanked by the Scottish center under the king's personal command. The extreme right wing, composed of Highlanders and Islemen, was led by the earls of Lennox and Campbell.<sup>89</sup> A fifth division, under the command of the earl of Bothwell, was placed behind the deployed Scots and seems to have constituted a reserve force.<sup>90</sup>

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<sup>86</sup>Holinshed, Chronicles, 591. Skelton, A Ballade of the Scottysse Kynge, 63. Douglas, A History of the Border Counties, 247. Butler, "The Battle of Flodden Field, 1513," 400.

<sup>87</sup>David Eggenberger, A Dictionary of Battles (New York, 1967), 145.

<sup>88</sup>Mackenzie, The Secret of Flodden, 49. Mackie, The English Army at Flodden, 48-49.

<sup>89</sup>Hodgkin, The Battle of Flodden, 26-28.

<sup>90</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 260-61.

James had completed the stationing of his men by the time the first English detachment, led by Admiral Howard, reached the vicinity of Branxton. The English march had not been an easy one despite the lack of Scottish opposition. A large marsh protected the area just north of Branxton Hill and was fordable only at Branx Bridge. It was almost four o'clock in the afternoon before the English were able to transport themselves and their equipment across the bog.<sup>91</sup>

The admiral, having impetuously pushed ahead of his father's division, was marching blindly, for the Scots' movements were hidden from his eyes by the smoke that accompanied the burning of the refuse at Flodden Hill. When the smoke had cleared somewhat, Admiral Howard saw the Scots for the first time. James' left wing was only a short distance away on Branxton Hill.<sup>92</sup> Aware that he was isolated from the rest of the English army, and thus greatly outnumbered, Howard took the Angus Dei medal from his neck and sent it by messenger to his father.<sup>93</sup> This act

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<sup>91</sup>Oman, A History of the Art of War, 310. One account indicates that the English were guided to Branx Bridge by a member of the Heron family which had been instrumental in the murder of Robert Ker of Fernihirst. I have been unable to find evidence to substantiate this version of events. Hunt, "Where the River Ran Red," 561.

<sup>92</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 262.

<sup>93</sup>McEwen, "The Battle of Floddon," 344. Hall, Chronicles, 561.

signified the extremely precarious nature of Howard's position<sup>94</sup> for the vanguard could do little but await the arrival of Surrey's rearguard and hope that the Scots did not attack in the interim.<sup>95</sup>

Surrey arrived at Howard's left flank none too soon, for the Scottish guns had already opened fire upon the vanguard. The Scots continued to fire upon the deploying English, but because of the placement of the guns high upon Branxton Hill and the inexperience of the Scottish gunners, the shots flew over the heads of the Englishmen.<sup>96</sup>

While the Scots were unable to direct their fire upon the enemy, the English guns, manned by German experts,<sup>97</sup> were much more effective. The accuracy of the English artillery fire achieved two ends, first, it silenced the Scottish guns, and second, it began to decimate the Scottish ranks to such a degree that James abandoned his strong defensive position on Branxton Hill and took the offensive.<sup>98</sup> The Scots marched down the slope to meet

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<sup>94</sup>Oman, A History of the Art of War, 310.

<sup>95</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 262.

<sup>96</sup>Ibid., 262-63. Polydore Vergil, The Anglica Historia of Polydore Vergil, A. D. 1485-1537, ed. by Denys Hay, Camden Society (London, 1950), LXXIV, 219.

<sup>97</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 263.

<sup>98</sup>Tucker, The Life of Thomas Howard, 114.

the enemy,<sup>99</sup> severely handicapped by their inability to maneuver effectively in their unwieldy massed formation known as a schiltrom.<sup>100</sup> The Scots' progress was also impeded by the English archers. They loosed volley after volley into the Scottish ranks and inflicted tremendous losses when the Scots failed to return the fire.<sup>101</sup>

The Scottish left, under the command of the lord chamberlain and his lieutenant, the earl of Huntley,<sup>102</sup> made first contact with the English. Edmund Howard, commander of the English right, had the unfortunate experience of seeing his men break and run before the enemy reached them. Only a few soldiers remained with Howard who barely escaped after being beaten to the ground on three separate occasions.<sup>103</sup> The action of the march warden, Lord Dacre, prevented the Scots from flanking the English position after the disintegration of Edmund Howard's division. Howard's difficulty was observed by Dacre, who detached his cavalry from the rearguard and succeeded in pushing back the Scottish left.<sup>104</sup> The losses on both sides were

<sup>99</sup>Young and Adair, Hastings to Culloden, 100.

