The Scots in Sweden

Part II (B)

Militaria

The Period of Gustavus II. (Adolphus).

When Gustavus Adolphus ascended the Swedish throne in 1611, he was barely seventeen years old; but he enjoyed the advice of his wise Chancellor, Axel Oxenstierna. His first efforts were directed towards the restoration of peace with Denmark. But in spite of his declaring himself willing to surrender the title of King of the Lapps, which had proved so obnoxious to the Danish king that it had become one of the principal causes of the Calmar War, the peaceful offer was refused, no mediation was allowed, and the war was continued with great vigour. On the part of Sweden, however, a great want of troops made itself felt. Whilst the Danish army contained more than 18,000 mercenaries, Gustavus Adolphus only possessed one regiment of Scots, including the officers Colonel Rutherford, Captain Learmonth, Wauchope, and Greig, who commanded the artillery. Urged then by necessity, the king applied to Sir James Spens (or Spentz), in a letter dated November 1611, in which, after having referred to the promises made by Spens to his father, and to the services which the latter had required of him, he urges him to hasten his return from Scotland with the "promised three thousand soldiers of proved faithfulness and bravery." He added that he wished them to be infantry. With these Spens was to sail for Elfsborg by the month of April 1612. He was to be paid 20,000 Imperiales at Hamburg, and promised that any further expense should be carefully considered. Gustavus Adolphus continues: "Furthermore, we thought it right to let you know that we have arranged with our general, Joh. Moenighovius, that he is to transport his 1000 infantry from Holland to Elfsborg in the beginning of spring, so that if you could combine your fleet and army with

the ships of the aforesaid Moenighovius, we should be extremely glad."

From the following it will appear that Spens took no active part in these levies himself; the organiser was Colonel Andrew Ramsay, a favourite with King James I., who calls him the "chief of the business." His brother John, as one of the royal pages, had saved the king's life in the Gowrie conspiracy. Now, while Moenighovius's expedition landed not far from Trondhjem on the 19th of August with four Dutch ships, and succeeded in reaching Stockholm in safety after having suffered great hardships on the road, the Scottish levies were doomed to a more terrible fate. From the first, great difficulties had presented themselves to the recruiting officers. The Court of Denmark had, through "secret channels, ascertained that certain companies of men were levying in Scotland and ready to embark under the leadership of Ramsay, Stewart, and others"; "that 1000 men had already embarked at Caithness to fall upon Norway" (then, as it will be remembered, subject to Denmark). [See letters of the English ambassador, Sir R. Anstruther, to King James on the 9th and 10th of August, in Mitchell, *History of the Scottish Expedition to Norway in 1612* (Christiania), 1882, an excellent little book, full of trustworthy information.] This offence was all the more inexcusable as it was only a few months since the same ambassador had to write to Scotland about a certain Earl of Orkney (Robert Douglas), who had made a piratical descent on Norway, but was suspected of having a commission for levying and transporting troops for the service of Sweden. Strong representations were made in Edinburgh, whilst the explanations of Sir Robert at Copenhagen, to the effect that his king did not know anything about it, that the levies consisted only of voluntary men "of whom the country was full for want of employment, now that the general peace between England and Scotland had been restored, and that at the same time great distress had arisen from the excess of population (!)," appear to have found but little credence. The consequence was that King James at last awoke from his inactivity. He pleaded absolute ignorance. Up till then he had been under the impression, he said, that the levies were intended against Russia (31st of July 1612). The matter was immediately submitted to the Privy Council, and not many days afterwards two Proclamations were issued against the transport of soldiers and their enlistment for Sweden (August 4th), whilst two acts were passed, one "charging and accusing Captains Hay, Ker, and Sinclair with having enlisted men for the wars in

Sweden, and ordering them to desist"; the other summoning Colonel Andrew Ramsay to appear before the Council "to hear and see His Majesty's will in respect to the men of war enlisted under his pay." Next day the Lords of the Council ordered "officers of arms to pass command and charge the master-owners of shippes and mariners of vessels freighted for the transport of soldiers to Sweden, that they bring in their ships to the harbour of Leith and there suffer them to lie." On the fifteenth of August, two other acts were promulgated, ordering "that the companies of men lately enlisted under Ramsay and others should be broken up and in no wise be transported to Sweden," and that "the companies under Col. Ramsay should be disbanded and landed, one half at Leith, the other at Burntisland." [The documents are printed in Michell's book.]

These acts give us a very important insight into the method of recruiting then practised, although, since they are not unbiassed, the necessary allowance for high colouring must be made. They state, amongst other matters, that Sir Robert Ker had apprehended in the middle shires (*i.e*. the Border counties) a number of malefactors whom he intended for the service of Sweden; secondly, that the officers had violently pressed and taken a great many honest men's sons and carried them to their ships against their will (!), so that there is such a fear and dread arising among the people that none of them dare travel unless they be able to resist their violence, and divers young fellows who were resolved to come to these parts, "to have waited upon the harvest and cut down the corn," are afraid to come. In the charge against Ker and Sinclair it is further alleged "that honest men's bairns are detained on board ship as slaves and captives (!)"

Anybody disobeying these acts of the Council was threatened with the penalty of death. The levies were to be stopped immediately, the ships seized, their sails taken from the yards, and the men on board set at liberty. The remainder of the companies were not to travel home in groups of more than two, to obviate the possibility of their committing any acts of violence on the road. Curiously enough, no mention is made of disarming them. The natural conclusion that they had no arms is strengthened by an order given to General Moenighofen to provide arms and ammunition for the whole corps.

