

PROCLAMATIONS

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After the proclamation of 1901 the question of the ceremonial was raised in the public press and otherwise. It was strongly urged on the one hand that the Provost was the recipient of the order to make the proclamation, and might make it as he liked: and on the other hand it was argued that the proclamation was, or ought to be, addressed from the capital to the nation, and therefore could be made only by an officer of general and not local commission, and that the King's Heralds were the officials expressly appointed for the purpose.

On 8th May, 1910, an Order in Council was issued ordaining that the proclamation of the Royal Accession to be made in Edinburgh should be sent to the Lord Provost, who should make it with the assistance of Lyon King-of-Arms.

It must be assumed that the Privy Council, when it issued the Order, had no other method of proclamation in its mind than the old-established method, by which two persons divided the work of reading and proclaiming, and meant that the Provost should read the proclamation to Lyon and Lyon proclaim it to the people. But on 10th May, 1910, the day of the proclamation of his present Majesty King George, the Lord Provost disobeyed it. He read the proclamation without the assistance of Lyon or anyone.

From a national point of view the Provost's proclamation was a mistake; from the Edinburgh municipal point of view it was a blunder. By the Town Council permitting its Provost to become himself the crier of a proclamation they reduced the city for the occasion to the rank of a provincial burgh. The distinction between the capital and the provincial burgh in the matter of national and Royal Proclamations is that these proclamations in the capital are made by the King's officers, whereas in the provincial burgh the chief magistrate makes them; of that the settled practice in capitals, the practice in Edinburgh till 1910, and in London and Dublin till the present day, are illustration enough.

Whatever may be said of the Accession proclamations actually made in Edinburgh from the Union till the year 1910, it has to be said that the proclamation made in that year by Order of the Privy Council was neither meant nor executed as a national announcement.

A national proclamation was in fact made, but it was made by Lyon at his own hand. It has here to be noticed that the Sheriff of the Lothians, who like the Lord Provost had received a copy of the London proclamation, with orders to repeat it within his jurisdiction, executed his duty in the only manner proper in presence of the modern practice of the Officers of Arms, by which the Officer who proclaims does so without having it dictated to him.

After the Lord Provost had descended from the Cross platform, the State Trumpeters, Pursuivants, Heralds, Lord Lyon King-of-Arms and Sheriff having ascended, the Proclamation was, after a fanfare of trumpets, made to the people of the Kingdom of Scotland, and at request of the Sheriff to the lieges of the County of Edinburgh, by Lord Lyon King-of-Arms, who thereafter did proclaim the style and