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King Fred:

How the British King Who Never Was Shaped the Modern Monarchy

A thesis

presented to

the faculty of the Department of History

East Tennessee State University

In partial fulfillment

of the requirements for the degree

Master of Arts in History

by

Austin W. B. Hilton

May 2016

Dr. John Rankin, Chair

Dr. William Douglas Burgess

Dr. Henry Antkiewicz

Keywords: Patriot King, Georgian England, 18th Century Britain, Prince Frederick, British

Monarchy, Hanoverian Dynasty

ABSTRACT

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This thesis examines the British monarchy in the eighteenth century and how the philosophy of Frederick, Prince of Wales, helped to shape that monarchy. The early Hanoverians were seen with contempt by many of their subjects, often being ridiculed as ignorant outsiders. They helped matters none by their indifference to Britain, its people, or its culture. Prince Frederick, George II's eldest son, however, changed all of this. His philosophy on kingship, influenced by Henry, Viscount Bolingbroke's work, *The Patriot King*, helped to change the perception of the Hanoverian dynasty. When Prince Frederick died in 1751 before he could take the throne, it was left up to his son, Prince George, to carry out Frederick's vision. As George III, he fulfilled the philosophy and became the embodiment of the patriot king. This resulted in a surge in popularity for the Hanoverians, solidifying their place on the British throne.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my mother. She is the foundation upon which all of my successes have been built. Without her, I would not be the man I am today, nor would any of this be possible.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

There are numerous people and institutions to which many thanks are owed for their assistance in writing this thesis. My advisor, Dr. John Rankin, was immensely helpful and offered the greatest guidance every step of the way from research to writing. His advice and suggestions improved not only this thesis, but my overall writing ability as a historian. The other members of my thesis committee, Dr. Doug Burgess and Dr. Henry Antkiewicz, provided immeasurable insight and thought provoking commentary on this manuscript, leading me down roads of thought I might not have otherwise travelled. Special thanks are also owed to Dr. Philip Wilson, who not only helped me in the early stages of this thesis, but without whom the archival research I undertook would likely not have been possible. The British National Archives, the British Library, and the British Museum were all superb in providing me with a wealth of documents, letters, and images to make researching this thesis as enjoyable and fun as possible. Finally, I would be remiss if I did not give special thanks to my girlfriend, Brittany Rhoton. During the numerous hours I stayed up in the dark writing, she was my light guiding me to the end. In my most frustrated moments, she acted as both cheerleader and therapist, and I am forever grateful.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT.....	2
DEDICATION.....	3
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	4
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	6
2. A YOUNG DYNASTY IN TROUBLE.....	12
3. KING FRED.....	31
4. GEORGE III: PATRIOT KING.....	49
5. CONCLUSION.....	66
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	69
VITA.....	73

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In Britain, the monarchy is one of the strongest and most easily recognizable symbols of the country. Today, the ruling monarch, Queen Elizabeth II, is more than simply a ceremonial figurehead. She occupies a special place of reverence as a national unifier – a symbol of Britain itself that transcends political parties and the squabbles they entail. Her Hanoverian ancestors, Queen Victoria and King George III, are two of the most famous figures to ever occupy the throne. Queen Victoria ruled over the British Empire for sixty-three years, when it was at the height of its power in the nineteenth century. Victoria's grandfather, George III, also reigned for six decades, although much of the last was spent in illness with his son as Prince Regent from 1811-1820. When George died in 1820, he was championed not only as having been a great king, but as the father of his country. He was a symbol of everything that made Britain great – strength, resilience, majesty, and the arts. It is hard to believe that, just a few decades prior, there was a chance that his family would be cast from their grip on the throne and that he would never become King.

In the eighteenth century, Britain was a rapidly changing place. The Empire was growing, bringing with it new economic opportunities and foreign adventure. However, the political structure at home was also changing as well. The Glorious Revolution of 1688 saw James II deposed for his autocratic ways and Catholic beliefs in favor of his daughter Mary and her husband, William III. When Mary's sister, Queen Anne, died in 1714, the House of Stuart's reign came to an end after a century of rule. Britain was about to face a brand new test that it had never seen before. The throne would now pass to Queen Anne's cousin, George, Elector of

Hanover. A foreigner from the European continent who spoke very little English was now to become head of the blossoming British Empire.

The idea of a foreign-born king taking the throne was certainly not a new idea to the British people. For the past millennium, Britain had repeatedly been taken over by a foreign monarch. During the Anglo-Saxon period, the Danes took the crown with kings such as Cnut wielding power. In 1066, William the Conqueror killed Harold Godwinson in the Battle of Hastings, bringing about the Norman Conquest and establishing the House of Normandy and Plantagenet as rulers. When Elizabeth I died, her closest relative was James VI of Scotland, who inherited the English crown as James I. Finally, during the Glorious Revolution, James II was deposed in favor of his daughter, Mary, and son-in-law, William. Born in Holland, William held the title Prince of Orange before becoming King of England. Clearly, the English were not unaccustomed to a foreign monarch. However, the Hanoverians were very different and in exceptional ways.

The Glorious Revolution had a number of consequences on how kingship was viewed as well as inherited in Britain. Previously, the monarch was seen as a figure who ruled due to divine right. They sat atop the agreed upon social order above all of their fellow men and women and below only God. Kings such as James I and Charles I were great proponents of this belief, the latter's doing much to cause the English Civil War and his own execution in 1649. Elsewhere in Europe, Catholic monarchs were even stronger supporters of the idea of divine right. They also ruled absolutely as opposed to the English system of constitutional monarchy, which bound the throne to the rules of parliament. This absolutism, and the fear of it, was the chief reason why the English parliament saw James II, who was Catholic, as someone who simply could not rule and

had him deposed in 1688. The Glorious Revolution effectively ended the argument of divine right in Britain.

It also changed the rule of succession as well. From now on, only a Protestant could inherit the English throne. This meant that any Catholic in the line of succession was effectively disinherited from the throne. This created a system where individuals could simply be passed over in favor of a more suitable heir. In a society built around strict social order and rules, this was a monumental shift. In the past, claimants to the throne had bolstered their position by killing off their opponents in battle, wielding their victories as evidence that providence favored them and that it was they who had the divine right to rule. Now, there was no divine right and there was the added possibility of having a situation where numerous heirs with a better claim could threaten the throne. This created what could be considered a new form of monarchy, one in which stood on much weaker footing. Now, British rulers could no longer rely solely on military power, their blood line, or the favor of God to rule. Instead, they had to rely on the favor of parliament, acceptance from the British people, and a strong and national public image in order to maintain their grip on the throne. With the death of Queen Anne in 1714, this responsibility fell to King George I and his Hanoverian family.

The Hanoverians were a most unlikely and most unsuited family to the task. George I was seen by many of the political elite as having anything but a kingly disposition. They regarded him as a simpleton lacking both intelligence and social graces. He was plain and avoided social appearances, a far cry from the majestic and very public image expected from the holder of the British crown. His very open preference for his native Hanover and his frequent visits there only made the matter worse. This absenteeism was not wholly new for the British, either, though. King Richard I, hundreds of years before, had ruled England for years, yet spent

only a handful of months in the country and drained the treasury on his exploits in France. He was certainly not derided for it. He was even nicknamed Richard the Lionheart for his bravery.

However, this had occurred during a time of divine right. Richard had also been the closest heir to his father, Henry II. George had neither of these benefits. He was not on the throne because God had willed it but because parliament had. He also had numerous men in front of him in the line of succession but had won out because of his Protestant faith. It was these factors that made the Hanoverians' actions appear to be exponentially worse to the British people.

George II fared no better in public opinion than his father had. When he was Prince of Wales, the two spent much time in open feud with one another, only contributing further to discord. As King, George II continued his father's tradition of spending ample amounts of time in Hanover, infuriating his subjects. When he was in Britain, he drove off potential royal patrons with thick German shouts of how much he hated poets, painters, and anything to do with learning. Both Georges also had to contend with the Jacobites, supporters of the heirs of James II, who constantly plotted ways to oust the Hanoverians. The young dynasty was twice forced to fight off a full invasion by the Jacobites – one in 1715 and another in 1745.

When George III came to the throne in 1760, the Hanoverians were hardly secure as the ruling family of Britain. There was still the threat of invasion not only from the Jacobites, but from the French, and his early years were marked with notable issues. Nonetheless, by the time he died in 1820, every major threat to Hanoverian rule was eliminated. Their place on the throne was as secure as any dynasty before them. George III had succeeded in doing this by making himself everything his predecessors had not been. He was the first Hanoverian monarch actually born in Britain and displayed none of his father or grandfather's preference for Hanover. He never even visited the place while on the throne. He was also a great patron of the arts and, early

in his reign, took it upon himself to be seen as a patriot king – a nickname now widely associated with him. A patriot king was to act as an embodiment of the nation and to endure personal sacrifice for the good of the people. George's ideas on patriotic kingship are largely responsible for his exceptional popularity, but they did not originate with him. It is another member of the Hanoverian family who helped to bridge the gap between the shaky beginnings of the first two Georges and the secure and robust power of George III.

George III's father, Frederick, Prince of Wales, originally destined to succeed George II to the throne, died in 1751. This proved nine years before the death of his father. Since he never held the throne, Prince Frederick has become largely forgotten to history. He has received a handful of biographical treatments from historians but is largely skipped over when discussing the Hanoverians and their role in reshaping England. His contribution to the Hanoverian dynasty has been largely understated and deserves a much closer inspection. Frederick's actions and ideas as Prince of Wales should be seen as largely responsible for the dynasty taking a drastic turn during the reign of George III. It was Frederick who first took it upon himself to conform to the image of a patriot king, though he was still only Prince of Wales. Prince Frederick was also the first of the Hanoverians to show any large interest in the arts and sciences, becoming a great patron to both. He also took it upon himself to mix and meet with all types of people while out in public, even meeting with a prisoner who had aided the Jacobite invaders.

The ways in which he openly opposed George II played to the sympathies and complaints of large amounts of the public. The fact that he died before taking the throne meant that it was left up to his son to put his ideas about kingship into action. As a result, his monumental importance in taking the Hanoverians from a bunch of German lackluster usurpers to British patriot kings has gone largely unnoticed. The result is an interpretation of their reign showing

George III as much more revolutionary. If any of that family deserves that interpretation, it is Frederick, Prince of Wales. It was Prince Frederick who was the linchpin. It was his ideas that were truly responsible for the Hanoverians being successful in Britain. Without him, the survival of the dynasty is uncertain. Without his ideas, George III could have been doomed to be just like his former two namesakes, offering nothing of great note and causing more scorn to be heaped onto the family. It was a dynasty in trouble that knew nothing about and cared nothing for being seen as British. Prince Frederick in his desire to assimilate into the culture changed this. He made the Hanoverians British. He gave them an air of majesty. His visibility and public persona made him adored. His patronage of the arts made him kingly. In passing these qualities down to his English-born son, Frederick helped to turn the tide of political and public opinion in favor of the Hanoverians, creating a dynasty seen as British.

CHAPTER 2

A YOUNG DYNASTY IN TROUBLE

“What, shall a German cuckold and his fool, an ox and ape ore generous Britons rule...”

In the early morning hours of August 1, 1714, Great Britain’s Queen Anne slipped into a coma and died. Despite eighteen pregnancies, none of Anne’s children reached adulthood. Her death brought to an end the century-long rule of the House of Stuart. With its end began the long rule of the House of Hanover that would stretch right up to the beginning of the twentieth century. To say the beginning of their rule in Britain was troubled is an understatement. Over the next twelve years, the new King George I was forced to face a plethora of problems and threats to his family’s new kingdom. In foreign affairs, England was threatened with and actually suffered from multiple invasions that sought to end the Hanoverians’ new power and return the Catholic Stuarts to the throne. Economically, many of the elites lost vast fortunes speculating in the market. Politically, Great Britain saw the rise of Sir Robert Walpole as the first Prime Minister. This in itself is highly significant as it shows a denigration of power during George I’s reign from the monarchy down to a cabinet government. This trend of power being eroded from the crown downwards was a permanent one that continued throughout the Hanoverian Dynasty. It continues today with Britain’s Queen Elizabeth II occupying a role much more ceremonial than functional in nature. The totality of these issues, combined with George’s perceived lack of majesty in public as well as numerous rumors that abounded about his wife and mistresses, severely weakened the image and prestige of the crown. These same issues undermined his

successor, George II. It would not be until after the latter's death that a reversal in opinion about the monarchy and an increase in the perception of majesty occurred.

On September 29, 1714, nearly two months after the death of Queen Anne, George I finally arrived in Britain. His delay was due in part to the slow procession his entourage made across Europe coupled with bad wind that kept him from crossing the channel. His eventual arrival was not the boisterous and glorified reception that befitted a British monarch. Delayed by bad weather and thick fog, the King, after being rowed up the Thames, arrived in Greenwich after nightfall.¹ The new dynasty, selected due to their Protestant faith, had arrived under the cover of darkness like a foreign agent; not an English king.