<sup>100</sup>Maxwell, The Lowland Scots Regiments, 12.

<sup>101</sup>Young and Adair, Hastings to Culloden, 100.

<sup>102</sup>Pease, The Lord Wardens, 212-13.

<sup>103</sup>Maidment, Nugae Derelictae, Sec. VIII, 9.

<sup>104</sup>Hunt, "Where the River Ran Red," 560. Weber, The Battle of Flodden Field, 130.

so heavy that each of the two divisions was virtually immobilized.<sup>105</sup>

The soldiers of Hume and Edmund Howard had barely clashed when the division led by the earls of Crawford and Montrose encountered the troops of the lord high admiral.<sup>106</sup> At the same time, James' own division met that of the earl of Surrey,<sup>107</sup> the king personally leading his men on foot.<sup>108</sup>

In the heavy hand-to-hand fighting that ensued, it became apparent that the English weaponry was more effective than that of the Scots. Most of the Englishmen carried a weapon known as a bill.<sup>109</sup> In order to increase its handiness in close quarter fighting, the bill was only about six feet long and possessed a rather heavy head that resembled an axe-head with a spear point protruding from its top.<sup>110</sup> The Scots, for the most part, carried spears about eighteen feet in length,<sup>111</sup> but the greater length was nullified by the more versatile English bills.<sup>112</sup>

<sup>105</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 264-65.

<sup>106</sup>Mackenzie, The Secret of Flodden, 82.

<sup>107</sup>Butler, "The Battle of Flodden Field, 1513," 408.

<sup>108</sup>Holinshed, Chronicles, 597.

<sup>109</sup>Norman and Pottinger, Warrior to Soldier, 146.

<sup>110</sup>Ibid., 174.

<sup>111</sup>McEwen, "The Battle of Floddon," 344-45.

<sup>112</sup>Dickinson, "Some Notes on the Scottish Army,"  
135. Maidment, Nugae Derelictae, Sec. VIII, 14.

Once the heads of their spears were lopped off by the bills, the Scots were, for all practical purposes, defenseless.<sup>113</sup>

When their spears were useless, James' soldiers drew their swords, but these too were beaten down by the bills. The division of Crawford and Montrose was gradually crushed by the admiral who then turned to aid his father by attacking James' own division in the flank and rear.<sup>114</sup> The Scots fought well until their king was slain within a spear's length of Surrey.<sup>115</sup> After the loss of their leader, they seemed to lose their ability to sustain a concerted attack and were broken into small groups fighting for their lives.<sup>116</sup>

All hope for a Scottish victory, or even a stalemate, was lost when the right wing was engaged by the English left wing under Stanley. The Scots, subjected to a murderous archery barrage, tried to evade the arrows, thus opening cleavages in their ranks.<sup>117</sup> During the confusion, the Scots were flanked and attacked by Stanley and routed. The entire Scottish army was by now in flight.<sup>118</sup>

<sup>113</sup>McEwen, "The Battle of Flodden," 345.

<sup>114</sup>Oman, A History of the Art of War, 315.

<sup>115</sup>State Papers Henry VIII, No. 1, 2.

<sup>116</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 265-66.

<sup>117</sup>Mackenzie, The Secret of Flodden, 84.

<sup>118</sup>Hunt, "Where the River Ran Red," 56. Skelton, A Ballade of the Scottysshe Kynge, 79-80.