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All these apparently vigorous measures came too late. A small body of Scottish recruits, led by Alexander Ramsay, Sinclair, and others, had escaped the vigilance of the authorities and embarked for Sweden at Caithness. What happened to them is best described in the words of the Danish “Stadthalter” (Governor) of Norway, Kruse, and in the reports of Sir R. Anstruther to the Scottish king. On the 17th of September 1612 Kruse announced to the Danish Government the arrival of two ships off the coast of Romsdal, between the 19th and the 20th of August, and the destruction of the force at the Pass of Kringelen on the 26th. “We cannot omit to communicate to the Chancellor somewhat at length,” he says, “on account of the nature of the matter, how on or about the 19th of August two Scottish ships arrived off Romsdalen in the province of Bergenhuus with a number of soldiers. What part those ships came from and by whom they were fitted out, as also who it was that procured them, is to be ascertained from their own report and deposition here annexed. And straightway the next day after their arrival they betook themselves inland and proceeded along the country-road, over a field called Maerotoppen, whereupon they entered the valley of Gudbrandsdal, which is to the southward of this mountain-range and in the province of Aggershuus, and they had taken with them two Bönder (peasant proprietors) of Romsdalen as guides. But when one of his R. Maj. lensmen in the parish of Vaage, which is situated in the above-named bailiewick of Gudbrandsdal, by name Lauritz Hage, perceived this, he at once roused the peasantry and went forth against the said Scots. And when he perceived that they were too strong for him, he advanced for two or three days and kept before them along the road without, however, engaging in any skirmish and fight. Meanwhile he sent messengers to the peasantry in the two adjoining parishes, who quickly came to his assistance, and when they were in this manner gathered, they were four or five hundred men strong. Thus he advanced before them until he saw his advantage at a field called Kringelen which they were obliged to pass. Thus he turned them in between the rock on one side and a large river close by on the other side, in which advantageous position he encamped in the woods and there lay with his men until the foreign soldiers arrived there, without, however, supposing or knowing aught but that the Norwegian troops were still withdrawing along the road before them.

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“The above-named Lauritz Hage having made his arrangements and perceived his advantage, attacked, together with another lensman Peter Rankleff of Ringeböe, and with all their men together they fired upon the foreign troops and shot them to death during an hour and a half. Those who were not shot jumped into the river to save themselves but were all drowned, and those of them who got alive over the river were quickly killed by the Bönders on that side, all of which happened and occurred on the 26th of August last.

“From the Bönders who were themselves present at the battle, and who buried and counted the dead and the defeated, we learn that the foreign soldiers must no doubt have numbered at the least five hundred and fifty men, although the Scots who remained alive, and of whom there are altogether eighteen, will not admit that they were more than 350 men strong at the utmost.

“On the day the battle took place 134 Scots were taken prisoners who were straightway the next day killed and shot by the Bönders with the exception of eighteen, the Bonders saying to each other that His Royal Majesty had enough to feed in those same eighteen. Some of them were, however, wounded, and some had bullets in their bodies when they arrived here. Of the above-named eighteen we now send you the three principal ones, who are a captain of the name of Alexander Ramsay and his lieutenant Jacob Mongepenny, who has previously been in Denmark and Sweden, and who on this their expedition served as interpreter; and a third, called Herrich Bryssz (Henry Bruce), who according to his own statement has served as a soldier in Holland, Spain, and Hungary. [No mention is made of James Scott, who was one of the prisoners.] As regards the remaining fifteen persons some of them have straightway taken service among good folk here in the country, some of them who will willingly serve your R. M. in Jörgen Lunge’s regiment I sent at once to Elfsborg. What has further occurred in this matter is, as already stated, all to be ascertained from their own statements, which are written down. As to what knowledge can be obtained from the letters that were found on them, we can say nothing this time, for when the Scots were taken prisoners, the Bönders took all the letters to themselves, from which we now have our certain knowledge (?). What can be ascertained from them [*i.e*.

letters], so soon as we receive them, shall be straightway sent to the Chancellor, and if we on our part can serve the Chancellor to his honour, advantage, and command, he shall always find us willing. The Chancellor is hereby commended to God Almighty. Done at Aggershuus, 17th Sept. 1612.

"ENWOLD KRUSSZE."

[See Michell, *l.c.*, pp. 180 ff.]

A second report from the same to the same adds but little new information. It contains, however, one significant passage which does away with the tales of ravages and cruelties of the Scots current in Norwegian tradition and poetry. "We have also since ascertained," Kruse writes, "that those Scots who were defeated and captured on their march through this country have absolutely neither burned, murdered, nor destroyed anything either in Gudbrandsdalen or in Romsdalen, excepting only one Danish man, who lives in the Romsdal, Söffram Settnes. From him they have taken a box filled with various kinds of silver, both tankards, belts and other such wrought silver . . . It was the plan of the aforesaid Scots to have made their way into Sweden through Gudbrandsdalen over a mountain called Österdalsfjeld in the parish of Jonset, which they could have done easily in a five days' march at the utmost, had not God, the most Almighty, destroyed them" (October 3).

We now come to Sir Robert Anstruther's report to King James, dated 26th October, 1612: "Doubtless Your M. hath heard," he writes, "of that unfortunate accident [Notice how Kruse calls it the work of God, Anstruther an accident. It was an atrocious crime.] that happened unto three hundred of Your M.'s subjects which landed in Norway under command of Alexander Ramsay, lieutenant-colonel to Colonel Ramsay, and Captains Hay and Sinclair. After they had marched six days within the country, pressing to go through to Sweden, they were overcharged by the inhabitants and all killed except a few. The said Ramsay, Captain Bruce, James Monipenny, whom they used as an interpreter, and James Scott were sent to Denmark.

"After their coming hither a Council of War was held to examine them and afterwards to give judgment. After I had spoken with them and found that their journey was enterprised rashly, and rather simple than well advised, for not one of them had any kind of commission or warrant to show, neither

from the late King Charles, neither from Gustavus, neither from Col. Ramsay."

The Latin deposition of Alex. Ramsay is to the following effect: he had been appointed Lieut.-Colonel by Andrew Ramsay, who had declared that he held the office of Colonel by a letter from King Charles IX.; he had told him the levies were carried on with the knowledge and approval of the King of Great Britain; that an agreement had been made between himself and others, George Sinclair and G. Hay, each commanding a regiment. He had embarked at Dundee, but the two others at Caithness. The Scottish Privy Council was unacquainted with the matter, etc., etc.

Good Sir Robert Anstruther, who rather wanted the prisoners to be treated leniently, had them privily examined again, and then sent with their depositions to King James, "hoping," as he wrote, "it shall be far better for them to come into the hands of Your R. M. who ever has used grace and clemency unto those that offend of simplicity, not of wilfulness."

