

CHAPTER III
IN ALL LOYALTY TO THE CROWN

*Should such a man, too fond to rule alone,
Bear, like the Turk, no brother near the throne –*
Alexander Pope

1. *The Crown*

The Crown is to most Scotsmen the symbol of an ancient kingdom which had to fight through so many centuries for its very existence. This is why their loyalty has a special colour and even passion. They are loyal to their Queen as Head of the United Kingdom and the British Commonwealth; but she is this Head for them – whatever she may be for others – because she is descended from a long line of Scottish kings going back and back till it is lost in the mists of antiquity. The fact that she is also descended from the kings of England is not the basis of Scottish allegiance – how could it be? To any one with some sense of history it should be obvious that this is a claim about which Scottish feeling is bound to be sensitive. It is also one which could so easily be met by a little courtesy and consideration.

The kings of Scotland bore also the title 'King of Scots': they were kings, not merely of the land, but of the people. Although the loyalty of the Scots to their kings has been passionate, it has not been abject or servile. Its authentic note rings out in the letter of protest sent in 1320 to the Pope and known as *The Declaration of Arbroath*. Speaking of King Robert the Bruce six years after he had won the battle of Bannockburn it says: 'He has been made our Prince and King by the Providence of God, by the right of succession in accordance with our laws and customs which we are resolved to maintain even unto death, and by the due consent and assent of us all. To him, as

IN ALL LOYALTY TO THE CROWN

to one through whom salvation has been achieved for our people we are bound alike by law and by his services in the preservation of our liberty, and we are resolved to adhere to him in all things. But if he should abandon the task he has begun and should seek to subject us or our kingdom to the King of England or the English, we should instantly strive to expel him as our enemy and the betrayer of his rights and ours; and we should appoint as our king another who should be equal to our defence.

'For so long as a hundred men survive, we will never in any way submit to the domination of the English. It is not for glory or for riches or honours that we fight, but simply and solely for freedom, which no good man surrenders but with his life.'

This Declaration was presumably made in King Robert's presence and with his approval – he was not the kind of man to be lightly crossed. The Scots have believed that kings under God hold their crown subject to the laws of the realm and the consent of the people and on the condition that they are faithful to their trust. They have never accepted the doctrine that kings are absolute by Divine Right and that subjects have a duty of non-resistance in the face of tyranny; nor have they hesitated to say so bluntly in the presence of the monarch. The English have been more polite; but it was they who shocked Scotland and the world by putting their king to death.

It may be noted in passing that when this Declaration was quoted by the B.B.C., it had to be toned down. The Scots were made to declare that they would never submit to the domination of the enemy. Who the enemy were was veiled in decent obscurity.

2. *The Coronation*

It is not unreasonable that the predominant partner should conduct the ceremony of crowning the ruler of the United Kingdom; but it might be expected that every effort would be made to show that the coronation is not an exclusively English affair, and that England is acting for Scotland – not to mention

the other members of the British Commonwealth – as well as for herself. What do we find?

In the 'approved souvenir programme' for the Coronation of our present Queen there was a genealogical table showing 'the descent of the Crown'. It starts from William the Conqueror and is entirely English. There is no mention of the long line of Scottish kings which is the source of the Scottish allegiance. It is true that Sir Arthur Bryant, a historian who shows respect for the composite character of the United Kingdom, mentions, in his article on *The Queen's Majesty*, that she is a descendant of Robert the Bruce; but so far as the official genealogy is concerned there is no indication that Scotland existed before a daughter of Henry VII married a Scottish king in the early Sixteenth Century. In a description of the ceremony itself the Garter Principal King of Arms, who might be expected to be punctilious in these matters, tells us bluntly that it is the coronation of a Queen of England.

The Church of England is prevented by its theology from allowing a minister from a non-episcopal Church to function jointly in a religious service, and particularly in a service of Holy Communion. As the Communion Service forms part of the Coronation Ceremony, it was a great concession in 1953 to invite the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, almost a quarter of a millennium after the Treaty of Union, to join the Archbishop of Canterbury in presenting a copy of the Holy Bible to her Majesty. This concession after so many years was gratefully welcomed in Scotland. The gratitude did not become warmer when it was revealed later that the Archbishop, in spite of his own more liberal views, felt obliged by the law of his Church not to offer to the Moderator the bread and wine which he gave to his fellow bishops during the Communion Service. But if Scotland cannot be represented further on the ecclesiastical side, there might be all the more reason why she should be represented on the secular side. There seems to be no such representation, and the peers who pay homage to her Majesty are exclusively English. As was remarked by *The Times*, few could object if the peers of Scotland were given a separate place in this ceremony.

