

FHIR asdair ma's miann leat luaidh air sguel
ainmeil nan liathean a t hreig, thig dluth agus dean
umhlachd. So am ball.

(Travilar if you wish to celebrate the deeds of former days, pay homage here now!)



THE BATTLE OF CLIFTON MOOR 18TH
DECEMBER 1745

A COMMEMORATION IN MEMORY OF
LOYAL JACOBITES 17TH DECEMBER
2006



Hame, hame, hame, O hame fain wad I be-

O hame, hame, hame to my ain countree!

Allan Cunningham

A commemoration in memory of Loyal Jacobites

With Special Thanks To:

John Turner, Estate Manager, Lowther Estates

**David Shand, DSC North Limited and his “heiland
fencers”**

Jack Johnson, Chaner Limited

Mr. & Mrs. John Holliday, Clifton Hall Farm

The Parish Council of Clifton

Arthur & Veronica of The George and Dragon

Freddie ‘bagpipes’ Wilson

John McCabe

Introduction

This commemoration in memory of the fallen Jacobite soldiers of HRH Prince Charles Edward Stewart was instigated following works to tidy the graveside area below the “Rebel Tree” and the placing of a small plaque in memorial to

the men buried there. These works was carried out with kind permission of Lowther Estate and made possible with kind donations of services by DSC North Limited and Chaner Limited.

Prior to these works being undertaken respects to the fallen had to be paid by climbing over an old section of decaying timber post and rail fencing. Following consultation with the Estate, approval was given to replace the timber fencing with a similar fence in line with its rural location and the addition of an access gate to the graveside location below the tree. The Estate also gave permission to allow the placement of a small brass plaque in memory to the fallen. Works were carried out in October 2006 with the grave area tidied up of weeds etc. on completion.



The Grave Site prior to works commencing



The Grave Site on completion of the works



The plaque in the making

The Battle of Clifton Moor 18/12/1745

An account of the battle.

Early in the morning of the 18th, the rear-guard left Shap; but as some of the small carriages were continually breaking, its march was much retarded. It had not proceeded far when some parties of English light horse were observed hovering at some distance on the eminencies behind the rear-guard. Lord George Murray notified the circumstances to the prince at Penrith; but as it was supposed that these were militia, the information was treated lightly. No attempt was made to attack the rear-guard, or obstruct its progress, till about mid-day, when a body of between 200 and 300 horse, chiefly Cumberland people, formed in front of the rear-

guard, behind an eminence near Clifton Hall, and seemed resolved to make a stand. Lord George Murray was about to ascend this eminence, when the party was observed marching two and two abreast on the top of the hill. They suddenly disappeared to form themselves in order of battle behind the eminence, and made a great noise with trumpets and kettledrums. At this time two of the companies of Roy Stuart's regiment, which the Duke of Perth had attached to the artillery, were at the head of the column. The guns and ammunition wagons followed, behind the two other companies of the same regiment. The Glengarry regiment, which marched with Lord George Murray at its head, was in the rear of the column. Believing, from the great number of trumpets and kettle-drums, that the English army was at hand, the rear-guard remained for a short time at the bottom of the hill, as if at a loss how to act in a conjuncture which appeared so desperate. It was the opinion of Colonel Brown, an officer of Lally's regiment, who was at the head of the column, that they should rush upon the enemy sword in hand, and either open a passage to the army at Penrith, or perish in the attempt. The men of the four companies adopting this opinion, immediately ran up the hill, without informing Lord George Murray of their resolution; and his lordship, on observing this movement, immediately ordered the Glengarry men to proceed across the inclosure, and ascend the hill from another quarter, as they could not conveniently pass the wagons which had almost blocked up the roads. The Glengarry men, throwing off their plaids, reached the summit of the hill almost as soon as the head of the column, on gaining which, both parties were agreeably surprised to find, that the only enemy in view was the light horse they had observed a few minutes before, and who, alarmed at the appearance of the Highlanders, galloped off in disorder. One of the fugitives fell from his horse, and was cut to pieces in an instant by the Highlanders.

