



# Key Players during the 1715 Jacobite Rising



## James VIII (1688-1766)

James, son of James VII by his second wife Mary of Modena, grew up in exile at the palace of Saint-Germain-en-Laye and was recognised by Louis XIV of France as king of England, Scotland and Ireland. Meanwhile, acts were passed under William II to exclude James from the throne and secure the Protestant succession.

The misfortune that would haunt all Jacobite attempts to regain the crown was in evidence in 1708 when a French backed attempt failed to land James in Scotland. He subsequently enlisted with the French army and fought in Flanders.

James was always at the mercy of the wider political situation: English treaties with France would include articles requiring the withdrawal of French support for the Jacobites. However, in 1710 a change of government in Britain encouraged Jacobite hopes that James would be proclaimed king on the death of Queen Anne. James's refusal to renounce Catholicism made his accession impossible and it was George I who came to the throne in 1714.

With the new king came a new government that offered no hope of a political solution for the Jacobite cause. A military option was the only course left open to James and so the scene was set for the rising of 1715.



I am King James VIII of Scotland and III of England, but for as long as I can remember I have lived in exile here in France. Now the time has come to reclaim my rightful throne from the Hanoverian usurper.

There have been times in the past when we hoped, with the help of the French, to return to our kingdoms. In the year seventeen hundred and eight we sailed for Scotland, but our plans were discovered and my advisers would not allow me to land in Fife, though I pleaded with them.

Sometimes too it seemed there might be a political resolution of our difficulties, rather than a military one. But always they insist I must renounce my Catholic faith to inherit the throne that is already rightfully mine. This I shall never do. I have chosen my own course, therefore it is for others to change their sentiments. Now that my half-sister Queen Anne is dead and the Protestant Hanoverian George is on the throne, there is no alternative. Our dear supporter the Earl of Mar has raised the Jacobite standard at Braemar, and has fought a brave battle at Sheriffmuir. We sail tomorrow to join him.