In this hope he was not mistaken; the captive officers were dismissed by King James, who refused to "act as jailer to the King of Denmark."

As to Andrew Ramsay, he failed to obey the summons of the Scottish Privy Council, and was denounced a rebel after the due three "blasts of the horn." He was afterwards apprehended in England, whither he went to seek a quarrel with Sir Robert Carr of Ancrum, Viscount Rochester, whom he accused of having divulged to the king the gathering of the men in Scotland. [See Michell, pp. 44 ff.] After due trial he was banished the country, "next unto death the highest punishment we could inflict," the king writes to his Danish brother-in-law.

The above are the plain, authentic facts of the fatal expedition. How tradition, always busiest it seems in mountainous regions, wove a fanciful fabric around it, telling of 800 Scots who committed the most barbarous cruelties on their march, telling of Sinclair's wife and bairn, of his dog Vildtyrk, of his being invulnerable and therefore only to be killed by a silver bullet, of the Mermaid's warning, the heroism of the Bönders, the tune the

pipes played in the mountains, the so-called Sinclair march, and much else may be read in the little book we have quoted so often. Poetry and painting have contributed to immortalise this feat of the Norwegian peasantry. [Two Norwegian artists, Gude and Tidemann, have produced a very fanciful picture of the landing of the Scots, in the foreground of which a Scottish clergyman tries to carry off a Norwegian maiden (!). The celebrated Sinclair Ballad, written by E. Storm (†1744), commences -

"Herr Sinclair sailed across the sea
And steered hie course to Norway's strand:
'Mid Gudbrand's rocks his grave found he,
There were broken crowns in Sinclair's bands."

It has several times been done into English. Even dramatically the event has been treated. To all this and to the remaining relics of the Scots found in the country Michell devotes the second half of his book.] A large stone slab now marks the spot where Sinclair was buried. The inscription runs: "Here was the leader of the Scots, George Sinclair, buried after he had fallen at Kringelen, on the 26th of August 1612." [Formerly a post was raised on the spot with the inscription: "Here below rests Mr Coronel Jörgen Sinkler, who fell at Kringlene in the year 1612 with a force of 900 Scots, who were crushed like earthen pots by a small number of 300 Bönders of Lessö, Wage, etc."]

It would seem as if the disastrous end of this expedition put an end to all desire on the part of the Scots of enlisting in the service of Sweden; but this is not so. Besides Robert Stuart, the Earl of Orkney, concerning whom the Danish Government was not far wrong when it suspected him, under the guise of a pirate,- easily enough assumed, we should say - of having shipped troops to Sweden, [On 29th October, 1612, Gustavus Adolphus writes that the Earl on his own responsibility had brought "een trop krigsfolk " into the kingdom; though we have now no opportunity for so many, he adds, yet let him be satisfied as to the rest of his claims with 200 "skippund" (each, 350 lbs. Engl.) of copper. Riks. A.] the Scottish regiments were always replenished as soon as their numbers showed any diminution. This, thanks to hunger, cold, and disease, was only too frequently the case. In Livland and Finland especially the situation of the Scots was lamentable. Ignorant of the language, exposed to the rigours of the climate, frequently unpaid for months together, the miracle is that there was any discipline left at all. Sometimes, when driven to extremes, these raw recruits, who were no heroes and had no heroic cause to fight for, took justice into their own hands. An amusing case of the kind occurred in Samuel Catron's regiment before Narva, towards the end of the year 1615. In their exasperation the Scots carried the head of the commissariat out of his lodgings, dragged him into the open country, and there - did *not* kill him. But we will let the soldiers

themselves speak. In a Latin letter to the king they explain their case. ["Milites Schoti exponunt quo animo magistrum annonæ extra civitatem Narvenais traxerint." Riks. A.] "We, the soldiers of Captain Cobson," they say, "humbly beseech your Majesty by the love of God to have pity on us and to remember how great hardships we have suffered during these nine or ten years' service under Your Majesty's father of pious memory and in the days of Your Majesty himself. That we have kidnapped the master of the commissariat ["magistrum annonæ"] this our great crime we confess. But we take God to witness that we did so from ignorance rather than from any contempt of the law. For we were afraid of the anger of our captain who slept in the next house, and we did not think it worth while to confer with him inside his own dwelling, being in fear of exciting a tumult in the town, but we accompanied him without inflicting any injury on his person or his possessions out of the township to ask him if any of our officers had received our pay, and what were the causes why it was not distributed, especially since Your R. M. had told us, that care would be taken that the moneys should be paid out to our Colonel. Had we known that this our deed would be interpreted in a way so malicious we would in no wise have committed it. For they say we should fare as the Scots did before Wesenberg some time ago, but God knows without our fault. For we have during these many years suffered so much for the sake of the Crown of Sweden that we would never think of offence except when driven to it by extreme necessity. Since Y. M. departure we have received now a couple of marks, now half a dollar, nay sometimes only half a mark, and thus we have led a miserable life, so much so that very many have on the very streets exchanged death for life. We therefore beseech Y. M. most earnestly to pay us something for our long services or give us leave to go; a greater reward we do not wish. . . . Expecting Y. M.'s good and favourable reply, we pray for a long and happy reign and for a complete and glorious victory over all Y. M.'s foes." [Riks. A.]

Was there ever a more naive and a more curious petition penned? We are glad to say the king pardoned them, though not without adding words of fatherly rebuke. [Riks A. *Registr*. Letters dated 15th January 1616 and 8th February.]

It is true the Scots always remained touchy. Another proof of this is afforded us in a more serious case of mutiny which occurred in 1628. About

this the king writes from Dirschau on the 16th of July to the General commanding in Livland: -
"We have heard that the Scots in Livland, when on the march from Dünaborg, laid down their arms all of them and caused a serious mutiny at the time when they should have been led against the enemy; and this for the only reason that the overseer [The word used in the original is Gewaldiger, *i.e*. one who has the Gewalt (power). It corresponds, perhaps, to the German Profoss, or police-constable.] whom you caused to be shot since, ordered one of their nation and regiment to be hung. As we have not received any more information about the matter, which seems grave enough to us, we request you to let us know as speedily as possible the true reasons which led to the mutiny of these Scots, and wherefore the overseer was shot; so that we may give our orders preventing the same thing from occurring again." [Riks A. *Registr*., 1628, p. 446.]