Some of the English army pursued the fleeing Scots until dark,<sup>119</sup> but the English borderers were more practical. These Englishmen went immediately to the Scottish camp, killed the survivors, and departed, taking with them all the livestock that could be found.<sup>120</sup> This plundering by the borderers was not limited to the possessions of the enemy. When the English returned to their camp, it too had been sacked by some of the men they had fought beside earlier in the day--the borderers.<sup>121</sup>

The following day, 10 September, the English commanders returned to the battlefield now littered with some ten thousand dead Scots.<sup>122</sup> Another twelve hundred or so prisoners were taken.<sup>123</sup> The completeness of the English victory is shown by the fact that their losses probably did not exceed fifteen hundred.<sup>124</sup> Among the dead was the

<sup>119</sup>Hunt, "Where the River Ran Red," 560.

<sup>120</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 267.

<sup>121</sup>Thomas Ruthal, bishop of Durham, to almoner Wolsey. National MSS England, No. 4.

<sup>122</sup>Douglas, A History of the Border Counties, 251. State Papers Henry VIII, No. 1, 2. Thomas Ruthal, bishop of Durham, to almoner Wolsey. National MSS England, No. 4. Vergil, The Anglica Historia, 221. "The Flodden Death Roll," The Scottish Antiquary; or, Northern Notes and Queries, XIII (1873), 101-03. Paolo da Laudi, Milanese Ambassador to the Holy Roman Emperor. C. S. P. Milan, No. 659, 404. Maidment, Nugae Derelictae, Sec. VIII, 12.

<sup>123</sup>"A Contemporary Account of the Battle of Flodden," Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, VII, (1870), 150.

<sup>124</sup>Estimates of the English losses range from four hundred to five thousand but most authorities agree that

corpse of James with wounds from an arrow and a bill. The body was identified by Lord Dacre who knew James well as a result of previous dealings with the Scottish court as march warden.<sup>125</sup> After his death, rumors soon spread concerning the fate of James both during and after the battle. Legend maintains that during the fighting there was a human ring around the Scottish king to protect him,<sup>126</sup> but no evidence exists to support this contention.<sup>127</sup> Many Scots refused to believe their king was dead, but rather contended that he escaped and would come again to reign over Scotland.<sup>128</sup>

James' corpse was taken to Berwick<sup>129</sup> and then to the Carthusian monastery of Sheen near London, where it

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the most reasonable figure is around fifteen hundred. State Papers Henry VIII, No. 1, 2. Vergil, The Anglica Historia, 221. Howell, Bella Scot-Anglica, 10. Holinshed, Chronicles, 598. Mackie, King James IV, 268. Mackie, The English Army at Flodden, 69.

<sup>125</sup>Dacre to Norfolk, L. and P. Henry VIII, No. 5090, 805-86. Hall, Chronicles, 564.

<sup>126</sup>Scott, Marmion, 234-35. Herbert, The Life and Reign of King Henry VIII, 40.

<sup>127</sup>Donaldson, Common errors in Scottish history, 11.

<sup>128</sup>Hunt, "Where the River Ran Red," 560. Skelton, A Ballade of the Scottysse Kynge, 28. Vergil, The Anglica Historia, 221.

<sup>129</sup>Thomas Ruthal, Bishop of Durham, to Almoner Wolsey, National MSS England, No. 4. Spinelly, Ambassador to Queen Margaret, to Cardinal Bainbridge, State Papers Henry VIII, No. 1, 2.

remained unburied because James was an excommunicate.<sup>130</sup> Burial took place in St. Paul's Cathedral after Henry had received permission from Pope Leo X to inter the Scot's remains.<sup>131</sup>

The captured Scottish ordnance was of very high quality, and, therefore, valuable to the English. The guns were entrusted to Lord Dacre, who carried them first to Etal Castle and then to Berwick, where they remained for many years.<sup>132</sup>

One final task had to be completed by the victorious army--the burial of the slain Scots. The bodies were placed in two huge pits, one southwest of Branxton Hill<sup>133</sup> and the other near Branxton Church.<sup>134</sup> James' crusade to carve a new, higher niche for Scotland in European affairs was over, for "The Flowers of the Forest are a' weede away."<sup>135</sup>

Probably as much has been written to explain the Scottish defeat at Flodden as about the battle itself.