This strange new King's past may have been more interesting than the man himself. In addition to being a German born and bred on the continent and having little to no knowledge of the English language, George I was the first person to take the throne as an already divorced man. He had previously been married for twelve years (1682-1694) to Sophia Dorothy of Celle. At his accession to the British throne, they had been divorced for two decades due to her alleged infidelity with Count Philip Christoph von Königsmarck, a man who disappears from the historical record after the affair was uncovered and is widely believed to have been killed. As for Sophia, she remained locked up in the Castle of Ahlden for thirty-two years until her death, never again seeing either her husband or her children, including the future George II.² The strange circumstances of George I's marriage seemed more akin to the Tudor period than anything of eighteenth century Britain. As a result, it provided the courts of Europe with ample

¹ J.H. Plumb, *The First Four Georges* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1957), 38.

² *Ibid.*, 39.

gossip leading to numerous rumors regarding George's supposedly sinister or perhaps even murderous character.³

George's coronation came on October 20, 1714, less than a month after his arrival. It received mixed reviews from the English population. As many historians have correctly pointed out, there were numerous celebrations all over the country. Some of the festivities were so intense that there were reports of people burning effigies of both the Pope and the Jacobite pretender James Stuart. Catholic opposition, in the view of many, had been definitively driven from the country and the faithful Protestant George I was the protector against its return.⁴ These joyous celebrations have been used by many to show the popularity of the Hanoverian succession and paint a picture that Britain welcomed its new monarch with open arms.

The reality, however, was markedly different. George was from Hanover, a place not exactly held in high esteem by many of the English and especially the Jacobites. They considered Hanover a backwater. It was a place full of yokels, good for practically nothing, save for the farming of vegetables. One of those vegetables was the turnip and it was this vegetable that was used by many as a derogatory symbol of the new king. During the coronation itself, a spectator was arrested for brandishing one atop a stick.⁵ The use of a turnip on the day of the coronation was not limited to the one incident, either. In a letter to Edward, Lord Harley, dated October 31, 1718, his English tutor Dr. Stratford made mention of another occurrence from the same day:

Our bumpkins in this country are very waggish and very insolent. Some honest justices met to keep the Coronation day at Wattleton, and towards the evening when their worships were mellow they would have a bonfire. Some bumpkins upon this got a huge turnip and stuck three candles, and went and placed it at the

³ Ibid.

⁴ Matthew Charles Kilburn, "Royalty and Public in Britain: 1714-1789" (PhD diss., University of Oxford, 1997), 70.

⁵ Lucy Worsley, "Why Do the Georgians Matter?," June 2014, accessed March 21, 2016, <http://www.lucyworsley.com/why-do-the-georgians-matter>.

top of a hill just over Chetwynd's house... When they had done they came and told their worships that to honour King George's Coronation day a blazing star appeared over Mr. Chetwynd's house. Their worships were wise enough to take horse to go and see this wonder, and found, to their no little disappointment, their start to end in a turnip.⁶

This was obviously done in homage to the story of the Star of Bethlehem, heralding the arrival of Jesus as heavenly king. Here, the star heralding the arrival of Britain's king turned out to be nothing more than a vegetable. The message in this is clear: King George was no rightful King of Great Britain and those who were his followers were being led astray by an outsider who was nothing more than a continental provincial parading as a monarch. Elsewhere in the country, dissent was not nearly as playful. Instead, others were taking a decidedly violent path to vent their outrage.

Vicious rioting in no less than twenty towns throughout England countered pro-Hanoverian festivities.⁷ One firsthand account from three days after the coronation describes a celebration in Chippenham, Wiltshire being interrupted by an angry mob. A great procession was underway "with the greatest cheerfulness imaginable, till interrupted by a Jacobite mob, who, armed with guns, pistols, and clubs, marching with beat of drum, assaulted and abused the justices, who saw how far these villains trespassed upon the law, used no forcible means to suppress them..."⁸ In Norwich, mobs formed and cries went up of "God damn King George!" The situation was much the same in Birmingham. At the Castle-Tavern, where a group of people had come to celebrate the coronation, the windows were shattered by angry rioters who forced

⁶ The National Archives, *Report on the Manuscripts of His Grace, The Duke of Portland, K. G., Preserved at Welbeck Abbey*, vol. 7-8 (London: Printed for H.M. Stationery Office by Mackie & Co. Ltd., 1901), 245-246.

⁷ Paul Kleber Monod, *Jacobitism and the English People: 1688-1788* (Cambridge University Press, 1993), p. 173-178.

⁸ *An Account of the Riots, Tumults, and other Treasonable Practices* (London: Printed for J. Baker, 1715), 6.

the inhabitants out.⁹ “At another part of the town, a worthy gentleman entertained some friends at his own house, and, for the better solemnizing such a glorious day, put out a flag, with King George in a cipher thereon. This house shared the same fate with the Castle.”¹⁰ It was further said that any man in the city who wished God’s blessings upon King George became immediately in danger of his life.¹¹

The very next year the Whigs achieved a rousing victory in the parliamentary elections. Embittered, numerous members of the defeated Tories defected to the Catholic claimant to the throne, James Stuart, Queen Anne’s half-brother in exile. His supporters, called the Jacobites, a Latinized form of James, were largely to blame for both the instigation and execution of the coronation riots. Emboldened with support and seeing an opportunity to quickly terminate this new dynasty, Stuart decided to invade in what became the Jacobite Rebellion of 1715. It was a strategic disaster and the rebellion quickly ended, the Jacobites never making it further into England than Preston, Lancashire, where they were cut down. Robert Corbet in a letter to the provost of Edinburgh described it: “It appears there has been a great slaughter among them after they refused to surrender and submit to His Majesty’s clemency, which was offered to them by General Wills and rejected.”¹² George I had managed to squash this first rebellion that attempted to overthrow him. Nevertheless, it had showed his fragile grip on the throne and just how deep support for Stuart ran amongst the aristocracy. Many prominent political figures of the day had supported the Jacobites, including Lord Bolingbroke who fled to France after its failure and was not allowed back in the country for nearly ten years.

⁹ Ibid., 9.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² TNA SP 54/10/57, A pamphlet giving three accounts of the defeat of the Jacobites in Preston, Lancashire. Edinburgh, 16 November 1715.

Four years later in 1719, a Spanish-supported attempt at yet another Jacobite invasion was even less successful. This time, the weather played a greater role in its demise than the British themselves. Undaunted, the Jacobites continued to plot and scheme. This resulted in the British uncovering a third attempt, the Atterbury Plot in 1722. The leader, Francis Atterbury, was the Bishop of Rochester and the Dean of Westminster Abbey. The Jacobites decided to execute the plot at the same time as the elections of 1722. These elections were scheduled well in advance thanks to the Septennial Act of 1716 which allowed Parliament to sit for seven years after the elections of 1715.¹³ Thus, the Jacobites had time to prepare and, in a letter to the Pretender dated April 22, 1721, Atterbury seemed fully confident: “The time is now come when with a very little assistance from your friends abroad, your way to your friends at home is become safe and easy.”¹⁴

Fortunately for the King, government agents were able to uncover the entire plot just before it was to be carried out. Though Atterbury himself narrowly escaped conviction and left for the continent like Bolingbroke, numerous others were hanged, drawn, and quartered. The Atterbury Plot demonstrates that political opposition to George’s reign was not simply a representation of a larger battle of Catholics against Protestants. Atterbury himself was not only a Protestant, but an Anglican bishop, not to mention the fact that he was Dean of Westminster Abbey, a position that answered directly to the crown. The King’s reign had endured three serious attempts at rebellion and invasion in less than seven years, a sure sign of just how unstable his grip on power really was. It seemed that at any given moment, Hanoverian rule might crumble. Even after this third attempt, Jacobite resistance remained and propaganda

¹³ David Bayne Horn and Mary Ransome, eds., *English Historical Documents: 1714–1783*, vol. 7 (New York: Routledge, 1996), p. 150.

¹⁴ J. H. Glover, ed., *The Stuart Papers: Printed from the Originals in the Possession of Her Majesty the Queen*, vol. 1 (London: W. N. Wright, 1847), 62.

supporting their cause continued to spread. One rather insulting example was a song that appeared in 1722 as a hymn to the Pretender. “No more shall foreign scum pollute our throne; No longer under such we’ll blush and groan; But Englishmen and English King will own. What, shall a German cuckold and his fool, an ox and ape ore generous Britons rule, whilst under them like dogs we sneak and howl.”¹⁵ Jacobite propaganda both fuelled and sustained the movement operating as a clear threat to George and his kingdom.

Aside from the rioting and military threats to his power, George I also had to deal with personal attacks on his looks, his intellect, and even his mistresses. Some of these underwhelming opinions of the King have even carried right up to modern day. The historian J. H. Plumb described him as “very stupid and lacking interest in the arts, save music.”¹⁶ George I’s contemporaries were perhaps the most unforgiving in their assessment of his personality and physique. Lady Mary Wortley Montagu wrote: “The King’s character may be comprised in very few words. In private life he would have been called an honest blockhead.”¹⁷ She went on to call him such things as “properly dull” and stated that he would have never went from Elector of Hanover to King of Great Britain save for the ambitions of others around him.¹⁸ William Coxe’s *Memoirs of the Life and Administration of Sir Robert Walpole*, published in 1800, paints a less than stellar portrait of the King at his accession: “He was already fifty-four years of age, and had been long habituated to a court of a different description from that of England, to manners and customs wholly repugnant to those of his new subjects. He was below the middle stature, and his

¹⁵ The National Archives SP 35/40 f.179, Extract from a Jacobite song, consisting of 43 verses, calling for the return to the throne of James Francis Edward Stuart and end to rule by George I, House of Hanover, 1722.

¹⁶ Plumb, 39.

¹⁷ Lewis Saul Benjamin, *The First George in Hanover and England*, vol. 2 (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1909), 2.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

person, though well proportioned, did not impress dignity or respect.”¹⁹ The memoirs continue on to describe his “hatred of the splendour of majesty” and describe George as “phlegmatic and grave in his public deportment.”²⁰

It was certainly this aversion to the trappings of majesty that did more to tarnish George I’s reputation and image among the English than his lack of intellect. The author Lewis Saul Benjamin summed it up best at the start of the twentieth century when he wrote: “They did not care that he was a fool, but they resented the undeniable fact that he had not the charm of manner and the handsome appearance of the Stuarts; they felt aggrieved that he disliked the parade of state; they complained that he did not appear frequently in public, conveniently forgetting that when he did so he was greeted with hoots and hisses.”²¹ On the subject of what many thought were the King’s two mistresses, Sophia von Kielmansegg and Ehrengard Melusine von der Schulenburg, the public expressed utter disdain and detestation at them. They were constantly chided by the King’s detractors who nicknamed them “the elephant” and “the maypole,” respectively. Many even accused them of exploiting the king for their own gain. As it turns out, only one of the two women was actually a mistress of the King. Unbeknownst to most, Sophia von Kielmansegg was actually his illegitimate half-sister, but the persistent rumors that they were both mistresses and out to control him for their own advantage was evident from the opinions in print at the time. Nathaniel Mist, in his *Weekly Journal* on 27 May 1721, wrote: “We are ruined by trolls, nay, what is more vexatious, by old ugly trolls, such as could not find entertainment in the most hospitable hundreds of old Drury.”²² It is clear that many in the country felt that George was not only a poor excuse for a monarch, but was succumbing to the

¹⁹ William Coxe, *Memoirs of the Life and Administration of Sir Robert Walpole, Earl of Orford*, vol. 1 (London: Thomas Cadell, 1800), 95.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

²¹ Benjamin, 221.

²² Plumb, 41.

whims and fancies of those in his inner circle. Many blamed his “mistresses” for the problems facing the country, believing that their opinions and desires were influencing the King’s decision. In the minds of many, not only was the King a puppet, he was a puppet controlled by scheming women who were as foreign as him. This perception of George as weak undermined his kingship. One cannot be majestic and weak. The accusations that George was not the one truly in control was certainly true during the latter years of his reign. However, it was not his one mistress or half-sister in control. Rather, it was Britain’s first Prime Minister, Sir Robert Walpole.

Walpole’s rise to power came as a direct result of the economic fallout of the South Sea Company. When George first ascended to the throne, one of the great issues of the day was Britain’s ever increasing national debt. In an attempt to alleviate the situation, the King’s government came up with an innovative method of getting rid of the debt. This involved selling the debt to another entity – the newly formed South Sea Company. The company was formed in 1711, three years before George took the throne, as a joint-stock company and was granted a monopoly on trading in South America. Over the course of George’s early reign, the stock price swelled and numerous high profile members of society invested. The famous satirist Alexander Pope wrote to Lady Mary Montagu urging her to invest. In a letter dated August 22, 1720, he wrote: “I was made acquainted late last night, that I might depend upon it as a certain gain, to Buy of South Sea Stock at the present price, which will certainly rise in some weeks, or less. I can be as sure of this, as the nature of any such thing will allow, from the first & best hands: & therefore have dispatched the bearer with all speed to you.”²³ Unfortunately, just weeks after he penned the letter, the price collapsed in what became known as the South Sea Bubble. A

²³ Alexander Pope, *The Correspondence of Alexander Pope*, ed. George Sherburn, vol. 2 (Oxford: University Press, 1956), 52.

multitude of people lost thousands overnight in one of the most famous economic collapses in British history. To make matters worse, it was almost entirely due to a fraudulent financial conspiracy involving insider trading among numerous other illegalities.²⁴ John Aislable, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, was stripped of his office and imprisoned as a result. Numerous others were impeached for their corruption.