In the mean time the recruiting and completing the number of men in the regiment went languidly on. King James of England, after enlarging eloquently on the great crime of Andrew Ramsay, especially as it was directed against the "sacred person of our brother, the King of Denmark," ends by pardoning the perpetrator at the intercession of the Swedes, and permits Swedish levies within his kingdom, if directed "in Muscovitos tantum" (25th November 1614). [Ramsay is called the brother of the "vicecomes" of Haddington. Spens recommends him in a letter dated 25th November 1614.] The winter in Livland and Finland caused much suffering. Sad news reach the king from the camp before Mitau, where death and disease had been busy: Captain J. Craffert shot by the enemies, Captain Seton wounded, Captain Robert Lamb sick, Lieut. Rutherfurd sick. These three officers, the report adds, have not received any pay during the last year (30th July 1622). In July 1624 Gustavus Adolphus enumerates only eight Scottish regiments complete and ready to be shipped to Germany; one other regiment is to go to Riga as garrison, but only "if the Scots have sufficiently warm clothes to stand the cold." [Letter to Colonel Ramsay of 28th December 1625.] Colonel J. Duvall's (Macdougal) regiments, which mustered 2351 strong in 1625, only numbered 1216 in 1626; 1052 had died, 83 were sick.

In the meantime the resolution to come to the aid of the Protestant princes of Germany gradually fixed itself in the mind of Gustavus Adolphus. It is the

fashion nowadays to search for underlying motives and not to rest satisfied with those that offer themselves naturally. If our greatest heroes can be made less heroic by that process, the discovery is immediately hailed as worthy of an historian of the new school: - “The world loves to blacken what is bright and to drag into the dust what is sublime,” in the words of the great German poet. Fortunately we have not to decide here whether Gustavus ultimately swerved aside from the straight course, or how far he got entangled in the meshes of an ever-busy and unscrupulous diplomacy. We can only say that a man who gave the most solemn assurances as to his reasons for taking up arms, a man who took leave of his subjects in Sweden with the memorable words: “And as it happens that the pitcher goes to the well till it breaks, so will it also be with me, that I, who in many dangers willingly would have shed my blood but have hitherto been spared, yet at last must spill it; therefore I shall recommend all of you to the protection of God, hoping that we may one day meet again before God in a heavenly and eternal life” - a king who went into his tent before the Battle of Lützen and dictated words to his secretary which have in poetical form found their way since into many of the German hymn-books - we cannot believe this man to have been insincere or a hypocrite. [See Gustav Adolf’s Prayer after the landing in Germany in the Supplement.] It was religion primarily, the great cause of Protestantism, then trampled upon and well-nigh stifled by an overpowering enemy; that filled his heart, a cause in the service of which he did not spare his own life. Neither do we believe that the many hundreds of Scottish officers that we meet in the ranks of the Swedish army during the Thirty Years’ War were induced by mercenary purposes only, or attracted only by the thirst for adventure. No doubt with many of them booty took the place of honour, and little it mattered which side they fought on as long as they fought for him that paid best; but there were more who had a very high sense of duty, who were bound to the king by honest attachment. How could it have been otherwise unless all feeling of loyalty had utterly died in old Scotland, “the land of the leal?” Was not the queen of the unfortunate King of Bohemia, on whose account the war arose, a Scottish Princess, Elizabeth, born in the old castle of Falkirk and educated in West Lothian among her own people?

Gustavus Adolphus himself preferred Scottish officers to others. Even at a time when he was fairly overrun with them he tries to make shift by splitting

one regiment into two, in order to make room for them. The ensigns and lieutenants still remaining without a charge were to receive officers' pay in the meantime, until ways and means could be found to appoint them. [Oxenstierna, *Skrifter och Brefvexling*, i. 608. In the same letter two Hamiltons of Prestfield and of Reda (?) are mentioned: 29th May 1630.] He sometimes, it is true, complained of their hot temper, but then, he added, "they have to bear with me likewise." He gratefully acknowledged their services above all others, and never ceased to reward them with a lavish hand. He distrusted only one of his Scottish officers, and that was the Marquis of Hamilton. The almost regal state with which the latter surrounded himself, the utter collapse of his mission, and his incapacity as a commander and diplomatist, go far to explain this feeling.

I have followed the fortunes of the King of Sweden's most prominent Scottish officers from the time of their landing in Germany in my book on the Scots in Germany. It will therefore only be necessary to supplement the story given there. The greatest efforts had of course to be made to raise the numerical strength of the Swedish army so as to be able not only to compete with the enemy but to garrison and protect the conquered territory. Large numbers of Scottish recruits were again brought over in 1627. According to Mankel [Uppgifter rörande.] they numbered about 2400 men. These numbers are, however, deceptive; they very often represent the required total on paper only, not the active strength of the regiments. In the present case the force arrived off Kalmar on the fourth of July, and the Pfalzgraf John Casimir writes to Oxenstierna about having despatched them. [Oxenstierna's *Scr. och Brefvexling*, x. 536.] Towards the end of May in the next year Captains Bothwell and Ballantyne arrive with 90 Scotsmen off Gothenburg to fill up the regiments. No money being available for their expedition, the Count advanced three hundred Thaler out of his own pocket and sent the men forward by boat. In short, hardly a year passed in which we do not read of some recruiting business done in Scotland. In 1627, for instance, James Bannatyne receives a passport issued at Elbing for his voyage there in order to fill up the gaps in his regiment. [*Ibid*., iii. 678. A letter of his is extant praying for the refunding of his expenses. Riks A.] In 1629 Gustavus writes with regard to the new levies in Scotland, that he trusted there would be no difficulty for them now to pass through the Sound in safety. It was this letter

in which he expresses his determination not to dismiss any of his Scottish officers but rather try and "courtisiren" (humour) them. These were Duwall's levies, concerning whom General Wrangel writes to the Chancellor that he feared, if their pay was not forthcoming soon, they would all run away and go to Danzig, where they received five ducats as handsel. During the time of the plague at Stralsund in the summer of 1629, a great many officers died, and the Scottish regiments were decimated.