<sup>130</sup>Vergil, The Anglica Historia, 221,

<sup>131</sup>L. and P. Henry VIII, No. 4502, 683-84. Letters of James IV, No. 568, 318-19.

<sup>132</sup>Thomas Ruthal, bishop of Durham, to almoner Wolsey, National MSS England, No. 4. Ibid., No. 6. State Papers Henry VIII, No. 1, 2. Mackenzie, The Secret of Flodden, 16.

<sup>133</sup>Mackie, King James IV, 269.

<sup>134</sup>Hunt, "Where the River Ran Red," 560.

<sup>135</sup>Jane Elliot, "A Lament for Flodden," The Oxford Book of English Verse, 1250-1900, ed. by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch (Oxford, 1910), 542.

James has been severely criticized for several decisions he made during the course of the campaign. The two weeks spent at Ford Castle, according to some historians, should have been spent marching toward the heartland of England. But, as was indicated earlier, this was unnecessary for James' purpose of winning a decisive victory.<sup>136</sup> Likewise, many feel that the Scots should have attacked the English force while it was occupied in crossing the Till River. In James' defense, it has been pointed out quite correctly that to do so would have been to abandon an excellent defensive position.<sup>137</sup> He had no way of knowing that he may have missed his best chance of victory when he let Surrey complete the tactically dangerous flank march uncontested.

Perhaps the most just criticism of James' execution of the campaign was his failure to maintain his position on Branxton Hill.<sup>138</sup> Ayala's assessment of James' military abilities, written before Flodden, was strangely prophetic.

He is courageous, even more so than a King should be. I am a good witness of it. I have seen him often undertake most dangerous things in the last wars. I sometimes clung to his skirts, and succeeded in keeping him back. On such occasions he does not take the least care of himself. He is

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<sup>136</sup>Alfred H. Burne, The Battlefields of England (London, 1950), 175-76.

<sup>137</sup>Tytler, History of Scotland, Vol. V, 68.

<sup>138</sup>Young and Adair, Hastings to Culloden, 104.

not a good captain, because he begins to fight before he has given his orders.<sup>139</sup>

This impetuosity was made doubly dangerous by the Scots' formation, known as the schiltrom. Developed by the Swiss in the fifteenth century as a defense against cavalry attack, this tightly massed formation was, in fact, an unconscious revival of the Greek phalanx. The formation itself was not at fault. Not only was it a good defensive formation, but it constituted a formidable offensive one as well so long as it kept in motion.<sup>140</sup> Once it stopped; its flanks and rear became very vulnerable, and this is what happened after James ordered his men down off Branxton Hill to meet the English.

James was not unaware of the complicated nature of the Swiss schiltrom. He had requested and received forty French professional captains to drill the Scots in the intricacies of the new tactics, but it required years, not months to become adept at the use part of the schiltrom. The Celtic spirit of independence made it difficult to subject the levies from the Highlands and the Western Isles to the necessary drill.<sup>141</sup> The absolutely essential element necessary to make the formation effective was discipline.

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<sup>139</sup>Pollard, Henry VII, No. 133, 197-99.

<sup>140</sup>Burne, The Battlefields of England, 168.

<sup>141</sup>Young and Adair, Hastings to Culloden, 94.