Apart from the very recent official presence of the Moderator of the General Assembly Scotland might as well never have existed so far as the Coronation Ceremony is concerned. The royal obligation to maintain the settlement of the Church of England forms part of the Oath. The equal obligation to maintain the settlement of the Church of Scotland receives no mention whatever.

3. *The Title*

Although it is occasionally admitted that at the Union there ceased to be a Queen of England just as there ceased to be a Queen of Scots, yet in practice this is far from English usage even in the highest quarters. Some Englishmen go so far as to resent being reminded of the legal position and regard Scottish criticisms as petty or even grotesque.

There might be something to be said for reviving the old titles. There is still a sad lack of royal magic in titles like 'King of Britain' or 'King of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland'. Provided the monarch were both King of England and King of Scots, there could be no objection if he were referred to generally by his English title, but in Scotland he would be described and welcomed as the King of Scots. From the Scottish point of view there is nothing to be said for using the title 'King of England' without using also the equally ancient title 'King of Scots'. This would seem to be another example of the pretension that Scotland, if it ever existed, has disappeared for good and that Britain is just England and nothing more.

It was unfortunate that in her Christmas Day broadcast from New Zealand in 1953, the Queen referred to herself as the first Queen of England to visit the Dominion. This caused pain to some Scotsmen: they would have felt less unhappy if she had also said that she was the first Queen of Scots who had visited Dunedin, the Edinburgh of the southern hemisphere. It was, however, realised that this was a mistake of her advisers, and it affected in no way the loyalty of her Scottish subjects. Yet the depth of Scottish feeling was shown by one exception. Two maiden ladies, the Misses Alison and Karleen Macintosh,

refused to pay their pitifully small income tax on the ground that the Queen had chosen to be Queen of a separate kingdom, had dissociated herself from Scotland, and so had rendered the Treaty of Union null and void. Needless to say, their case, which one of them pled in an impassioned speech, was not accepted by the Sheriff in spite of his observation that this was a somewhat interesting constitutional point. If reports are to be trusted, they avoided future claims by getting rid of their taxable income.

A further source of Scottish protest concerns the numeral to be attached to the reigning monarch when he or she has had predecessors of the same name. William III of England was known also as William II of Scotland – this was before the Union of 1707 – but the next William was known simply as William IV. Her present Majesty was proclaimed Elizabeth II as a successor to Elizabeth of England. The Scots have never had an Elizabeth as a Queen Regnant, and they resented this numeral as a slight to Scotland. They resented it all the more because at this time changes were made in the royal title to meet the desires of the Dominions, while the wishes of Scotland were ignored.

At the suggestion of an ingenious Scottish M.P., the Prime Minister – Mr. Winston Churchill, as he was then – asserted that since the Act of Union the principle had ‘in fact’ been followed of using whichever numeral in the English or Scottish lines happened to be the higher. He even affirmed that this would be reasonable and logical. ‘Thus’, he said, ‘if a King Robert or King James came to the throne, they might be designated by the numeral appropriate to the Scottish succession, thereby emphasising that our Royal Family traces its descent through the English Royal Line from William the Conqueror and beyond, and through the Scottish Royal Line from Robert the Bruce and Malcolm Canmore, and even further back’.

Such a principle would certainly satisfy Scottish claims; but it was noticeable that Sir Winston declined to commit his successors to it. It is greatly to be feared that the suggestion was merely another example of the political dust that is thrown in the eyes of the Scottish people. If practice has ‘in fact’ accorded

with this principle, this, as the Americans say, is purely coincidental. The principle that was really followed is well known. The numeral is determined by the names of the Kings of England from the time of William the Conqueror, and the Scottish Royal Line is – and is likely to be – ignored.