What compounded the problem for King George was his perceived close involvement with the company. The Court of Directors had elected him Governor of the company in February of 1718. Even worse, not only had he not paid for the shares he held in the company, he had taken them as payment for promoting the company. While many of the wealthy elite were ruined by the collapse, he actually made a gain of £45,304.²⁵ The Jacobites, who were always waiting for an opportunity, easily detected the King's precarious position. John Menzies wrote from Paris in October 1720, "it wants but kindling the train of powder by some strong hand, and a right conduct in placing the train."²⁶ James Stuart said in December that "matters seem at present to be very ripe in England."²⁷ This certainly seemed the case. One pamphlet from 1722 captured perfectly the sentiments of many. "The birth-right and privileges of freemen in London, will hereby in a little time become contemptible: For as South Sea has strip'd them of their superfluous riches, long wars, continued taxes, and high duties, impair'd their stocks, and shocked their credit..."²⁸ King George I had reigned for only seven years. Yet, time and time again, his actions or lack thereof had given the Jacobites an excuse to invade as well as given

²⁴ Jeremy Black, *The Hanoverians* (London: Hambledon and London, 2004), 72.

²⁵ *Ibid.*

²⁶ *Ibid.*

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Reasons Against Building a Bridge From Lambeth to Westminster: Shewing the Inconveniencies of the same to the City of London, and Borough of Southwark* (London: Printed for J. Roberts in Warwick Lane, 1722), 6.

credence to their cause. The Hanoverian venture in Britain was off to a less than stellar beginning and it was not getting any better.

As a direct result of the collapse, King George had to (reluctantly) rely on Sir Robert Walpole to both restore order as well as shield him from the scandal.²⁹ In 1721, Lord Carteret noted, “The King is resolved that Walpole shall not govern, but it is hard to be prevented.”³⁰ Viewed with both suspicion and contempt by many, Walpole had made a fortune having sold his shares at the height of the market and just before the collapse.³¹ This led many to believe that the man tapped by the King to solve the problem had been in on the fraud as well. Overall, the collapse of the South Sea Company was a two-fold problem for King George I. On the one hand, it looked as if he had been highly involved with the company and this certainly reflected badly on him. On the other hand, Sir Walpole quickly became so influential that he became the chief power in England. Walpole’s power became so great that he is now considered Britain’s first Prime Minister. The South Sea Bubble accelerated the transfer of power, jealously guarded by George I, from the crown to a cabinet of ministers led by the Prime Minister. George I certainly cannot be fully blamed for the happenings of the company and the actions of those who ran it. Nonetheless, it occurred under his watch and served only to undermine and erode his authority, both actual and perceived. The instability and erosion of royal power emboldened the Jacobites. Meanwhile, the power of Walpole would continue to rise almost unabated well into the next reign.

Both the King and Walpole found themselves satirized and lampooned in numerous pamphlets and publications, though none as famous as Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*, published in 1726. The story deals with the fictional kingdom of Lilliput, which is meant to be a

²⁹ Black, 72.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Ibid.

satire of England. Lilliput is ruled by an emperor who is assisted by a first minister named Flimnap, each of whom can be clearly seen to represent King George I and Prime Minister Walpole, respectively. During one description of Flimnap in the story, Swift pens as Gulliver, “I was assured that, a year or two before my arrival, Flimnap would infallibly have broke his neck, if one of the king’s cushions, that accidently lay on the ground, had not weakened the force of his fall.”³² This was a cheeky way of Swift saying that Walpole would never have risen from his unfavorable position early in George’s reign to where he was in 1726 without certain political intrigues, namely the assistance and influence of the King.

Less than a year after the publication of Swift’s work, King George I was dead. It was during another trip to his native Hanover that George suffered a stroke and died on June 11, 1727. It seems fitting that he would be in Hanover at the time of his death, a place that he was criticized for visiting so frequently. He had been in Hanover during one of the Jacobite rebellions. He had also been there when the South Sea Company collapsed. It is only appropriate that the King, seen by many in England as caring more about the backwater of Hanover than his kingdom, would be there at his death. With his demise, there was the hope of a much different reign under King George II – one that would perhaps be more British and patriotic in character than that of George I. Unfortunately for the British people, the great majority of those hopes would end up in disappointment. The numerous problems ranging from military invasion to personal character flaws that had plagued George I were doomed to plague his eldest son almost as badly if not worse. More so, the reign of George II would have the new King face these problems and criticisms for three times as long as his predecessor.

³² Jonathan Swift, *Gulliver’s Travels*, vol. 1 (London: Jones & Company, 1826), 34.

“Now Duncce the second reigns like Duncce the first.” - Alexander Pope

While still Prince of Wales, the future George II had made it a habit of opposing his father, trying to look better by comparison. He even set up his own opposing royal court, making no secret of his opposition. This rival court, in the words of historian Ragnild Hatton, “made a sorry and dull impression and could in no way compete with that which George I kept up.”³³ Even so, the fact that he ingratiated himself with many of George I’s greatest political opponents gave them the hope that they would have many more blessings to enjoy once the Prince of Wales came to the throne. In 1727, they would finally get to see if that would come to pass. To quote J. H. Plumb again: “Like his father, George was stupid but complicated. Undignified scenes were a part and parcel of his weakness.”³⁴ The famous eighteenth century writer and satirist Alexander Pope alluded to the accession of George II in his work *The Dunciad*. Published anonymously just one year after the new George took the throne, the author famously quipped: “Now Duncce the second reigns like Duncce the first.”³⁵ In an almost prophetic tone, Pope accurately predicted the repetition of history that was to follow.

Like his father, George II had to face down the Jacobites and the threat of an invasion. They had seen in George I a man that had to be eliminated in order to return the Stuart dynasty to the throne. There was nothing in George II to sway them from this endeavor and he, like his father, would have to face a military invasion as well. This invasion became known to history as the much more famous and almost successful Jacobite Rebellion of 1745. Led by Charles Stuart, the first significant conflict was the Battle of Prestonpans on September 22, originally called the Battle of Gladsmuir. After a momentous Jacobite victory in which George II’s troops were

³³Christine Gerrard, *The Patriot Opposition to Walpole* (Oxford: University Press, 1994), 63.

³⁴ Plumb, 65.

³⁵ Alexander Pope, *The Dunciad* (London: Lawton Gilliver, 1727), 68.

routed, Stuart penned a letter to the British nobility dated November 2. In it, he compares his generous behavior in contrast to that of George I at Preston in 1715. Speaking of himself, he writes, “Compare his (Stuart’s) clemency towards all the prisoners and wounded at the Battle of Gladsmuir, with the executions, imprisonments, and banishments exercised by the German family after their success at Preston in the year 1715, and your affections will tell you, who is the true father of the people.”³⁶ Stuart paints himself as forgiving and loving in contrast to the Hanoverians which, in his view, makes him even more deserving of the throne.

This certainly helped to drum up continued support for the campaign. The 1745 rebellion came so close to success that it caused the defenses of Manchester to be abandoned and briefly sent London into a state of panic. By December 15, Whitehall Palace sent out a letter concerning the quartering of troops in Essex and Kent for the defense of London. “The commissaries for wood and straw are now with the troops in Essex and Kent, who are canton’d (grouped) in barns and stables etc. It will likewise be necessary that some provision of this sort be made in case these troops are to be disposed of in like manner about London...”³⁷ The Jacobites would never make it to London. Instead, they were eventually pushed back into Scotland before being cut down by George’s youngest son, Prince William, Duke of Cumberland at the Battle of Culloden. George II had come very near to losing his kingdom

Not surprising to the detractors of George II at the time of 1745 rebellion, the King was not even in London when it began. He was not even in Britain, having gone off on one of his frequent visits to Hanover just as his father had before him. This, just as with George I, had become a topic of derision. Like his father, the King was often ridiculed for what the English

³⁶ TNA SP 54/26/72D, Extracts from a printed letter from Charles Edward Stuart addressed to “the nobility, gentry, and free-born subjects,” 2 November 1745.

³⁷ TNA SP 41/16/14, Letter from Whitehall concerning the quartering of troops in Essex and Kent for the defense of London, 15 December 1745.

perceived as his indifference to them in favor of his native land. In fact, it could be argued that the contempt the English had for this behavior was even fierier in nature than it had been under George I. In 1736, nine years before the rebellion, the King was off on one such visit when a rather sarcastic advertisement was left hanging from the gate of St. James Palace. It read: “Lost or strayed out of this house a man who has left a wife and six children in the parish. Whoever will give any tidings of him to the Churchwardens of St. James Parish, so as he may be got again, shall receive 4s. 6d. reward. This reward will not be increased, no one judging him to deserve a crown.”³⁸ This extreme behavior showed just how intolerant Britons had become to the Hanoverians always leaving the kingdom for Hanover.

As if this was not enough of a concern, George II found he had even greater problems. 1736 was also the year in which Parliament passed the Gin Act of 1736. This was one of a series of Gin Acts passed in 1729, 1736, 1743, 1747, and 1751. These Gin Acts, all passed during George’s reign, aimed to curb Britain’s ever-growing appetite for the drink – an appetite that grew so large it became known as the Gin Craze. The backlash from Londoners against the Act was so great that troops had to be deployed throughout the city in order keep the peace.³⁹ Prime Minister Walpole wrote, “...the murmurings and complaints of the common people for want of gin and the great sufferings and losses of the dealers in spirituous liquors in general have created such uneasiness that they will deserve a great deal of attention and consideration...”⁴⁰ Other responses to the Act included draping tavern signs in mourning, ridiculing the law in a play

³⁸ Philip Woodfine, *Britannia’s Glories* (Rochester: The Boydell Press, 1998), 3.

³⁹ Jeremy Black, *18th Century Britain* (New York: Macmillan, 2008), 113.

⁴⁰ William Coxe, *Memoirs of the Life and Administration of Sir Robert Walpole, Earl of Orford*, vol. 3 (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1816), 418.

called *The Deposing and Death of Queen Gin*, and gathering in the streets to shout, “No gin, no king!”⁴¹

Many felt that it was not so much King George who was responsible for the act, but rather Queen Caroline and Walpole. In fact, the general impression throughout the country was that the Queen was really the one behind the scenes pulling the strings and that George was merely a puppet under her thumb. It was becoming a Hanoverian tradition that the King was seen as a puppet under the influence of someone else. George I was believed by many to be a puppet of his mistresses. Likewise, George II was seen to be a puppet under the influence of Queen Caroline and Prime Minister Walpole. George II was not unaware of such rumors, either, and routinely flew into fits of rage at the suggestion. One such incident involved him discovering a much-circulated verse, despite the Queen’s attempts at keeping it from him. It read: “You may strut, dapper George, but ‘twill all be in vain; We know ‘tis Queen Caroline, not you, that reign – you govern no more than Don Philip of Spain. Then if you would have us fall down and adore you, lock up your fat spouse, as your dad did before you.”⁴² Afterwards, the King, in an attempt to demonstrate his independence, began acting rude to the Queen in public, flatly contradicting her for all to see. Furthermore, he refused to speak to Lord Marlborough until some months later. This was because Marlborough had admitted to George that he had known about the verse, but refused to reveal who had informed him.⁴³

On top of all of this, George also had the misfortune, like his father, of being seen as an ignorant simpleton. However, where George I appeared ignorant due to his lack of interest in British affairs and his “blockhead” demeanor in public, George II openly admitted he disliked anything learned. When he was shown an engraving of Hogarth’s *The March to Finchley*, he

⁴¹ Kristin Olson, *Daily Life in 18th century England* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999), 239.

⁴² John Van der Kiste, *King George II and Queen Caroline* (Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 1997), 103.

⁴³ *Ibid.*

exclaimed in his thick German accent, “What! A painter burlesque a soldier? He deserves to be picketed for his insolence! Take his trumpery out of my sight!”⁴⁴ This was after he had already cried: “I hate painting and poetry, too! Neither the one nor the other ever did any good!”⁴⁵ In response, Hogarth, instead of dedicating the work to the King, changed the inscription to read: “The King of Prussia, an encourager of the arts and sciences.”⁴⁶ George II had always had a self-confessed hatred of “poets and painters.”⁴⁷ He had never cared for learning, proclaiming that he had “hated all that stuff from his infancy” and “felt as if he was doing something mean and below him.”⁴⁸

This was compounded by the way in which George, Queen Caroline, and Walpole were caricatured in popular pamphlets of the day. The reign of his father had coincided with the rise of the political cartoon as a way of expressing disagreement and highlighting perceptions that people had of the government. Under George II, it was reaching its heyday. Perhaps the most famous caricature of the period was an anonymous drawing published in 1740 entitled “Idol Worship, or the Way to Preferment” (see Figure 1).

