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The Jacobite Court in Exile at Saint-Germain and the Stuart Papers

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Bonnie Prince Charlie Entering the Ballroom at Holyroodhouse before 30 Apr 1892. Royal Collection Trust/ ©Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II 2018



By the beginning of 1689, James II and VII and his queen, Mary of Modena, had fled to France where Louis XIV put at their disposal the castle of Saint-Germain-en-Laye, near Versailles. Both kings had spent part of their youth there and they shared common memories of the Stuarts' first exile (1648-60). After his defeat in Ireland, James II and VII definitively retired to Saint-Germain, where he died in 1701. In 1713, anticipating the conclusion of the treaty of Utrecht,^[1] his son James 'III and VIII' moved his court from France to Lorraine, then Avignon and eventually to its last destination, Rome.

The Jacobite court at Saint-Germain

Drawn by the royal family, Jacobites in exile gathered at and around the court of Saint-Germain. The waves of arrivals and the network of royal favour can be traced through the appointments of office holders at the court. Most of them were registered in the *Livre royal des Entrées et des Brevets*^[2] and they were published in 1904 in *The Jacobite Peerage* by Melville Massue de Ruvigny, Marquis de Ruvigny and Raineval^[3]. Some of the office holders, such as William Waldegrave, who had attended Mary of Modena at the birth of James Edward and was appointed first physician to the King on 23 May/2 June 1695, followed their sovereigns in exile from the time of the Glorious Revolution. Others were personal friends, such as Bridget Mannock, who was very close to Queen Mary^[4]. As long as the Jacobite court stayed at Saint-Germain, new appointments were regularly made and they remained a powerful political tool for the king in exile, enabling him to attract, reward and encourage the exiled Jacobites. As time went on the offices in the royal households passed on to a new generation. Thus, in July 1701, Colonel Henry Slingsby died and was succeeded as gentleman of the Bed Chamber on 1/12

February 1702 by Richard Baggot^[5]. Until 1715, however, most of the new office-holders were sons and daughters of the first generation of the exiled courtiers, not newcomers. The court in exile at Saint-Germain became less and less representative of the political and social realities of the British Isles, a phenomenon that eventually weakened the ability of the exiles at Saint-Germain to understand British political life.

Besides individual warrants, several lists of the members of the royal Households have been preserved for the 1693-1705 period, as well as lists of pensions. Three of them are part of the Stuart Papers: a list of salaries and pensions paid by Mary of Modena, 'for the 3 last months of the year 1693'^[6], a compilation of the 137 appointments for the four services of the court (the King's, Queen's and Princess's households and the Stables) from October 1701 to July 1702^[7] and a list of the members of the Queen's household in 1703^[8]. They are complemented by a list of the inhabitants of the castle of Saint-Germain drawn up before October 1692 and preserved in the Nairne papers at the Bodleian Library, Oxford^[9], an inventory of the wages and salaries paid by the King and the Queen during the summer of 1696, now preserved at Sizergh castle^[10], and a list of the monthly wages and pensions of the whole royal Household for January 1709 in the British Library^[11]. Finally, a list of James II and VII's household was procured by Charles Montagu, Earl of Manchester and William III and II's envoy at Paris between 1699 and 1701; it is part of the earl's papers, now at the Beinecke Library, Yale^[12].

In the 1690s, the Jacobite court at Saint-Germain appears to have been a kind of smaller version of the court James II and VII had known at Whitehall. The size of the King's household at Saint-German can be

estimated at around 90 people during James's lifetime and around 130 during his son's time there. The Queen's household never exceeded 100 before 1690, and decreased to 90 later on. This means that the whole royal entourage never amounted to more than 200 people. But the courtiers in positions that carried political influence or held an office close to the royal family only numbered around 50, whereas the court at Whitehall before the Glorious Revolution had employed more than 600. The size of the household of James II and VII at Saint-Germain was, in fact, no bigger than the one he had kept as Duke of York before 1685. To draw a comparison with Versailles, the 6000 *livres* yearly pension Lords Herbert, Middleton and Caryll were granted in June 1700 would have been the equivalent of the wages of Louis XIV's *premier valet de chambre* at Versailles and the yearly pension of a secretary of state of the Sun King amounted to 20,000 *livres*. In 1703 Mary Gordon, Duchess of Perth, enjoyed a monthly salary of 314 *livres*, 8 *deniers*, and 4 *sous*^[13], at a time when Louis XIV's ordinary *valets de chambre* received 500 *livres*.

