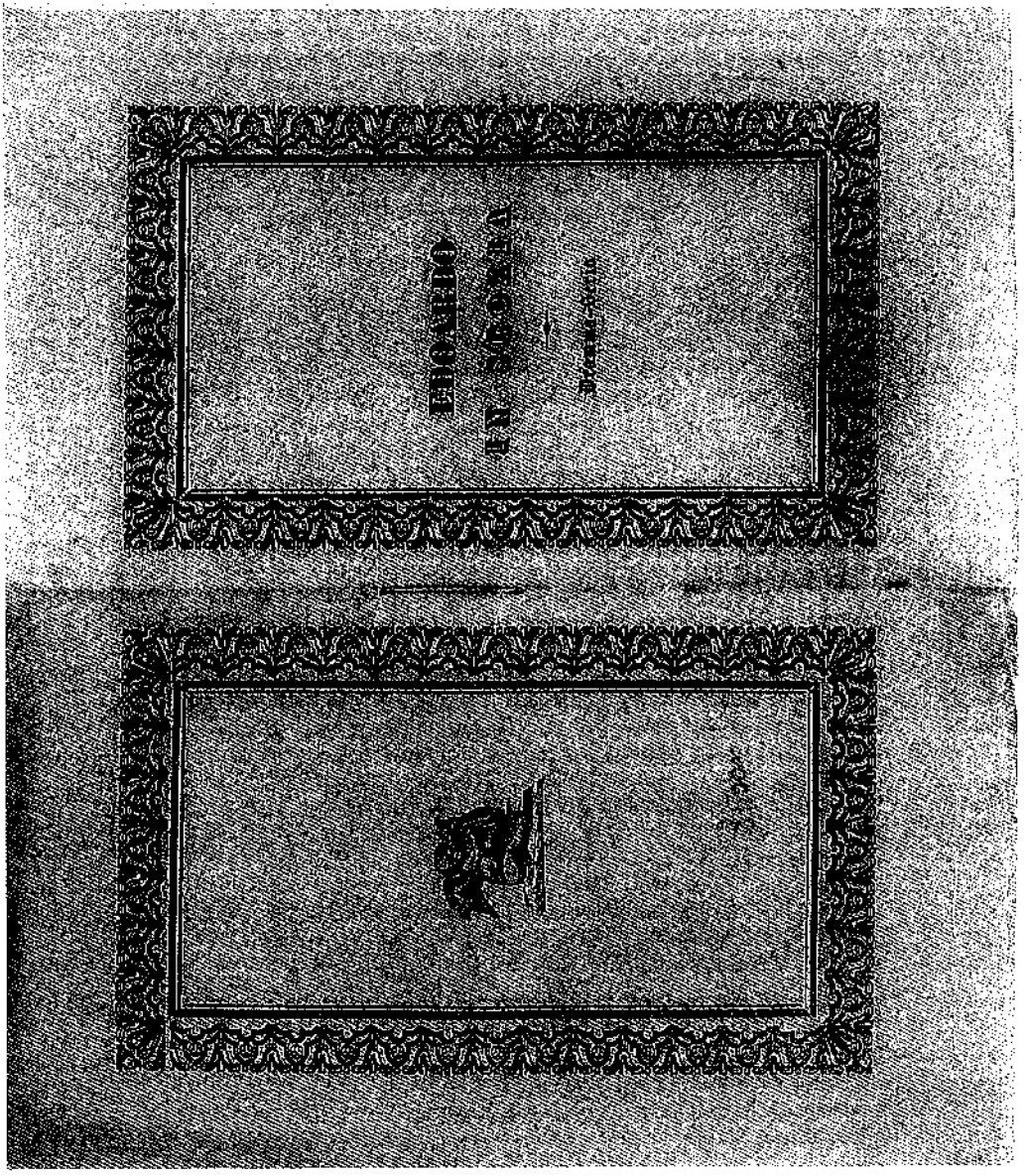

LM
CLEMENT

The Stuarts and their kith and kin

Alexander Weatherson

Elis. *No. Figlia impura della Guisa,*
parli tu di disonore?
Meretrice indegna oscena
in te cada il mio rossore.
Profanato è il suolo Scozzese:
vil puttana dal tuo piè.