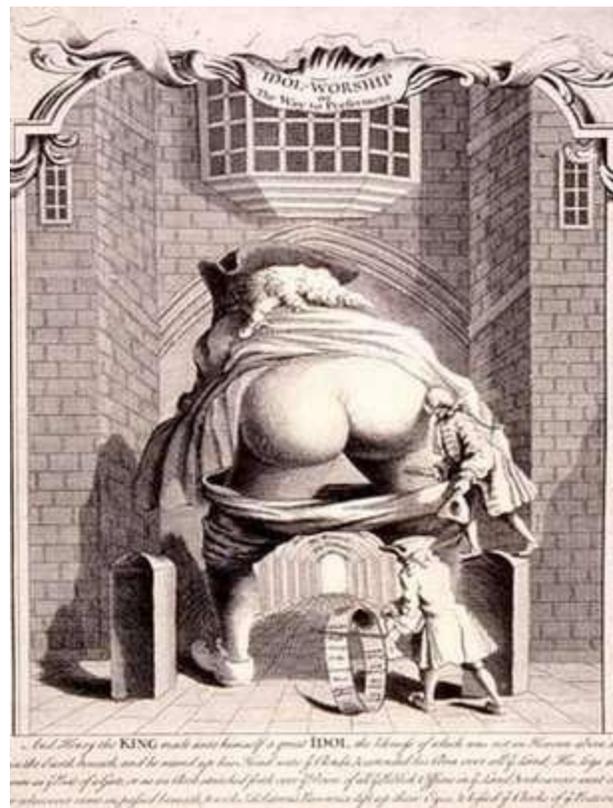


Figure 1. Idol Worship, or the Way to Preferment
(© British Museum)

11. ⁴⁴ Sidney Hutchinson, *The History of the Royal Academy 1768-1986* (London: Robert Royce Ltd., 1986),

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ Van der Kiste, 122.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

Here we see the entrance to the British treasury clearly blocked by Walpole's bare backside. The two smaller men represent those desiring money from the treasury. Their actions represent the fact that anyone wanting anything from government during this period knew whose rear end they had to kiss in order to get it. The cartoon suggested it was Walpole and not George II who ran England. Indeed, it may even have implied that the King himself would have to humble himself to the will of Walpole.

Another popular cartoon was 1743's "The British Lion Out of Order." In it, a Hanoverian horse is depicted riding a very starved and emaciated British lion. This was intended to mock George II's military expenditures on the continent that were being used in Hanover's fight against France. The Hanoverian horse represents both Hanover and George II while the starved British lion conveys the message that the King is siphoning Britain's resources away to the continent, causing it to become weaker and weaker.⁴⁹ Both the military campaign and the caricatures depicting it only stiffened the opinion that George II was weakening England in order to help his beloved Hanover.

Under the Hanoverians, Britain saw an invading army nearly march into London to depose the king for the first time since the Middle Ages. Whereas George I had to endure an invasion immediately after being crowned, the 1745 invasion showed real condemnation of the House of Hanover. George II had already ruled some twenty years and thus one way of viewing the invasion of '45 was as a direct critique of his rule. Whatever the perspective, after 30 years of rule, the Hanovers were no more secure in 1745 than they had been in 1715.

This cannot simply be explained away with the argument that the Jacobites had a claim to the throne, and therefore, were always going to be a problem. The fact that they were able to

⁴⁹ Thomas Wright, *Caricature History of the Georges* (London: John Camden Hotten, Piccadilly, 1867), 149.

mount invasion after invasion with increasing success shows that there was always significant support for the toppling of the Hanoverians. This was not just from Britain's old enemies France and Spain across the channel, either. As evidenced by the Atterbury Plot, there was ample support for the Jacobites at home as well. Without it, the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745 would never have been able to conquer Scotland, enter England, and threaten London all within a time span of just a few months. The problems and threats to the new German family on the throne ran much deeper than just their battle with the Jacobites. Furthermore, they were made exponentially worse by George I and George II's behavior, both real and perceived, coupled with the growing disdain of Prime Minister Walpole.

CHAPTER 3

KING FRED

“No king, who is not, in the true meaning of the word, a patriot, can govern Britain with ease, security, honor, dignity, or indeed with sufficient power and strength.”

George II died in 1760. He had outlived his son and heir, Prince Frederick, by nine years. The throne passed to Frederick’s eldest son, King George III. Prince Frederick had been the antithesis of his father. In keeping with the Hanoverian tradition of opposing the father, Frederick spent much of his adult life in open feud with the King. What marked him as being different from his father were the ways in which he rebelled. He was also different in the way he endeared himself to the general public, something neither his father nor grandfather were ever truly able to do. The ideas he cultivated and passed on to his son are clearly responsible for the transformation of the Hanoverian image from that of low intellect and indifference to cultured and patriotic holders of the throne.

Prince Frederick was born Frederick Ludwig in Hanover on February 1, 1707, seven years before the death of Queen Anne and the rise of his grandfather to the British throne. The English envoy at Hanover, Lord Howe, reported the news a few days later:

This Court having for some time past almost despaired of the Princess Electoral being brought to bed, and most people apprehensive that her bigness, which has continued for so long, was rather an effect of a distemper than that she was with child, her Highness was taken ill last Friday at dinner, and last night, about seven o’clock, the Countess d’Eke, her lady of the bedchamber, sent me word that the Princess was delivered of a son.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ W. H. Wilkins, *Caroline the Illustrious Queen Consort of George II and Sometime Queen-Regent: A Study of Her Life and Time*, vol. 1 (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1901), 88-89.

Howe's description gives evidence to the general state of gossip in Hanover at the time. Many had claimed that Princess Caroline was not pregnant at all and was simply ill. Once that idea was falsified by the quite obvious birth, numerous other rumors sprang up in the former's stead. There was wide gossip that Frederick's parentage was in question. There were even suggestions that she had, in actuality, been delivered of a sickly daughter and that a healthy boy had been substituted and was being passed off as the heir to the Electorate.⁵¹

This was, of course, only gossip and there is nothing at all to suggest anything amiss in Frederick's parentage or birth. Nonetheless, the tales persisted. Many pointed to Frederick's pronounced lack of Hanoverian characteristics as evidence. Unlike other members of the family, he was heavy-nosed, thick-lipped, and yellow-skinned. He was called "Der Grief" by other family members, from the German for griffin. However, almost certainly unbeknownst to them, it was also a West Indian term for a half-caste.⁵² In many ways, given future events, the claims and the alternate meaning of the nickname have an almost ironic feel. Once in England, the Prince certainly did everything in his power to be seen as different from the other Hanoverians. To many, he was the perfect mix of German and British.

On 1 May 1707, Queen Anne died; George I and his son hurried off to Britain to secure the succession. The seven year old Frederick did not accompany them. He was entrusted to the care of his uncle, Ernest Augustus. He would not see his parents again for fourteen years. There would undoubtedly have been many advantages to bringing Frederick along. Unlike his father and grandfather, he would have had an opportunity to

⁵¹ Van der Kiste, 28.

⁵² John Walters, *The Royal Griffin: Frederick, Prince of Wales 1707-51* (New York: Stein and Day, 1972), 25.

experience Britain from an early age. He could have grown up there, learned to acclimate to British culture and, once an adult, be almost as British as anyone else on the island. However, it was not to be. Frederick would not step onto British soil until he was already in his twenties.

Why were the new British royals so adamant about Frederick staying behind in Hanover? The decision was entirely that of George I. He believed that Frederick should stay behind for a couple of reasons. Firstly, he wanted the boy to gain some knowledge and appreciation of the family's native land. Given his own preference for his German territories over Britain, such an action is understandable. Secondly, had three generations of the ruling family left at once, there would be scarcely anyone left to represent George I in his position as Elector of Hanover. Therefore, he believed it imperative to keep Frederick there so there would be someone in the line of succession still among the people. George I understood, at least in Hanover, the importance of image. As bad as George was at manipulating his and his family's image in Britain, he was almost as good at it in Hanover.

Although he was kept away in Hanover, Frederick, on occasion, met with visiting members of the English aristocracy. These meetings provided Frederick the opportunity to distinguish himself from his father and grandfather. In 1716, during one of George I's Hanover visits, Frederick had the pleasure of meeting Lady Mary Montagu. As has been demonstrated, Lady Montagu's impression of George I was already subpar as evidenced by her calling him an honest blockhead. Her meeting with Frederick, however, appears to have left her with a view in stark contrast to how she saw the King. In one striking and complimentary letter to Lady Bristol, Lady Montagu details her meeting with the young Prince and expresses her very favorable opinion of him:

I am extremely pleased that I can tell you without flattery or partiality that our young prince has all the accomplishments that 'tis possible to have at his age, with an air of sprightliness and understanding, and something so very engaging and easy in his behavior, that he needs not the advantage of his rank to appear charming. I had the honor of a long conversation with him last night before the King came in. His governor retired on purpose (as he told me afterwards) that I might make some judgment of his genius by hearing him speak without constraint, and I was surprised at the quickness and politeness that appeared in everything he said, joined to a person perfectly agreeable and the fine hair of the Princess Caroline, his mother.⁵³

Clearly, her opinion of Frederick was a far cry from her summation that George I could be described in very few words and that he was extraordinarily dull. Nor was she the only member of the aristocracy who was quick to speak flatteringly of the Prince. Shortly after his arrival in England, Lady Bristol herself was able to make his acquaintance and offered equally kind remarks: "He is the most agreeable young man it is possible to imagine without being the least handsome. His person is little but well-made and genteel; a liveliness in his eyes that is undescribable and the most obliging address that can be conceived."⁵⁴ Amongst members of the aristocracy Frederick made a name for himself as different from his relatives. He, at least as far as leading lights Lady Montagu and Bristol, had the making of being a more effective king.

Frederick's arrival in England was continuously delayed. In 1726, with George I's death, Frederick became the heir to the British throne. Although next in line to be King, months went by with no word from Britain summoning him to join his father, George II. The King still wanted his son to remain in Hanover. This perplexed the English elite with many of them complaining of the delays. On the subject of the King delaying Prince Frederick's arrival, Lord John Hervey later wrote in his memoirs:

In was in this winter, just before the Parliament met, that the King was prevailed to send for his son from Hanover. His ministers told him that if the Prince's coming were longer delayed, an address from Parliament and the whole nation

⁵³ Walters, 30-31.

⁵⁴ Walters, 52.

would certainly oblige his Majesty to send for him, and consequently, he would be necessitated to do that with a bad grace which he might now do with a good one.⁵⁵

It must be stated that Lord Hervey's memoirs are one of the most valuable sources of this period and the reign of George II in general. Hervey served in various posts during the eighteenth century including as vice-chamberlain in the royal household, a member of the Privy Council, and later Lord Privy Seal. As a result, he was in a unique position to learn very close and descriptive information about the royal family and their day to day business. Hervey eventually would form a close friendship with Prince Frederick that, after a few years, soured. This has caused historians to cast serious doubt about the authenticity or veracity of Hervey's scathing claims and insults against the Prince's character. Nonetheless, his memoirs are still invaluable as a source for general day to day business in the royal household.

One reason why George II may have delayed summoning his son and heir comes down to the particulars of court finance. Prior to the death of George I, the Civil List had marked out 800,000 pounds per year for the King and Prince of Wales. Of this, 700,000 went to the King and the remainder to Prince George. After the succession, Parliament changed the Civil List to allocate all 800,000 pounds per year to George II with nothing earmarked for Prince Frederick.⁵⁶ While that may sound rather avaricious, there was sound reasoning for it. As Prince of Wales, George II had been much older with a wife and family to maintain in Britain. Frederick, on the other hand, was merely in his twenties and still a bachelor.

⁵⁵ John Hervey, *Some Materials Towards Memoirs of the Reign of King George II*, ed. Romney Sedgwick, vol. 1 (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1970), 95.

⁵⁶ Hervey, 34.

When Frederick did finally arrive in 1728, he did something that neither his father nor grandfather had shown the least interest in. He began looking for ways to assimilate into the native culture by demonstrating an enthusiasm for English sports and gin. In addition to that, he was sure to be seen by the public. Instances of Frederick and his public character quickly caught the eye of Benjamin Reichenbach, the Prussian ambassador. He wrote numerous letters to King Frederick II detailing the Prince's growing popularity among Londoners and his unorthodox ways of meeting with them. On a sightseeing tour of the Tower of London and Somerset House, the Prince made it a habit of running off from his attendants and joining crowds of townspeople to meet and greet them.⁵⁷

Frederick immersed himself into British culture. Shortly after his arrival, he became enamored with the sport of cricket. The Prince not only took up the game, but became quite a sensation as numerous reports mention him in competition. By 1733, only half a decade after arriving in the country, he was already a county cricket player for Surrey.⁵⁸ One match during the summer of that year resulted in the Prince presenting a silver cup to the winning team, possibly the first such instance of a trophy being awarded in the game.⁵⁹ One would be hard pressed to imagine either George I or II engaging in a cricket game. Frederick continued to be a cricket enthusiast for the rest of his life and it has even been speculated that his death may have been the result of being struck by a cricket ball, though this is unproven.

The British citizenry mobbed Frederick with delight. George I had despised appearing in public and took any and every opportunity to avoid it. George II had hardly improved on this image and had certainly taken no greater interest in British culture. This was beside the fact that the first two Hanoverian kings had been derided for their continuous leave of absences to

⁵⁷ Walters, 53-54.

⁵⁸ Morris Marples, *Poor Fred and the Butcher: Sons of George II* (London: Joseph, 1970), 41.

⁵⁹ H. T. Waghorn, *Cricket Scores, Notes, etc. (1730–1773)*, Blackwood, 1899, 5.