Other officers as well were employed to levy troops in Scotland at about the same time. How dangerous such an errand was has been graphically told us in a Latin letter of Arfvid Forbes to Axell Oxenstierna, dated Frankfort-on-the-Main, November 1633. How he was shipwrecked and imprisoned and ransomed, how through the negligence and dishonesty of others he lost all his money, pawned his property, and was left penniless after having provided his 2600 men with food and clothing for several months - all this the reader will find in that document, which moreover details the pecuniary claims the writer now had on the Swedish Government, amounting to the large sum of 369,400 "Imperiales." Spens (in the meantime), who had been sent by the King of Sweden to urge Charles of England to support him in the Thirty Years' War, was to superintend the levies in England. A Colonel John Gordon offered to levy at his own expense twelve companies of foot-soldiers in 1630, towards whose monthly pay the merchants of Danzig were to contribute. [*Ibid*., i. 676. It is, however, only fair to state that in the case mentioned above, Scottish troops are not especially mentioned, though Gordon was Scotch. Extreme care is necessary if one wishes to arrive at a just estimate of the Scottish levies. There was a large admixture of Irish and English in late years; and Scottish officers often had to raise troops in Germany or elsewhere. We believe that at no time the number of Scots available in the field during the Thirty Years' War exceeded 6000 or 8000.] In the letter to Oxenstierna, which conveys this news, the king adds, "Such levies are very necessary at the present time."

The largest contingent of soldiers, however, was to be brought across from England and Scotland by James, third Marquis of Hamilton. Already in 1629 he had offered his services to the Lion of the North, and these had been accepted on condition of his bringing 6000 men with him. Alexander Leslie was to accompany the Marquis to London likewise for the purpose of levying. Gustavus Adolphus landed in Germany in June 1630. In the same month Hamilton went to Scotland, but could only collect 400. Finding

hardly any volunteers in England either, he had recourse to official pressure. Other circumstances delayed his departure. We know that his recruiting was looked upon with suspicion, and this is confirmed by a letter of Leslie's to Oxenstierna, dated 29th June 1631, in which he writes that certain ill-conditioned people, notably one Baron Ochiltree, had caused the rumour to be spread that it was not the Marquis's intention to sail to Germany with his force at all but to raise rebellion in Scotland. Once during Hamilton's absence Ochiltree had suddenly demanded access to the king, and told him that he as well as the queen would be in deadly peril as soon as the Marquis returned. The latter intended to murder the king, Earl of Roxburghe (?), the queen, and the Earl of Dorset, the Prince. But the king remained calm. Hamilton was graciously received after his return from Scotland, informed of his accuser's tales, and, as a token of confidence, ordered to sleep in the royal bed-chamber. Ochiltree was seized and confessed that all was false, [See Oxenstierna's *Skr*.] that some misunderstood utterances of Colonel Mackay had caused the mischief. As to the recruiting business, Hamilton at last, on the 16th of July, sailed with six thousand English, by no means of the best quality. The number of Scots by this time amounted to one thousand. On the 3rd of August he landed with his force near the mouth of the Oder. There he was ordered to guard the Oder fortresses whilst the king fought Tilly at Brettenbach. Famine and plague soon swept away his troops. He was then attached to the king's entourage, but left the scene of war in 1632. In later years he made himself useful to Queen Christina by pleading the cause of Sweden at the Court of the King of England and by assisting the Swedish ambassador, Skytte. For this the queen presented him with several cannons for his castle (1635). [Riks A *Registr*., 1635.]

His future career at home, known to the reader of English history, abundantly proves that the King of Sweden had not been mistaken in his judgment of him. A man of many shifts, a lover of intrigues, without either courage or manliness or skill, unsuccessful in everything he attempted, he only deserves our pity when he put his head on the block.

Having brought the story of the Scottish levies down to the time of Gustavus Adolphus' death, we may now consider the lives of the chief Scottish actors before and during the Thirty Years' War a little more closely. This becomes

all the more necessary, since the dates in English biographical memoirs are mostly compiled without the Swedish or German sources having been fully consulted. They are therefore decidedly incomplete and inaccurate in many places. It is easy, for instance, to stigmatise James Spens as an adventurer or the prototype of such. Looking through the printed correspondence of the great Swedish king and his equally great chancellor, Axell Oxenstierna, and examining above all the numerous manuscript letters written by Spens or addressed to him, our judgment of him must necessarily be corrected. Or take the scanty news given in English biographical notices of Field-Marshal Alexander Leslie's activity during his service in Sweden. We are told how he was present at such a battle, how he was promoted on such a date, but we receive no picture of the man. And so with the Generals - King, Macdougall (Duval), James Ramsay, and the other Scottish military leaders. [The only exception is Patrick Ruthven, whose correspondence with Oxenstierna has been admirably edited and published.]

I have already in former books of mine tried to inspire those dry dates with some life, especially as to the heroic defender of Hanau; now that Swedish sources have become accessible, more can be done. Thus, whilst referring the reader who is anxious to know the part played by Scottish officers in Germany during the Thirty Years' War to these books in order to avoid repetition, [*The Scots in Germany*, Part II.] the sketch may now be filled in by the use of letters and other papers scattered here and there in the archives and libraries of Sweden.