From the 1701-1702 list of appointments, it is clear that a range of different national groups were employed at the court. The English composed 45%, the Irish 39%, the Scots no more than 3%. There were also Italians (6%), employed by the Queen, and a small group of French (7%) who had followed the Stuarts since the Restoration and who mostly worked in the royal kitchen, such as François Gauthier, 'gentleman of the Buttery and yeoman of the Chaundry'^[14]. The percentage was, furthermore, very different in each part of the court. The King's household was predominantly English (67.5%) while 56% of the staff of the Stables were Irish.

The great majority of the courtiers were Catholics, but there were also Protestants at the Jacobite court, particularly Nonjurors, and some of these were notably important. Denis Granville, Dean of Durham and brother of the Earl of Bath, for example, received a certificate on 17/28 August 1695, stating that he was one of those loyalists, 'resisting the evil example of those of the Church of England who countenanced the horrid invasion of 1688 and having quitted all that he had follow the King in France'^[15]. Though Granville was only a part-time resident at the court, where he had been appointed chaplain, James II and VII protested he was the best friend he ever had, and Granville referred to James and Queen Mary as, 'my father and mother', and James 'III and VIII' as 'my brother'. In 1699, in a codicil to the King's will, he was nominated to the Queen's council^[16]. He remained with James II and VII throughout his final agony almost till his end and Queen Mary made him a member of her Household in 1702. He died the following year. His three nephews George, Thomas (secretary to the Queen then Secretary of State to James 'III and VIII' in Lorraine), and Bevill Higgons (the poet) were active Jacobites. All three of them were Protestants.

From 1689, Louis XIV granted his cousin a yearly pension which continued until his own death in 1715. The money was intended to pay the wages of the courtiers, but also to support the thousands of Jacobites who gathered around the king they had followed into exile. When he came back from Ireland, James II and VII had to prepare for a longer exile than he had expected and, 'began to think of settling himself at Saint-Germains, and of modelling his family and way of living suitable to the pension of 600 000 *livres* a year, which he received from the court of France'^[17]. Already

straitened, the situation grew critical after the treaty of Ryswick in 1697^[18] and the disbanding of one third of the 'Wild Geese'^[19]. Orphans and widows of Irish soldiers were almost totally dependent on the charity of the court for their survival, in spite of some support provided by sympathetic French sources. On 13/23 October 1699, Mary of Modena sent a grateful letter to the prior of Saint-Germain- des-Prés in Paris, who had told her of his desire, 'to give a pension of 150 *livres* for the relief of the King's poor subjects'^[20]. The Stuart Papers show how critical the financial issue was for Saint- Germain and the amount of time and energy it required from the Queen to deal with it. The list of pensions already mentioned of February 1703 was drawn up in order to cut the court's expenses:

'Whereas our disbursements exceed our receipts near 4000 *livres* per month, that we may not run in debt, or suffer those to perish who live by our pensions, we, as guardian of our son, by the advice of his Privy Council, hereby order you to make payment of the pensions usually paid by you accordingly as you will find them reduced in the lists of pension signed by us for January last, till further order'^[21]. Likewise, in 1708 she wrote to her Treasurer, William Dicconson, that she may be, 'forced to sell the rest of the jewels'^[22]. In 1715 again, she asked Dicconson to write to the son of the great Jacobite banker Sir Daniel Arthur to find means to pay Piers Butler, Earl of Newcastle, the four months of wages he was due: 'I beleeve if you answer for it to Mr Arthur, he will do it for him on my account, but pray don't lett anybody know the contents of this note'^[23].