The rear-guard resumed its march, and on reaching the village of Clifton George Murray sent the artillery and heavy baggage forward to Penrith under a small escort. Being well acquainted with all the inclosures and parks about Lowther Hall, the seat of Lord Lonsdale, about the distance of a mile from Clifton, Lord George Murray, at the head of the Glengarry regiment and some horse, examined these parks and inclosures in the hope of falling in with the light horse; but, although he saw several of them, he only succeeded in making two prisoners. By these prisoners Lord George was informed that the duke himself, with a body of 4,000 horse, was about a mile behind him. As Clifton was a very good post, Lord George Murray resolved to remain there; and on his return to the village he sent Colonel Roy Stuart with the two prisoners to Penrith, to inform Charles of the near approach of the duke, and that he would remain at Clifton till further orders. In the event of the prince approving of his intention of making a stand at Preston, his lordship requested that 1,000 men might be sent him from Penrith. On returning to Clifton from Lowther parks, Lord George found the Duke of Perth there; and, besides Colonel Roy Stuart's men, who amounted to about 200, he also found the Macphersons with their chief, Cluny Macpherson, and the Stewarts of Appin, headed by Stewart of Ardshiel.

Before the return of Colonel Roy Stuart from Penrith, the enemy appeared in sight, and proceeded to form themselves into two lines upon Clifton moor, about half a mile from the village. The Duke of Perth thereupon rode back to Penrith to bring up the rest of the army to support Lord George, who he supposed would, from the strength of his position, be able to maintain himself till joined by the main body. The duke was accompanied by an English gentleman who had attended Lord George during the retreat, and, knowing the country perfectly well, had offered to lead without discovery the main body a near way by the left, by which movement they would be enabled to fall upon the enemy's flank. Had Lord George received the reinforcement he required, his design was to have sent half of his men through the inclosures on his right, so as to have flanked the duke's army on that side, whilst it was attacked on the other by the other half. He expected that if he succeeded in killing but a small number of Cumberland's horse that the rest would be thrown into disorder, and that as they

would be obliged to retreat through a lane nearly a mile long, between Lord Lonsdale's inclosures, that they would choke up the road, and that many of them would be unable to escape. In absence of this reinforcement, however, the Lieutenant-general was obliged to make the best dispositions he could with the force he had with him, which amounted to about 1,000 men in all, exclusive of Lord Pittsligo's horse and hussars, who, on the appearance of the enemy, shamefully fled to Penrith.

The dispositions of Lord George were these. Within the inclosures to the right of the highway he posted the Glengarry men, and within those to their left he placed the Stewarts of Appin and the Macphersons. On the side of the highway, and close to the village of Clifton, he placed Colonel Roy Stuart's regiment. As some ditches at the foot stretched farther towards the moor on the right than on the left, and as that part was also covered by Lord Lonsdale's other inclosures, the party on the right could not easily be attacked; and they had this advantage, that they could with their fire flank the enemy when they attacked the left. To induce the enemy to believe that his numbers were much greater than they were, Lord George, after exhibiting the colours he had at different places, caused them to be rolled up, carried to other places, and again unfurled.

About an hour after the Duke of Cumberland had formed his men, about 500 of his dragoons dismounted and advanced forward to the foot of the moor, in front of a ditch at the bottom of one of three small inclosures between the moor and the places where Roy Stuart's men were posted at the village. At this time Colonel Stuart returned from Penrith, and, after informing Lord George that the prince had resolved to march immediately to Carlisle, and that he had sent forward his cannon, he stated that it was his royal highness's desire that he should immediately retreat to Penrith. From the situation in which the Lieutenant-general was now placed, it was impossible to obey this order without great danger. The dismounted horse were already firing upon the Highlanders, who were within market-shot; and, if retreat was once begun, the men might get into confusion in the dark, and become discouraged. Lord George proposed to attack the dismounted party, and stated his confidence that he would be able by attacking them briskly to dislodge them; Cluny Macpherson and Colonel Stuart concurring in Lord George's opinion, that the course he proposed was the only prudent one that could be adopted, they agreed not to mention the message from the prince.

