

The Massacre of Glencoe February 1692



The Real History

The Massacre of Glencoe

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By
A Scottish Patriot



IN SCOTLAND, MURDER has always been a dreadful crime. But there is a worse crime in the Highlands, much worse. It is called Murder under Trust. That's what it was. That's why the Massacre of Glencoe has reverberated so strongly in Scottish history.

The London/Amsterdam money power had just recently manoeuvred that hook nosed monarch William of Orange onto the throne by treachery to replace the incumbent Stuart line. The City of London was concerned about a possible Scottish backlash and with good reason. Hence the Glencoe Massacre and The Highland Clearances ordered by the City of London Edomites through their puppet monarch.

The Government plotters originally planned to include many other clans, but only the Glencoe McDonalds provided the excuse. King William signed the orders in England but later washed his hands of the whole thing

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and claimed to know nothing of it when the London press got hold of the story. That's politics for you.

The Facts

The atrocity occurred at 5.00 am on February 13, 1692 when some of the 135 men in the Argyll regiment, turned on the MacDonalds after receiving orders to kill all the men below the age of 70. The soldiers had been billeted for 11 days with McDonald families in the little Glencoe communities and receiving hospitality. The regiment were not only Campbells. Only a few were professional soldiers.

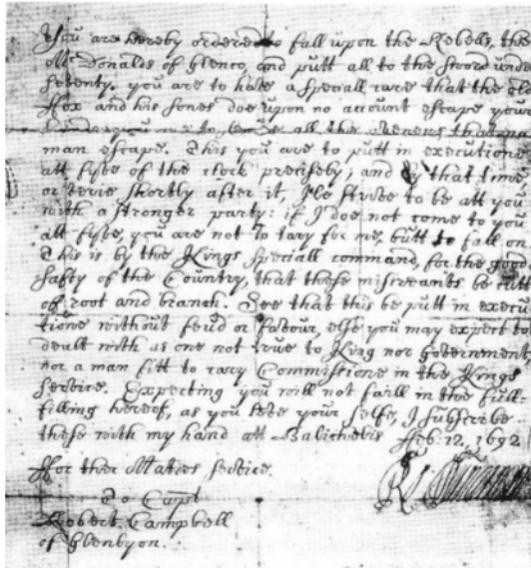
The Captain of the troop, Robert Campbell of Glenlyon who was 60, seems to have been deliberately chosen as a shambles of a man by all accounts, a drunkard, who had recently taken his army commission to help to clear his large gambling debts. He was given his orders only the night before, by a Major Robert Duncanson who was billeted with support troops at Ballachulish House. He knew nothing of the plan until then.

More Telling Facts

The killings began with gunfire. That is a sure way for the soldiers to warn everyone up the glen that trouble is about. That was clearly deliberate. Swords and daggers would have been far quieter and more effective and would have seen off half of the targets before the MacDonalds were roused. They were at close quarters, for goodness' sake.

It is thought that there were about 200 McDonald men in Glencoe. Only 39 were killed including women and children. After a surprise attack 3 hours before dawn, as they all lay sleeping in their beds, with soldiers outside, in their yards and they succeeded in killing only 39? If the soldiers killed three McDonalds each, then only 13 soldiers were needed to do the job. These soldier lads couldn't do it. Not in any way. The person who had cooked for them for the past ten days was like their own mother. They had laughs with the boys, who worked on the farm just as their own families worked theirs. They eyed the girls, and the girls eyed them.

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You are hereby ordered to fall upon the Rebels, the
all Denales of Glencoe, and putt all to the sword under
your hands, you are to take a speciall care that the
fox and his fence doe upon no account spare your
man spared. This you are to putt in execution
all fives of the clock precisely, and that I am
or to be shortly after it, the fives to be all you
with a strong party: if I doo not come to you
all fives, you are not to tary for me, butt to fall on.
This is by the Kings speciall command, for the good
safety of the Country, that these miscreants be cutt
off root and branch. See that this be putt in execu-
tion without feild or favour, else you may expect but
death with us, not to be to King nor Governour,
nor a man fitt to rayse Commission in the Kings
service. Expecting you will not faill in this mil-
litarie duty, as you take your selfe, I subscribe
these with my hand at Ballochvie Feb: 12, 1692.