The court of Saint-Germain as a Jacobite administration Saint-Germain was the centre of Jacobite intrigues, at least until James 'III and VIII' left for Lorraine in 1713. Keeping alive Jacobite networks in

the British Isles through regular correspondence with friends of the cause was one of the main duties of the Secretary of State, a task John Drummond, Jacobite Duke of Melfort, and James Drummond, Jacobite Duke of Perth, bitterly contested with Charles Middleton, Earl of Middleton. A small number of agents were directly paid by Saint-Germain and their names can be found in the cyphers of the court^[24]. Three are known to have been active between 1710 and 1714: James St Amand (1643-1728) in England, John Menzies, alias 'Abraham', among the M.P.s and peers at Westminster and Henry Stratton, alias 'Scougal', in Scotland^[25].

Yet the court was not only a political centre. It also stood at the centre of a royal administration, even if Saint- Germain offices appeared to be mere 'amateurs' by comparison with those of Louis XIV's absolutist bureaucracy. Maintaining a working relationship with the French authorities was thus a regular duty for Jacobite Secretaries of State. The Stuart Papers provide many examples of the variety of certificates that had to be provided to satisfy French administrators who were unsure how to deal with troublesome Jacobite exiles. The French foreign minister Jean Baptiste Colbert de Croissy, Marquis de Torcy, for example, demanded that all newcomers make themselves known at Saint-Germain, where they would be issued a certificate of good behaviour. On 26 May/6 June 1705, even Sir Richard Bulstrode had to ask for one on his arrival in Paris, though he had been:

'...for many years English Envoy at Brussels and continued there after the usurpation till 1694, doing all the services he could to France, by correspondences he carried on with frontier towns in the conquered countries. His giving intelligence being at last discovered, he was obliged to fly precipitately to France, leaving his family at Brussels,

where they were insulted and all the furniture and effects confiscated...^[26]

Naturalised foreigners were also submitted to regulations in France that Saint-Germain tried both to ease and to apply. When Lewis Innes, one of three brothers involved in running the Scots College, left Paris to join James 'III and VIII' in Lorraine in 1713, he had to obtain permission from Torcy. According to James Fitzjames, Duke of Berwick, 'it was fitting he should, for he is naturalized, and consequently cannot stirr out of France without leave'^[27]. The reliability of interpreters was often suspect and Middleton had to give a certificate to Patrick Hicky, an Irish interpreter at the court of Chatelet, stating that he had come to France after the defeat of Limerick, was a good subject of the King and was lodged at, 'rue Sainte-Marguerite, Faubourg Saint-Germain'^[28]. In the same way, Jacobites had to obtain genealogical certificates from James Tiry, herald of arms of the Jacobite court, before they could ask for a Letter of Nobility from the French authorities, as was the case on 23 December 1699/2 January 1700 with Luke Commerford, one of the 'Commerfords of Waterford' who were fighting in the ranks of the 'Wild Geese' regiments in France and in Spain^[29].

The main role of Saint-Germain, as a Jacobite administration, was dealing with the 'Wild Geese'. On 21 April/1 May 1689 Louis XIV demanded a Jacobite contingent be sent to join his armies on the continent to offset the French troops he was sending to help his cousin in Ireland. An Irish Brigade was accordingly integrated into the French army under the command of Justin MacCarthy, Viscount Mountcashel^[30]. As Irish regiments of the French army, they were granted the status of foreign troops and soldiers and paid accordingly. By contrast, when the main body of the

'Wild Geese' followed Patrick Sarsfield to France after Limerick's capitulation, the new regiments were instituted on a totally different basis. An agreement was signed between the two kings stating that the new Irish regiments, though at the disposal of Louis XIV, remained James's troops. It was an unprecedented concession and proof of Louis XIV's commitment to his cousin's cause that he allowed a kind of foreign army on his kingdom's soil. Consequently, it was James who signed the warrant organizing the Jacobite troops into two Horse Guards regiments, two Cavalry regiments, two Dragoon regiments, eight Infantry regiments and three independent companies^[31]. The officers' commissions were issued by James (except for the highest ranks, which Louis kept in his own gift). Only the soldiers' wages were paid by Louis XIV. As foreign troops, they should have received higher wages than the French, but Louis XIV insisted that they would be paid on the same footing as French soldiers and so James II and VII compensated them by pledging that he himself would pay them the difference as soon as he was back on his throne^[32]. These wages were then doubled when the troops were in winter quarters^[33].