No Scottish name during the time of Charles IX. and Gustavus Adolphus is more frequently named in court or camp than that of Sir James Spens of Wormiston. He served many kings, and succeeded in winning the favour of all of them; he was an intimate friend of Oxenstierna, and attached to Gustavus Adolphus with feelings of sincere veneration. About his early career we have already spoken. The date of his entering the service of the King of Sweden is variously given. It must have been before 1606, for in the month of April of that year King Charles IX. writes to him concerning the levying of troops, 600 horsemen and 1600 foot-soldiers. [Riks A. Dipl. Angl. Spens Correspondence.] Other letters on the same subject followed in 1607. Two years later, on the 4th of January, he gives a receipt for two bills of exchange, one

to the amount of 1000 Thaler, the other of 9000 “Imperiales,” for levying purposes, to be paid by a merchant and banker, Coote, in London. Not long afterwards we find him in the English metropolis. A very rambling letter, written in the worst possible German, and dated Grünwitz (!) - Greenwich - 26th May, 1609, has come down to us. [*Ibid*. In a letter of King Charles to Spens, copper and iron is promised to him in case the money should not suffice (4th January, 1609).] In it he tells his master, the King of Sweden, of the English king’s new book against the Pope, which was to be sent to the Protestant German princes in order to bring about a closer union among them. He also asks that no other levies might be raised till after his return, and signs himself “Y. M. faithful servant,” “who does all that is in his power to serve you.” In 1611 he is again in England on diplomatic business. [His services were claimed also for purposes rather extraneous to his character as diplomatic representative of Sweden. Duke John of Östrogötland begs him to remember his promise and send him eight men able to sing and to play, also a noble youth who could "bene saltare et dimicare." Spens Corr. Dipl. Angl. Riks A.] In the same year Gustavus writes the two letters to him that have been mentioned above, and which brought about the disastrous expedition known by the name of the Sinclair expedition. The last of these two letters, dated 16th November, also orders him to complain to the King of Scotland about some of his soldiers having deserted to join the Russian foe.

Of the same year two letters of Spens to Gustavus Adolphus, of the 4th of April and the 30th of May respectively, have come down to us, in the first of which he recommends an ensign of Captain Wauchope, named John Campbell, for the post of captain. He is not only, the writer says, the most experienced in drilling recruits among all Colonel Rutherford’s officers, but he also understands the language sufficiently well. This apparently refers to the Gaelic of the Highlanders, and is the only instance I have come across where this most vital question of the language of military command is referred to. The other letter expresses a hope to have the force of levied troops ready as soon as the necessary moneys were forthcoming. Relying on the king's promise to re-fund him within three months, Spens concludes by saying that he will arrange about the outfit himself.

From this time onward Spens was flying like a shuttlecock from one court to the other. We find him now at London or Edinburgh, now at Copenhagen,

now at Stockholm. His first diplomatic errand from King James was to mediate between Denmark and Sweden in 1612; in this business he failed. In the Danish capital the hostile feeling ran high, and the English messenger barely escaped ill-treatment, though he received from the King of Denmark a letter of safe-conduct couched in the highest terms of praise. In October 1612 Spens is taken formally over by Gustavus Adolphus, and a certain salary for his diplomatic services is promised to him as long as he lived. His official appointment to be Sweden's ambassador to England took place in 1613, on the 17th of December. The official document calls him: "Spens who at all times proved his fidelity and his promptitude." [" Spentzius qui per omne tempus fidem ac promptitudinem probavit."] For the next four or five years he stayed in London, keeping his Swedish master regularly informed about matters of political importance. Interspersed are other notices of private interest - thus, when he writes about sending pictures of the king, the queen, and the Royal Family (4th January, 1614), or when he recommends Andrew Ramsay, probably the same that we met above in the fatal organisation of the Norwegian expedition, for a commission in the army. In 1615 he similarly commends Thomas Hamilton, of noble birth, ready with his hand and an experienced officer, "who had seen service in Holland, and now wanted to enter the Swedish ranks, being ashamed to waste away in shameful idleness." ["... Thomas Hamilthonus, vir honesto et generoso loco natus, manu promptus et in rei militaris peritia complurium annorum assuetudine apud Batavos. . . . Sed cum apud eos omnia pacata videret, pigeretque eum in otio et ignavia torpescere egit mecum per amicos quosdam, ut per me commendari possit Majesti. Vai., apud quam viros reimilitaris amantes in pretio esse audiebat. . ." Spens Papers. Rits A.] Very frequently in these early letters the complaint occurs that no salary has been paid him, nor did the promised seventy "skippund" (about 11 tons) of copper arrive (Oct. 1615). As to guns and ammunition he fears that English merchants will not run the risk of exporting them (1617). His own health has been bad; he is a martyr to gout, and begs the king to excuse the tenor of his writings. In 1619 he is sent by King Charles to Stockholm with a long letter of instructions, dated 30th July. In it he is first told to congratulate the Swedish king on his coronation, and to express, brotherly affection for him; he is, secondly, also to congratulate him on the happy conclusion of the war between Denmark and Sweden. Thirdly, the British sovereign offers his further good services to make the alliance between these two countries firm. Fourthly: "If you shall be asked what is your opinion concerning the King's marriage, you shall answer, that we

would refer that to his own consideration both in respect to the liking of the parties, as also to his own particular benefit. In a general way we wish he would ally himself to some prince near his own dominions." Fifthly, as to the Polish war, the king ought to consider what means he has and strength to continue, what advantages the war has for him, what strength the King of Poland has, etc. In conclusion, the letter intercedes for a merchant of Edinburgh, Ths. Lothian, and expresses a hope that the King of Sweden will take the Scottish merchants under his protection. We next hear of Spens, who had since been made a baronet (1622), in the year 1623, when he is sent to England to request permission of the Privy Council to raise troops to repel a threatened Polish invasion. His son James was authorised to levy 1200 men. [*Reg. of Privy Council*., xiii. 364, 478, 500.] This was done at the request of the King of Sweden himself, who wished the elder Spens to remain in the Aula Regis and not to travel to Scotland. For the levies were to be Scotch only; their destination Gotheborg. [Letter dated 23rd April in Spens Corresp. Riks A.] In the same year he was sent to Sweden on diplomatic business, that is to say to bring Gustavus Adolphus into an alliance then planned by England and France against the Emperor. In January 1624 he returned, bearing the king's demands, but these were thought extravagant, and the more moderate ones of Denmark found acceptance. From 1624 to 29 Spens lived in London, though not uninterruptedly. In 1627 he was sent to invest Gustavus Adolphus with the Garter, [*Cal. of State Papers, Dom*., pp. 62, 119, 180.] and at the same time to visit Danzig and the Churfürst of Brandenburg, to concert means how best to unite forces against the common enemy. After his return to England the King of Sweden warns him against the plans of the Danzigers, who were anxious to buy ships and ammunition in Scotland in order to close the Baltic against the Swedes. [Riks A.] The second last letter from his Swedish master reached him in 1629, when he is informed of the Earl of Crawford's wish to raise a few regiments at his own expense ("suo ære"). Knowing that Spens himself was at that time engaged in levying troops, the king considerately leaves the whole matter to him. In May 1629 the last letter urges him to bring the soldiers across as quickly as possible. After that time he seems to have followed Gustavus Adolphus, in his German campaign, in his military capacity as General over the Scottish and English forces. He died, however, in Stockholm in 1632, from the shock which the news of the king's death produced on his already enfeebled

constitution.

