

**Copy of a speech made by James Bradshaw (1717-1746), Jacobite rebel,
before his execution on 28 Nov. [1746], L6/1703.**

June's Document of the Month focuses on a document which has a link to a famous event in Scotland's history. In the Lucy family of Charlecote collection, amongst a series of papers titled "Miscellaneous Secondary and Printed Works", is a copy of a speech made by Jacobite rebel James Bradshaw. His name is sometimes also spelt Bradeshaw, but for the purposes of this we shall refer to him as Bradshaw. This handwritten copy dates from c.1746 and can be found at catalogue reference L6/1703. The speech was made by Bradshaw shortly before his execution on the 28th November 1746. The speech is two pages long, and a full transcription has been provided separately.

The Paper read by Mr James Bradshaw before his Execution
on Nov^r 20th

It would be a breach of Duty in me to omit this last Opportunity of doing Justice to those, who stand in need of it; & I think it incumbent upon me & rather, because I am your only Englishman in this part of your Work, who had Honour to attend his Royal Highness in Scotland.

When I first joined your King's Forces, I was induc'd to it by a Principle of Duty only, & I never saw any reason since to convince me, that I was in the least mistaken: but on the contrary, every Day's Experience has strengthen'd my Opinion, that what I did was right & necessary. That Duty I discharged to the best of my power; & as I did not seek a reward of my Services in this World, I have no doubt of receiving it in the next.

Under an Opinion, that I could do more Good by marching with your Army into Scotland, than by remaining with your Manchester Regiment at Carlisle, I obtain'd leave to be in your Lord's Camp; for I was willing to be in Action.

After your Battle at Alford I had your misfortune to fall into your Hands of your most ungenerous Enemy, that I believe ever a punish'd & name of Soldier; I mean your prebend D. of Cumberland & those under his command; whose Inhumanity exceeded any thing I could here imagin'd in a Country, where your bare mention of a God is allow'd of. I was put into one of your Scotch Kirk's, together with a great number of wounded Prisoners, who were strip'd naked, & then left to die of their wounds without your least assistance; & tho' we had a surgeon of our own, a Prisoner in your same place, yet he was not permitted to dress their Wounds, but his Instruments were taken from him on purpose to prevent it & in consequence of this, many expired in your utmost Agony. Several of your wounded were put on board your Beans of War, & there died in lingering tortures. Your general Allowance, while we were Prisoners there, was half a Pound of Meel a Day, which was sometimes increased to a Pound, but it never exceed'd it; & I myself was an eye-witnes, that great numbers were starv'd to death. This Barbarity extend'd so far as not to suffer your men, who were put on board your Beans, to lie down even on Planks, but they were oblig'd to sit on large Stones; by which means their legs swell'd as big almost as their Bodies. There are some few of your Cruelties exercised; which being almost incredible in a Christian Country, I am oblig'd to add as a Persecution to your truth of them: And I do assure you upon your words of dying Men, as I hope for Mercy at your Day of Judgment, I omit nothing but what I know to be true.

The Injustice of these Proceedings is aggravated by your Ingratitude of them: for your Elector of Hanover's People had been oblig'd by your Prince, who order'd

Page 1 of speech, Warwickshire County Record Office, L6/1703.

L6/1703

His Provisions of some allowance of Muel as his own Troops, I always made
 it his particular Care, that all y^e Wounded should be carefully dress'd, &
 us'd with y^e utmost Tenderness. His extreme Caution to avoid y^e Effusion of blood
 even with regard to Spies, when his own Safety made it almost necessary, &
 his surprising Generosity to all his Enemies without distinction, certainly demand'd
 different Treatment: & I cannot think, that an English Army, under English
 Direction, could possibly behave with such unprovoked Barbarity.

