Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Between Romance and History: Walter Scott's *Waverley* and the Construction of Scottish History

Treball de Fi de Grau/ BA dissertation

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June 2020

Acknowledgments

I am extremely grateful to my supervisor Dr. David Owen for his guidance, feedback and understanding that have kept me motivated throughout the whole project. I would like to thank my family and particularly my mother whose patience cannot be underestimated. Special thanks to my friends Claudia, Anna, Àngela, Marthe, Sara and Sonia who have supported me during these four years.

ABSTRACT

Carry the lad that's born to be King
Over the sea to Skye
(Sir Harold Boulton, 1870s)

These verses belong to the original version of *The Skye Boat Song*, written by Sir Harold Boulton at some uncertain point in the 1870s. It narrates how Bonnie Prince Charles fled with the help of Flora MacDonald after the defeat of the Jacobites in the Battle of Culloden in 1746.This work typifies aspects of the Romantic movement from of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in which there was a revival of the Scottish folklore. One of the greatest authors of this period is Sir Walter Scott (1771-1832) whose historical novel *Waverley* (1814) became the finest example of Scottish Romantic literature. Scott was a pioneer for the cultural revival of the Jacobites and his novel is broadly accepted as proof of that: "Scott constructs the country as an object of English romantic desire by idealizing Scotland's own Highland past as he seeks imaginative enhancement of a necessary but insipid modernity" (Glendening, 1997: 159). This novel has previously been analysed in various ways such as a source in the search for Scottish identity or even as a propagandistic message in favour of Scotland's independence. However, the aim of this paper is to analyse and compare *Waverley* to what non-literary historical accounts tell us about "The Jacobite Rising of 1745". In order to do this, the Battle of Prestonpans (the first Jacobite victory), and the Battle of Culloden (their ultimate defeat) will be compared. Furthermore, the historical figures of Bonnie Prince Charles and Flora MacDonald- both principal figures in the uprising- will be discussed and compared to their portrayal in the novel. Therefore, an analysis on both history and novel will be carried out in order to assess where these might be different and to enquire Scott's motives for any discrepancy.

Keywords: Walter Scott, *Waverley*, Romanticism, the Historical Novel, the Jacobite Rebellion, Bonnie Prince Charles.

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0. Introduction

Sir Walter Scott was a major figure in Scottish literature and culture in the Scottish folklore revival. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries this revival coincided to a large extent with the Romantic movement (c. 1770-1830). As Pittock says (1991:108) "The cult of the Highlands as containing a portion of defeated and primitive Scottish history which nevertheless in some sense encapsulated the Scottish identity was one popularized by Scott and adopted wholesale under Victoria.". This period saw the promotion of Scottish history, culture and literature and was in itself highly influenced by the movement.

The purpose of this dissertation is to analyse *Waverley,* which was Scott's first novel, published anonymously in 1814 (although its authorship was widely suspected). *Waverley* narrates the story of Edward Waverley, an Englishman who joins the army just before the Jacobite uprising of 1745. He is sent to Scotland where he will meet Jacobite sympathisers and will eventually come to discover where his true allegiances lie. Edward is a naïve young man who has no preconceptions about Scottish cultural habits or history. Moreover, the descriptions of his experiences are pervaded with romantic conceptions and are replete with impartial and indifferent observations of his surroundings.

The story takes place in the fourth Jacobite uprising (1745)[1], which attempted to restore the Stuarts to the throne of England, Ireland and Scotland after William and Mary of Orange[2] had taken the crown from Mary's father, James II of England and VII of Scotland (generally referred to simply as James II).[3] The sequences of events triggered by the dethronement of King James II not only meant a change of monarchs but also of

[1] Formal uprisings (as opposed to other conflicts and plans aimed in part at a Jacobite restoration) occurred in 1689, 1715, 1719 and 1745.
[2] See Annex: Table 1.
[3] The term Jacobites derives from Jacobus, Latin for "James".

dynasty, as Scott's narrator observes: "The ministry of the period were prudently anxious to diminish the phalanx of opposition. The tory nobility, depending for their reflected lustre upon the sunshine of a court, had for some time been gradually reconciling themselves to the new dynasty" (Scott, 1814: 7). People progressively adapted to the new reality after these events. It is important to bear in mind that the restoration of the monarchy in England, Ireland and Scotland in 1660 and the subsequent change of dynasty were two events that marked society in a very significant manner. However, in *Waverley*, Scott did not explicitly state any particular, partisan opinion or political belief as- I think- he preferred to create a description of events that allows the reader to discover and shape their own opinion on these highly political matters.

The aim of this project is to compare the historical events described in Scott's novel to records of external history, and to draw attention to whatever differences may be perceived. To what extent do the discrepancies between external history and Waverley align to any particular current in Scottish history? If so, what was Scott's intention and accountability for them? In order to do this, two different themes will be examined. First, two important figures from the rebellion will be analysed, namely, Bonnie Prince Charles and Flora MacDonald. The second theme consists of the analysis of two battles in terms of their external historical accounts and the novel's own recreation. The first is the Battle of Prestonpans, the first great victory of the Jacobite army in 1745 and, in effect, the beginning of the rebellion. The second is the Battle of Culloden in 1746 which brought the disastrous defeat of the cause.

Waverley is a work of literature and is broadly considered as the first historical novel in European tradition. Why can the use of a literary text to study and analyse history be justified? History can itself be understood as a being very similar to a work of fiction. However, a principal difference between historical and fictional accounts is that, in the

former, readers implicitly expect objectivity when reading "history" (and possibly tend to assume that what they are reading is "the truth") whilst in a work of literature, readers not only accept the possibility that the author might be taking certain freedoms in narrating events, but may actually expect them to do that. In fact, however, fictional accounts such as those in historical novels simply make more evident what non-fictional historical accounts also do, which is to explain and describe events from a very particular perspective, and with a very particular objective. If there is a significant difference, it is the fact that non-fictional accounts attempt to present themselves as objective (and therefore reliable), while fictional accounts are clearly "free" from having to present this type of claim. But even accepting that there are of course many political currents in non-fictional accounts of history, these accounts *fix* a particular cultural view (or views) of the past, and can be referred to in order to ask whether and why fictional accounts such as *Waverley* are different from these non-fictional perspectives. Therefore, the novel is used in this project as a way to measure how Scott varies his retelling of the past from recognised non-fictional historical accounts.

"By fixing then the date of my story Sixty Years before this present 1st November, 1805, […] they [readers] will meet in the following pages neither a romance of chivalry, nor a tale of modern manners; that my hero will neither have iron on his shoulders, as of yore, nor on the heels of his boots […]; and that my damsels will neither be clothed 'in purple and in pall', like the Lady Alice[4] of an old ballad […] (Scott, 1814: 4-5).