Spens was a busy man; he was also a much enduring man. It is to this latter quality that the King of Sweden alluded gracefully and gratefully in one of his donation-letters. It is stated there that he most unselfishly during our time of need waited for what was due to him. Spens left two sons, James and Axell, the former of whom became the ancestor of the now flourishing line of the Counts Spens in Sweden. [Spens's widow, Margaret Forath, petitioned the Riks-Råd, claiming salary due to her late husband. Instead of the 10,000 thus demanded she received 500 Thaler as a pension for two years. *Riks-Rådets Protokoll* (1634). Queen Christina gave her moreover the church tithes of Härkirberga Socken for three years (Registr. Riks-Ark.); but she would not allow the sale of the estate of Orrholmen, as directly opposed to the terms of the Donation Deed. In a letter, dated 9th July 1635, she expresses as much to the Marquis of Hamilton, who had interceded for Spens's son William (?) and his widow. We doubt not, the queen continues, that "Dominus Spens" will have sufficient opportunity to raise money on the estate wherewith to satisfy his father's creditors.] They were educated at the expense of Queen Christina, who set aside six hundred Thaler annually for that purpose, until they should have come of age. During that time the widow was to enjoy the revenues of the landed property (9th September, 1637).

More famous, and endowed with greater qualities as a military leader, was Alexander Leslie, the Field-Marshal. He also served two countries, Sweden and Scotland. Of his coming to Sweden and his achievements generally during the Thirty Years' War in Germany we have spoken in another place. [See *Scots in Germany*, Part II.] We need only add here what more immediately concerns his relations to the Swedish king and his chancellor, and affords at the same time a glimpse into the details of a busy life. For this purpose his letters to Oxenstierna form the soundest basis. They commence in the year 1626, when Leslie was commandant of the town and fortress of Pillau in Eastern Prussia. His great business was then to strengthen the place. New sconces and redoubts were being built, under the supervision of an engineer called Thomæ, for which he afterwards received in donation the rents of all the farms, freehold properties, and estates in the district of the small town of Mehlsack. Leslie's next anxiety was the victualling. He caused a mill driven by horses to be erected, and complains of the magistrates of Königsberg, who refuse to let him have the necessary timber for the purpose. As a great relief there comes the timely offer of a merchant called Morenberg, who not only promised to take the whole business of food-

supply for the garrison upon himself, but also advanced large sums of money. In a letter from Dirschau, King Gustavus writes about the wisdom of courting this man's friendship, who might buy a Danish ship laden with some hundred tons of grain then lying in the harbour of Pillau, to make malt and brew beer for the troops (6th August, 1626). In one of the following letters in which Leslie reports on the progress of the fortification-works and on the probable intentions of the Brandenburgers, he defends himself against the charge of levying ten Thaler of duty from every incoming ship, whilst he only received half a Thaler. On the 16th of January, 1628, he pronounces the mill completed, but now another grave anxiety arises: signs of a terribly infectious disease, called the plague. Very wisely he removes his sick men out of the town to a place called Tiegenhoff, together with Lieutenant Johnson, an ensign, a "Predikant" (clergyman), a barber (surgeon), and some non-commissioned officers (2nd May, 1628). But the frightful havoc of the disease would not be stayed; it raged especially in Stralsund during the following year, where the Burgomaster, together with many officers, succumbed. Of the newly levied troops which Colonel J. Duwall had brought across, few remained alive. Leslie now dates his letters from Stralsund, where he had been appointed Governor. They are written in a rather despondent tone: the citizens refuse to take Swedish copper as payment; officers and men clamour for their pay. He and Duwall have exerted themselves to the utmost, but what next? (29th May, 1629). He fears his men will desert, [" Some of the Scots," General Bandissin writes in 1630, ran away from Braunsberg to Danzig, where they are given five ducats "auff die Hand" (as a bounty).] as the soldiers from the Imperial army do, who come to the town where nobody wants them. His own salary as Governor is ridiculously low. "Since I see," he writes in a moment of irritation, "that I am cut short and that my services are counted for naught, I beg of Your Excellency to give me leave to go. Let a man be appointed here who has a better political head than I have." It was a year of trouble. The difficulties between the military commander and the civil authorities of the town increased. All plans of attacking Rügen must be set aside because of the insufficient number of troops and the unwillingness of the magistrates to furnish new recruits to fill up the ranks. A convoy is taken by the enemy, who swarm about the country in strong numbers. The plague is not diminishing, "so that the soldiers on the ships off Wismar cannot be relieved for fear of carrying the infection there." "I have attempted in vain,"

he writes on the 16th and 20th of August, “to persuade the magistrates to let me have the necessary timber to build barracks on the ramparts of the town, for those of my soldiers that are still well; on the contrary, they have provided some of Duwall’s new companies as well as the Swedes with such wretched quarters that of necessity the plague must get in amongst them. [. . . “dass ohnumbgengklich (with absolute necessity) die seuch (contagion) der pest unter sie gerathen muss."] Few of my soldiers will remain alive.” It must have been a relief for Leslie when in 1630 he could report some victorious skirmishes with the enemy. In the following year he was attached to the Marquis of Hamilton and assisted him in his levying of troops in England. He was back in 1631. The death of the King of Sweden moved him also, though constitutionally a reticent man, to expressions of the greatest grief.

