

William Baird, son of William Baird and Janet Brown, Aberdeen:

The Jacobite Rising of the “45

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Most of the written Baird historical discussions and records of the Jacobite Rising of 1745 involve the path of the highland chief of the family, William of Auchmedden, or the activities of the lowland Bairds, who were mostly with the English and Cumberland. This would be very true of most clans and families, for the chiefs/officers had the most possibility of being noticed and recorded as participants. This article is not about those in charge, it is about those in the general ranks; those who had nothing more than pitchforks and dirks or axes taken from farms and woodlots, as weapons.

There are Bairds that were just regular citizens, not tenants of the chief, but independent businessmen who heard the call of the Catholic Stuarts and gave their all to the cause of the Bonnie Prince and his father. One of those was William Baird, a middle-class sixteen-year-old, whose family had already made a name for themselves in the silk and wool trade in Aberdeen City, Gallow Gate. William was the son of William Baird and Janet Brown, born 6 June 1729 and baptized at St. Nicholas Kirk in Aberdeen. There is also recorded one sister from both these parents, Janet Baird, born and baptized the next year, 1730. The marriage of his parents is also duly recorded at St. Nicholas Kirk, 1728. There are references to both William, and his father William, in the records of Aberdeen at the time.

William worked with his father in the silk and wool trade, and they were the first manufacturers in Aberdeen to employ the use of machinery in the production of dyed textiles.ⁱ For those who remember how wool and silk was dyed in that century, the use of mechanical means allowed human beings to forgo being covered in boiling urine, which was used to set the dye in the wool or silk. Rows of people on both sides, usually women, would pour hot urine (usually their collective own) on the fabric and “waulk” the wool to songs used for this purpose. In Gaelic, this process was called *luadh* (“loo-ugh”) and the songs used for the work were known as *orain luaidh* (“or-ine loo-ie”). Use of machinery would have allowed the dyers to remain mostly dry and clean, rather than covered with urine all dayⁱⁱ.

As to young William's involvement with the Jacobites, he put a white cockade in his hat and paraded with a group in Aberdeen, September 1745, joining James Moir of Stoneywoodⁱⁱⁱ demanding arms at the house of Lord Lewis Gordon, and fought with Stoneywood's Regiment, at the battles of Inverurie, December 1745 and according to his stories to his children, Culloden, April 1746. He was in Aberdeen on 14 April 1746, and had given himself over to the authorities, who recommended he be held in the prison there, but, according to his dictated story to his family, was released in the custody of his father, due to his youth, and promptly ran away to Culloden, in order to fight. After the fall at Culloden, he escaped the field with James Moir and his troops, eventually returning to Aberdeen, where he gave himself up according to the terms of the Duke of Cumberland's demands and was imprisoned at the Tolbooth there; a horrible hole in which to be cast. His father was also held in the Tolbooth in Aberdeen, (possible because of young William's running away to Culloden) but was released in July 1746. He is now portrayed as the prisoner automaton who is speaking in the Jacobite cell of that museum.

Young William was moved to Carlisle and transported on the ship *Gildart*, Richard Holmes, Captain, in May 1747. As it turned out, Richard Holmes was the relative of men who had been transported after the Rising of the '15, and it is believed that he set up the sale of the men who came on with him to Maryland, for this trip. Some of the Jacobites were sold in Virginia, but those who were Catholic, were of course, taken on to Maryland, which was the Catholic Colony, and sold to three or four gentlemen. Two were sold to "Longhunters" who took them back to the wilds of the western territories. Those who were bought by the other gentlemen were mostly allowed their freedom, almost as soon as they left the ship. Those who had been transported after the '15 had done well in the colonies, and were quite wealthy when the *Gildart* brought the newly deported Jacobites. It is believed that William was one of these, and made his way to the Waxhaws in the Carolinas, to become a yeoman farmer.

Recently, in researching the papers of the South Carolinian Library at the University of South Carolina, it was proven that there were indeed two William Bairds who settled in the Waxhaws. The first was from Pennsylvania, by way of Augusta, Virginia, and the other was William Baird from the ship *Gildart*. The latter was reported by Nancy Crockett, in her papers donated to the library, as having moved about several times, and never being clear as to where he was from or how he arrived in the colonies, only ever admitting that he was from Aberdeen, Scotland.^{iv} William married a woman named Jean, and had several children. He died in 1800, and there are records of the dividing of his property in 1824, most likely at the death of Jean.

Stories of the middle-class Jacobites who were transported are plentiful in American history, not to mention entire villages of tenants put out by the Highland Clearances. Those middle-class people who lost everything due to Culloden, then those who lost everything because they were put off their lands, another means of the English breaking the Clan System forever, made up the strength of the United States.

There were 88 prisoners transported on the *Gildart* in 1747, all reported Jacobites. The diaspora that was forced upon Scots, for more than a 300-year-period, filled the frontiers of the United States and it is this author's premise that the anger and fury surrounding how the Scots viewed their treatment by the English fueled the American Revolution to a great extent.

Certainly, many of those who fought in the Continental Army and State Militias were transported Scots or their descendants, and the memory of the Scots is very long. What was done by the Duke of Cumberland's orders, after Culloden, the burning, rape and starvation of the people of Scotland, as punishment for the Rising, was fully remembered by those who fought for the freedom of the States of America. William Baird was a soldier in the Carolina militia and fought for that freedom he so firmly believed in, here, in his new country, finally achieving what he fought to obtain in the Rising of the '45. Freedom, liberty, and independence are clearly a hallmark of Scottish civilization. What was begun with the Declaration of Arbroath was brought to fruition through the American Revolution.

ⁱMcDonnell, Frances. *Jacobites of 1715 and 1745, North East Scotland*, Clearfield Press: 2009, p 3.

ⁱⁱ Historical Papers Relating to the Jacobite Period, 1699-1750, Volume 1, ed. James Allardyce. Nabu Press: p. 254.

ⁱⁱⁱ McDonnell, Frances. *Jacobites of 1715 and 1745, North East Scotland*, Clearfield Press: 2009, p 3.

^{iv} Crockett, Nancy. Loose papers given to University of South Carolina. 1939.