In this fragment, Scott is legitimising the story through two notions. First, Scott is describing the symbols of old tales, that is, medieval accounts. In contrast, his is not an old story or myth long forgotten, but something that has happened in "modern times".

[4] This makes reference to a lost ballad of a young woman who sees a corpse being carried and asks the bearers to leave the corpse, saying that she herself will be dead by sundown next day.

Scott uses the example of the story of Lady Alice to describe feminine concerns or a medieval warrior as in the Arthurian mythology for masculine ideas. But this story [*Waverley*] is not a lost legend, it is history and more importantly it is alive. Second, the date is fixed at a point in the past that might possibly be remembered by the reader. In this way, Scott is establishing a limit to the extension of the myth.

"A tale of manners, to be interesting, must either refer to antiquity so great as to have become venerable, or it must bear a vivid reflection of those scenes which are passing daily before our eyes, and are interesting from their novelty". (Scott, 1814: 5). His story comes from a well-known "legend" that has become part of Scottish culture, or at least Scott makes it a real and live reflection for those who are reading it. A tale of manners can be described as a "novel dominated by social customs, manners, conventions, and habits of a definite social class […] is often, although by no means always, satiric; it is always realistic, however" (Harmon, Holman; 1996: 325).

Following this definition and Scott's descriptions, what he seems to want to do is write a work of fiction that re-creates the real world by referring to a great "quest" or "milestone", and this is achieved by writing about people and their customs.

Finally, "it is therefore worth bearing in mind the opinion of the Scots and Scotland held by many in England. The Jacobite army consisted of Lowlanders and Highlanders, but it is the image of the Highlanders that is indelibly stamped on their army and that the Jacobites tried hard to foster" (Oates, 2008). Moreover, both opposing armies were formed by English and Scottish citizens. Being born in Scotland did not make you a Jacobite and being born in England did not make you pro-government sympathiser (also, as with many European armies until very modern times, a lot of the soldiers were simple mercenaries who fought to whoever paid more money). We need to bear this in mind while reading the novel and analysing all its components.

1. Chapter 1: A Description of Men

The reason for the title of this chapter lies at the beginning of *Waverley* "From this my choice of an æra the understanding critic may farther presage, that the object of my tale is more a description of men than manners" (Scott, 1814: 5). This is one of the many descriptions and justifications Scott gives regarding his novel. In this fragment, he seems to explain that his novel's aim is to describe people and their customs rather than focusing his novel on conflicts and battles. In this first chapter an analysis of two important and major figures both in the novel and from external history will be carried out.

1.1. Bonnie Prince Charlie

"There you go, you cowardly Italian"
(Gibson Lockhart, 1838:10)

This expression became infamous through an article written by Scott in the literary and political journal the *Quarterly Review*- according to Lockhart in *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott* (1838). It sums up the depiction of and misconceptions about Bonnie Prince Charlie that were current at the time and that have come down to us today. Scott's own view of the prince is far more difficult to see than this phrase suggests (and it doesn't seem likely to me that Scott held this opinion). But even though the idea of a cowardly prince has been refuted and shown to be inconsistent, many cultural ideas concerning the "Young Pretender" still remain largely unchanged.

"Charles was portrayed as a young, fair and feminine figure who […] was undoubtedly compelling and charismatic" (Pittock, The Scotsman 2019). This was, and still is, the portrayal of Charles's personality. He was described as a weak leader but with a strong sense of righteousness and good communicative skills. After all, he must have had strong personality traits to captivate the people who joined the cause. New studies, carried by scholars such as Pittock in his article *Bonnie Prince Charlie: What he was*

really like or Graham in *Bonnie Prince Charlie: Truth or Lies*, suggest that he was not as weak as previously conceived and that these views corresponded to the Hanoverian propaganda against both him and his army. Whatever the case, this was the image shaped by Scott and his contemporaries and it is how society perceived Prince Charles.

In order to analyse and compare Scott's presentation of Charles's personality, several fragments from the novel will be examined that exemplify these differences on different levels. This will then be contrasted with non-fictional accounts to assess and evaluate any discrepancies.

The Jacobites intended to make Charles Stuart more acceptable to British society; for this, certain myths and cultural figures were used to make him appear more approachable. "From at least the beginning of the dynasty's reign in England, the Stuarts were strongly attracted to Messianic symbols of themselves as Once and Future King[5], Arthur, or even Christ" (Pittock, 1991: 3). This can be related to several instances of Arthurian mythology and biblical references throughout the novel. For instance, "Waverley began to think he had reached the castle of Orgoglio, as entered by the victorious Prince Arthur" (Scott, 1814: 39), which is a reference to Spencer's poem *The Faerie Queen* in which Orgoglio, a Satan-like figure is defeated by King Arthur, who is literally referred to as the "victorious knight". What can be seen throughout the novel are metaphors that compare great figures and warriors, such as King Arthur, to Charles Stuart. Use of this kind of legend was aimed at creating a myth around the figure of Charles, but one that was accessible to the people so that they could understand and feel connected to him.

[5] Legend says that King Arthur did not die but is simply sleeping, waiting to return. Once England needs him, he will awake and return to help his country (a prophecy recorded by the inscription to his tombstone: "Hic iacet Arturus/ Rex quondam, rexque futurus", according to Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur* 21:7).

"The idea of death and resurrection became linked to the idea of exile and return: Christ's Second Coming with Arthur's. the returning Stuart monarch would bring back true peace and a reign of perpetual righteousness over Great Britain" (Pittock, 1991: 3). This works as a legitimisation of the Stuart's cause and as a comparison with the greatest English king and hero. In fact, the novel suggests how the Prince may actually see himself as a hero and acts as if he deserved such an honour There is certainly some majesty in the way he enters a room and behaves before his subjects: it is a type of performance.

"Jacobite propaganda not surprisingly defended his dynasty's claim to be the legitimate ruling family of Britain on various legal, political, and moral grounds. Yet what shone through this legitimizing thicket was less assertion of principle than the sheer glorification of Charles Edward as a "hero," much as the Jacobites had celebrated James before him" (Kaiser, 1997: 368).

The notion of hero is also related to mythification and to being appointed by god and the divine right to restore the Stuarts to the throne. That is, not only was Charles's acting through right but through duty, to god, his father and family, and to his subjects. Moreover, he seems to have what might be termed a "God complex" in the way he addresses his subjects and develops himself throughout the novel. However, if he behaves like a god, he is a very involved deity and not at all arrogant. This appears to be contrary to the conventional representation of Charles's personality, since self-importance was "an unfortunate character flaw of most of the Stuarts, and Prince Charles was a prime example of this inherent arrogance" (Graham, 2014: 5). Charles Edward is always described as a very haughty and egotistic young man who pursued his own admiration. However, this is not at all what can be found in the novel. At one point, the Prince says: "But now, gentlemen, allow me to be umpire in this matter [an argument], not as Prince Regent but as Charles Stuart, a brother adventurer with you in the same gallant cause." (Scott, 1814: 291). In this passage it can be seen how Charles tries to make his supporters feel important

by equating them with his own person. This fragment refers to a confrontation between Waverley and Fergus; Charles stops the fight by making both of them feel appreciated and heard. It creates a sense of equality among all participants ("brother adventurers") and also builds bonds of camaraderie that are more prominent and stronger in soldiers who fight together for the same cause.