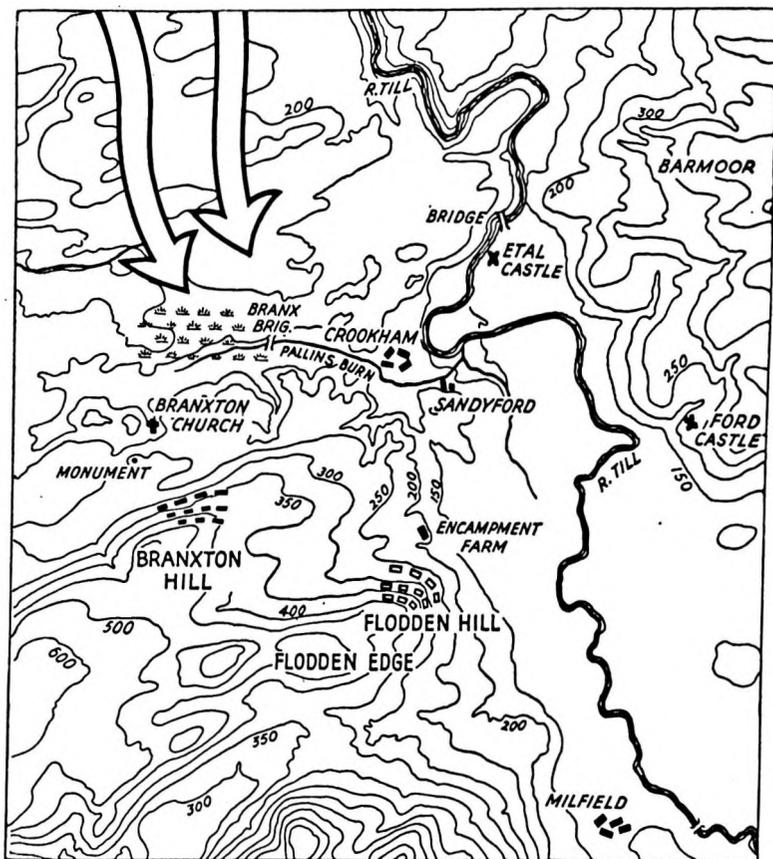
for it had to move as a unit, since the slightest break in the ranks seriously effected its efficiency.<sup>142</sup>

This brings us to the real, albeit, intangible cause of the defeat, the Scottish character at this point in history. Long accustomed to the rejection of any authority other than that of their own chieftains, the Scottish clans had ingrained into them an attitude of localism, a fierce independence that made it virtually impossible for them to accept the type of discipline required to win battles against a sophisticated adversary.

In head-to-head confrontations with the English, the Scots almost always paid dearly for their aversion to regimentation. Their performance at Flodden generally has been overrated. The tenacity and bravery of the Scottish army has been praised in many accounts of the battle, but these virtues produced poor results when one remembers that approximately 10,000 Scots were killed, compared to some 1,500 Englishmen. In reality, Flodden was nothing short of a debacle for Scotland. Indeed, the price extracted by the battle in terms of human life for Scottish opposition to England was so high that it contributed significantly toward a change of attitude in Scotland, a change that was necessary before the two nations could be joined in the personal union of 1603.

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<sup>142</sup>Mackenzie, The Secret of Flodden, 66.



VERTICAL INTERVAL 50 FT.

0 1000 2000 3000  
YARDS

### THE BATTLE OF FLODDEN



English approach march



Approximate locations of first



and second Scottish positions

## CHAPTER X

### THE AFTERMATH

From an individual point of view, Flodden was very rewarding for the English commanders. Most of these leaders were knighted for their participation in the battle<sup>1</sup> while the earl of Surrey was elevated to the dukedom of Norfolk.<sup>2</sup> This grant, made on 1 February 1514, carried with it the addition of a demi-lion--similar to that on the arms of Scotland, pierced in the mouth with an arrow--to the Howard coat of arms.<sup>3</sup>

Perhaps the most important ramification of the battle, so far as England was concerned, was the removal of the threat of serious Scottish intervention for years to come. Traditionally it has been noted that the loss of her king and most of her nobility deprived Scotland of the political leadership needed to unite a nation adequately to

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<sup>1</sup>Skelton, A Ballade of the Scottysse Kynge, 77-78.

<sup>2</sup>Campbell, Lives of Admirals, 324-25.