The common answer to the Scottish protest was that the Dominions raised no objection to the title Elizabeth II, although they never had an Elizabeth I. This is not surprising because in her time they did not even exist – let alone have their own monarchs. There is no parallel here whatsoever. The argument ignores, as usual, the fact that Scotland is not, and never was, an English Colony or Dominion or Dependency, but is, along with England, one of the two co-founders of the United Kingdom. The argument in short does not even begin to meet the Scottish case.

What is really interesting is this: the name of Edward is manifestly more obnoxious to the Scots than the name of Elizabeth; yet when the titles ‘Edward VII’ and ‘Edward VIII’ were proclaimed, this gave rise only to sporadic protests, whereas the title ‘Elizabeth II’ occasioned something which might almost be described as a burst of anger. To this day the Post Office dare not put the inscription E II R on pillar-boxes in Scotland. This is almost the only affair in which the Scots have not been content to restrict their protests to rational argument, which has so little chance of being heard. If politicians would try to understand why there has been this surprising change of temper, there might be some hope that the interests of Scotland would get more consideration than they do.

4. *The Honours of Scotland*

The regalia of Scotland – the Crown, the Sceptre, and the Sword of State – are older than the regalia of England, since Oliver Cromwell destroyed the original English regalia but was foiled in his attempt to confer the same benefits on Scotland. They are known as ‘The Honours of Scotland’ and were carried before the Scottish kings at what was called ‘The Riding of Parliament’. At the Union of 1707 they were hidden away in a chest and were rediscovered only in 1817, a few years before the

visit of George IV to Edinburgh, the first British monarch to see Scotland since the reign of Charles II.

It was a gracious thought on the part of the present Queen when she decided to pay a Coronation Visit to Scotland and to attend a national service in St. Giles' Cathedral. By her express desire the Honours of Scotland were carried to the Cathedral, and there they were presented to her by three Scottish peers in full ceremonial dress. She received the Crown from the Duke of Hamilton and gave it back to him after holding it in her hands. This unique acknowledgement of Scotland's place in history aroused feelings of loyalty which it would be hard to describe without appearing to exaggerate.

It may seem niggling to mention even a breath of criticism, but the full picture must be given. It had been hoped that she would wear her coronation robes and perhaps even place the Crown on her own head; and there was a feeling of disappointment when she appeared in ordinary dress and carrying a handbag, which got in her way during the course of the ceremony. This feeling was perhaps increased when later she did wear her coronation robes for the opening of the Canadian Parliament. It was known that among her English advisers were some who were exercised at the thought of what might happen in Scotland without English supervision – there might be a second Coronation! – and it was commonly believed that they intervened at the last moment to prevent her Majesty from carrying out her original intention.

The warmth of loyalty shown on this occasion seems to have taken some Englishmen by surprise: they apparently imagined that the outcry against the royal title meant a lack of respect and affection for the Queen herself. Nothing could be farther from the truth. The protests had never been personal; and indeed as her mother's daughter her Majesty enjoys, as it were, an extra loyalty and affection in Scotland, where she is regarded by her subjects as their own specially Scottish Queen.

5. *Symbols and ceremonial*

There are many other matters of symbolism and ceremonial in which Scottish sentiment is ignored and sometimes outraged.

They cannot be discussed in detail here, but some reference must be made to them, although it is very easy for the non-expert to fall into error.

Whether by accident or by design, there is now no Earl Marischal of Scotland. But Scotland still has her ancient College of Heraldry, which has the powers of a Court of Law and is headed by the Lord Lyon.

The Royal Arms, as authorised by the Scottish College of Heraldry and used on government documents, differ from those used in England, where the three lions passant guardant of England occupy the first and fourth quarters. In Scotland it is the lion rampant of Scotland which occupies these quarters; and this would seem to be a proper recognition that at least within her own borders Scotland, as a partner in the United Kingdom, is in no way subordinate to England. Some Scotsmen wish that the Royal Standard could be used in its Scottish version when the Sovereign visits Scotland, and they resent the use of the English version on these occasions as a symbol of English encroachment.

The form of the Royal Standard is for the Sovereign to decide. It would certainly give pleasure to her Scottish subjects if when she is resident in her Northern Kingdom she adopted the version of the Scottish, rather than of the English, heralds.