In historical accounts, Charles Stuart has been praised endlessly for his communicative abilities and is remembered as an eloquent orator, but one who was capable of appealing to his followers. "Charles, for all his Stuart grandeur, always managed a common touch, and his charm could make allies among the most unlikely people" (Graham, 2014: 33). This is a reasonable claim, as his purpose was not only to win a war but also to win over the people (he needed this if the restoration were to succeed).

The perception of Bonnie Prince Charles expressed in Scott's novel is of a very intelligent and independent young man. He proves to be able to communicate mostly on his own to all his subjects using French and English, and everyone would excitedly listen to anything he had to say. In reality, however, this was unlikely to have been the case because he spoke "no Gaelic, the language of north-western Scotland.[…] Charles had to use them [the chiefs] as his translators" (Graham, 2014: 33). Other historical accounts, however, play down the significance of language and- instead- emphasise the Prince's innate ability to somehow "rule" others (though this aspect is obviously almost impossible to demonstrate historically and so it is possible that this is also part of pro-Jacobite version of events):

"On his behalf, it must be said that he may not have been an intellectual and had little book learning, but from childhood he was a perceptive boy […]. He may not have learnt much about

reading, writing or mathematics, but he absorbed the elements of kingship as it should be practised under the rules of divine right by which his father lived" (Douglas, 2002).

He was brought up under the divine statement that it was his right to get the throne and therefore, his education revolved around this exact idea. He was supposed to learn skills and qualities that would make him a great king and be welcomed back by his people. This might be the source of his renowned charm.

Finally, in the novel, the Jacobites are presented as always giving Waverley a choice; at all times he has the power of deciding what to do. That is, not only they do not judge him, but they actively help him achieve whatever he wants to do. In contrast, the English expelled him from the army and imprisoned him without any opportunity to defend himself. He is English but he is welcomed as a Jacobite without this causing any real struggle. Once again, in Scott's account Bonnie Prince Charles proves to be better than his Hanoverian opposites and shows that the "Scottish" cause is about justice and union.

In reality, we can only imagine how an Englishman of Waverley's background would actually have been received, and how much he would have been trusted, by the fiercely anti-English forces of north-western Scotland and by the anti-Hanoverian members of Prince Charles's camp. Whatever the case, Scott's account does seem a little optimistic. In fact, later on in the novel, Scott expands on this matter, saying that "Government are desirous at present to intimidate the English Jacobites" (Scott, 1814, 309). This shows that Waverley was no exception and that the Jacobite movement was not reduced to Scotland against England; there was a deeper struggle. "Baldhaldy[6] says

[6] William MacGregor Drummond of Balhaldy was an "agent of the Association of Scottish Jacobites formed that year [1741] for the purpose of restoring the House of Stuart" (Mass Ruvigny et Raineval, 2003: 97).

that, by his desire, a Mr. Butler[7], who was trusted by France, went with him, and that they returned in October 1743, "well pleased with our success"; with full details about the readiness and organisation of the English Jacobites" (Lang, 2012). This shows in part the contribution of English Jacobite sympathisers and the participation of France in the rebellion, and suggests that Scott's version was too simplistic, perhaps for political reasons.

Moreover, in Scott's novel, the British government had to prove its power after the defeat of the Jacobites at Culloden not only with the Scottish subjects but with the English as well. However, it can be seen how the British government did not act as firmly against its English citizens as it did against the Scots. This is the case of Simon Fraser of Lovat who was a clan leader sentenced to death due to his participation in the rising. In fact, Fergus Mac-Ivor is shown no mercy either and is condemned "Colonel Talbot owned that he could not conscientiously use any influence in favour of that unfortunate gentleman. "'Justice', he said, 'which demanded some penalty of those who had wrapped the whole nation in fear'" (Scott, 1814: 340). Meanwhile, Waverley, an Englishman, was spared this fate along with his future father-in-law Bradwardine "Protection by His Royal Highness to the person of Cosmo Comyne Bradwardine […] forfeited for his accession to the late rebellion- the other a protection of the same tenor in favour of Edward Waverley" (Scott, 1814:333). The only figures to have been saved are these two, an Englishman and his soon-to-be family member. Colonel Talbot is willing to put his reputation at stake for both of them, even though they too "wrapped the whole nation in fear".

My interpretation of Charles' character in *Waverley* is in keeping with pro-Jacobite ideas. He is presented as a powerful man whose pride and class do not make him

[7] Mr. Butler was an equerry of Louis XV of France.

unable to relate to his subject's pain. I would argue that Scott used all the good qualities known about this man (real or not) and applied them to this character. He is not only a prince; he is a comrade. He fights along with his subjects instead of simply leading them to battle. Furthermore, he understands that he needs to be accepted by British society as a whole. It does not matter if you are English or Scottish: you are his subject. That is why he is seen to show mercy and avoid as much confrontation as possible. Moreover, Scott's Prince Charles is a well-educated man who knows languages and literature. Even though, in *Waverley* some Highlanders speak in Gaelic, he is not left behind in the conversation and seems to try his best at communicating. Charles's profile in *Waverley* seems, as previously stated, an optimistic one. He is presented as flawless with no haughty personality traits and is clearly a great leader who supports his subjects. In other words, Scott's portrait of Bonnie Prince Charlie is highly positive.

1.2.Flora MacDonald

> "Eighteenth-century Scottish women were not passive, but active agents of historical change, shaping Scottish society during a key transitional period"
> (Simonton and Barclay, 2013).

The historical figure of Flora MacDonald can be seen in *Waverley* through Flora Mac-Ivor's character. She is best known for her contribution to Bonnie Prince Charlie's escape which led to her being granted the consideration of Scottish heroine. The novel, however, does not describe the escape although her figure is both central and recurring throughout.

In *Waverley*, Flora Mac-Ivor is presented as a young woman with strong beliefs and an imposing personality. She has one goal in mind and works hard to achieve it:

"For myself, from my infancy till this day, I have had but one wish- the restoration of my royal benefactors to their rightful throne. it is impossible to express to you the devotion of my feelings

on this single subject, and I will frankly confess, that it has so occupied my mind as to exclude every thought respecting what is called my own settlement in life" (Scott, 1814: 143).

Contrary to the real Flora MacDonald's family, the Mac-Ivors *did* participate in the previous rebellions and Scott's Flora grew up focussed on the importance of achieving the restoration of a Stuart monarchy. Of the many characters in the novel, she is undoubtedly among the strongest and most determined.