With regard to y^e report of his Royal Highness having order'd that no
 Quarter should be given to y^e Enemy, I am perswaded in my Conscience,
 it is a wicked malicious Treachery, & a ~~crime~~ ^{crime} of Yurpation, in hopes
 of an Excuse for y^e Cruelties committed in Scotland, which were many
 more & greater than I have time to describe; for I firmly believe, y^e Divine
 would not consent to such Orders, even if it were to gain y^e three Kingdoms.

I would gladly enter into y^e particulars of his Royal Highness's Character,
 if I was able; but his Qualifications are above Description: All I can say
 is; He is every thing, that I could imagine Great & Excellent, fully
 deserving what he was born for — to rule over a Free People.

I die a Member of y^e Church of England, which I am satisfied, would
 flourish much more under y^e reign of a Stuart than it does now, or has
 done for many Years. The Friends of y^e H. of Hanover say, they deep out
 Popery; but do they not live in Infidelity? which is almost become, if
 I may so say, y^e Religion of the World.

I think it every mans Duty, by all lawful means to live as long as he can;
 & with this view I made a Defence upon my Trial, which I thought might
 possibly do me Service. All that y^e Witnesses swore in my behalf, was
 strictly true, for I would much rather die than be y^e Victim of Perjury.
 After Sentence my Friends petition'd for my life, & if it had been granted,
 I should be thankful for it; but as it otherwise happens, I patiently
 submit, & have confident hopes, that upon y^e whole it will be better for
 me; for I suffer for having done my Duty.

As I expected, so it happen'd upon my Trial, Mr Maddox perjur'd himself,
 & I am assur'd, he is so immerg'd in wickedness, that it would be difficult for
 to forgive it. Lieutenant Moore swore, he was acquainted with me
 in Manchester; but I declare, I was never in his Company, before we met
 at Inverness, & should think it a great Reflection upon y^e Honour of
 any Government to encourage Officers to lay by their Swords, & become
 Informers. I forgive both these & all my Enemies.

I am convinc'd, that these Matters are inevitably rain'd, unless y^e Royal
 Family be restor'd; which I hope will soon happen; for I love my
 Country, & with my parting Breath I pray God to bless it. I also
 beseech him to bless & preserve my lawful Sovereign King James 3^d,
 & Dr. of Wales, & D. of York, to prosper all my Friends, & have
 Mercy upon me.

ACR 378/92

Page 2 of speech, Warwickshire County Record Office, L6/1703.

In the speech, Bradshaw details his time spent in captivity after the Battle of Culloden in April 1746. He describes the conditions he and fellow prisoners were kept in:

“I was put into one of the Scotch kirks, together with a great number of wounded Prisoners, who were stripped naked, & then left to die of their wounds without the least assistance; & tho[ugh] we had a Surgeon of our own, a Prisoner in the same place, yet he was not permitted to dress their wounds, but his Instruments were taken from him on purpose to prevent it, & in consequence of this, many expired in the most utmost Agonies. Several of the wounded were put on board the Jean of Leith, & those died in lingering tortures.”¹

He also talks of his actions, stating that he was motivated by “Duty only” and that he “never saw any reason since to convince me, that I was in the best mistaken: but on the contrary, every day’s Experience has strengthen[e]d my Opinion, that what I did was right & necessary”².

James Bradshaw

James Bradshaw was born in 1717, the only child of a Roman Catholic family in Manchester. He attended the Manchester Free School and was educated in the classics. He entered into an apprenticeship in London around 1734. He returned to his native Manchester upon the illness of his father. Upon his father’s death, Bradshaw inherited a thriving trade, and some money. He married Miss Wagstaff and they had a child. Tragically, both his wife and child died in 1743³.

Bradshaw was originally a Captain in the Manchester Regiment, before leaving to join the forces under the leadership of Lord Elcho at Carlisle⁴. He was captured after the Battle of Culloden and taken by ship to London with 42 other prisoners. His trial took place in October 1746. He was found guilty and executed on 28th November, aged just 29. This speech was made shortly before his execution on Kennington Common⁵.