In pursuance of this determination, Lord George Murray went to the right where the Glengarry men were posted, and ordered them, as soon as they should observe him advance on the other side, to move also forward and keep up a smart fire till they came to the lowest ditch. He observed that if they succeeded in dislodging the enemy from the hedges and ditches, they could give them a flank fire within pistol-shot; but he gave them particular injunctions not to fire across the highway, nor to follow the enemy up the moor. After speaking with every officer of the Glengarry regiment, his lordship returned to the left, and placed himself at the head of the Macphersons, with Cluny by his side. It was now about an hour after sunset, and the night was somewhat cloudy; but at short intervals the moon, which was in its second quarter, broke through and afforded considerable light. The Highlanders had this advantage, that whilst they could see the disposition of the enemy, their own movements could not be observed. In taking their ground the dismounted dragoons had not only lines the bottom inclosures which ran from east to west, directly opposite the other inclosures in which the Highlanders were posted, but some of them had advanced up along two hedges that lay south and north.



The Highlanders being ready to advance, the Stewarts and Macphersons marched forward at the word of command, as did the Macdonalds on the right. The Highlanders on the right kept firing as they advanced; but the Macphersons, who were on the left, came sooner in contact with the dragoons, and received the whole of their fire. When the balls were whizzing about them, Cluny exclaimed, "What the devil is this?" Lord George told him that they had no remedy but to attack the dragoons, sword in hand, before they had time to charge again. Then drawing his sword, he cried out, "Claymore", and Cluny doing the same, the Macphersons rushed down to the bottom ditch of the inclosure, and clearing the diagonal hedges as they went, fell sword in hand upon the enemy, of whom a considerable number were killed at the lower ditch. The rest fled across the moor, but received in their flight the fire of the Glengarry regiment. In this skirmish only twelve Highlanders were killed; but the royal forces sustained a loss of about one hundred in killed and wounded, including some officers. The only officer wounded on the side of the Highlanders was Macdonald of Lochgarry, who commanded the Glengarry men. Lord George Murray made several narrow escapes. Old Glenbucket, who, from infirmity, remained at the end of the village on horseback, had lent him his target, and it was fortunate for Lord George that he had done so. By means of this shield, which was convex, and covered with a plate of metal painted, his lordship protected himself from the bullets of the dragoons, which cleared away the paint off the target in several places. The only prisoner taken on this occasion was a footman of the Duke of Cumberland, who stated that his master would have been killed, if a pistol, with which a Highlander took aim at his head, had not missed fire. This man was sent back to his royal highness by the prince.

The Account of Cluny MacPherson

Written by Cluny himself following the engagement

“ The Duke of Cumberland (as they call him) came up to us at Clifton very late Wednesday last the eighteenth accompanied by 400 horse or rather better yn three, according to our information, and 200 foot about a day or two’s march behind him. He indeed surprised us as we had no right intelligence about him, and when he appeared there happened to be no more of our army at hand than Glengarries, Stuarts of Appin and my regimts. The rest of the Armie being at such distance that they could not assist us at the time, our three Regiments planted