<sup>3</sup>Rowland Bretton, "The Howard Augmentation," The Coat of Arms, VI (July, 1961), 290.

mount a successful invasion of a foreign country.<sup>4</sup> Although it is true that Scotland suffered severe losses in the ranks of her nobility, the effect of these deaths has been over-estimated. The Scottish nobility had always appeared to be of dubious value. This class was constantly plagued by internecine quarrels and worked to the detriment of Scotland more than any other factor in her history.<sup>5</sup> The personal tragedies that resulted from Flodden were numerous, but the political tragedy had little relationship to the unusually high number of noblemen lost there.

As complete as the English victory was, it appears that Henry missed a great opportunity to bring Scotland firmly under English control. During this period of reign, England's foreign policy was concerned with increasing her influence on the continent, primarily at the expense of France.<sup>6</sup> It is arguable that this abandonment of Henry VII's less glamorous, but extremely successful, policy of isolation was of doubtful wisdom. But then, the temper of the Renaissance was not acclimated to isolationism.

This preoccupation with France, and the resulting invasion of that country by England in 1513, prevented Henry

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<sup>4</sup>Fitzwilliam Elliot, The Battle of Flodden and the Raids of 1513 (Edinburgh, 1911), 118. Burton, The History of Scotland, III, 83.

<sup>5</sup>Accounts of the Lord High Treasurer, IV, lxxxv.

<sup>6</sup>Mattingly, Catherine of Aragon, 153.

from exploiting fully Surrey's great victory at Flodden.<sup>7</sup> The impracticality of Henry's French ambitions is further illustrated by the fact that, while his first royal campaign was successful, it did not produce many concrete gains for England.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, the resounding victory over the only real threat to English security, Scotland, was not followed up. Henry remained committed to the idea of French conquests.

The victory at Flodden did not have the long-lasting effect upon England that the defeat had upon Scotland. While the victory was duly celebrated in England, it soon became little more than a pleasant memory. Scotland, however, felt the effects of this battle for the rest of the century. There was hardly a segment of Scottish life at the national level that was not altered in some manner by the tragic events of 9 September. The major changes that took place in Scotland's ecclesiastical, foreign, and domestic policies in the sixteenth century can be linked directly to the defeat at Flodden.

The pope's excommunication of James alienated many Scots after Flodden. In Scotland, most felt that it was Henry VIII who had violated the provisions of the treaty when he sent the Howards after Andrew Barton, disregarding

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<sup>7</sup>Scarisbrick, Henry VIII, 37-38.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 37.

the procedure set out for the orderly redress of grievances.<sup>9</sup> When the Pope, for political reasons, defended England, and later excommunicated James for crossing the English border,<sup>10</sup> papal prestige suffered greatly in Scotland.<sup>11</sup>

This anti-papal sentiment did not constitute a challenge to Rome in matters of faith,<sup>12</sup> but it did signal the beginning of a renewed effort by an element that was determined to assert Scotland's independence from the Church in temporal matters.<sup>13</sup> Like England, Scotland was not without a certain amount of anti-clericalism in the Middle Ages. There was the almost universal question of whether the temporal powers in Scotland had the right to appoint bishops, and the Scottish prelates habitually supported the Avignonese candidates during the Babylonian Captivity.<sup>14</sup> While allegiance to Rome was not seriously

<sup>9</sup>Letters of James IV, No. 394, 218-19.

<sup>10</sup>Burleigh, A Church History of Scotland, 111.

<sup>11</sup>Gordon Donaldson, Scotland: Church and Nation through Sixteen Centuries (London, 1960), 30. William James Anderson, "Rome and Scotland, 1513-1625," The Innes Review, X, No. 1 (Spring, 1959), 177-78.

<sup>12</sup>David McRoberts, ed., Essays on the Scottish Reformation, 1513-1625 (Glasgow, 1962), 44.

<sup>13</sup>Mackinnon, The Constitutional History of Scotland, 331.

<sup>14</sup>J. H. Burns, "The Conciliarist Tradition in Scotland," Scottish Historical Review, XLII (October, 1963), 89-92. W. Stanford Reid, "The Origins of Anti-Papal Legislation in Fifteenth-Century Scotland," Catholic Historical Review, XXIX (January, 1944), 445-46.

questioned until the reign of Mary, queen of Scots (1542-1567),<sup>15</sup> the seeds of the Scottish Reformation had been planted by papal activities during the Flodden campaign.