Hanover. Until Prince Frederick's arrival, Britain had spent the better part of fifteen years under an almost absentee King. Now, they had a Prince who not only delighted in being in Britain, but took it upon himself to actually mingle amongst the people and ingratiate himself with them. This alone marked the beginning of a turning point between the Hanoverians and the people.

Unfortunately for the Prince, not everyone delighted in his publicity. King George II was highly dissatisfied with his son's popularity and their relationship soon began to deteriorate. This was in line with the family trend. It was almost natural for Hanoverian fathers to hold their sons in contempt and vice versa. George I and II had famously feuded to no end. The same would occur later on between George III and the future George IV. However, the disputes and anger between George II and Prince Frederick may have been the worst of all the Hanoverian father-son relationships.

George II and Prince Frederick engaged in numerous disputes throughout the late 1720s and 1730s, often regarding Frederick's allowance, which the latter considered insufficient. At the same time, Frederick's popularity continued to grow. Instead of supporting their son, the King and Queen believed Frederick debased himself by catering to the whims of the British public. The King and Queen worried about Frederick's public image and insisted on being kept informed of their son's actions. For instance, in 1736 the Queen inquired to Lord Hervey about a feast that had occurred at Pall Mall, in which Prince Frederick had attended. Hervey reported to her that Frederick had pleased the crowd by toasting numerous things. He told her, "neither the 'Prosperity of the City of London' – 'the Trade of this Country' – 'the Naval Strength of England' – 'Liberty and Property' – nor any other popular toasts of that kind were omitted."⁶⁰ Queen Caroline responded with disgust, "My God, popularity always makes me sick; but Fritz's

⁶⁰ John Hervey, *Some Materials Towards Memoirs of the Reign of King George II*, ed. Romney Sedgwick, vol. 2, (New York: AMS Press, Inc., 1970), 628.

popularity makes me vomit. I hear that yesterday, on his side of the house, they talked of the King's being cast away with the same sang-froid as you would talk of a coach being overturned; and that my good son strutted about as if he had already been King.”⁶¹

The exact reason for what set off their mutual disdain for one another has not been brought to light. Frederick's newfound popularity with the British people played at least some role. King George likely saw it as an attempt to erode his own popularity and power. After all, he had attempted to do the same thing during his own father's reign. Money most certainly also played a factor. Frederick argued that his allowance was not enough for a Prince of Wales to live on and maintain a proper image and household. Lord Hailes, writing in 1788, speculated that this was the primary cause of the feud, though he himself admitted that he could not be sure: “I cannot discover what was the real cause of this unhappy quarrel. The Duchess (of Marlborough) seems to think that it originated in the motion for augmenting the Prince's revenue. It is probable that the whole matter will be explained to posterity should the Memoirs of Lord Hervey ever see the light. I have reason to believe they are written with great freedom.”⁶² Unfortunately, Hervey's memoirs were not as descriptive as Hailes thought they would be and, therefore, we are still left in the dark.

During Frederick's early years in Britain, there were serious political matters beginning to develop. Just four years after taking office in 1721, Whig politician Robert Walpole was becoming highly unpopular with many of the political elite, especially the Tories. The Tories had never supported George I and many, such as Viscount Bolingbroke, had actively backed the Jacobite Rebellion of 1715. Now, though, Walpole was beginning to draw enemies from his own

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Sarah Churchill, *Private correspondence of Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough, Illustrative of the Court and Times of Queen Anne; With Her Sketches and Opinions of Her Contemporaries and the Select Correspondence of Her Husband, John, Duke of Marlborough*, vol. 2 (London: Henry Colburn, 1838), 204.

party who believed him to be corrupt and tyrannical. In 1725, the Earl of Bath joined together with other dissatisfied members of the party to form the Patriot Whigs, a group that dedicated itself to opposing Walpole's policies. The Patriot Whigs even went as far as to join forces with the Tories to form a political barrier in the Commons against the Prime Minister. Still, Walpole held power as the Patriot Whigs looked for an issue that might unseat him.

As the Patriot Whigs distanced themselves from Walpole, so too did Frederick look for policies that distanced himself from his father. His chance came in 1736 with the most recent passing of the Gin Act. Frederick seized upon the opportunity to be seen as a prince and friend to the common people. "No gin! No king!" This was the cry going up from taverns all over the city. Frederick responded to this by going into the taverns and raising a glass himself to show support against the legislation.⁶³ This also showed him to be a friend to the Patriot Whigs, who had been critical of the Acts. The relationship between the Prince and the Patriots grew strong as both opposed Walpole and George II. The Patriot Whigs would play a crucial role in developing Frederick's approach to politics and kingship. During the anger and rioting over the Gin Act, the King was in Hanover. When he returned, he found an anonymous note on the gate of St. James Palace sarcastically offering a reward for his return. Frederick used instances like this to the fullest, conspiring with the King's political rivals. Some of those most disgruntled at the constant Hanover visits even suggested he use his father's absence to carry out a coup, though this never transpired.⁶⁴ Tensions between father and son were reaching fever pitch; something had to give.

The great breaking point finally came in 1737 and it served to further drive the Prince into the arms of the Patriot Whigs. Frederick's wife, Princess Augusta, was pregnant with their first child. The couple had spent the summer at Hampton Court Palace with the King and Queen,

⁶³ Lucy Worsley, *The Courtiers: Splendor and Intrigue in the Georgian Court at Kensington Palace* (New York: Walker & Co., 2010), 200.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

both of whom were adamant that they be present for the royal birth. Things certainly did not go as planned. On the evening of July 31, 1737, Princess Augusta's water broke and she went into labor. This would normally have been the time to summon numerous midwives, the Queen, and members of the Privy Council to verify not only the birth but also that the child in question was not replaced with another.⁶⁵ However, Frederick had absolutely no intention of letting Augusta give birth under the watchful and controlling eyes of the King and Queen. In a move that showed a blatant disregard for the health of his wife, Frederick had Augusta moved from her room, down the stairs, and into a carriage. The couple then sped off fifteen miles to St. James Palace in central London where a daughter, Princess Augusta Frederica, was born. The King and Queen were unaware of anything until the early hours of the morning when they were awoken, told of the impending birth, and that the parents to be were miles away. George II erupted into a fit of rage so magnificent that it lasted entirely through the next day.⁶⁶ One courtier observed that George "swells, struts, and storms with rage."⁶⁷

Frederick later explained that it was necessary to move Princess Augusta because of a lack of sufficient supplies at Hampton Court to facilitate a royal birth. This was obviously untrue; they had been there for months and everyone was expecting the birth. St. James Palace was the unprepared place and the royal couple, upon such a sudden arrival, was rumored to have had to use table cloths for bed sheets.⁶⁸ The quick and sudden move had nothing to do with the comfort of the mother or her impending child. Instead, the move was a political necessity for Frederick to the physical detriment of Augusta. Frederick saw this as the perfect opportunity to

⁶⁵ Ibid., 211.

⁶⁶ Ibid., 215.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 214.

make a statement and outfox his father. The fact that he was so willing to put his wife and unborn child in danger to do it shows the extent of his feud with his father.

George II banished Frederick from court. In a very ironic twist, he was forced to do to his son the very same thing that George I had previously done to him. This split from the King solidified Frederick's alliance with the Patriots. He was now in full opposition to his father just as they were in full opposition to the increasingly unpopular Walpole. The Prince had certainly been no stranger to the Patriots before this incident. When Queen Caroline had lamented at Frederick's popularity and strutting about, it was largely in the presence of the Patriots that he did so. Now, however, he and the Patriots began working closer together than ever before.

Frederick's interest in the arts was well established long before the feud between he and his father had reached its zenith. Two contemporaries who commented on the Prince's love and knowledge of literature and art were Anglo-Irish politician John Percival, Lord Egmont, and the famous engraver George Vertue. Lord Egmont found himself highly impressed by Frederick's ability to quote Longinus and Boileau during one conversation they had had. "I was extremely pleased to find the Prince had read so much, and had so good a memory."⁶⁹ George Vertue also commented very favorable on Frederick's cultured attitude, especially after one particular encounter in the King's Gallery at Hampton Court. As they were walking together, Vertue observed that Frederick used "proppr & significant Termes and expressions which is a plain evidence of his application to knowledge & skill in these historys & works of eminent Masters—and their merit to be thoroughly acquainted with them. A strong memory whilst thus engaged."⁷⁰ Famous twentieth century art historian and Director of the Royal Collection Oliver Miller noted

⁶⁹ Gerrard, 59.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

that Prince Frederick was the most important and intelligent royal collector between Charles I and George IV.⁷¹

In addition to his love of literature and art, Frederick also had a keen interest in music, poetry, and the stage. The Prince was an avid player of the cello and viola and wrote songs for late-night concerts he performed in the courtyards of Kensington.⁷² He wrote poetry in both English and French and even dabbled in songwriting.⁷³ At Leicester House, Frederick's residence, he enjoyed putting on performances of plays such as Rowe's *Lady Jane Grey* and Addison's *Cato*. He would have his children play different speaking roles in the plays, which had the added benefit of helping them along in their speech training. One particular performance of *Cato* at Leicester House in 1749 contained a prologue that was almost certainly written by Frederick himself. The speaking role of that prologue was given to Frederick's eldest son, the future George III, in which he uttered the lines that would not have been honest had they come from Frederick's mouth: "A boy in England born, in England bred."⁷⁴ This was written by Frederick as a direct reference to patriot kingship. Patriot kingship was an idea that the Prince of Wales had made a personal endeavor, beginning in the late 1730s with his relationship with the Patriot Whigs and one notable individual in particular – Henry Bolingbroke.

Viscount Bolingbroke, a lifelong Tory, had a complicated relationship with the Hanoverian dynasty. Bolingbroke had actively supported the Jacobite rebellion of 1715 that sought to dethrone George I. As punishment, Bolingbroke had been exiled to France, but was allowed to return some ten years later. When he did, he joined forces with the founder of the Patriot Whigs, the Earl of Bath, to start a publication known as *The Craftsman*. *The Craftsman*

⁷¹ Oliver Millar, *Tudor, Stuart and Early Georgian Pictures in the Royal Collection*, vol. 1 (1963), 28.

⁷² Gerrard, 61.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 111.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 61.

was the literary instrument of choice for the Patriots and allied Tories in their denouncement of Walpole and his policies. Nonetheless, Bolingbroke left again for France shortly after, this time voluntarily and only returned to the country intermittently. One such return occurred in 1738 and the timing was most opportune. This was just one year after Frederick's fight in Parliament over revenue and the fiasco at Hampton Court and St. James involving the birth of Princess Augusta Frederica.

Shortly after his return, Bolingbroke decided to pay a visit to Alexander Pope, the author of *The Dunciad*. By this time, Pope had become close friends with the Prince of Wales thanks to their shared opposition to both Walpole and George II. Frederick saw this meeting between Bolingbroke and Pope as a golden opportunity for himself as well. As a result, he went out of his way to meet Bolingbroke and the two quickly went from mere acquaintances to close friends. Now, Frederick could add Bolingbroke to his ever growing list of collaborators.⁷⁵ These same collaborators had previously played the roles of fervent anti-Hanoverians bringing national scorn and ridicule to George I and II. Bolingbroke had supported a military rebellion and Pope had famously called the first two Hanoverian monarchs Dunce I and Dunce II. Now that Frederick had brought them into his orbit, he was effectively taking the wind out of anti-Hanoverian sentiment. It was now becoming more of an opposition to George II than it was the Hanoverian family as a whole.

It was also during this time that Bolingbroke authored one of his most famous works, *The Idea of a Patriot King*. In it, Bolingbroke argues that in order to become a patriot king, the heir must be trained for his future duties by suffering in the cause of the people.⁷⁶ In *The Idea of a Patriot King*, Bolingbroke wrote: "No king, who is not, in the true meaning of the word, a

⁷⁵ Michael De La Noy, *The King Who Never Was* (London: Peter Owen Publishers, 1994), 178.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*

patriot, can govern Britain with ease, security, honor, dignity, or indeed with sufficient power and strength.”⁷⁷ He further asserted that:

Nothing can so surely and so effectively restore the virtue and public spirit, essential to the preservation of liberty, and national prosperity, as the reign of such a prince. We are willing to indulge this pleasing expectation, and there is nothing we desire more ardently than to be able to hold of British prince, without flattery, the same language that was held of a Roman emperor, with a great deal...⁷⁸

The name of Bolingbroke’s work, *The Patriot King*, can be interpreted in a couple of ways.

Firstly, the king of Bolingbroke’s philosophy should be one who is patriotic and is tied to Britain rather than some foreign land. Secondly, it should be a king who is allied with Patriot Whig ideas as well. Frederick very obviously represented both of these ideas. In doing so, he offered a hope for a future with a much better Hanoverian on the throne. After all, Bolingbroke was closely aligned with the Patriot Whigs. They represented the opposition to everything seen as bad about Hanoverian government – Walpole, corruption, absenteeism, and a continuous and blatant disregard for British priorities and values in favor of continental German ones.