The routine administration of the 'Wild Geese' was thereafter done by Saint-Germain, where Sir Richard Nagle, Secretary of State for Ireland, was put in charge of the correspondence with the officers and handled the many details of sustaining the 14,000 Irish troops in France. He remained Minister for War until his death in April 1699. After the treaty of Ryswick in 1697, one third of the regiments had to be disbanded. Many ex-soldiers gathered around Saint-Germain where they hoped to be sustained, or decided to move to western France where many Irish merchants had already settled. Bryan MacDermot, for example, merchant at Rouen in 1710,

applied for the favour of James 'III and VIII' on the grounds that:

'he had served the late King during the Irish Wars as a foot captain, and ... after the capitulation of Limerick, he left his property and country to follow his said Majesty to France, and served there as an officer the whole of the last war, only quitting the service when the troops were reformed at the peace of Ryswick, after which he was obliged to trade to endeavour to maintain himself, while his four brothers who crossed to France with him continued to serve as officers and have all died during the present war...'^[36]

The officers' attachment to the court at Saint Germain remained very strong: most took up winter quarters there and sometimes they or their relatives held office in one of the royal households. Sarsfield's widow, Honora Bourke, daughter of John Bourke, Earl of Clanricarde, eventually married Berwick in 1695 and his son was granted a pension in 1698^[35].

Saint-Germain was also initially in charge of supervising the Irish privateers operating from western France. As early as 1692, James II and VII appointed Thomas Strafford receiver of the king's tenth of the prizes for Brest and Brittany, but Sir William Ellis had to be named in August 1695 to try to put some order in Strafford's accounts. It turned out he owed the King more than 14,000 livres, but James forgave him out of, 'compassion on his indigent condition', and released him from his duty^[36]. In 1692, the first letters marque^[37] were registered by James Nihill, agent to the Commissioners for the Revenue^[38]. Nine ships were already at sea and a total of thirteen letters of marque were granted, but from 1693 the French resumed control of such certification. Thus in 1694, most likely in November, Edmond Finch received a:

'...commission to command the Spy and to take, or in case of resistance destroy, all ships with the goods and lading, belonging to the inhabitants of England, Scotland and Ireland, with the ships and goods of any of the enemies of the King or the Most Christian King [Louis XIV], and to bring all such ships and goods without breaking bulk into some French port, and procure the same to be judged in the next court of Admiralty established by the most Christian King, paying the tenths belonging to the King to his agent...'^[39]

The rest of the text outlined the instructions, 'to be observed by such as shall arm any ships in course' and simply translated the official French instructions. On the list of officers, a privateer named Peter Nagle was killed at sea in 1695. He had been commissioned by James II and VII on 13/23 February 1695 to command the *Marin* on the same day Philippe Welsh was entrusted with the *Trompeuse*^[40]. Both were based at Brest. Nonetheless, when Madagascar privateers started to look for the official protection of a prince in 1706, they applied to James 'III and VIII', offering '800 experienced sailors [who] could serve on board of ships of the King'.

At a more general level, the role and the organization of the court of Saint-Germain as an ally of France is one of the many fields of historical research that need to be further explored through the records left by the exiles and now accessible among the Stuart Papers at Windsor.

NOTES

^[1] Signed in 1713 to establish the peace at the end of the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714), the treaty recognised Philip V as King of Spain whilst requiring him to renounce his claims to the French throne.

^[2] RA SP/M/18.

^[3] [Melville Amadeus Henry Douglas Heddle de la Caillemotte de Massue de Ruvigny], Marquis de, *The Jacobite Peerage, Baronetage, Knightage and Grants of Honour* (London, 1904).