If we turn to the 'supporters' of the Royal Arms, these are the lion of England and the unicorn of Scotland. In the English version the lion of England alone is crowned – is this in order to cock a heraldic snook at Scotland and the Treaty of Union? With greater courtesy the Scottish version gives crowns to both the unicorn and the lion. The Scottish version is used on the official papers of the Scottish Office, but it is the English version which is printed on Acts of Parliament passed exclusively for Scotland.

In matters where regard for Scottish tradition and rights would gain so much and cost so little, dismal discourtesies are hard to understand. From 1820 onwards even the tabards supplied at coronations for the Lord Lyon and his Heraldry were quartered English fashion. It was only by the command of the King himself that the Scots quarterings were restored in 1928.

The Scots have also grievances in regard to the Army, which plays so great a part in ceremonial and pageantry. It has been said that the British soldier can stand up to anything except the War Office, and the War Office is resolute in ignoring Scottish sentiment. In dealing with the Scottish regiments, who have won so much glory for an army that is supposed to be British, advice seems to be taken only from the English heralds, and the display of Scottish arms in regimental colours is forbidden.

To give one example. The Queen's crest for England is used on the Colour pikes of all English regiments, and the flag of St. George is used as a second Colour by many of them. We might expect that the Colour pikes of Scottish regiments would bear the Queen's crest for Scotland, and that the second or regimental Colour would be the flag of St. Andrew, as it was in the past. Such ceremonial equality, which could injure nobody, is not allowed. If Scottish soldiers ask why their ancient Colours should be taken away and replaced by English ones, the answer is 'My dear fellow, these are not English Colours, but the Colours of the British Army'. Thus a plain injustice is defended on the ground that it has already been committed.

A similar temper is shown in questions of precedence. The Royal Scots Fusiliers, so far as the date of their original formation is concerned, are the fourth among the British infantry regiments, but they are reckoned as the twenty-first. Why? Because precedence is reckoned, in the case of Scottish regiments, not from the date of their formation, but from the date on which they first came upon the English establishment.

The whole attitude is reminiscent of the English peer who said of the Dominion troops, during the First World War: 'These fellows act as if they were allies, when they are only parts of the English army.'

It would be tedious to elaborate further complaints. The War Office does not hesitate to impose its own English ideas on the uniform of Scottish regiments and at one time even proposed to design a common tartan for them all. Regiments of utterly different traditions are amalgamated in spite of protests, and it

is said to be official policy in recent years never to allow more than one Scottish regiment at a time to be quartered in Scotland. Mr. Hore-Belisha did his best to abolish the Scots Greys – the sole Scottish cavalry regiment – and was prevented from doing so only by the ferocity of the snarls which greeted his orders. More recently the records of the Black Watch – together with the men who kept them – were removed from Perth to England in direct breach of the Treaty of Union. A rule had been introduced that the smaller record offices of the Army should be amalgamated and it was impossible to make an exception for Scotland. There had been no difficulty about making an exception for the Guards.

There may be a rational defence for some of these practices, but as a whole they reveal the same curious disregard of Scottish sentiment and tradition that we find elsewhere.

6. *The Stone of Destiny*

At their Coronation the Kings of Scotland sat on a very unusual throne covered by a silken cloth woven with gold. It was a block of stone called the 'Lia Fail', or 'Stone of Destiny', because of the belief that no one could rule in Scotland unless he had sat on it at his crowning and that so long as this stone was in Scotland the Scots would possess the land. According to a legend which need not be taken too seriously it was the stone which had been Jacob's pillow when he saw the angels in a dream at Bethel.

It was this stone – if we may ignore some evidence to the contrary – that Edward I carried off to England as loot along with the Holy Rood of St. Margaret and any documents which might show that Scotland had been independent. It was placed in Westminster Abbey as a memorial of the subjugation of Scotland. At the time of the Treaty of Northampton in 1328 a promise was made to return the Stone, though this was embodied, not in the Treaty itself, but apparently in some accompanying document now lost. This promise was never kept.

The Scots, as so often, had to make the best of a bad job.

They recalled – or composed – a Latin epigram, which has been translated, not too elegantly, as follows:

Unless the Fates be faithless found,
And prophet's voice be vain,
Where'er this monument be found,
The Scottish race shall reign.

This prophecy was supposed to have been fulfilled when James VI of Scotland ascended the English throne.