Moreover, she speaks several languages, Italian and French among them, and proves to be a highly suitable wife. That is why Charles Stuart holds her in such high esteem " The Prince took much notice […] particularly of Flora, with whom he danced, a preference which she probably owed to her foreign education and command of the French and Italian languages" (Scott, 1814: 220). (These are in fact, qualities pertaining to Charles Stuart's wife Louise of Stolberg-Gedern). Flora can dance and sing and has a good understanding of literature; Waverley's reading of Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is proof of this. "All the company applauded with their hand, and many with their tears. Flora, to who the drama was well known, was among the former" (Scott, 1814: 272).

She is supposed to have learnt several languages as previously stated, and to have been acquainted with literature as well as music and art. The Hanoverian propaganda tried to spread the notion of un-Britishness through her studies of continental matters "The Grand Tour […] distinguishes English customs and manners from Continental vice. This particular contextualization renders the Tour doubly illegitimate because it writes the travel to the Continent out of the acceptable frame of a proper English education" (Müller, 2009). Although this applies to the Grand Tour and not to education content, there was a clear attempt in such views to oppose Flora's "continental" education with acceptable national qualities, which made her a "bad" figure of reference.

An “attack” made on Flora to discredit her image, and consequently Charles’s, was the widespread assumption- whether founded or not- that they had an affair. “After Culloden Prince Charles saved his own skin, fled with his mistress Flora Macdonald and left the clans to the mercy of “butcher” Cumberland” (Graham, 2014: 99). The novel shows that Charles admires Flora but goes no further than this. Of interest, however, it is that the same source that refers to the liaison between Charles and Flora as a fact (she is his “mistress”) also adds that “an affair, whether of the heart or simply from the human need for companionship, was the furthest thing from the Prince’s mind in late April 1746” (Graham, 2014: 99). So, the novel does not pick up on this theme and historical sources either follow unfounded beliefs or else are ambivalent on this point.

In all, Flora MacDonald is presented in *Waverley* as the embodiment of a Scottish heroine: a woman of letters, a musician with strong Scottish feelings and, most significantly, willing to risk everything for her country. Scott’s narrator refers to her “as if she were already conscious of mental superiority, [and] seemed to pity, rather than envy, those who were struggling for any farther distinction” (Scott, 1814: 107). She is described in the novel as having a certain superiority even over clan chiefs and her own brother.

Scott’s Flora has no expectations from life nor dares to dream of any until the Stuarts are restored to the throne. She will not settle for the “domestic dreams” that Waverley has (and tries to convince her to share):

> “But you, Mr Waverley, would for ever refer to the idea of domestic happiness which your imagination is capable of painting, and whatever fell short of that ideal representation would be construed into coolness and indifference, while you might consider the enthusiasm with which I regarded the success of the royal family, as defrauding your affection of its due return” (Scott, 1814: 143).

Here, Scott presents us with a very committed Flora Mac-Ivor who will not settle for an ordinary life because she has a greater purpose to fulfil. Historical accounts, however, are emphatically different. Flora MacDonald lived in an area in which her stepfather was commander of the local militia's, that is, a pro-government force. That is why she was able to secure a safe passage for Bonnie Prince Charlie by disguising him as a servant lady, something that she knew to be dangerous and that caused her concern: "The first idea of Flora was, not her own peril, but the danger into which she might bring Sir Alexander and Lady Margaret Macdonald, by carrying the fugitive to their neighborhood" (Ramage, 1894: 218). According to most accounts, neither Flora nor her family were deeply committed to the Stuart cause (although "she and her friends, […] all wished well to the Stuart cause" (Ramage, 1894: 12) and her participation in events was minor but effective. Although her escape with Charles Stuart was successful and has become immortalised in one of Scotland's great folk songs, the Flora of *Waverley* and that of historical reality appear to be rather distinct.

"Early education had impressed upon her mind, […] the most devoted attachment to the exiled family of Stuart. She believed it the duty of her brother, of his clan, of every man in Britain, at whatever personal hazard, to contribute to that restoration. For this she was prepared to do all, to suffer all, to sacrifice all" (Scott, 1814: 107).

This summarises Flora's personality in *Waverley* very accurately and reflects on her strong will but also her education and intentions. Even as a woman, she strikes us as an important individual maybe even someone who leads and is heard by other clan chiefs.

I believe that the portrayal of Flora MacDonald in *Waverley* is an over-romanticised one. It definitely seems to be presenting a pro-Jacobite idea, feeding that mystification of her figure and her story with Bonnie Prince Charlie. Flora Mac-Ivor is presented as a great and honourable lady whose only objective is the Stuart restoration. She is shown, in my views, as a powerful and loyal ideal of a Scottish heroine that

definitely shapes and supports her Romantic figure in contemporary times. Her character is not drawn into action by any coincidence, she comes (in the novel) from a family with strong beliefs and she is sure of her task. She is a strong woman who does not doubt herself or her sympathies. This seems to be if not the contrary to what history tells us about Flora MacDonald, it is at least a far stronger version of reality, one that but works at shaping her pro-Stuart figure.

2. Chapter 2: Highland Charge

The Highland Charge was a military strategy used as a smoke screen, that is, a distraction before the highlanders carried out the real attack. “The Highland charge has iconic status as a Jacobite military tactic within the Myth of the Jacobite clans. It has been seen as everything from a sign of barbarian savagery to an avatar of Confederate battle tactics.” (Pittock, 2009: 96-97). The idea of primitive fighting was not only supported by military tactics but also by the highlander’s weaponry. It has been said that the Jacobites did not have modern weapons such as guns or cannons. However, this is not true; it is simply part of Hanoverian propaganda. As regards fighting, weapons and strategy, *Waverley* provides a number of descriptions that, on closer assessment, are deceptive or misleading; the purpose of this chapter is to engage with some of these discrepancies.

2.1.The Battle of Prestonpans 1745

Waverley is introduced, in the novel, to a very well organised and structured army from the moment he sets foot in Scotland “Edward assented [to a demonstration of the militia’s prowess], and the men executed with agility and precision some of the ordinary military movements” (Scott, 1814: 101). However, “many Englishmen and Lowland Scots regarded the Highlanders as savages, to whom the rules of civilised warfare did not apply” (National Army Museum). This is relevant since not only are the Highlanders repeatedly dismissed for their savagery in many non-Jacobite accounts, but also their inability for organisation and discipline also commonly emphasised. Therefore, what Edward is looking at is a negation of everything he has been told about the Jacobites. Not only are these soldiers not savages but they are actually clear proof of their ability to be organised to fight for a common goal.

Their alleged savagery was what the British government needed society to believe. If the idea of savagery was not real, government claims about the need to protect the population would be revealed to be false. Following this Hanoverian propaganda, how could a decent society accept a king (that is, the Pretender) who was supported by savages? If that leader was the choice of barbarians, that would in turn mean that he was not respectable or decent.

