

PROCLAMATIONS

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The method was in use in Scotland till the year 1902. But latterly its meaning had become obscured; and the practice had degenerated into a form by which two Heralds, each with a copy of the proclamation, read it out sentence by sentence, the second officer repeating the sentence read out by the first before the first proceeded to the next sentence, both officers addressing the people.

The proclamation of 4th August, 1714, came near to being a national proclamation, and it was probably thought by the nobles and great officers who signed it to have as much as possible the appearance of one, if it could not in the hurry of the occasion be made into one altogether.¹ But Mr. Rig, the Sheriff Depute of Midlothian, was not of that mind. He, like the Lord Provost, had received a copy of the proclamation with orders to publish it. Edinburgh, besides being a burgh with a Provost, was the head burgh of his sheriffdom. Mr. Rig was ready to allow one proclamation to do for both town and county; but if it was to be so done, he insisted that it was necessary for him to be personally on the market cross along with the Provost, 'and there read the Proclamation while the Depute Lyon was proclaiming.' The Provost, however, would not hear of it; so the Sheriff mounted the cross after the proclamation had been made by the Depute, to the reading of the Provost, 'and read the Proclamation to the Lyon Deputy a second time.' It is clear that the Sheriff did not consider that the proclamation when read to the official crier by the Provost was sufficiently made to the people of the surrounding country, the sheriffdom of Midlothian, and there the Sheriff was right. As the proclamation itself bore, it was only an act of the Magistrates and Town Council of Edinburgh. In the same way the Sheriff's proclamation was confined to his own sheriffdom. No general proclamation of the accession of King George I. was made in Scotland as it was made at the capitals of England and Ireland. Lyon had no orders from the Government to make any proclamation, but at the request of two local magistrates assisted in making two local proclamations.

The proclamation of the accession of King George II. at Edinburgh on 19th June, 1727, is formally recorded, like that of the previous King, in the Records of the Edinburgh Town Council. It runs that on that day the Lord Provost, who at that time was John Drummond, 'represented that by an express yesterday's night from my Lord Advocate directed to his Lordship and the Solicitor, we had the melancholy account of the Demise of his Majesty King George . . . and also an Order of Council directing his Lordship to proclaim his Majesty King George the Second. Upon its arrival his Lordship advertised such nobility his Majesty's Servants, Gentry, Lords of Session . . . to attend his Lordship in the Town House about eleven of the clock, to which place they accordingly came.' On this, as on the previous occasion in

¹ The proclamation when it came to be printed was headed with the Royal Arms. The first signatories were the Duke of Montrose, the Marquis of Tweeddale, and the other peers, the Lords of Session, and other magnates of the realm who were present, none of whom were necessarily citizens of Edinburgh; the signatures of the Lord Provost and Bailies of Edinburgh came far down in the list; the proclamation, however, ran in their name.