As in the case of Scotland's ecclesiastical policy, the effect Flodden had on her foreign policy was long-ranged rather than immediate, but pronounced nevertheless. Many Scots began to realize that the use of their country as a tool to combat England could only have undesirable consequences.<sup>16</sup> Concurrent with this growing dissatisfaction with the traditional French alliance, there was a feeling that Scotland's national interests could be better served by friendly relations with England.<sup>17</sup> This was an extremely important change of attitude, one that had to be made before the two nations could be joined by a personal or a political union. Moreover, the change had to be effected voluntarily, for, if England had forced such a union upon the Scots, there would have always been a deep hatred of the English by the weaker state. Force could only have turned Scotland into another Ireland, fighting the political control that emanated from London, thus making a peaceful union impossible.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Mackinnon, The Constitutional History of Scotland, 309.

<sup>16</sup>Donaldson, Scotland: Church and Nation, 52-53. Letters of Henry VIII, No. 4459, 673.

<sup>17</sup>Notestein, The Scot in History, 110.

<sup>18</sup>Coupland, Welsh and Scottish Nationalism, 73.

The fifty years of Scottish history following Flodden are thus characterized by two distinct policies, advocated by two different segments of the Scottish population, policies that were in direct conflict with each other.<sup>19</sup> Government policy was committed to the maintenance of the status quo. It upheld both the Auld Alliance and continued allegiance to Rome. Aligned against the government was a growing faction of nobility which advocated a diplomatic understanding with England and more independence from the Holy See.<sup>20</sup> These two views were to remain unresolved until the events of the Scottish Reformation placed the pro-English, anti-Church faction in control of Scotland's government.<sup>21</sup>

Unfortunately for Scotland, no personalities evolved with the ability necessary to overcome the growing factionalism that plagued the country.<sup>22</sup> Margaret, the queen dowager, convened the Scottish Parliament in December and assumed the position of regent.<sup>23</sup> In August, 1514,

<sup>19</sup>Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, XIV, xl.

<sup>20</sup>Mackinnon, The Constitutional History of Scotland, 222-23. McRoberts, Essays, 3.

<sup>21</sup>Donaldson, Scotland: Church and Nation, 52-53.

<sup>22</sup>Fitzwilliam Elliot, The Trustworthiness of Border Ballads, as Exemplified by "Jamie Telfer i' the Fair Dodhead" and other Ballads (Edinburgh, 1906), 148. McRoberts, Essays, 2.

<sup>23</sup>"Tudor Intrigues in Scotland," The Scottish Review, XXIV (October, 1894), 227.

Margaret's marriage to the earl of Angus forced her to forfeit her office. This marriage complicated the problem of factionalism, for it tied the crown closely to the powerful house of Douglas, thus alienating the other nobles. Margaret was succeeded by John, duke of Albany, the French-born senior male relative of James V. Both were devoid of concern for Scottish interests, and Scotland suffered accordingly.<sup>24</sup>

If Henry's decision to attack France was inconsistent with his country's interests, James' invasion of England must have appeared to be the same. He and his country had little to fear from England, for Henry was genuinely interested in the maintenance of friendly relations with Scotland. Henry did not want to fight a war on two widely separated fronts, and this accounts for his efforts to keep the peace before 1513. What England would have done after defeating the French if Flodden had not occurred is impossible to say. It is doubtful, however, that she would have invaded Scotland. Despite the fact that England claimed suzerainty over Scotland, there had not been a concerted effort to achieve de facto overlordship with respect to the Scots since the fourteenth century. There is no evidence to support the idea that England was about to alter this policy of non-intervention in Scottish affairs at this time.

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<sup>24</sup>McRoberts, Essays, 2.