¹ Copy of speech made by Jacobite Rebel James Bradshaw, Warwickshire County Record Office, L6/1703.

² Copy of speech made by Jacobite Rebel James Bradshaw, Warwickshire County Record Office, L6/1703.

³ Jennett Humphreys, The Dictionary of National Biography, 1885-1900, vol. 6 Bottomley-Browell, sourced from [https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Dictionary_of_National_Biography,_1885-1900/Bradshaw,_James_\(1717-1746\)](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Dictionary_of_National_Biography,_1885-1900/Bradshaw,_James_(1717-1746)) (accessed 09/04/2021).

⁴ Noel S. McFerran, Speech of James Bradshaw, November 28 1746, The Jacobite Heritage, <http://www.jacobite.ca/documents/17461128.htm> (accessed 09/04/2021).

⁵ Jennett Humphreys, The Dictionary of National Biography, 1885-1900, vol. 6 Bottomley-Browell, sourced from [https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Dictionary_of_National_Biography,_1885-1900/Bradshaw,_James_\(1717-1746\)](https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Dictionary_of_National_Biography,_1885-1900/Bradshaw,_James_(1717-1746)) (accessed 09/04/2021).

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After the Battle at Culloden I had the misfortune to fall into the hands of the most ungenerous Enemy, that I believe ever assum'd the name of Soldier. I mean the pretend'd D. of Cumberland, & those under his command; whose Inhumanity exceed'd any thing I could have imagin'd in a Country, where the bare mention of a God is allow'd of. I was put into one of the Scotch kilns, together with a great number of wounded Prisoners, who were strip'd naked, & then left to die of their wounds without the least assistance; & tho' we had a Surgeon of our own, a Prisoner in the same place, yet he was not permitted to dress their Wounds, but his Instruments were taken from him on purpose to prevent it, & in consequence of this, many expired in the utmost Agonies. Several of the wounded were put on board the Sea of death, & there died in lingering tortures. Our general Allowance, while we were Prisoners there, was half a Pound of Meel a day, which was sometimes increased to a Pound, but it never exceed'd it; & I myself was an Eye-witness that great numbers were starv'd to death. Their Barbarity extend'd so far as not to suffer the men, who were put on board the Sea, to lie down even on Planks, but they were oblig'd to sit on large Stones; by which means their legs swell'd as big almost as their Bodies. These are some few of the Cruelties exercised; which being almost incredible in a Christian Country, I am oblig'd to add an Attestation to the truth of them: And I do assure you upon the words of a dying Man, as I hope for Mercy thro' the day of Judgment, I speak nothing but what I know to be true.

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Jacobitism

Jacobitism is the term given to a movement which supported the restoration of the Stuart family to the throne in favour of the Hanoverian family who were on the throne following the Glorious Revolution of 1688. The name of the movement was derived from Jacobus, the Latin for James, and was active largely during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The movement was strongest in Ireland, the Highlands of Scotland and the north of England, however, there was support and sympathisers further afield⁶.

The Jacobites were fighting to restore the exiled James VIII as King. They were led by Prince Charles Edward Stuart (James's son). George II's government army (led by the Duke of Cumberland, George's son) was equally determined to stop this happening⁷.

Perhaps the most famous conflict associated with the Jacobite movement was the Battle of Culloden, which took place in April 1746 on Culloden Moor, not far from Inverness. This was the last battle to be fought on British soil and saw the deaths of some 1300 men in less than an hour⁸. It was the final defeat of the Jacobite forces.

⁶ Information gathered from Jacobitism, Wikipedia, <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Jacobitism&oldid=1015607257> (accessed 09/04/2021).

⁷ The Battle of Culloden, National Trust For Scotland, <https://www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/culloden/the-battle-of-culloden> (accessed 09/04/2021).

⁸ The Battle of Culloden, National Trust For Scotland, <https://www.nts.org.uk/visit/places/culloden/the-battle-of-culloden> (accessed 09/04/2021).