The other side of the coin? Not before time I dare say, and anyway Queen Elizabeth has got it right, Scotland's soil was about to be profaned by a stream of operas that bore the footprint of her rival. Whether history should, or should not, be called *bunk* is a matter of opinion but ought not be left in the hands of a cabal of German melodramatic queens - without Mary Stuart Scotland might have been left in peace. *Vil beffarda*? a species of Stuart industry was a result of her intervention, in Italy alone in the earliest decades of the nineteenth century there was a Scotch broth of operas by Aspa, Capecelatro, Carafa, Carlini, Casalini, Casella, Coccia, Donizetti, Gabrielli, Mazzucato, Mercadante[1], Nicolini, Pacini, Pavesi, Pugni, Rajentroph, the Riccis, Rossini, Sogner and Vaccai - and this is just a scratch upon the surface of the European infatuation with the decapitated Stuart and/or her northern fastness which boiled-up in the bloodbath finale of the eighteenth century, operas often rabid and inconsequential, full of fashionable confrontations and artificial conflicts, politically motivated, repetitious and soon forgotten. At the heart of the plot, however, lay an Italian, the pulp plays and novels of Camillo Federici (1749-1802) a former actor whose prolific vulgarisations of Schiller and Kotzebue set Italian librettists scribbling for four decades. Indeed, without *him* it is to be suspected that Sir Walter Scott would never have captured the imagination of so many poets, nor for so long.

Among his egregious popularisations was a version of August Friedrich Ferdinand von Kotzebue's 'Edoardo Stuart in Scozia', stooping to conquer a credulous audience which Federici attempted to hitch to a Napoleonic bandwagon - vaunting the valour of a French invasion of an ultra-perfidious Albion (and omitting to notice that his hero failed

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[1] A few of these masters passed her on to their pupils: Mercadante's pupil Canepa staged a *David Rizio* in 1872 and Palumbo a *Maria Stuarda* in 1874; Donizetti's pupil Agnelli wrote a *Cromwell* (which remained unperformed), and De Giosa a controversial *Le due regine* which was staged in 1891.

abjectly). It was Federici, rather than Kotzebue, who supplied the argument for the *Edoardo in Iscozia* (or *Scozia*) which Domenico Gilardoni put into verse for Carlo Coccia in 1831, muddling history as only the most sentimental romantic operas could do. The improbable amours of Prince Charles Edward Stuart with "Ilda Makdonal" (Flora MacDonald) bear some of the taint of "Hello" or Paris Match which is a shame as Coccia's energetic score is full of merit as well as genuine local colour and Gilardoni's libretto (almost his last) is painfully noble and touching.

An endemic confusion between King Charles II and Prince Charles Edward Stuart (Bonny Prince Charlie) – two Stuarts in flight - was in evidence from the first, with a bizarre appearance of Cromwell "*Crumvello*" now and then (though seldom in person - he lacked *charisma*) as a kind of arbiter plucked from time to pump up the plot. An historical blip that risked real hilarity before it finally bore operatic fruit. Federici's shadow should not be totally discounted however, it actually bore down on legitimate Rossinian masterpieces like *Elisabetta regina d'Inghilterra* [2] and *La donna del lago*, as well as on Pacini's *Vallace* (of the same ilk in 1820), even on contemporary Bournonville ballets and those French *opéras comiques* like *La Dame Blanche* which pinned together the kilt on the Parisian stage. His imprint was remarkably indelible. Listing these Stuart effusions is a strange experience. Most of them are purely decorative with a fashionable Ossianic flavour, Highland mist, sporrans and transferable to other climes and even more exotic heros and heroines without undue effort. In many instances Scotland was a country of last resort: Pacini's *Malvina di Scozia* was an attempt to avoid the ukase applied to the plot of Inès de Castro (this did not prevent the composer from indulging in a quite threatening array of bagpipes!), for Bellini, Scotland was a usefully remote spot on which Fernando could pretend to be dead (*Bianca e Fernando*). A tartan curtain was drawn over operatic imagination at frequent intervals, both Coccia and Vaccai considered that the geographical obscurity of Scotland offered a salving refuge from everyday life; Coccia's *I solitari* of 1811, and Vaccai's *I solitari di Scozia* of 1815 (both based on the same play by Giovanni De Gamerra of 1801) equally favour the Hebridean countryside as a suitable place of monastic retreat for misanthropic males (which view continues to attract support south of the Border).