^[4] F. H. Blackburne Daniell (ed.), *Calendar of the Stuart Papers belonging to His Majesty the King, preserved at Windsor Castle*, Vol. 1: 1579-Feb 1716. (Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1902), 103, 164.

^[5] HMC *Stuart*, i. 171; RA SP/M/19/63.

^[6] RA SP/Main/1/79.

^[7] HMC *Stuart*, i. 162; RA SP/M/19/45. Also, HMC *Stuart*, i. 163-176.

^[8] RA SP/Main/2/23.

^[9] Bodleian Library, Nairne Papers, Carte MSS 180-181, 208-212, 256-258.

^[10] Strickland Collection (R4) at Sizergh Castle, Cumbria.

^[11] British Library, Egerton MS 2517.

^[12] Manchester Papers. James Marshall and Marie-Louise Osborn Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

^[13] RA SP/Main/2/23.

^[14] HMC *Stuart*, i. 164; RA SP/M/19/55.

^[15] HMC *Stuart*, i. 106; RA SP/M/18/99.

^[16] RA SP/Main/1/114.

^[17] J. S. Clarke (ed.), *The Life of James the Second, King of England, &c, Collected out of Memoirs Writ of His Own Hand* (2 vols, London, 1816), ii. 472.

^[18] The concluding treaty of the Nine Years' War, or the War of the League of Augsburg (1688-1697), which France and her Jacobite allies lost to the Grand Alliance of the Dutch Republic, England, Scotland, the Holy Roman Empire, Spain, Savoy and Sweden. Among other articles, Louis XIV was compelled to recognise the outcome of 1688 and to acknowledge William of Orange as King of England, Scotland and Ireland, thereafter giving very limited assistance to the exiled James II.

^[19] Irish soldiers who left Ireland for France after the surrender of the Jacobite forces at the treaty of Limerick on 3 October 1691, in a mass exodus known as 'the Flight of the Wild Geese'.

^[20] HMC *Stuart*, i. 143; RA SP/M/15/229.

^[21] HMC *Stuart*, i. 180; RA SP/M/19/15.

^[22] HMC *Stuart*, i. 228, RA SP/Main/2/50.

^[23] HMC *Stuart*, i. 441; RA SP/Main/5/50.

^[24] RA SP/Box/5.

^[25] HMC *Stuart*, i. 507, 508; RA SP/Main/6/25.

^[26] HMC *Stuart*, i. 202; RA SP/Main/2/34.

^[27] HMC *Stuart*, i. 258; RA SP/Main/2/86.

^[28] HMC *Stuart*, i. 151; RA SP/M/18/135.

^[29] HMC *Stuart*, i. 145; RA SP/M/18/177.

^[30] HMC *Stuart*, i. 41; RA SP/M/18/11.

^[31] HMC *Stuart*, i. 6; RA SP/M/18/31.

^[32] HMC *Stuart*, i. 67; RA SP/Main/1/67.

^[33] HMC *Stuart*, i. 83; RA SP/M/18/49.

^[34] HMC *Stuart*, i. 238-9; RA SP/M/19/89.

^[35] HMC *Stuart*, i. 134; RA SP/M/18/127.

^[36] HMC *Stuart*, i. 69, 105, 122; RA SP/M/18/35, 101, 113.

^[37] Letter giving the bearer licence to fit out an armed vessel and use it in the capture of enemy merchant shipping.

^[38] HMC *Stuart*, i. 69; RA SP/M/18/35.

^[39] HMC *Stuart*, i. 92-3; RA SP/M/18/85.

^[40] HMC *Stuart*, i. 97; RA SP/M/18/89.

CITATION

Genet-Rouffiac, Nathalie: "The Jacobite Court in Exile at Saint-Germain and the Stuart Papers." *State Papers Online: The Stuart and Cumberland Papers from the Royal Archives, Windsor Castle*, Cengage Learning (EMEA) Ltd, 2018

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