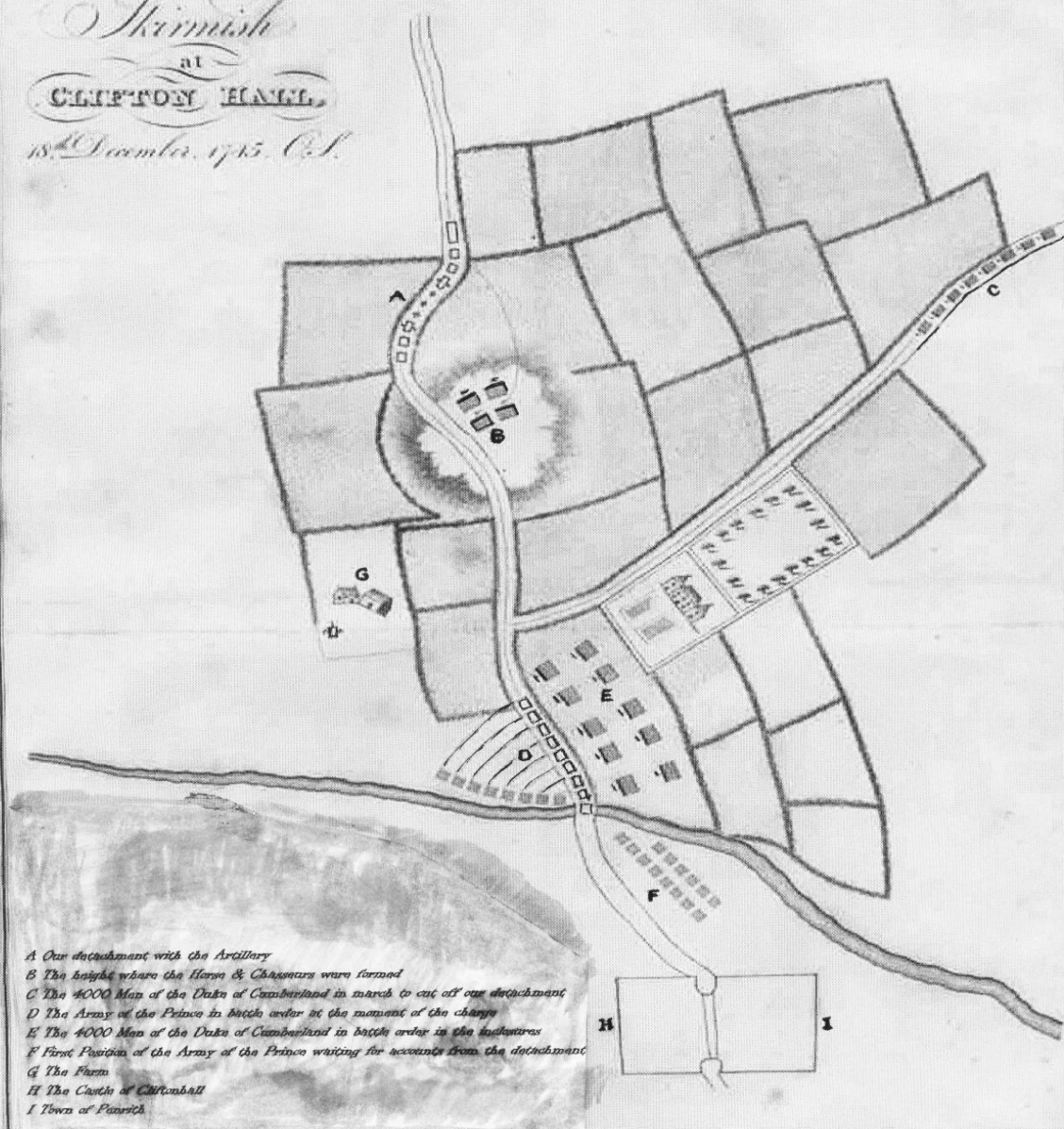
themselves to Receive the Enemy Being Commanded by our Generall Lord George Murray. Glengarries Regmt were planted at the back of a Stone Dyke on our Right, the Apin Regmt in the centre, and mine on the left, Lineing a Hedge wherefrom we expected to attack the Enemie on there march towards us. But the generall spying another hedge about a gun Shot nearer to the grand army of the Enemie which he thought to be more advantageous, ordered my Regmt and the Stuarts to profess themselves of that Hedge. Directly and at the same time planted himself at the Right of my Regmt which put me to the left. Immediately we made towards the lest mentioned Hedge without any Cover, which Hedge was without our knowing of it lined by the Enemie and was so very Clofs having a Deep Ditch, that it was much the same as if they had been Intrrenched to the teeth. Upon advancing to wards them we Received a most warm fire, I mean my Regmt Single wch we soon Returned and upon Disch charging all our firelocks attacked them Sword in hand, Beat them out of their Intrenchments and put them all to flight, in a word the whole Ditch the Enemie had Lined, was all filled up with their Dead Bodies so that we had no difficulty in Crossing it. This was only one Body of about six hundred Dragoons that had Dismounted, in order as we think to try if we Durst face them. But I suppose they were so well peppered that they will not Be hasty in attacking us again. Glengarries Regmt fired very Briskly from the Back of the Stone Dyke on the Right, on apart of the Enemy that Marched Directly to have flanked us which routed that party ; for ought I think they did not loose above a man or two. The Stuarts did not attack in a Bodie, a few of them by accident came in our Rier By which means they Did not loose a man. I had twelve men and a Sergt killed on the spot and three privat men wounded But not one officer Eyr killed or wounded. We cannot be pofsitve How many were Killed of the Enemie But that it is generally said by the Country men that they were a Hundred and fifty and a Great many wounded.....we have Great Reason to thank all mighty God for our Coming so Safe off as the attack Being after nightfall was one of the most Desperate ones have been heard of for a Long time, which is allowed by all the officers here as well Scots as ffrench who say that the part my Regt played was one of the most gallant things happened in this Age and say it was ane action worthy to be Recorded if done by the Oldest and Best Disciplined Regimt in Europe. Upon beating of all back that had advanced to the Main Body of the Enemy we Retyred and Charged again to be Readie for a Second attack at which time we Received Express orders from the prince to Return to Penrith”