Many, like Bolingbroke, had originally turned to the Jacobite Pretender as the best option of restoring Britain’s monarchy to a rightful king. This was obviously not an option for the Whigs who, while opposing George II’s policies, had participated in the overthrow of James II and one of his heirs. Now, in Prince Frederick, they had finally found their own royal glimmer of hope. Not only that, but they had brought Tories such as Bolingbroke into the fold of support as well. Frederick had created a coalition of support for his kingship from members of both parties who saw in him a positive change.

⁷⁷ Henry St. John Bolingbroke, *Letters on the Spirit of Patriotism and on the Idea of a Patriot King* (Oxford: University Press, 1917), 61.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 46.

Prince Frederick believed that, upon succeeding to the throne, it would be his job to bring the ideas of a patriot king to fruition.⁷⁹ Bolingbroke's instructions that the heir should suffer in the cause of the people was already something the Prince had experience with. One such instance had occurred in 1736, two years prior to Bolingbroke's work, when the Prince himself joined the drinking rioters protesting the Gin Acts and was even rumored to have taken part in their anti-monarchical chant. At Cliveden, he was known as the people's prince and stories abounded about his readiness to visit the homes of all Britons, including the poor, or of his walking the streets on his own with no apparent fear for his safety – quite an impressive feat for any Hanoverian during this period.⁸⁰

The young Prince of Wales had cultivated a cultural image that stood in magnificent contrast to that of both his father and his grandfather. Now, he sought to build upon it even further and to solidify the patriot image of himself in the most British way possible – through the arts. One example was the patriot prologue he later wrote to *Cato*. The Prince also wanted to take advantage of his friendship with George Vertue, too. The Prince, an avid buyer of Vertue's works, believed that they could join forces to accomplish something spectacular for the nation as well. As a result, Prince Frederick discussed with him “the settlement of an academy for drawing and painting,” though it would never materialize in his lifetime.⁸¹ Perhaps, most famously, he commissioned James Thomson to write *Rule, Britannia!* and Thomas Arne to set it to music. In fact, the song's first performance was in Frederick's home in 1740. Not only was the Prince of Wales defying previous Hanoverian behavior by participating in very pro-British culture, he was actively adding to and expanding it as well. Nevertheless, just five years after the song's debut,

⁷⁹ De La Noy, 179.

⁸⁰ Van der Kiste, 114.

⁸¹ Hutchinson, 11.

the Hanoverians were left staring down their old adversaries. They still had to survive one final invasion that would put the dynasty to the test.

In 1745, Bolingbroke's former allies, the Jacobites, began their second rebellion. Not surprisingly, he decided that it would not be in his best interests to throw his support behind them on this occasion. As for Prince Frederick, it does not take much to see just how serious he was about fighting for his father. While his younger brother, the Duke of Cumberland, was earning his nickname as the Butcher of Culloden, the closest Prince Frederick came to combat was the dining room. As George II's troops were fighting to retake Carlisle from the Jacobites, Frederick had a model of the city built and placed on his dinner table. In what was to be his greatest military triumph, the Prince gave the model a thorough pummeling by tossing sugar plums at it.⁸² After the rebellion was over, Frederick even met with the infamous Flora MacDonald. MacDonald had been imprisoned for aiding in the escape of the rebellion's leader, Bonnie Prince Charlie. Not only did the Frederick meet with her, he even helped to secure her eventual release from prison as well.⁸³

Unfortunately, all of the good hope that made Frederick the "people's prince" was to go unfulfilled. In March of 1751, six years after the Hanoverians survived the Jacobites, Prince Frederick took ill. He died on the March 31st at the age of 44, dashing Patriot hopes of a glorious future under his reign. George II later remarked that 1751 had been a fatal year for his family. He supposedly added: "I have lost my eldest son, but I am glad."⁸⁴ Nonetheless, Frederick's death was regretted by many, including painter Joshua Reynolds who lamented the loss of one "who would certainly have been a great patron."⁸⁵ Frederick's death was even felt in the world of

⁸² Ibid., 146.

⁸³ Van der Kiste, 187.

⁸⁴ Marples, 114.

⁸⁵ Van der Kiste, 193.

botany, thanks to his patronage in that field, too. Botanical gardener Peter Collinson wrote to famous American naturalist John Bartram: “The death of our late excellent Prince of Wales has cast a great damp over the nation. Gardening and planting have lost their best friend and encourager; for the Prince had delighted in that rational amusement a long while; but lately he had a laudable and princely ambition to excel all others.”⁸⁶ The writer and poet Richard Rolt expressed his sense of loss by writing *A monody, on the death of His Royal Highness Frederick-Louis Prince of Wales*. The work is an allegory, similar to Pope’s *The Dunciad*, in which the forces of dullness unite to kill Frederick and, with him, a patriotic regeneration of the arts.⁸⁷ All of these lamentations do far more to convey the sense of loss felt at Frederick’s death than the anonymous verse that has had the misfortune of becoming the best known: “Had it been his father, I had much rather...but since ‘tis only Fred...there’s no more to be said.”⁸⁸

In fact, there was much more to be said and say it people did. Prince Frederick made it all too clear to his contemporaries that he was a man very different from either George I or George II. George I continuously gave the image of being a stiff in public and caused those who surrounded him to believe him a bore who lacked in intelligence. Frederick, by contrast, impressed numerous acquaintances ranging from the great artists of the day to the same woman who had leveled harsh criticisms at his grandfather. George II was proud to shout out how much he hated poets and painters and that neither of them had ever done any good. Frederick embraced both of them, even taking up the arts himself. The first two Hanoverian monarchs had made themselves unpopular by spending large swaths of their time on the European mainland and then shying away from the public when they actually were in Britain. Their support of Robert Walpole had deepened this resentment with shouts of corruption ringing from both the Tories

⁸⁶ Gerrard, 66.

⁸⁷ Ibid.

⁸⁸ Van der Kiste, 193.

and Patriot Whigs. They successfully fought off the Jacobites on two occasions, but the frequency of the rebellions showed just how unstable and frail the new dynasty was. Their lack of interest in nearly every aspect of British culture only exacerbated the problem by further alienating themselves from their subjects. In short, they were seen as foreign rulers – outsiders – and they ruled in a way that only seemed to confirm it in the minds of their subjects.

Frederick, however, had an entirely different air about him. He came to Britain as someone eager to assimilate. He joined his new countrymen in drinking, in sporting, and in reveling in British culture. He took it upon himself to go out and see his subjects and to let them see him. Instead of clamoring back to Hanover incessantly, he was buying up British art and commissioning the writing of patriotic anthems. Instead of being an absentee king, he was readying himself to be a patriot one. It was only by his untimely death that those plans were thwarted. George II reigned for nine more years after Frederick's death before dying in 1760. With his death, Frederick's young son now sat upon the throne. Now, it was up to him to fulfill the role of patriot king – a moniker later associated with him. Prince Frederick had laid out the blueprint on how to do it. George III carried it out and made it so.

CHAPTER 4

GEORGE III: PATRIOT KING

“I glory in the name of Briton...”

On 25 October 1760, George II arose at his regular time of six in the morning at Kensington Palace and asked for his morning cup of chocolate. Soon after, he retired to the lavatory in preparation for a walk around the gardens. Moments later, his valet heard a loud crashing sound from within and, bursting through the door, found the King on the floor bleeding from a head wound sustained by a fall.⁸⁹ George II had suffered an aortic aneurysm which had caused his heart to rupture. The King was dead. His grandson and heir, George, Prince of Wales, was riding on his horse at Kew when he received the news that the King had had an accident. He used the excuse that his horse was lame to turn back and head to Kensington Palace, meeting William Pitt along the way bringing confirmation of the King’s death.⁹⁰ The long reign of King George III had officially begun. The new monarch, of a very different mindset than his predecessors, had a disparate vision of kingship.

This new mindset was the result of George’s upbringing and education. He was born on 4 June 1738 to Frederick, Prince of Wales and Princess Augusta. Prince Frederick made it a priority to educate the young prince and his brother, Edward, in subjects ranging from literature to mathematics and the sciences. This created a fascination for scientific objects as well as learning that would last throughout George III’s life. Their education was carried out by numerous private tutors selected by Frederick. The people he sought advice from and who he

⁸⁹ Van der Kiste, 213.

⁹⁰ Ibid.

chose to fill the roles had a dramatic impact on George's ideas and philosophy with regard to kingship. They also drew suspicion from others who believed they were out to corrupt the young boy's mind.

Frederick determined that his belief in being a patriot king would be passed down to his son. He even left handwritten instructions to his son as advice on how George should rule if Frederick died prematurely and never lived to be king. As Frederick did die in 1751, the letter shows very good forethought on his part to commit his views and opinions to paper. His writing it in and of itself harks back to the Stuart's who did the same thing for their sons, such as James I's *Basilikon Doron*, written as instructions to Prince Henry of Wales on how to rule.⁹¹ One wonders what difference James's letter might have made had his son not predeceased him and Charles I taken the throne in his stead. Frederick's letter was titled, *Instructions for my Son George, drawn by my Self, for His good, that of my Family, and for that of His People*. Based heavily on Bolingbroke's *Patriot King*, it served as an instruction manual on how George was to change the tide of growing anti-Hanoverian sentiment in the country.

One instruction he gave to his young son showed forethought as excellent as his writing the letter itself. "Convince the Nation that You are not only an Englishman born and bred, but that You are also by inclination, and that as You will love your Younger children next to the Elder born, so you will love all Your other Countries, next to England."⁹² In these simple words, Frederick showed that he had excellent knowledge of the Hanoverian situation as it was in the 1740s. Firstly, he knew that George had an asset that he himself did not have; George was born in Britain. It did not matter how much support Frederick drummed up for his views on kingship, he could not escape the fact that he was born in Hanover. No amount of cultural assimilation,

⁹¹ Marples, 79.

⁹² Ibid.

support for gin, or hours spent playing cricket could change this. He knew that George represented the perfect hope of being a native-born patriot king who, if he listened to the advice of his father, could turn around the fragile rule of the Hanoverian dynasty and make it solid.

Secondly, Frederick's advice for George to treat his other dominions as second in importance to Britain was a clear attempt to fix the problem suffered by George I and II. Their continual preference for Hanover to Britain, including their long absences to the electorate, caused Britons to feel neglected and second best. This helped keep support for Hanoverian opponents strong as well as served as an excuse, in the minds of Britons, for why the Hanoverians were not fit to rule. Frederick, as evidenced by his instructions, knew that this was a problem that could no longer be allowed to go on. He thus implored Prince George to never put Hanover above Britain. If he listened to this advice, his Hanoverian detractors would lose much of their footing in their claim that the dynasty held British concerns subservient to those of other dominions. George certainly took both pieces of advice to heart as is evidenced by his actions later on as king.

For Frederick, it was also paramount that George's tutors educated him in a way that was compatible with his instructions to his son. It is not surprising then that he went to Viscount Bolingbroke, author of *The Patriot King*, for a suggestion on who to hire. The former Jacobite suggested George Lewis Scott for the position and Frederick agreed, hiring him in late 1750, just months before his death. Scott, like Bolingbroke, held Jacobite sympathies.⁹³ It is not surprising then that this created fears among many in government. Men who had previously supported the Pretender were now in control of molding the young Prince George and educating him. If they still held a preference for the Stuarts, how could they be trusted to educate a future King? They

⁹³ Christopher Hibbert, *George III: A Personal History* (New York: Basic Books, 1998), 11.

could educate him to believe that he was weak and that he should turn over the throne to the Stuarts instead. What many feared, however, was that George's tutors would teach him to be an absolute monarch and mold him to behave and rule as James II had. This fear became so great that anonymous publications began springing up decrying the men now in charge of the prince.

One such publication came out shortly after Frederick's death when the young George was Prince of Wales. Titled *Copy of a Memorial of several Noblemen and Gentlemen of the first rank and fortune*, it launched into a fury of allegations and fears directed at the young prince's handlers. It chiefly complained that one could "see none but the friends and pupils of the late Lord Bolingbroke entrusted with the education of a Prince, whose family that very Lord endeavoured, by his measures, to exclude, and by his writings to expel, from the throne of these kingdoms."⁹⁴ The blistering publication then turned its attention to George Scott specifically:

That there being great reason to believe that a noble Lord has accused one of the preceptors of Jacobitism, it is astonishing that no notice has been taken of a complaint of so high a nature: on the contrary, the accused person continues in the same trust, without any inquiry into the grounds of the charge, or any steps taken by the accused to purge himself of a crime of so black a dye.⁹⁵

The accusations mentioned in the publication had been leveled at Scott by Lord Harcourt and Dr. Thomas Hayter. Harcourt and Hayter had been brought in to assist in tutoring the prince shortly after Frederick's death amidst growing concerns about who he had left in charge of instruction. They accused George's tutors of poisoning his mind with Jacobitism, including the claim that his preceptors had encouraged him to read a book about the Glorious Revolution of 1688 written from a Jacobite viewpoint. Harcourt even went as far as to suggest George's teachers were

⁹⁴ John Brown, ed., *Memoirs of George the Third, Late King of Great Britain; Including Characters and Anecdotes of the British Court; With an Important Addition of Scarce, Curious, and Original Matter* (Liverpool: Caxton Press, 1820), 267.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*

actually in contact with other known Jacobites as a part of a looming conspiracy.⁹⁶ In the end, Scott stayed on despite others leaving and no evidence ever came to light to back up Harcourt and Hayter's claims. Clearly, though, the anonymous *Memorial* was penned by someone who was of the same opinion as Harcourt and possibly someone who knew him personally. It scathingly closes with:

Lastly, the memorialists cannot help remarking, that the three or four low, dark, suspected persons, are the only men whose station is fixed and permanent; but that all the great offices and officers are so constantly varied and shuffled about, to the disgrace of this country, that the best persons apprehended, there is a settled design in these low and suspected people, to infuse such jealousies, caprices, and fickleness, into the two ministers whose confidence they engross, as may render this government ridiculous and contemptible, and facilitate the revolution which the memorialists think they have but too much reason to fear is meditating.