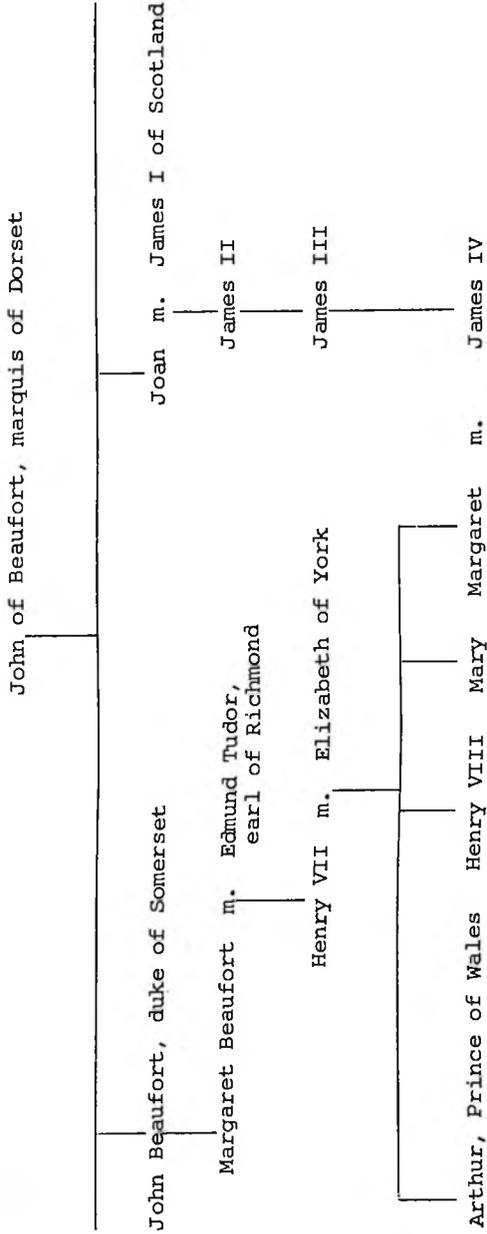
Most authorities feel that James went to war since he felt morally and legally obligated to do so by virtue of the Auld Alliance. James himself used this to justify the invasion of England, as well as incidents with England such as the Ker murder, the killing of Andrew Barton, England's failure to complete the payment of Margaret's dowry, and, of course, Henry's campaign in France.

James, however, showed during his reign that he possessed too much political sense to allow himself to be pulled into a war against his will. His far-sighted efforts to reduce the power of the Scottish nobility and, in turn, to increase the strength of the crown were carried out in order to enhance his chances of achieving a corresponding rise in Scotland's prestige abroad. At first he sought to do this by sponsoring a crusade to the Holy Land, and as long as this remained within the realm of possibility, no one worked harder for peace than James IV. Only when the Holy League made war in Europe inevitable did James turn to war. This should not be interpreted to mean that he was opposed to war, for his elaborate program of building up the military capacity of Scotland, particularly the navy, suggests that he was far more interested in war than he pretended. He was against war only as long as it served his purposes to oppose it. When it was obvious that Scotland's prestige could no longer be advanced by a crusade against the Turks, James turned to another crusade, this one against Scotland's ancient enemy.

This, then, was the reason James invaded England, and not because of the Auld Alliance. His correspondence with his uncle, King John of Denmark, clearly demonstrated that James was unconcerned with treaty obligations when they failed to contribute to the realization of his over-all objectives. He brought to his dealings with other monarchs the same determination and sense of purpose that he exhibited when he subdued the Scottish nobility to an extent never before achieved, extended royal justice throughout the realm, and in general advanced Scotland's position among the states of Europe. As subsequent diplomatic machinations showed, James was not drawn into war against his will, but rather he entered willingly in a misguided attempt to participate in the game of Renaissance diplomacy. The criminality of James' actions lay not in his entrance into continental diplomatic circles, but in the fact that he entered so ill-equipped. Had he been king of England, Spain, or France, he would have been considered a daring prince of the Renaissance rather than as a tragic figure who was the victim of his own inadequacy in foreign affairs.

APPENDIX

THE TUDOR AND STUART COMMON ANCESTRY



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