Cluny MacPherson, December 1745

The Battle Plan

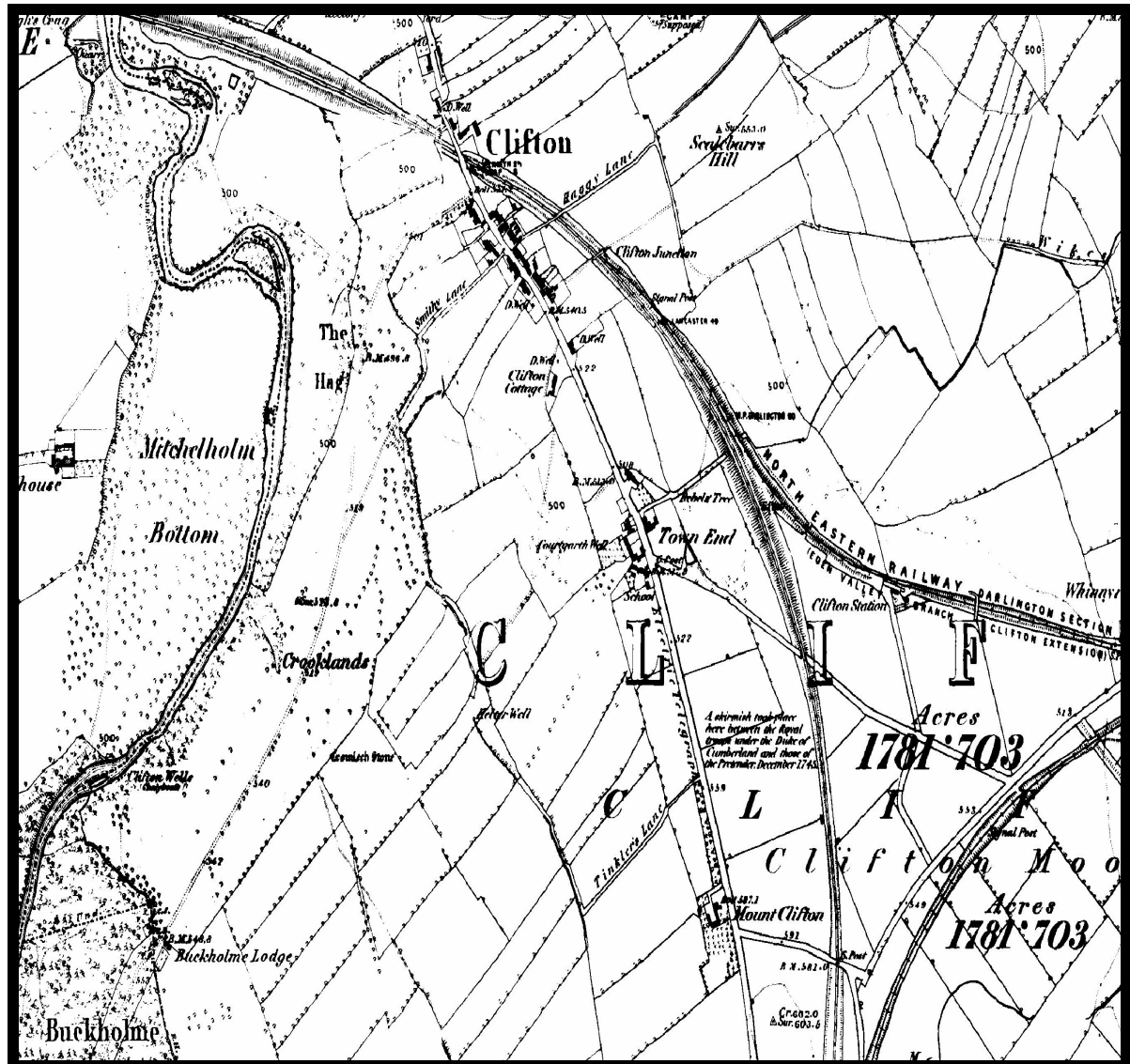
**From an 1820 engraving now in the keeping of Aberdeen University Library
forming part of the MacBean Jacobite Collection.**