In Scott's novel, and in clear contrast to this "government propaganda", the highland soldiers appear to be well trained and well prepared. But even if that was reality, the fragment just cited from the novel appears to be intended to show the newly arrived Waverley how effective this army really is. It is reasonable to suppose that Waverley might have been used as part of Jacobite propaganda. If he returned to England or tried to contact the British army, he would be able to provide a new perspective on the Highlanders and most importantly on Bonnie Prince Charles and his army.

Several important characteristics from early chapters in *Waverley*, and events in history, need to be discussed in order to understand the Battle of Prestonpans. First, the so-called "march" which refers to the march from Dunbar to Edinburgh by the government army commanded by Sir John Cope[8]. Cope believed that his troops were heading to a place defined by himself as "being very proper for us" (Cope, 2018: 37) in which they would have a strategic advantage over the enemy. In fact, this may really have appeared to be so, as the government forces located themselves on flat ground immediately behind a bog, which separated them from the Jacobite fighters. It appeared that the only way in which the Jacobites could approach Cope's troops was by attacking through the bog, in which they would have been easily destroyed. Facing each other and without a clear ability to move or take immediate action, both armies rested.

[8] Throughout 1745, most British military forces were fighting in mainland Europe (in the War of Austrian Succession, 1740-48), which explains the timing of the uprising.

However, a Jacobite sympathiser (Robert Anderson) who lived locally enabled the Jacobites' attack[9]. This young man knew the area well and showed the Jacobites a well-hidden path through the bog that allowed them to attack Cope's forces. In *Waverley*, Anderson is not directly spoken of but the narrative does mention "a faithful friend [who] offered to guide us by a practicable, though narrow and circuitous route, which, sweeping to our right, traverses the broken ground and morass, and enables us to gain the firm and open plain, upon which the enemy are lying" (Scott, 1814: 239).

Once in the enemy's territory, the Jacobites divided into two lines "the first was destined to charge the enemy, the second to act as a reserve. The few horse, whom the Prince headed in person, remained between the two lines" (Scott, 1814: 239-240). The fact that Charles was in the first lines of attack proves how confident the Jacobites were (as armies rarely allowed their leaders to participate from such dangerous positions). But it also suggests that the novel takes an opportunity to highlight Charles's bravery and dedication to his fighters. The Jacobites needed to attack quickly, since in terms of weaponry the British army is generally recognised as having been superior. If they had waited, Cope's army could have prepared a far more effective defence and the surprise attack would have been meaningless. After the attack, the "Hanoverian forces fled and many were killed or captured. […] The Infantry in the first line were miserably massacred by the Rebels" (Throp, 2017: 21). Moreover, something that boosted that Romantic view of Prestonpans, magnifying Prince Charles's figure, were the Prince's actions regarding the prisoners' treatment. "Prince Charles ordered his men to spare the lives of their prisoner. […] He insisted that the wounded get the best possible treatment" (Norris-Warfare History Network). This yet again enhances the idea of Charles as a great leader who wanted to bring around the sympathy of *all* his people. Not only were prisoners taken

[9] See Annex: Table 2.

care of or spared their lives but Charles also "ordered that there be no public rejoicing of the victory" (Future Learn- The Battle of Prestonpans).

Following this battle, Sir John Cope was court-marshalled; at trial, his character and behaviour during the battle were examined. In fact, he is said to have fled with other soldiers and there seems to be some reference to this in *Waverley* "Balmawhapple […] mounted on a horse as headstrong and stiff-necked as his rider, pursued the flight of the dragoons above four miles" (Scott, 1814: 242). There is no other reference to this event, but it could be assumed that this makes reference to Cope's escape to London to inform about the defeat and the forces of the Prince's army.

It is unclear why the names of Cope and Anderson were left out in the novel. However, Cope's name might have been left unmentioned so that his figure would not get even more tarnished than it was. Therefore, this in my belief is proof of a slightly pro-government recounting of events. The fact that a Highlander went after the dragoons trying to catch them, would only leave Cope as a coward who fled the battle. On the contrary, leaving Anderson's name out would mean that attention would still be focused on a single figure, Bonnie Prince Charles, and the importance and merit of this battle would not be shared. Finally, what I believe happens in *Waverley*'s description of the events of the Battle of Prestonpans is a need to balance both accounts to avoid causing an offence to either sides.

There is certain mythification or tendency towards an overly romantic account of these events by both the Jacobites and the Hanoverians. On the Jacobite part, there was certain manipulation or exaggeration regarding the number of soldiers in both armies. "The Jacobites themselves made sustained efforts to create confusion about their numbers and plans" (Harris, 1995: 11). The intention behind keeping the numbers a secret or its manipulation was mainly to protect themselves. They had yet to gain France's political

and economic support and to reveal the real numbers could have left them defenceless. Moreover, the Prince still needed to win over more people, some of them important figures, some who were still doubting or were simply scared; and he still needed to gain the support of France itself. Exaggerating the number of supporters, would certainly bolster his sympathisers and very possibly might encourage people to join the cause. In fact, "the report of the battle in the pro-Jacobite Caledonian Mercury […] encouraged the malcontents, and was the cause of 'drawing people from the distant parts of Scotland to join the rebellion" (Duffy,: 10). For the Jacobites, the Battle of Prestonpans provided the cause with energy and most importantly, with hope.

On the Hanoverian part however, there is a clear tendency to downplay the battle and its significance. The facts appear to be that Sir John Cope's action was the first engagement by the government's army, a force with superior weapons. And yet the Jacobite victory was clear and devastating, and Cope was charged with being an incompetent leader. However, "this [the denunciation of Cope] prompted an indignant reply […] from a man who purported to have come to London soon after the battle of Prestonpans. He noted that he "was amazed to find, how much of the Publick was impos'd upon by an infinite Variety of Falsehoods" (Davis, 1998: 50). This might suggest that the little information directly available about the battle might actually have been manipulated by the government to maintain the credibility of their forces by claiming that pro-Jacobin accounts were untrustworthy.

All these characteristics are quite ambiguous in *Waverly*. There is no specific number regarding how many soldiers the pro-Jacobite army had, nor those in the pro-government's army. There are only details on how fast the battle was won and how great the Prince was, that he let his enemy live instead of massacring them. However, *Waverley*'s account of the battle seems to be slightly pro-government. Scott would not

change history but he could definitely embellish it at his will. So, even if this was a battle won by the Jacobites, the British army is not ridiculed over their defeat in the novel. In fact, it seems as if Scott would rather draw the attention somewhere else so that, the defeat and the British soldiers are not dishonoured even more. This could be a plausible explanation for Cope's being missing from the account of the battle; while in the Jacobite army the names of its leaders are referred to. In other words, Scott seems to be avoiding tarnishing Cope's reputation even more.