[2] *Cfr "A dialogue between two composers"*, printed as an appendix to Newsletter 85 p3.

Allan Cameron, *Crumvello*, and La fuga di Carlo Stuart

In amongst the annals of musical incest – rife in the primo Ottocento – the name of *Crumvello* or *Cromwello* shines out at regular intervals. That is to say, it throws a sinister light on the hoary mix represented by Verdi's projected *Allan Cameron* of 1843 with a text by Francesco Maria Piave, based on a "Scott-derived" Parisian confection which the maestro understood to refer to the flight of Charles II of England, and the machinations all too obvious in the watching brief of Giovanni Pacini and the susceptibilities of the more venerable Carlo Coccia. The 'Allan Cameron' on which the Verdi opera would be based was a Gallic travesty by Pierre-Auguste Callet and Javelin Pagnon (1841) which claimed to be translation of Scott's 'Woodstock or The Cavalier' (1826). [3] Verdi's hankering after the financial potential and kudos of Victor Hugo put paid to the project, after insisting upon renaming the proposed libretto "*Cromwell*" and trying to insert at least an echo of Hugo's play 'Cromwell' (1827) into Piave's second act, he jettisoned the entire project in favour of *Ernani* with Hugo in undiluted ascendance. This left *Allan Cameron* to fall into the hands of Giovanni Pacini. Five years later it made an appearance.

It has to be said at once that the Pacini/Piave *Allan Cameron* was born under an unpromising star, intended for La Fenice on 21 March 1848 its début was under threat from the start owing to the political disorders of that Year of Revolutions. Though it *was* actually staged, if briefly, it passed more-or-less unnoticed in the insurrectional floodtide that swept over the watery city, Pacini almost forgets it in his memoirs. Its true *prima* came three years later in that same theatre on 11 January 1851 with much the same cast as originally intended – a cast of rare distinction with the title role being taken by the renowned (Verdian) baritone Felice Varesi; that of the fugitive monarch Charles II (Carlo) by the Neapolitan tenor Raffaele Mirate (who had replaced the voiceless Domenico Conti after one single ignominious attempt to sing the title role), but with one notable change - Annetta De la Grange who had sung like an angel in the chaos of 1848 had been replaced in 1851 by Teresina Brambilla (Verdi's first Gilda and the wife of Amilcare Ponchielli) whose Editta proved no less spectacular. Two months later this very same team would emerge as

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[3] *Cfr* Julian Budden 'The Operas of Verdi Vol 1' (London 1973) 140. Budden doubts the claim of the authors, adding, in a footnote "Assuming, however, a confusion between the two Charleses, ie Charles II and the Young Pretender, *Allan Cameron* could be seen as a remote descendent of *Waverley*."

Gio. Ebben, morrete voi.
a 2. Morir!... si vada.
(escono tra soldati.)

SCENA VII.

Chiostro aperto della suddetta abbazia. Fuori delle arcate vedesi la campagna. Alla destra dello spettatore è una porta che mette alla precedente sala; alla sinistra l'ingresso d'un tempio. - E l'alba.

Coro *di Puritani nell'interno del tempio.*

I. Gedeone guerrier del Signore
La sua spada tremenda impugnò;
II. Del leone di Giuda il valore
Di Filiste la turba fugò.
Tutti Di Cromvello i nemici cadranno,
Come foglie che il gelo colpì.
Pietà indarno, mercè chiederanno,
Ora sorge l'estremo lor dì.
(*Allano frattanto attraversa il chiostro trascinato co' suoi compagni alla morte.*)

SCENA VIII.