For thoe all other fervices.
Do Capt
Robt Campbell
of Glendon.

Copy of order to Capt. Campbell by Maj. Duncanson

Then they were told suddenly to get out their swords and rifles and kill all the men – it couldn't be done. And they did not do it. They made sure the families were warned. – the soldiers got the blame for it. Two of Glenlyon's lieutenants refused to carry out the murders and broke their swords. They were later prosecuted and freed. Also, according to tradition, the family of Campbell of Airds at Castle Stalker helped many of the fugitives. Glenlyon, the leader of the attack, saved two young McDonald men but both were murdered by Duncanson.

Another Telling Fact

Additional soldiers were sent to block off the passes out of the Glen. Escaping McDonalds would head naturally the other way towards Duror in Appin. That is where their long-standing friends were, the Stewarts. They knew that another military force was at Ballachulish, so they would not go along the coast. So why would the soldiers block the one exit they would not use?

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Most of the soldiers actually got the people to safety. Some soldiers killed them though, and some McDonalds died horribly. It was not a Clan fight - it was planned by the government. The Campbell clan was set up to take the blame

There is a poor escape route out to Glen Etive for the families living up the valley and this was blocked off. Some of the 39 were killed here. But the easiest escape routes to Appin were not blocked at all. Come on, that was deliberate.

Probably Duncanson selected Glenlyon to lead the attack because Glenlyon was related by marriage to Alasdair McDonald, MacIain's younger son. Glenlyon had no prior knowledge of the task expected of him until the night before the attack. This would help to lull the suspicions of the people of Glencoe. They arrived and claimed hospitality under the Highland code and said that the Fort William garrison was full.

The McDonalds were very suspicious and wary. The McDonald Chief had been late in signing his loyalty oath to King William. Oh, they would have been very worried indeed but in ten days their fears settled down. The soldiers themselves had no idea why they were there, of course, so they would have been re-assuring to the Glencoe MacDonalds.

It was an act of official policy, conceived by a Secretary of State for Scotland, Dalrymple, and executed by a Scottish commander-in-chief, approved by the King, and carried out by a regiment in the British Army. Indeed, the Argyll Regiment was deliberately chosen by Dalrymple because he knew how their involvement would be perceived. The Campbell clan was not popular with the government. Under Scots law. "Murder under trust" as this was, was a more heinous crime than ordinary murder.

The government decided to make all the Clan Chiefs vow an oath of loyalty by January 1st. The McDonald Chief, MacIain left it till late, then set out for Inverlochy, today's Fort William, where he was told to go to Inverary to sign. He did so, but arrived six days after the deadline. All seemed well, but this was the excuse that the government in London needed for teaching the Highlanders a lesson in treachery.

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Afterwards, those responsible for organising the murders were pardoned by William. One became a colonel, another a knight, a third a peer, and a fourth an earl. Not surprising really, because William had personally signed the orders. All of this is well documented, from the subsequent Parliamentary Commission which later enquired into the crime. Dirty job politics, always has been, always will be.

In fact, it appears that the Secretary contemplated the total extirpation of the clans. In a letter to the commander of the forces in Scotland, dated January 7th., he says, "You know in general that these troops posted at Inverness and Inverlochie, will be ordered to take in the house of Innergarie, and to destroy entirely the country of Lochaber, Lochiel's lands, Keppoch's, Glengarie's and Glencoe," and he adds, "I assure you your power shall be full enough, and I hope the soldiers will not trouble the government with prisoners."



The
End

A quill pen in an inkwell.

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