2.2.The Battle of Culloden 1746

The Battle of Culloden in 1746 was very different from Prestonpans as regards the fighting itself and the result. In terms of troop numbers and weapons, the pro-government forces were greatly superior. Moreover, the Jacobites were once again driven to a place chosen by the English for the battle to take place. In fact, "some later suggested that a retreat to Inverness, where their stores were located, would have been a better option. There was enough food there for the army for two or three days and this would also have allowed the stragglers and other men to join them there" (Oates, 2008). This is argued to merely have been a postponement of the battle, but it would have certainly helped the Jacobites to be well-fed and rested.

Significantly, I think, this battle is not directly described in *Waverley*. Rather, it is slightly accounted for through other characters in the novel. The implications of this are important and will be discussed more fully later. After all, this battle is known to be the definite defeat of the cause as there was no other Jacobite Rising after this. Moreover, the event marks a bloody ending and the start of the clearances[10], but Scott does not use it to

[10] Clearances are described as the "forced eviction of inhabitants of the Highlands and western islands of Scotland. […] The Highland Clearances resulted in the destruction of the traditional clan society and began a pattern of rural depopulation and emigration from Scotland (Britannica- Highland Clearances).

enforce or convey the idea of the English brutality. It seems that, in spite of what history tells us, Scott is avoiding putting an emphasis on what was the great failure and the "destruction" of the Highlands' life.

To understand the Battle of Culloden a little background is needed. First, the Jacobites ended up without the support of France, which was supposed to invade England from the South. Moreover, already in December things started to decline; the soldiers' mood as well. The rebellion did not seem to be succeeding and soldiers were extremely exhausted and with no resources. This desperation is reflected in *Waverley*: "…embarked? the vessel is going to pieces, and it is full time for all who can to get into the long-boat and leave her" (Scott, 1814: 293). This seems to indicate a realisation of the failure of the cause. This fragment refers to a conversation between Fergus and Waverley, and curiously enough, this sentence is spoken by Fergus whose family was particularly loyal to the cause. Therefore, what can be inferred from this is that it was already obvious in December that they would not be successful, they were lacking too many things to succeed. Finally, the lack of allies was very clear in Derby, where ,previous to Culloden, the Jacobites were stopped by the British army. Charles was forced to retreat in hopes of obtaining that much-needed French help.

In the novel, the first thing Waverley hears of Culloden is while he was riding back from London to Edinburgh "Here [the borders of Scotland] he heard the tidings of the decisive battle of Culloden. It was no more than he had expected, though the success at Falkirk had thrown a faint and setting gleam over the arms of the Chevalier" (Scott, 1814: 312). The Battle of Falkirk is, in many cases, regarded as undecisive, although tactically it was a Jacobite victory, so it is described here as merely a gleam. It is definitely striking how the Prince was so blind as not to see and understand his reality. The Jacobites were losing soldiers and had no valuable resources.

The reason behind Culloden's absence from the novel is obvious from a narrative perspective. Waverley is the protagonist and all action and historical accounts are directly connected to him. Since he leaves for London, he does not experience the battle and therefore, Culloden is not described in the narration. However, the important issue is the reason why Scott deliberately made Waverley leave Scotland and so avoid recounting the events.

Two perspectives can be interpreted from the aftermath of Culloden and both are missing. From the pro-Jacobite point of view, the Battle of Culloden not only meant the complete defeat of the cause but also the escape of Bonnie Prince Charles sometimes described by his contemporaries as cowardly. However, in *Waverley*, Fergus -even just before being executed- remains loyal to the Stuarts "God save King George! Said the High Sheriff. When the formality concluded, Fergus stood erect in the sledge, and, with a firm and steady voice, replied, 'God save King *James*!' These were the last words which Waverley heard him speak" (Scott, 1814: 350). So, even if their hopes and the cause were defeated, the loyalties of the sympathisers still remained unscathed.

From the pro-government perspective, Culloden is known for the British commander (and king's son),[11] the Duke of Cumberland, referred to in most historical accounts as the "butcher". He earned this name because of the strong repression he carried out not only at Culloden but during the following years. "It was after the Battle of Culloden that the Duke of Cumberland earned, and deserved, the name of the "butcher". He ordered hundreds of prisoners to be shot, and his soldiers were permitted, and may well have been ordered, to cut down all fugitives with savage cruelty (Peach, 1975, cited in Oates, 2008). In fact, this shows how different the two royal characters seemed to be. While Charles's priority was to get accepted, and to let his enemies live and be taken care

[11] William Augustus (1721-1765) was the youngest son of King George II (1683-1760).

of, the Duke of Cumberland showed no mercy. It was not his priority or need to protect the Highlanders; they were the enemy and they had to be destroyed and erased. However, very few scholars defend his figure or character: "by posterity he is remembered chiefly as 'the butcher of Culloden', his name thus linked to the image of a capricious sadist. Nothing is further from the truth… And yet the reality has been outweighed by the myth (Rex Whitworth, 1993, cited in Oates, 2003). In certain quarters, the duke was even called Sweet William which stands in contrast to the butcher's reputation and shows how unclear the various accounts can be. Once again, Scott appears to be quite ambiguous regarding his reasoning and choosing of events.

Even if the battle is not accounted for in the novel, there are several references to the aftermath and how circumstances changed in the Highlands after this. To start with, a survivor of the battle "insisted much upon his grief at the loss of Edward and of Glennaquoich, fought the fields of Falkirk and Culloden, and related how, after all was lost in the last battle, he had returned home, under the idea of more easily finding shelter among his own tenant and on his own estate than elsewhere". (Scott, 1914: 319). This man explains how once he escaped from Culloden, he got back home but hid himself in his land. Not only were those who directly participated in the rebellion punished but also their families as well. The fact that they needed to seek shelter is in itself very revealing of how they were treated.

"It seems likely that [the Jacobites] only prolong the war to place the chevalier's person out of danger" (Scott, 1814: 309). This refers to Charles's escape, showing how the Jacobites spoke about the prince in good terms, showing no regret or anger for his person. However, it is important that Scott describes this in the novel because it is my conviction that even though, the characters in *Waverley* show no resentment towards Charles, Scott is actually criticising the prince's actions and is, in a sense, blaming him

for the aftermath. If the army had surrendered at the beginning of the rebellion or even before the Battle of Culloden, events would have been very different.

There is no direct or indirect account made in the novel of the Duke of Cumberland. The British are traditionally regarded in Scottish history as the culprits of the Culloden massacre; is Scott therefore hiding this part of history? The novel gives no full account of how bad or bloody the battle was.

I believe that the Battle of Culloden is absent due to a pro-government current in Scott's recounting of the events. It is true that some narrative aspects support a pro-Jacobite perspective; however, I think that the anti-Jacobite elements (no direct mention of the battle; no repetition of the duke's reputation; no direct reference to the nature of the retaliation; the implicit criticism of Charles) are stronger and more valid indications of Scott's position on this event.