The memorialists were certainly correct in their assertion that a revolution was brewing. It was not a Jacobite revolution, though. Rather, it was a revolution in Hanoverian kingship. The decisions made by Frederick about who should educate Prince George had multiple effects that proved to be his making as a strong monarch.

Firstly, the fact that these men had once been Jacobites was actually an asset and not a detriment. James II may have been deposed because he was a Catholic and an absolutist, but the Stuarts still knew how to rule as patriot kings. When James I became king, he and his entire court packed up and left Scotland for London. They became English practically overnight. The Stuarts were also well experienced at engaging in patronage of the arts. Charles I was one of the most avid collectors of any monarch. Their downfall was their absolutist and divine right beliefs. That is why Charles I was executed and James II deposed. After the Glorious Revolution of 1688, Parliament did away with the notion of divine right. Unfortunately, George I and George II also

⁹⁶ Hibbert, 17.

did away with any obligation felt by the monarchy to be and act British as well as engage in artistic patronage or show an interest in higher learning.

The onus was on Frederick to instill this ability in his son and bring back the perceived majesty of the crown that Britons so desperately craved. Frederick knew that he could not rely on the advice of his father nor any men suggested by him to do any good service to Prince George's education. That is why he sought advice from and appointed former Jacobites to be George's tutors and preceptors. These men knew the ruling methods of the Stuarts. They could instill these same principles in George. They could teach him a love for higher learning and patronage as well as how to be British instead of German. In short, they could teach him the proper way to be a king. This accomplished another goal as well. It undermined the position of the Pretender. No longer was it a contest between the Stuarts who, although well versed in the art of ruling, were still Catholic and absolutist and the seemingly ignorant and disinterested Hanoverians. George's tutors would teach him how to be and act just as majestic and kingly as the Stuarts. The British could finally have a king who was Protestant, constrained by Parliament, and who appeared patriotic and devoted to Britain. The Hanoverians were finally building up a solid foundation on which to rule and wipe out any remaining Jacobite resistance.

As it turns out, neither George Scott nor any of the other tutors accused of being Jacobites would have the longest or strongest impact on the young prince. That honor would go to John Stuart, 3rd Earl of Bute. Despite his surname, Lord Bute was not closely related to the Pretender and had no history of Jacobite sympathies. He also was no stranger to those who opposed George II's policies, either. He married the daughter of Lady Montagu, who was close friends with Alexander Pope and who had written her less than gleaming impression of George I. Bute became a part of Prince Frederick's inner circle and eventually was made a Lord of the

Bedchamber. After Frederick's death, Princess Augusta insisted he remain as Groom of the Stole.⁹⁷ Though he was not a Jacobite himself, Bute belonged to the Tory party, which included Bolingbroke and had long been considered the party where Jacobitism was most ensconced. Bute was also, like Frederick, a heavy supporter of Bolingbroke's idea of a patriot king. After Frederick's death, Bute used his position to become a father figure to George and to help teach him the best way to carry out the instructions left to him by Frederick.

One method he employed was to have Prince George write essays on constitutional monarchy, including ones dedicated to analyzing monarchs of the past. In one example, an essay written about Edward III was corrected by Bute to incorporate a moral lesson. Morality became a constant theme with Bute. He used it to warn the young prince against illicit sexual relations and women in politics.⁹⁸ After all, it had been Edward III's mother and her lover who had conspired to murder Edward II. Other essays touched upon figures such as Henry II and the sons of William the Conqueror.⁹⁹ Bute was giving Prince George something that neither George I nor George II had ever had. George was getting a crash course in British royal history, being taught to not only know the events, but the mistakes made by kings and the way to avoid them. Bute was guiding the young boy along a long and winding roadmap of kingship, cleverly illustrating which actions led to a strong grip on the throne and which led to destruction. Keeping with Frederick's advice to his son, George was beginning to feel an overpowering sense of duty to Britain and not to the native lands of his grandfather. In 1757, he wrote Bute saying that when king he hoped to restore Britain to "her ancient state of liberty" and to make it "the residence of true piety and virtue."¹⁰⁰

⁹⁷ Hibbert, 24.

⁹⁸ John Brooke, *King George III* (London: Constable & Company Ltd, 1972), 48.

⁹⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁰ R. R. Sedgwick, ed., *Letters from George III to Lord Bute, 1756 -1766* (London, 1939), 6.

Just three years later, George II took his fatal trip to the lavatory and Prince George became King George III with Lord Bute closely in tow. Frederick's dream of becoming a patriot king would finally be fulfilled by his son. Immediately after his accession, George III took it upon himself to follow his father's instructions. He stressed the fact that he, unlike his predecessors, had been born in Britain. His papers make note of the fact that on the day of George II's death, George III made a declaration of "His Attachment to His native Country."¹⁰¹ One month later, on 18 November 1760, George III gave his first speech opening Parliament. It was a speech written with the aid of Lord Bute and it went further to stress George's place of birth: "Born and educated in this country, I glory in the name of Briton; and the peculiar happiness of my life will ever consist in promoting the welfare of a people whose loyalty and warm affection to me I consider as the greatest and most permanent security of my throne."¹⁰² The Duke of Newcastle clearly saw Bute's authorship in the wording. He wrote to Lord Hardwick: "I suppose you will think *Briton* remarkable. It denotes the author to all the world."¹⁰³ There has been debate among historians as to whether George said he gloried in the name of "Britain" or "Briton" in his speech with different quotations offering opposing spellings.

Rather than argue on this point, it should be argued that George III quite clearly considered both to be one and the same. He gloried in being a native born Briton and, as King, in being the embodiment of Britain itself. That, in his mind, was what a proper king was supposed to be. What is also clear is that his choice of words was not lost on those in attendance. Eleven

¹⁰¹ Sir John Fortescue, ed., *The Correspondence of King George the Third, Printed from the Original Papers in the Royal Archives at Windsor Castle*, vol. 1 (London: Frank Cass & Co. Ltd, 1967), 18.

¹⁰² George Harris, ed., *The Life of Lord Chancellor Hardwicke; With Selections from His Correspondence. Diaries, Speeches, and Judgments*, vol. 3 (London: Edward Moxon, 1847), 232.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 231.

days after the speech on the 29 November, the *British Freeholder* recorded the sentiments of many:

To hear a king upon the throne of these realms, glory in the name of Briton, and to place a peculiar emphasis on being born and educated in England, inspires every Briton with the liveliest sentiments of duty and gratitude, and exultation of mind. For, however just, wise and good that prince may be, who is a stranger and Alien born, his government never gives that thorough satisfaction as under a native king... The sovereign who glories in the name of Briton will glory in every measure that is conducive to the glory of his country, and in discouraging and rejecting every connection that shall tend to diminish that glory or to oppress his people for the advantage of a foreign state.¹⁰⁴

It is clear that the *Freeholder* was not only glorifying George III, but offering him up as a stark contrast to George I and II. The reference to discouraging and rejecting every connection that shall diminish his glory for the advantage of a foreign state is quite overtly a reference to his predecessors' habits. The first two Georges had diminished the glory of the British throne by sacrificing British interests for the advantage of their native Hanover. George III, born and bred in England, had no such inclinations. His native birth coupled with his being taught Frederick and Bolingbroke's philosophy on patriot kingship meant that he was now in the perfect position to bring the glory previously lost by the Hanoverians back to the crown.

Though in position, George III's early years in power proved to be where his true training in being a patriot king took place. The first ten years were especially fraught with growing pains. From the beginning, the King found himself to be entirely reliant on the Earl of Bute. This extended to almost every question and issue as though he were a helpless child relying on a parent. His letters to Bute both before and after his taking the throne reveal a man that is nervous, insecure, and highly worried about his future prospects as king:

I beg you will be persuaded that I will constantly reflect whether whether what I am doing is worthy of one who is to mount the Throne, and who owes everything to his friend. I will by my behaviour show that I know if I in the least deviate

¹⁰⁴ *The Monitor or British Freeholder*, no. 280, 29 Nov. 1760 (London: Jay Scott, 1760), 1690-1.

from what here I promise and declare, I shall lose the greatest of stakes, my Crown, and what I esteem far beyond that, my friend...¹⁰⁵

George III clearly believed that his entire position was due to the aid of the Earl of Bute. Bute was the trusted friend of his father who was going to help him carry out his father's plan. George believed that if he erred even in the slightest from Bute's instruction, it would cast his entire reign into a sea of doubt. Therefore, he consulted with Bute on matters ranging from the personal to the political.

One of the first issues was before George took the throne. George preferred Lady Sara Lennox and, naturally, he wrote to Bute seeking advice and consent:

I submit my happiness to you who are the best of friends, whose friendship I value if possible above my love for the most charming of her sex; if you can give me no hopes how to be happy I surrender my fortune into your hands, and will keep my thoughts even from the dear object of my love, grieve in silence, and never trouble you more with this unhappy tale; for if I must either lose my friend or my love, I will give up the latter, for I esteem your friendship above every earthly joy...¹⁰⁶

Bute responded that he was against the match on the grounds that he did not believe it best for the future king's position and that George should think of his birthright and be willing to sacrifice for his country.¹⁰⁷ George, as always, submitted and did as he was told: "The interest of my country ever shall be my first care, my own inclinations shall ever submit to it. I am born for the happiness or misery of a great nation, and consequently must often act contrary to my passion."¹⁰⁸ He accepted Bute's decision and grieved in silence. Finally he wrote Bute that: "I should wish we could next summer by some method or other get some account of the various

¹⁰⁵ Hibbert, 27.

¹⁰⁶ Plumb, 93.

¹⁰⁷ Brooke, 71.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., 72.

princesses in Germany.”¹⁰⁹ He trusted Bute’s judgment to be far superior to George II’s, adding: “I can never agree to alter my situation whilst this old man lives. I will rather undergo anything ever so disagreeable than put my trust in him for a single moment in an affair of such delicacy.”¹¹⁰ Thus, it was by the influence of Bute rather than George II that, as King, George III settled on Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, marrying her on 8 September 1761.

On other matters, George III was going to have to learn that he was the king and that Bute was not. He had not learned the most important rule of kingship. He was in charge and he was the one who was going to have to make certain decisions. Bute’s authority over him soon began to draw sharp criticism from those in government who believed Bute was acting as though he himself were Prime Minister or, even worse, the king. Unsurprisingly, just two years into his reign, George made Bute Prime Minister in 1762, but it took less than a year for that plan to completely unravel. Bute was the first Tory to serve as Prime Minister since the reign of the Stuarts. The Whigs distrusted him, routinely satirizing him as being the power behind the throne as well as being in an illicit affair with the King’s mother. This combined with his policies made his premiership difficult. For example, Bute came under heavy fire for the 1763 Treaty of Paris in which he was accused of giving the French terms too lenient. At home, he had proposed a cider tax that roused anger throughout much of England, which is known for its cider production. By April 1763, Bute could rarely go out in public without having refuse and other objects hurled at him or being mobbed by angry crowds.¹¹¹ Finally, George III realized he had no choice but to replace Bute with the Whigs. George Grenville became Prime Minister.

Bute’s failed premiership has been seen by historians as representing a horrible start to George III’s reign. He was vastly unpopular and this affected the King’s popularity as well.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹¹ Hibbert, 91.

However, Bute's rule over the country should not be judged too harshly. Rather, we should look at it from multiple perspectives, including the role it played in warding off the greatest threat to Hanoverian power. Ever since they had taken the throne, the Hanoverians' chief opposition had been the Jacobites. George I was forced to contend with an invasion in 1715, just one year after he took the throne, as well as further plots until his death. George II had faced the same problem with the even more powerful Jacobite Rebellion of 1745 that had taken over Scotland and very nearly came close to breaching London itself. The Jacobites were undoubtedly the greatest threat to George III's power when he ascended the throne, yet he never had to withstand an invasion on par with that of his father or grandfather. In fact, there were hardly any really serious Jacobite plots during his reign. Much of this can be credited to his father, Prince Frederick, and Lord Bute.

Bonnie Prince Charlie, the Jacobite Pretender, was exiled in France, where he had been since the failed rebellion of 1745. There was always little doubt that the Jacobites, to be successful, needed the military and financial aid of the French. France had endorsed the rebellions of 1715 and 1745 and there was still much hope that they would again get behind such a plan, especially as they were engaging Britain in the Seven Years' War. However, naval defeats in 1759 coupled with Bute's concessions in the Treaty of Paris spelled the end of Jacobite hope. The French simply no longer saw any benefit in once again supporting a Stuart invasion. They knew that the odds were heavily stacked in the Hanoverians' favor and that it would come at a great cost to them, both financially and diplomatically. The naval defeats of 1759 weakened their military capability and the terms of the Treaty of Paris in 1763 meant that they stood to lose more than they could gain by supporting Bonnie Prince Charlie. As long as there was peace between the two countries, there could be and would be no Jacobite rebellion against George III.