Editta *fra i soldati puritani è condotta allo stesso destino, ma, giunta in mezzo alla scena, vien trattenuta.*

Ed. Sia lode a te, gran Dio, salvato ho il re!
Che cale a me, se spenta
Anzi tempo cadrà questa mia vita?
Meco morrà pur anche il padre mio;
Libere alfin nostr' alme,
Eterne nel Signore,
Di Carlo s'uniranno al genitore. (*s'ingin.*)
O d'un re martire, - alma beata,
Queste ad accogliere - scendi placata,
Al trono guidale - del Re dei re.

Da questo libere - terreno frale,
Al puro ascendano - gaudio immortale,
L'eterno godano - premio con te.
(*S'ode un confuso romore, dapprima lontano, ed un picchiar d'armi, che poi s'avvicina misto a confuse grida.*)
Coro Morte agli empi!... all'armi!... morte!...
Viva Allano!... viva il forte!...
Ed. Quali grida!... il genitore!...
Coro Viva Allano!...
Ed. Che mai fia! (*corre ad osservo.*)
Padre, padre!

SCENA ULTIMA.

Detta, Allano *ed* Evano, *seguiti da Montanari, Donne, e Pescatori armati di ronche, falci e fiocine, che fugano le guardie di Editta. Il sole frattanto è sorto.*

All. Figlia mia! (*abbracciandola*)
Questi prodi m'han salvato.
Sentì il ciel di noi pietà
Coro Or del re seguite il fato.
Finchè il ciel si placherà,
Ed. Ah del core il voto ardente
Inoalziamo al Dio supremo;
Egli è grande, egli è clemente,
Non invan pregato avremo.
Alla Scozia, a' figli suoi
Renda il padre, renda il re.
Tutti Alla Scozia, tu che il puoi,
Rendi, o nume, il padre, il re.
(*Tutti si affrettano a favorire la fuga dei Cameron.*)

FINE.

***Allan Cameron* - final tableau of the original version: Venice 11 January 1851**

the starring trio of *Rigoletto* born on that very same stage at the end of the very same season. Incest? Piave was volleyed like a tennis ball between the two maestri. But Pacini's *Allen Cameron* was a popular success, *Rigoletto* notwithstanding. Opera Rara's disc "*Pavento insano*" of 2005 [4] conveys an echo of its quality.

The story of *Allan Cameron* can scarcely be described as new (no wonder Verdi refused it). It is the same saga of Stuart wishful-thinking as *Edoardo in Iscozia,* with fervently loyal Highland clansmen coming to the aid of the imperilled King after his army had been routed, an account of his convoluted escape route and capture, together with a climactic prayer to his martyred father Charles I in Heaven capped by a peasant revolt against the Puritan oppressors, the prince's escape by boat (honour - if not his incipient romance with Editta– preserved) and ending with the loyal Allan Cameron (her father) freed to fight another day.

Pacini seems - understandably - not to have been entirely convinced by the merits of this argument and his music for the Puritans is frequently outstanding, above all Cromwell makes his presence felt, if not seen, thanks, it would appear, to Verdi's earlier intervention in the text. This must be the one single occasion when Verdi may be said to have made a personal contribution to a Pacini score!

Only a part of this was to last. Some five months later, on 12 July 1851 *Allen Cameron* was revived anew, this time at the Teatro Comunale in Modena with Mirate again in his royal role; no one will imagine, even for a moment, that Pacini could leave any score of his untouched for five months. And so it proved.

The libretto for this Modena edition makes much of the fact that Pacini staged the opera himself and the impresario's dedication to the Duca di Modena, Francesco V, really goes over the top:

> *"... ho divisato di far rappresentare nell'anzidetto Teatro l'applauditissima Opera* ALLAN CAMERON, *dell'illustre Pacini, e d'invitare lo stesso Compositore a dirigerne la esecuzione, perchè questo suo felice ultimo parto musicale consegua maggiore universale suffragio, e quindi più brillante successo."*

[Not a total exaggeration as *Allan Cameron* had held the stage interminably in Venice, Verdi's obsequious red-haired amanuensis Emmanuele Muzio had felt obliged to sneer at its success to the irritated maestro]. But irrespective of its *applauditissima* status it soon transpired

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[4] Item 9 ORR236 (2005) *Cfr* Newsletter 98, reviewed by Douglas Bennett pp30-31

Che dal ciel segnato ha un'ora,
In cui Scozia lieta ancora
Al suo prence obbedirà.
(Carlo coperto del mantello di Editta entra nel segreto addito che mette ad un sotterraneo che subito è chiuso da Editta.)