3. Conclusions and Further Reading

3.1.Conclusions

Comparing Scott's recounting of events to external historical accounts has definitely proven a great challenge. The figures of Bonnie Prince Charles and Flora MacDonald are greatly known and much has been said about them. The romantic retellings on their determination and bravery have been repeatedly described in the novel, but also some misconceptions such as Flora's direct participation and, to some extent, the Prince's stoicism. Moreover, the battles have proved yet again Scott's ambiguity. Prestonpans has been very well-described when compared to Culloden's lack of evidence; but Prestonpans shows lack of facts or certain vagueness on some topics. The Battle of Culloden, described by some characters, proves to be a conflicting event in many senses, which is marked by its aftermath rather than the battle itself.

When I approached this novel, I had strong preconceptions about how idealistically romantic the descriptions would be. This was probably due to the romantic recounting of Scottish history or TV productions such as Outlander, all of which reinforce the English-Scottish antipathy and a rather imprecise view of events. Therefore, I was quite sure that the novel would have strong arguments in favour of the Jacobite cause. After all, Scott is perceived as the greatest Scottish author and celebrated as a great patriot in Scotland. Furthermore, Scott's revival of this topic (only half a century after the events) is what granted him great part of his fame and also praises as a writer.

Even though I was aware that it was too simplistic and that nowadays Scott is analysed, discussed and often questioned, my initial belief was that Waverley would generally give a view of the uprising that was very different from historical accounts.

Throughout the novel Scott has proved to be quite ambiguous in relevant matters and events. When this is not the case, and he shows a certain predilection for one

particular view, there always seems to be a counter-argument that corresponds to the alternative positions. This, I think, can be interpreted as sort of a balance between both perspectives to avoid being labelled as pro- or anti-Jacobite.

Scott was indeed Scottish, but as has been previously stated, this does not mean that his sympathies are necessarily Jacobite. The Jacobite Rebellion of 1745-1746 was not primarily a national conflict, even if romantic accounts since then have turned this into a Scottish struggle against England. Therefore, the old argument that *Waverley* is pro-Jacobite because Scott was Scottish is not a strong one and has little argument to support that. Scott lived in the period of the Regency of George IV when George III was declared unfit to rule. Therefore, Scott lived in a country where the Stuarts were no longer a plausible future, but the Jacobite movement still had some reminiscent presence in Scott's contemporaries (for example, a Tory- and very English- family such as Jane Austen's almost certainly had some sympathy for the Jacobite cause). Therefore, Scott's public was not only Scottish or English, pro-Jacobite or anti-Jacobite: it was all of this. His novel needed to "escape" the political censorship that was typical in the early 1800s in Britain and making it ambiguous was an effective professional strategy. There are many ways of reading the novel and its message or purpose.

The portrayal in *Waverley* of the figures analysed in this TFG (Charles and Flora, principally), within their ambiguity, seem to be both emphatically Jacobite due to their romantic descriptions. However, both battles, yet again in Scott's ambiguity, seem to express a pro-government idea. This in itself is quite revealing. What can be seen then, if we accept this reading, is that the description of characters, which are heavily subjective, are over-romanticised by their Jacobite influence. In contrast, in recounting the battles, a more objective response seems to be given. The romantic descriptions that benefit the Jacobites can be easily discarded as they merely and very subjectively describe characters.

However, the *battles* described in the novel, descriptions that benefit the Hanoverians, can- to some extent- be seen as "true", verifiable historical events that more or less took place as Scott describes them.