Skirmish
at
CLIFTON HALL,
18th December, 1745. O.S.



- A Our detachment with the Artillery*
B The height where the Horse & Chasseurs were formed
C The 4000 Men of the Duke of Cumberland in march to cut off our detachment
D The Army of the Prince in battle order at the moment of the charge
E The 4000 Men of the Duke of Cumberland in battle order in the distance
F First Position of the Army of the Prince waiting for accounts from the detachment
G The Farm
H The Church of Cliftonhall
I Town of Peterborough

The OS map of Clifton Moor, circa 1863



How the London Gazette reported the action

"Letters received this morning from the Duke of Cumberland by a messenger who left his Royal Highness on Thursday morning last, bring an account that he had come up with the Rebels on Wednesday night with his cavalry after ten hours' march, just beyond Lowther Hall, which the rebels abandoned on our approach, and threw themselves into a village called Clifton, within 3 miles of Penrith, which village his Royal Highness immediately attacked with the dragoons dismounted, who behaved extremely well and drove the rebels out of it in an hour's time, tho' a very strong & defensible post. The loss of the rebels could not be known as it was quite dark before the skirmish was over. That of the King's forces amounted to about 40 men kill'd and wounded and four officers wounded but not mortally, viz. Colonel Honeywood, Captain East and the two cornets Owen and Hamilton. A Captain Hamilton of the Rebels was taken prisoner much wounded. After the action the rebels retired to four miles distance & his Royal Highness intended to pursue them as soon as possible."

The London Gazette.

Published by Authority.

From Tuesday December 17. to Saturday December 21. 1745.

Hambourg, December 14, N. S.

HIS Britannick Majesty's Ship the Bridgewater, Captain Balfour, is safely arrived in this River with the Hull Trade, which he has convoy'd to Elbe and Weser.