On the early morning of Christmas Day 1950 the Stone of Destiny was removed from Westminster Abbey by three students from Glasgow University and a Highland girl. After a series of misadventures they succeeded in bringing the Stone to Scotland in spite of all the efforts of the police. There it was hidden for some time, and a petition was sent by them to King George VI stating that they were able, willing, and eager to return the Stone, but asking that it should be allowed to remain in Scotland except at the time of future coronations. In the end the Stone was solemnly placed before the high altar of Arbroath Abbey. There it lay covered by the Scottish flag till it was summarily seized by police officers and whisked away to a police cell. It was then taken back unceremoniously to London and Westminster Abbey. There was no prosecution of the culprits.

It was most unfortunate that this affair happened at a time when King George VI was suffering from an illness which proved to be fatal. When this became known later, it was a source of the utmost regret to every one, and not least to the perpetrators of the deed itself, especially when it was reported that he had taken it as a personal affront. If his advisers had had any understanding of Scottish feeling, they would have known that this was far from being intended. The petition addressed to him was from 'certain of His Majesty's most loyal and obedient subjects', and one clause of it ran as follows: 'That His Majesty's petitioners, who have served him in peril and peace, pledge again their loyalty to him, saving always their right and duty to protest against the actions of his Ministers if such actions are contrary to the wishes or the spirit of his Majesty's Scottish people'.

There can be no doubt that this escapade, even if light-hearted and irresponsible, sprang from a spirit of patriotism, however misguided. In England it was fiercely denounced as vandalism, theft, and sacrilege with no redeeming features whatsoever. The then Archbishop of Canterbury, if he was correctly reported, said that 'There could be no simpler, more elementary illustration of the spiritual causes of the world's evil than the stealing from Westminster Abbey of the Coronation Stone'.

In Scotland feelings were more mixed. Many Scotsmen were as much shocked and outraged as were the English. The crime of sacrilege is unknown to the civil and ecclesiastical law of Scotland; but the Church of Scotland condemned it as 'a violation of the sanctuary' and passed sadly from the subject – perhaps because by this time there was news of the King's illness – without making any recommendation about the future fate of the Stone.

There were others who felt differently. They thought that charges of theft and sacrilege would be more appropriately directed to those who had first seized the Stone by treachery and violence and had kept it in a holy place as a perpetual insult to another nation. When they were told that two blacks cannot make a white, they declined to regard the recovery of stolen property as on the same level with the original theft; nor could they easily accept the doctrine that if an injustice is perpetrated for a sufficient length of time it becomes a legal and moral right.

Between these extremes there were many shades of opinion, but one emotion seemed to be as widely shared as it was strongly felt. This was the feeling that the Stone ought to be returned to Scotland for safe-keeping in St. Giles' Cathedral; and that at a coronation it should be transported with due ceremony – perhaps with an escort of Scots Greys – to Westminster Abbey, where it might function, no longer as a symbol of English pride in what the Garter King had patriotically described as 'the spoil of war', but as a symbol of the free loyalty of the Scottish nation.

This reasonable wish was silently but resolutely ignored.

7. *The bears of Berwick-upon-Tweed*

Perhaps we may be excused if we turn from these high matters and seek a little light relief in the history of Berwick-upon-Tweed, not so much for its own sake as for the tendencies which it reveals.

This ancient little town on the north bank of the Tweed was made a Royal Burgh of Scotland some six hundred years ago. The English in the course of their many wars captured it and used it as a bridgehead, just as Calais was used by them in France. But they did not cease to regard it as part of Scotland – even when it was the only part of Scotland they held, they gave the titles of the Scottish Officers of State to some of the local inhabitants as a symbol of the English claim to subjugate Scotland as a whole. At the Union of 1707 it would have been a gracious act to return it officially to Scotland; but this was not done, and the town enjoyed an ambiguous position right into the Nineteenth Century. It is said that the Crimean War was declared in the name of the United Kingdom and Berwick-upon-Tweed, but in the Treaty of Peace Berwick-upon-Tweed was forgotten and so remains at war with Russia until this day.