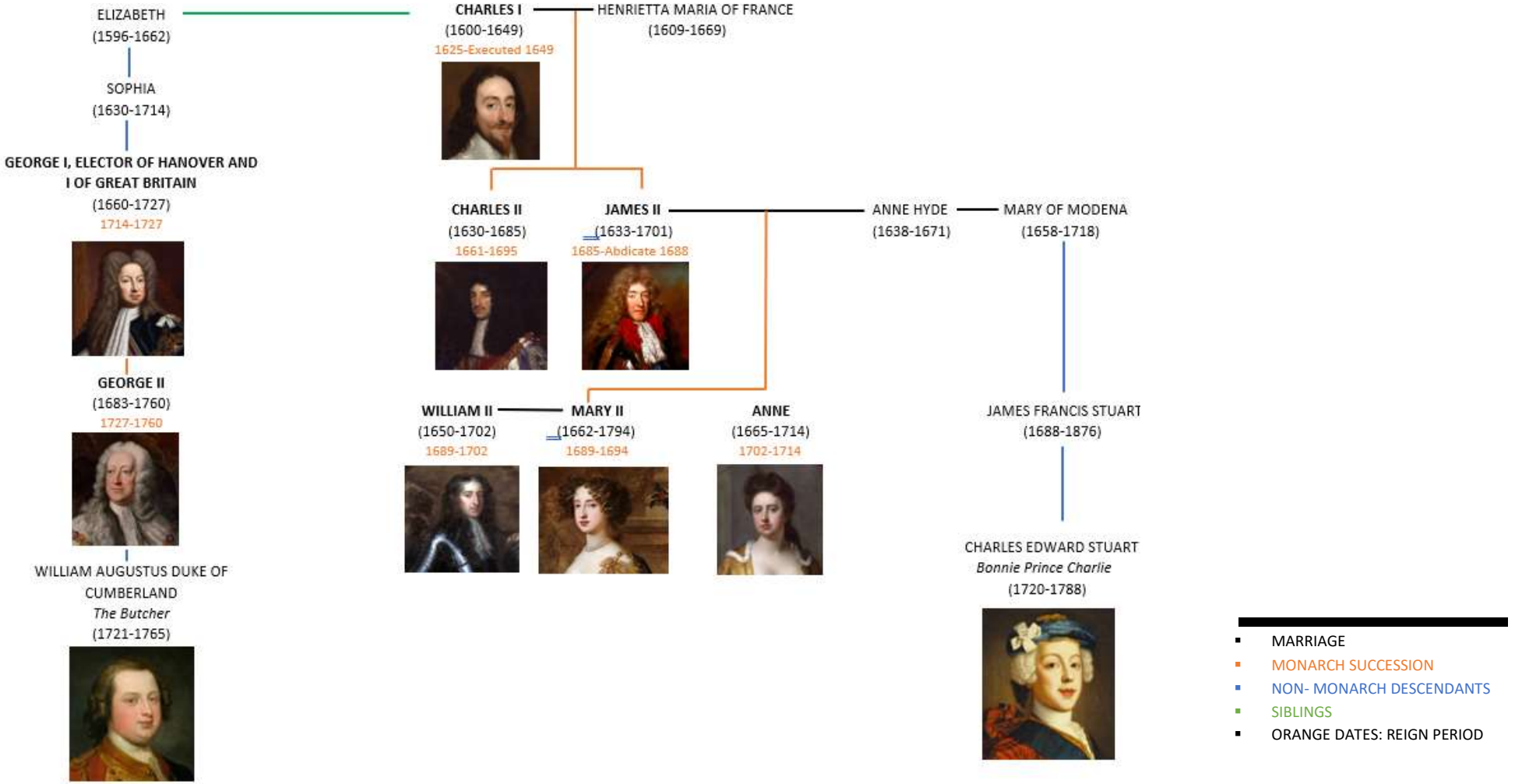
3.2.Further Research

Finally, I would like to briefly outline an area of further research that I believe would be of interest in approaching this novel, and which the nature and limitations of this TFG prevent me from developing. In the novel, there seems to be a representation of Bonnie Prince Charles by means of two characters. The representation of Charles but also a representation forwarded through Edward Waverley as a sort of *alter ego*. This is perhaps a way to describe the prince's personality without directly tarnishing his figure, since Bonnie Prince Charles seems to be portrayed as the epitome of a great king and leader, and a true *hero*. Contrary to this, although Edward Waverley is very similar[12] to the Prince in many senses, he seems to incarnate quite a few "weak" personality traits that are traditionally attributed to the Prince. This is an ambit that I have not found to be the focus of much critical attention and which I think would be a useful focus for further research.

[12] See Annex: Table 3.

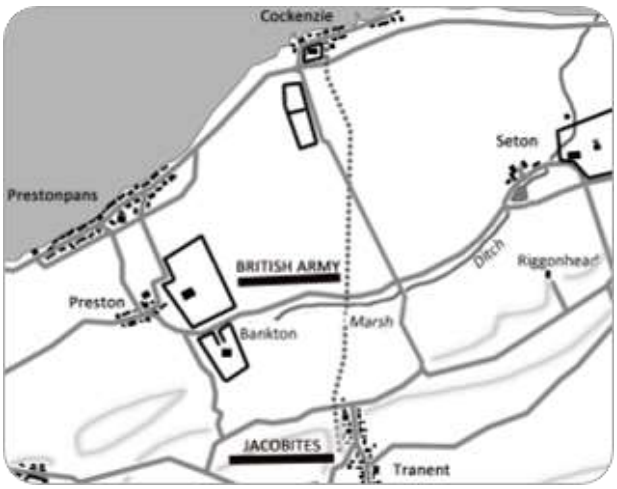
4. Annex :

4.1.Table 1

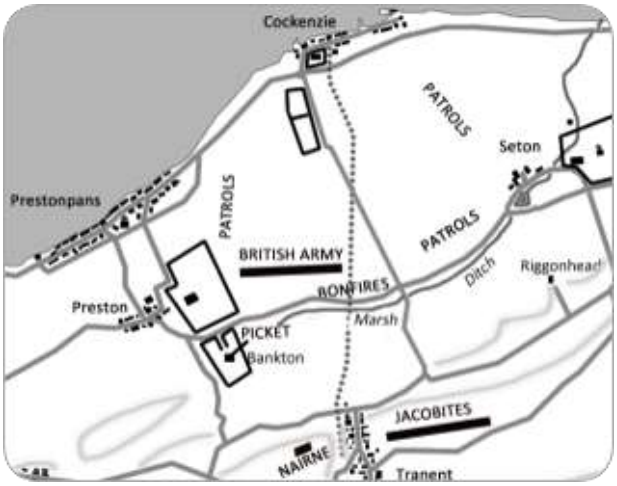


4.2.Table 2:

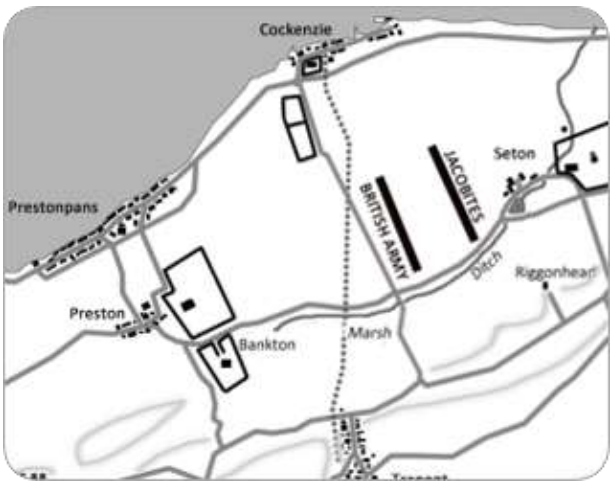
These diagrams show the location of the armies and their subsequent movements (The Battle of Prestonpans 1745):



First positions of both armies: the British army located on high ground and the Jacobites across the bog.

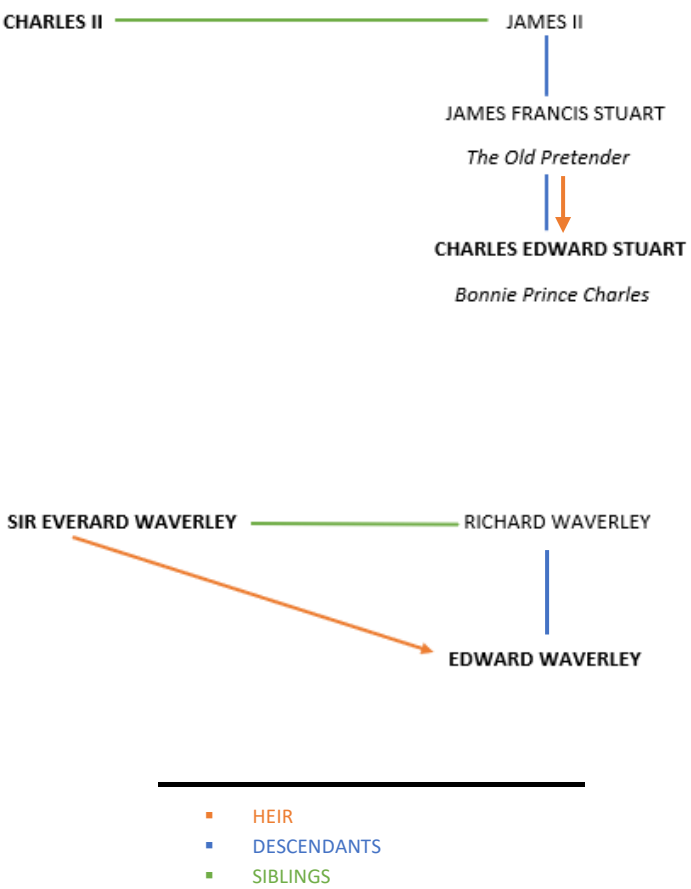


The Jacobites started to move through the path to locate themselves “behind” the British army with a clear approach to strike an attack.



Final location and positions in which the battle was fought.

4.3.Table 3:



Comparative table indicating certain similitudes between Bonnie Prince Charlie and Edward Waverley.

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