The Jacobites had long relied on support from conspirators within Britain to further their cause. This was waning as well. Most of those who had supported the earlier rebellions were now dead. Many who were still alive had become a part of Prince Frederick's inner circle, such as Lord Bolingbroke and George Scott. Frederick had embraced many who were potential Jacobite supporters at home by making their philosophy about kingship his philosophy, too. This resulted in them seeing Frederick and his son, George III, as men who would carry out their view of monarchy. Supporting the Pretender would mean they were risking their newly established positions of influence for no gain. The prime motivator in backing the Jacobites in the first place was undoubtedly their anger at losing their prominent positions at court and the Pretender's promise that they would regain them. Now, they had found a way to reach prominence without the necessity of regime change. Frederick had subverted support for Bonnie Prince Charlie at home and the actions of those such as Bute in the early part of George III's reign cut them off from any French support. Furthermore, successive governments under George's reign made it a point to discredit the Jacobites by associating them with unpopular minorities within the country. These ranged from the obvious Catholics to the Scots and Irish, of which the Irish were actually rather active in their support.¹¹² Together, these combined to eliminate the biggest external threat to Hanoverian rule.

Bonnie Prince Charlie died in exile in France in 1788. His son, Henry, made it a point to never oppose George III's reign and the King even granted him a pension.¹¹³ The changing political tide was not lost on the papacy, either. Upon Henry becoming the chief heir to the House of Stuart, the Pope refused to recognize him, a Catholic, as the rightful monarch of

¹¹² Paul Kleber Monod, *Jacobitism and the English People: 1688-1788* (Cambridge: University Press, 1993), 106.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*

Britain.¹¹⁴ The Hanoverians were now the rulers of Britain in the eyes of the Catholic Church, the British people, and the French. Jacobitism had been defeated and the patriot king had won out for the Hanoverians. It was still up to George III, though, to show himself as a king who ruled and behaved differently than his predecessors.

Prior to his death in 1751, Frederick had been greatly enthralled with the idea of founding a royal academy for the arts. This was something that many in the country had been pushing for at length and they saw Frederick as the person to get it done. One pamphlet, published in 1749, detailed at length the desires of its authors to found such an academy. *An Essay on Design, With Proposals For a Public Academy* cited the precedent set down by ancient civilizations such as the Greeks and Egyptians for artistic expression as a form of nationalism. It also looked at the contemporary example of France and Louis XVI has a template for Britain to follow.¹¹⁵ In doing so, Britain would be boosting its economic status as well. London, the essay argued, would cease to only be a seat of commerce and would instead be an artistic haven spurring creation and drawing attention from all around.¹¹⁶ Perhaps not surprisingly, the essay was sold in part by John Brindley, bookseller to Frederick, Prince of Wales.

Frederick and his friend, famous artist George Vertue, had met many times to discuss “the settlement of an Academy for drawing and painting.”¹¹⁷ Vertue saw the project as being one “for improvement of the Art of Delineing in this Nation.”¹¹⁸ He further described the benefits of such a project: “Being a most certain way, for our Nobility, Gentry and Learned persons to gain knowledge in the Arts of Architecture, Painting, Sculpture, the Drawing of Military

¹¹⁴ John MacLeod, *Dynasty: The Stuarts, 1560–1807* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1999), 347-48.

¹¹⁵ John Gwynn, *An Essay on Design: Including Proposals for a Public Academy* (London: John Brindley, 1749), 23.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 31.

¹¹⁷ The Walpole Society, *The Eighteenth Annual Volume of the Walpole Society (1929-1930)* (Oxford: University Press, 1930), 10.

¹¹⁸ Hutchinson, 11.

Fortifications, Engineer, Views prospects of Cities Town houses, with Plans of Ports Bays, both Regular and Irregular &c. whereby they may become as good judges of these Arts.”¹¹⁹ Had Prince Frederick lived longer than he did, he and Vertue’s vision may have become a reality, but it was not to be. Instead, it would be nearly twenty years after *An Essay on Design* that an academy for the arts was founded by and with royal support.

On 10 December 1768, George III, by personal act, founded the Royal Academy of the Arts with the goal of promoting British artists, sculptors, and architects and their works. Once again, George III had taken an unfulfilled hope and goal of his father and made it so. It was one in a long line of examples of royal patronage of the arts and artists by the King. Later, he would commission large and ornate portraits to be painted and hung along the corridors of Windsor Castle. Like his father, George delighted in being an amateur musician as well. He even owned a harpsichord given to him by Handel. His son, George IV, would be the one to grant a royal charter to the Royal Academy of Music in 1830. George III also began a literary collection early in his reign. He had not inherited a library from his Hanoverian predecessors due to their disinterest in it. In 1762, he purchased the library of Joseph Smith, the British consul at Venice and continuously built upon it over the years.¹²⁰ The King’s collection was originally housed at Buckingham Palace, occupying four rooms, with the King regularly granting access to the collection to various scholars who could find it of use. By the time of his death in 1820, it had grown to house over 65,000 volumes.

George III’s reign and royal image was as successful as it was thanks to a variety of factors. These can, of course, not all be boiled down to Prince Frederick and his patriot king philosophy. George III was not as popular at the beginning of his reign as he was at the end of it.

¹¹⁹ Ibid.

¹²⁰ Lotte Hellinga, "The Bibliotheca Smithiana" in *Libraries within the Library: the Origins of the British Library's Printed Collections*, eds. Giles Mandelbrote and Barry Taylor (London: British Library, 2009), 261–79.

The length of his reign itself, lasting sixty years, helped to play an obvious role. Other monarchs who have reigned a similar length of time such as Victoria and Elizabeth II have also enjoyed wide popularity. For many, George was the only monarch they knew and the memory of Jacobitism and the accession of George I in 1714 was a memory far too distant for them to have. The British fight against Napoleon coupled with George's illness that drove him into seclusion at Windsor also did much to build upon his image as a patriotic father figure to his country who was now becoming infirm. Nonetheless, the instructions left by Frederick on how to be a good and proper king were dutifully carried out by George and undoubtedly served as the foundation upon which his majestic time on the throne was built. The King made it his goal to correct everything done wrong in the previous two reigns. He put Britain above Hanover, hardly giving the latter a thought. George I and II had spent so much time there that they were almost absentee monarchs. George III never once stepped foot there in his sixty years on the throne. Whereas his predecessors were seen as buffoons with an aversion to poetry, painting, literature and music, believing them to be of no great importance, George III was an important patron of the arts.

The clearest view in the difference between how George I and II were viewed by the public in contrast to George III can be seen in the latter's death. Historian Linda Colley perhaps describes it best: "When George I expired while visiting Hanover in 1727, no one in Britain seems to have clamoured for the return of the body, and no monument to him was ever erected. George II fared little better in 1760. Outside the court, the newspapers did not scruple to report that he had died in the lavatory, anymore than Gentleman's Magazine was abashed at printing a coloured diagram of his dissected heart... Yet when George III died sixty years later, shops shut throughout the kingdom; even the London poor were reported as wearing some signs of mourning; both government and opponent politicians paid their respects; and over 30,000 people

descended on Windsor for the funeral, even though it was a strictly private occasion.”¹²¹ This latter observation was in great contrast to the funeral of George II whose funeral was “not well attended by the peers nor even the king’s old servants.”¹²² George III died on 29 January 1820 a man vastly more popular than his Hanoverian predecessors. He did so because he had followed in the footsteps of his father in striving to be a king unlike any Hanoverian monarch before him. In doing so, he died on a throne that his family was safely secure upon. It was so much so that the reign of his son, often seen as indolent and one of personal excess, did nothing to dent that security. Had George III not striven to be a patriot king, the reign of George IV or even his own may not have enjoyed such a luxury.

¹²¹ Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992), 229-30.

¹²² J. C. D. Clark, ed., *The Memoirs and Speeches of James, 2nd Earl Waldegrave 1742-1763* (Cambridge: University Press, 1988), 89.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

After George III's death, the idea of patriotic monarchy continued and even strengthened. Despite his personal shortcomings, George IV kept up his father's tradition, dedicating national resources to celebrating the arts as well as founding universities to compete with Oxford and Cambridge such as King's College, London. Monarchy began its slow march towards the symbolic and away from the political and hands-on approach. Prior to the Hanoverians, the monarch had worked with Parliament and together they exercised direct governance over the nation. Under George I, this process began to change with more and more direct power being placed in the hands of Parliament and less in the royal person. The new position of Prime Minister was fast becoming the seat of real executive power in Britain with the crown becoming more and more just a symbol of that power. Also gone were the days of monarchs holding divine right or even being the closest heir as their chief claim to the throne. Now, monarch would be based simply on tradition and the people of Britain's acceptance of it. If a king or queen failed to meet the challenge and could not win the approval of Parliament, they could easily be deposed in favor of a more suited candidate. This was how the Hanoverians inherited the throne in the first place. To remain on the throne, they had to emphasize their majesty and that they deserved to hold it.

George I and George II were wholly incapable of living up the image of monarchy that the Stuarts had. They came off as rough, unrefined, and more than slightly ignorant. Their distaste of the arts and of learning did a disservice to their position and caused them to be weak. The Jacobites were able to mount challenges to their rule in part due to their being perceived as

properly suited for the British throne – in all ways but their Catholic faith. It was that Catholic faith that was the major roadblock to their retaking power. If the Old Pretender, James Stuart, or the Young Pretender, Bonnie Prince Charlie, converted to Protestantism prior to the rebellions of 1715 or 1745, they may have stood a much greater chance at success. The Young Pretender eventually did try this tactic, but by that time it was too late. The Hanoverians were reversing their image and support for Jacobitism was all but gone.

It was through the work of Frederick, Prince of Wales, that the Hanoverian dynasty went from one seen as full of ignorant Germans to one of patriotic Britons of the first order. Frederick knew that the Hanoverians had to abandon their native lands in Germany if they were to gain acceptance in the new one. They had to adapt and assimilate, something his father and grandfather were unwilling to do. They had to become interested in British life, people, and culture. This could not be achieved by monarchs too stubborn and unwilling to attempt it or by ones who hardly even cared for gracing their dominion with their physical presence. Frederick knew this. The former Hanoverians did not.

His son, George III, on the other hand was born in Britain and had no natural inclinations to be German. He was the first Hanoverian to speak English as his native tongue. His father was aware that his son possessed all of the natural traits to make him a successful king. The only thing he would need would be proper instruction on how to use those traits. The tutors appointed by Frederick were men who knew how a king was supposed to act, look, and behave. They were Englishmen, some former supporters of the Jacobites, who were able to mold George III into a constitutional monarch limited by Parliament, but who had the demeanor and majesty of his Stuart forebears. They imparted upon him the vision and philosophy of Prince Frederick and turned George into what Bolingbroke described in *The Patriot King*.

Today, the monarchy bears all of the hallmarks of having descended from this philosophy. British kings and queens now play a limited role in the governance of the country. They no longer write or execute the laws, though they still must assent to them. They no longer rule based on divine right, either. They rule simply out of tradition and acceptance by the people. If this acceptance were to go by the wayside, the monarchy would collapse in a heartbeat.

Yet, despite this, there is a much more important role for the monarch to fulfill. The role of ruler has been replaced with that of representative. The monarchy represents the embodiment of Britain and all of the things that make Britain great – wealth, liberty, rule by consent, charity, patronage, and majesty. In short, the monarchy's role is to uphold the patriotic ideals of sacrificing for the nation, being neutral in politics, and putting Britain above all else. The royal family is able to fulfill its role as such thanks in great part to Prince Frederick's philosophy. It is a philosophy passed down over three hundred years through his son, George III, and great-grand daughter, Queen Victoria, to the current monarch, Elizabeth II. Prince Frederick did not just change the course of the Hanoverians in his pursuit of Bolingbroke's ideas. He changed the course of all the Hanoverian descendants as well. Frederick, Prince of Wales, saved a dynasty and shaped the monarchy as we know it today.

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VITA

AUSTIN W. B. HILTON

- Education: B.A. History/Political Science, East Tennessee State University,
Johnson City, Tennessee, 2013
M.A. History, East Tennessee State University,
Johnson City, Tennessee, 2016
- Professional Experience: Graduate Assistant, East Tennessee State University Career
Services, Spring 2016.
Assistant to Dr. John Rankin, HIS 1120 World History Since 1500,
Fall 2015.
Assistant to Dr. John Rankin, HIS 1120 World History Since 1500,
Spring 2015.
Assistant to Dr. Tom Lee, HIS 2020 U.S. History since 1877, Fall
2014.
- Honors and Awards: Phi Kappa Phi Honor Society, 2015.
Golden Key International Honour Society, 2015.
Graduate Student Research Award, East Tennessee State
University History Department, 2015.
Tuition Scholarship, East Tennessee State University History
Department, 2014-15.
Pi Gamma Mu Honor Society, 2012.
Phi Alpha Theta Honor Society, 2011.
Pi Sigma Alpha Honor Society, 2011.