Dresden, Dec. 23. His Prussian Majesty be- here with his first Minister Count Podewils, ral Conferences have been held with the Ple- tentiary Ministers of the King of Poland our reign Count Harrach on the Part of the

Gaspar Guirall Master, laden with Arms and Ammunition, and bound, as is supposed, for Scotland. By the Report of Captain Cooke, there are on board 2500 Muskets and Bayonets, 110 Barrels of Powder, 70 Cases of Ball, each weighing 400 Pounds Weight, and a great Num- ber of Flints; there were 60000 Pistoles in Bags on board, which, with the Vessel's Papers, were all thrown over-board, save about 1217 of the Pistoles. Some of the Prisoners say, that there were at Ferrol four Spanish Men of War and three Transports laden with Arms and Am- munition.

without any Opposition.
The Rebels at Perth have begun to make a Ditch round the Town, which it is given out they intend to fortify.

Whitehall, December 21.

Letters received this Morning from the Duke of Cumberland, by a Messenger who left his Royal Highness on Thursday Morning last, bring an Account, that he had come up with the Rebels on Wednesday Night with his Cavalry, after Ten Hours March, just beyond Lowther



Lowther Hall, which the Rebels abandoned on our Approach, and threw themselves into a Village called Clifton, within three Miles of Perth, which Village his Royal Highness immediately attacked with the Dragoons dismounted, who behaved extremely well, and drove the Rebels out of it in an Hour's Time, tho' a very strong and defensible Post. The Loss of the Rebels could not be known, as it was quite dark before the Skirmish was over: That of the King's Forces amounted to about 40 Men kill'd and wounded, and four Officers wounded, but not mortally, viz. Colonel Honeywood, Captain East, and the two Cornets Owen and Hamilton. A Captain Hamilton of the Rebels was taken Prisoner much wounded. After the Action, the Rebels retired to four Miles Distance, and his Royal Highness intended to pursue them as soon as possible.

St. James's, Dec. 20.

This Day the Baron de Boetselaer, Minister Plenipotentiary from the States General, had his first private Audience of his Majesty, to deliver his Letters of Credence: He was introduced by the Right Hon. the Earl Cowper, Gentleman of the Bed-Chamber in Waiting, and conducted by Sir Clement Cottrell Dormer, Knt. Master of the Ceremonies.

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The Battle of Clifton Moor is not as well documented as many of the battles fought in the 1745 rising. Some historians claim it as nothing but a skirmish. However in Jacobite terms it is every bit as important as Prestonpans or Falkirk. The ferocity of the "Highland Charge" once again proved its worth to the Prince's army and the fact that Hanoverian Dragoons led a night deployment speaks for itself. The victory of the Highland forces that night allowed the rest of the Prince's army to cross the border to Scotland unmolested and saved many of the loyal men and women the possibility of having to give their lives up to "foreign soil".

Some were not so fortunate and the sacrifice made by these men buried far from home at Clifton will always hold a place in the hearts of those who remember them. The retreating forces lost another 60 plus, men and women taken prisoner between Clifton and Carlisle. The most prominent of these being Captain George Hamilton of Redhouse Tower in East Lothian, wounded during the Clifton engagement and captured by Cumberland's Dragoons. Many would suffer the indignity of execution, long imprisonment or deportation for rising in arms against the Hanoverian Crown proclaimed in their homeland against the will of its people.

We will remember this sacrifice and all the sacrifices made by the people of Scotland for as a proud nation we stand "not for glory, nor riches, nor honours that we are fighting, but for freedom – for that alone, which no honest man gives up but with life itself"

The Esk was Swollen, sae red and sae deep,
But shouther to shouther the brave lads keep;
Twa thousand swam owre to fell english ground,
An' danced themselves dry to the pibroch's sound.
Dumfounder'd, the English saw-they saw-
Dumfounder'd they a'ran awa', awa',
From the hundred pipers an' a', an a'.
Lady Nalma



"Piseach do Alba agus neo-aonachadh"
("Prosperity to Scotland and No Union")