Leslie’s son-in-law was General Sir Patrick Ruthven. He is the type of what the Germans call a “Haudegen,” a hard drinker, [See *Scots in Germany*, Part II. His nickname was General "Rotwein " (red wine).] illiterate, brave, unscrupulous, but faithful to his duties as they were then understood. During Gustavus’s reign he was Governor of Memel and afterwards of Ulm. Many of his letters to Axell Oxenstierna have been printed; they commence with the beginning of the year 1629, when he defends himself against the charge of having delayed General Wrangel’s departure by not furnishing horses and conveyances in due time. “I did command the magistrates” (of Marienburg) “two days previous to be ready with their horses and carts, but what they furnished was of such miserable description that I put the Mayor into prison and sent him home after a time to provide better horse-material.” From Memel there are eleven letters all proving his anxiety to render the town safe against any attacks of the enemy. He advises the sending of a master of ordnance who would have the armoury under him, as well as of a customs-officer, to prevent ships leaving the harbour without paying duty. He tells how one night fire broke out just above his sleeping-room, but it only consumed the top of a tower. In another letter he thanks the chancellor for letting him have the rights of fishing in a neighbouring district. But the main burden of all his letters is the pressing necessity of money to pay his men. “Already,” he writes in May 1630, “the horsemen steal and plunder where they can; the peasants also, who have nothing more to lose, band themselves together, fall upon the men and murder them; item the horsemen retaliate,” and all

this because “they do not have in the least whereof to live.” [Ruthven writes in German, like most of the Scotch commanders. His language in very ungrammatical, but terse and picturesque. Here he says, “Sie haben semptlichen im geringsten nicht wovon zue leben." Patrick Ruthven was born in 1583. He did not come to Sweden with Mönnichhofen in 1612, but served already from 1609-11 in the war against Russia. He then joined Cobson's regiment, became Colonel of the Östergotland Horse Regiment (1616), Colonel of the Kronsberg Regiment; followed the king to Germany in 1626; encamped near Marienburg in 1629, was put at the head of the Scotch troops newly raised in 1630 (garrison, Elbing and Memel); joined Gustavus Adolphus in the summer of that year in his fortified camp at Werben; was present at the Battle of Leipzig; went to the Rhine with the king in 1632, and to Nürnberg; was made Major-General and Governor of Ulm, 1632-33; joined Banér in 1633; beat the Saxons at Dömitz on the 22nd of October; took an active part in many skirmishes; returned to Werben; was sent to London in 1634 on recruiting business.]

Even among the foot-soldiers a spirit of lawlessness begins to show itself, whilst the inhabitants, whenever they think themselves in the least aggrieved, fly to the chancellor. God knows I do not want to wrong them, but strict order must be maintained. The German horsemen seem to have conducted themselves worst of all. “They cut the corn of the poor people,” Ruthven writes on the 26th of July 1630, “before it is ripe or when it is ripe, thrash it and sell it as they please without granting the poor people anything of the money, although many relied upon it. Seeing their hope in vain, the poor must die of hunger, beg, or run away so that “the whole district will be a desert soon.”

“If I,” he continues a month later, “if I was to exhort the citizens to help the soldiers a little with some small entertainment, I obtain nothing, because they always refer and appeal to your Lordship’s written letters. I and my captains have ever and anon pawned our store of clothes and other things to content the men, but now the well is exhausted and I know of no other means.”

Enough has been quoted to show the enormous difficulties the Scottish officers had to contend with, enough also to prove their devotion to duty, their foresight, and their love of discipline. They all took their great king as their model. After the Battle of Breitenfeld on the 7th of September 1631, the magistrates of the ancient Imperial city of Ulm desired an offensive and defensive alliance with Sweden. It was concluded at Frankfort on the 13th of February 1632, and on the following day the writer of these letters, Sir Patrick Ruthven, now Major-General, rode into Ulm as the Swedish

Governor. He at once devoted himself to putting the fortress, for such it was, into proper order. New fortifications were erected, the old ones strengthened, and 1200 recruits levied, who had to swear their oath of allegiance both to the city and to the King of Sweden. The chronicles of Ulm relate many of the deeds of wanton cruelty of these men, but since they were Germans, the Scots cannot be blamed for it, nor can Ruthven, who according to the testimony of the same chronicles tried to uphold discipline and punish malefactors with an iron hand. But Ruthven was no favourite with the townspeople. The rigour with which he set about forcing the monasteries and small princes of the neighbourhood into submission, his greed, of which I am afraid he is not quite free, his dissatisfaction with the 400 Thaler he received monthly from the town: all this contributed to make his presence hated. In 1633 his rule was ended; he left the town, as some say, with six baggage-waggons loaded with booty, whilst he had entered it on a couple of miserable nags, (Kleppern) the "Geigwanst." [See article on Ruthven in Ulm in the *Würtembergische Vierteljahrschrift für Landeskunde*, 1888, Heft. ii. pp. 142 ff. The author does not know what became of Ruthven afterwards; thinks it probable that it was a certain Lieut.-Col. Ruthven who was buried at Ulm in 1647. He confuses the Marquis of Hamilton with one of the many other Hamiltons, etc.] The revenues of the county of Kilchberg were assigned to him by Gustavus Adolphus, to which Christina afterwards added those of the monastery of Roggenburg.

But before he left Ulm in 1633 the fatal November day of 1632 had closed on the battlefield of Lützen. The body of the Defender of Protestantism, of the Golden King of the North, covered with gore from many wounds and trampled upon almost beyond recognition, had been sorrowfully removed. Whatever of earthly dross there may have adhered to his soul, it had been burned away, and the pure gold appeared refined in the fiery trial of battle. His loss seemed irreparable to those high in command as well as to the commonest "Trossknecht."

Among the documents referring to the Thirty Years' War in the Royal State Archives in Stockholm is preserved a short description of the Battle of Lützen, written in German by a common soldier, an eye-witness. It contains these words: "When His Royal Majesty was dead, the sun lost its brightness and did not shine any more till well into the fourth week, and the thick fog remained also for several weeks." [*Handl. Tysku Kriget*; Jöns Månsson's diary. Riks A.:

THE SCOTS IN SWEDEN

"Indem Ihre Majestät war geblieben, verlor die Sonne ihren Schein und schien nicht mehr bis in die vierte Woche und der dicke Nebel blieb auch etliche Wochen bestehen."]

I