SCENA VI.

Odonsi alcuni colpi di cannone e fucilate.

Editta, Allano
e Coro di Montanari scozzesi e Pescatori

Ed. ed All. Quali grida?
Ed. O genitor!
Coro Viva Allano!
All. Che mai fia?
Ed. Padre udisti?
All. Figlia mia!
Coro Atterrate il nemico crudele:
Viva Carlo, il leggittimo re.

SCENA ULTIMA.

Carlo, Soldati e detti
che irrompono ed abbattono un muro.

Carlo O miei prodi, o Allano fedele,
Premiò il ciel la costanza, la fè.
Nell'ebbrezza d'amore il più santo
Scorreranno miei giorni felici,
Cadrà sol colla vita l'incanto
Di sì puro ineffabile amor.

E di Editta, d'Allano l'affetto
Mai potrà cancellarsi dal cor.
Ed., All. Nell'ebbrezza d'amore il più santo
Scorreranno tuoi giorni felici,
Cadrà sol colla vita l'incanto
Di sì puro ineffabile amor,
E di prence sì umano l'affetto
Mai potrà cancellarsi dal cor;
Coro Oh sì: ceda da queste contrade
L'ombra mesta del lungo dolor;
Al cessato fragor delle spade
Or succedano i canti d'amor.



Allan Cameron – final tableau of the revised version: Modena 12 July 1851

that the illustrious Pacini had made radical changes to his music. A new broom had swept away practically all the pieces that had been so applauded in Venice (including every one of those on the "*Paventa insano*" disc). Pacini now opted for full-frontal Verdian surge and spectacle but not at all Verdian in its political stance. The major protagonist has become the tenor, though the Modena primadonna was none other than Fanny Salvini-Donatelli (of *Traviata* fame to come – another incestuous factor) she has lost her florid *aria finale* so eminently suitable to the Violetta-voice, as well as her key place in the plot [5]; the Puritans are now decimated (their impressive Act IV chorus eliminated/Cromwell marginalised); much of the gothick phantasmagoria of the original (noises-off, ruins and stormy seas) has been dropped; there is a new *cantabile* for Allan and two reworked duets; the momentous finale primo (at the end of Act II) has been re-articulated to rival that of *Rigoletto*; the coro is ever-present and the whole opera is shorter, bolder, rejecting belcantistic indulgence, the orchestra enhanced and the *finale ultimo* deprived both of sentiment and heaven - no filial devotion or stratospherics - but replaced by a grandiose *insieme* to make a final curtain of truly imposing dimensions: Charles II no longer shuffled-off ignominiously behind Editta's skirts and upstaged as in the earlier version but on his feet at the end, in the centre of a triumphal tableau in an apotheosis of glory.

Who supplied the new text? Almost certainly Pacini himself. Who provided the impetus? It can be laid at the door of the Stuart myth of survival, at the political agenda that lay under all those earlier operas whatever their romantic garb. The opera, set in 1651, was deemed to strike a chord in 1851, *Allan Cameron* in its latest guise had become a message of encouragement to the beleaguered *status quo*. Flight rejected as a political solution.

This particular message, as we know, fell on deaf ears in Modena. *Allan Cameron,* one of Pacini's most rewarding scores, had been laid at the feet of political expediency. It had one more revival (at Verona in 1854)[6] and then vanished for ever.

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[5] She retains her splendid Act I *cavatina* but is otherwise restricted almost entirely to duets. Maybe Pacini subsequently felt guilty, as as in his memoirs he goes out of his way to give her an unexpected boost *"...Salvini-Donatelli, il cui talento emerge ancora...non che quella di Editta, con plauso universale nel mio* Allan Cameron, *nella primavera* [sic] *del 1851" Le mie memoria artistiche* (Firenze 1865) p119

[6] On 7 February 1854 at the Teatro Filarmonico of Verona, once again with Salvini-Donatelli in the role of Editta, but this time *post-Traviata* with some sections of her florid music re-instated. Or it would seem.