Whatever be the truth of this tale, Berwick-upon-Tweed is now administered as part of Northumberland. Even if we set aside historical claims, this is unfortunate geographically: the town is cut off from its natural hinterland. A large proportion of its rates is paid to Northumberland County Council, but if the shops paying these rates were dependent on the economy of Northumberland many of them would disappear. Berwickshire, on the other hand, is deprived of its natural county town, as can be seen by a glance at any map. To restore the town now to its natural status in Scotland might mean something of an administrative upheaval, and this may be considered an adequate excuse for letting things stand as they are, in spite of their unfairness and inconvenience. The only point to be made here is that the status of the town was abolished, not after a consultation of the inhabitants, but as an administrative consequence of the introduction of County Councils.

Now for the light relief. English officials do not always

display a superabundance of tact in dealing with those who have been brought under their control. The inhabitants of Berwick-upon-Tweed decided to have a properly authorised coat of arms, and for this they dutifully applied to the English College of Arms. Since they had used a wych-elm and a bear in their arms for at least six hundred years, they expected to have these as part of the new design, but this was refused. The English do not give reasons, or at any rate not the real reasons, for their actions; but the real reason was suspected to be that this was a Scottish bear. The inhabitants were outraged by this refusal; and, remembering their Scottish origin, they applied to the Lord Lyon of Scotland for a coat-of-arms. This he duly granted, bear and wych-elm and all.

The inhabitants were delighted, but the English Heralds were shocked beyond measure and regarded the proceedings as Scottish aggression. Their spokesman was even driven to appeal to the Treaty of Union, which is so commonly ignored and which in any case did not assign Berwick-upon-Tweed to England. He contended that whatever was the status of the town in the past, its present status was decisive; and since it was now an English town, it was therefore not entitled to the insignia of a Royal Burgh of Scotland. He found the proceedings of the inhabitants and of the Lord Lyon alike beyond his comprehension, and he even went so far as to suggest that in granting, not merely the original bear, but two other Berwick bears (as supporters) the Lord Lyon had sold the inhabitants a pup.

A spokesman for the Lord Lyon replied with some coldness that the English Heralds had failed to understand the situation. The Lord Lyon had been acting in his judicial capacity; and since ancient arms in Scotland are a form of heritable property, he could have come to no other conclusion. When a person becomes English he does not abandon his rights to any Scottish heritable property, and the town of Berwick had established its legal right to the heritable property which it had held for centuries as a Scottish Royal Burgh.

Fortunately for its inhabitants, while the Lord Lyon has the power to enforce his decisions in Scotland, the English College

of Heralds has no corresponding power in England, and the town of Berwick is able to flaunt its traditional arms with impunity.

8. *Psychology*

Where symbols and ceremonials are concerned, we might perhaps not unreasonably expect some semblance of equality between free nations joined in a common union. Yet it is the common practice to dismiss Scottish complaints under this head as petty and trivial or even as the manifestation of an inferiority complex. The very fact that a plea for Scotland should begin with grievances of this kind may be taken to show how sentimental the claims of Scotland are.

This argument is hardly convincing. Symbols, and especially symbols of status, play a far from negligible part in the life of individuals and nations. The argument comes strangely from Englishmen, who attach so much importance to ceremonies and symbols so far as England herself is concerned. It would seem difficult to sustain the thesis that in Britain English patriotism is truly noble, but Scottish patriotism merely absurd; or even that while English patriotism is properly manifested in traditional symbolism, the desire of the Scots to retain their own national symbols is parochial and childish. The demand that the Scottish case should be examined on such assumptions is – to put it mildly – a trifle steep.

Disregard of Scottish sentiment in ceremonial matters cannot but be a potent source of irritation, and it is important also as itself symbolical – or symptomatic – of an English attitude manifested in other spheres. Its significance is all the greater because here no obvious English interest is concerned. I make no apology for beginning with this topic. It will help us to understand the treatment of Scotland in affairs which may be thought to be of more practical importance.

To dismiss Scottish complaints as the product of an inferiority complex hardly conforms to the decencies of polite discussion. Instead of meeting a serious argument it uses a cheap cliché to rule the arguer out of court. It is itself an instance of that very

disregard of Scottish feeling which is the subject of complaint. This clumsy incursion into depth psychology merely strengthens the Scottish case. If the present system is able to give Scotsmen an inferiority complex, it must be about as bad as it is possible for a system to be.