

The Retreat of the Highlanders through Westmoreland in 1745.

BY R. S. FERGUSON, F.S.A., LOC. SEC. S.A. FOR CUMBERLAND; CHANCELLOR
OF CARLISLE.

SOME time in the year 1886 I was in the keep of the old castle of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, which is occupied by the Society of Antiquaries of that city for the purposes of their museum. My attention was attracted to a manuscript plan hanging in one of the deep window recesses; its limits were defined by a broad margin of red paint, within which a vast tartan boa constrictor seemed to be endeavouring to swallow a church and sundry red and black blocks. On a closer inspection I found that the plan was titled

An Exact Plan OF THE SKIRMISH ON CLIFTON MOOR;

that the red and black blocks represented the forces of the Duke of Cumberland; and that the tartan boa constrictor was nothing else than the Highland army, or a part of it.

As I have always thought that the history of the retreat of the Highlanders through Westmoreland in December, 1745, has been very inadequately dealt with by all previous writers, I viewed this strange plan with much interest: by the courtesy of the officials of the Newcastle Society of Antiquaries the plan was entrusted to me for examination, and a fac-simile of it is here reproduced as Plate xxiv. My first enquiries were as to how the Society became possessed of it, and Mr. G. J. Spence was kind enough to make the necessary searches, with the following result:—In the *Archæologia Ailiana*, vol. iii., Old Series, p. 12, under head of “Donations,” is

"1. March 1842
An exact plan of the Skirmish on Clifton-Moor in 1745 (M.S.)
Donor—Sir M. W. Ridley Bart."

This is, as Mr. Spence kindly ascertained, an exact copy of the entry in the minute book of the Society, signed by John Trotten Brockett; the file of the Society's CORRESPONDENCE for that year contains no letter from Sir M. W. Ridley, and no reference to the plan whatever. No engraving or account of the plan is in the publications of the Newcastle Society of Antiquaries. The present Sir M. W. Ridley, in reply to an enquiry, courteously regrets he has no information to give, nor can he suggest any reason why such a plan should have been in his father's possession. Internal evidence seems to prove the plan to be contemporary with the skirmish, and my own impression is that it is the work of G. Smith, a schoolmaster of Wigton, and at this period a frequent contributor to the Gentleman's Magazine on antiquarian subjects. He published in 1743 plans of Carlisle and the vicinity, showing the position of the Duke of Cumberland's batteries, and the breaches made in the walls of the city.

This plan (PLATE xxiv.) represents the position of the troops at two distinct times on Wednesday, the 18th Dec.—namely, at 3 p.m. and at 5 p.m. I have, therefore, made from this plan, which I shall call the Newcastle plan, two copies (plates xxxi. and xxxii.) showing matters at 3 p.m. and at 5 p.m. These will be given in the next number.

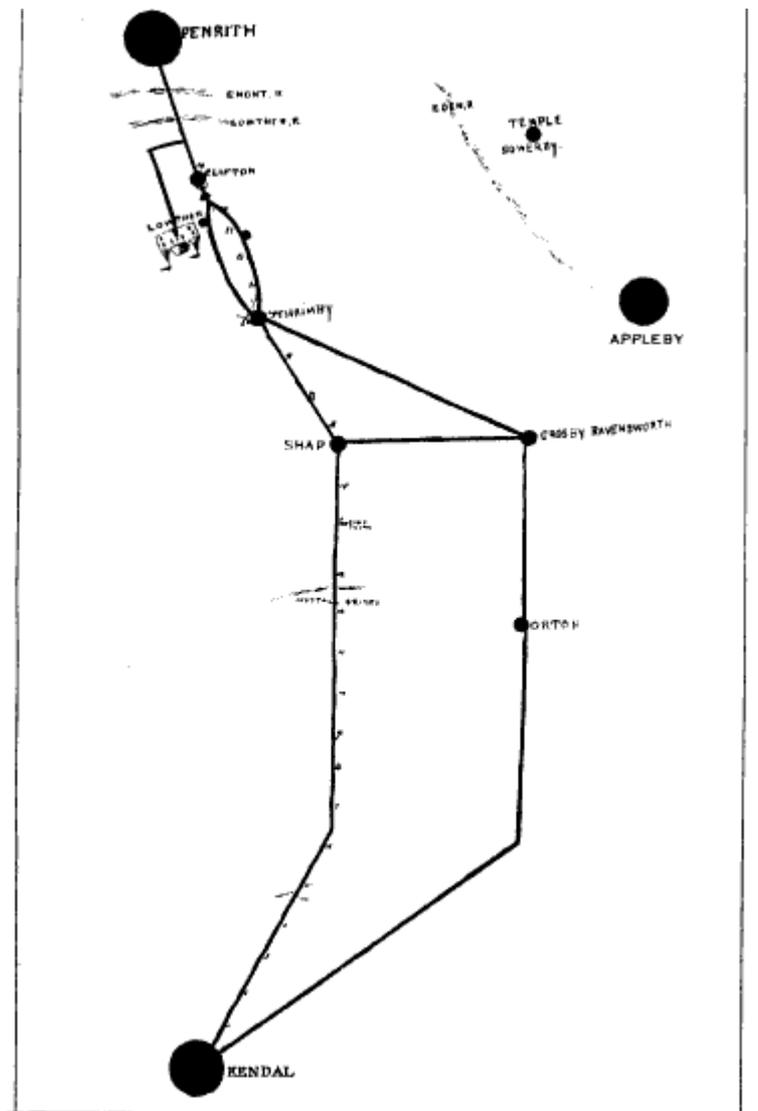
The title, an "Exact Plan," is rather a stretch of the imagination on the part of the artist; it is RATHER a bird's eye view of a somewhat large district, extending from the parallel of latitude, if we may so speak, of Lowther Hall on the south to that of Lowther Bridge on the north; and from the longitude of Lowther Hall on the west to Brayham Common on the east. The Shap and Penrith road, running from south to north, bisects this district, whose centre is occupied by Clifton Moor, which is, roughly speaking, represented by a rightangled triangle, with its right toward the S.W. angle of the plan; the longer of the sides that contain the right angle runs north and south parallel to and between the Lowther enclosures and the Shap and Penrith road, while the shorter side runs due east and west, and at its eastern end a road communicating with the Appleby road leaves the common. The Shap and Penrith road leaves the common at the northern angle of the triangle, going through the town of Clifton between the church and the hall, and down the hill to Lowther Bridge over the river of that name. The Moor slopes downwards to the north, and the northern angle is the "Fort of the Moor" and also "The Town End," where is, on the west of the road, the Town End farm-house, the residence, in 1745, of Thomas Savage, a Quaker, and the place where the Duke of Cumberland lodged on the night of Wednesday, December 18th, 1745. The Moor was enclosed in 1812, and only a small green at its north, or foot, left open.

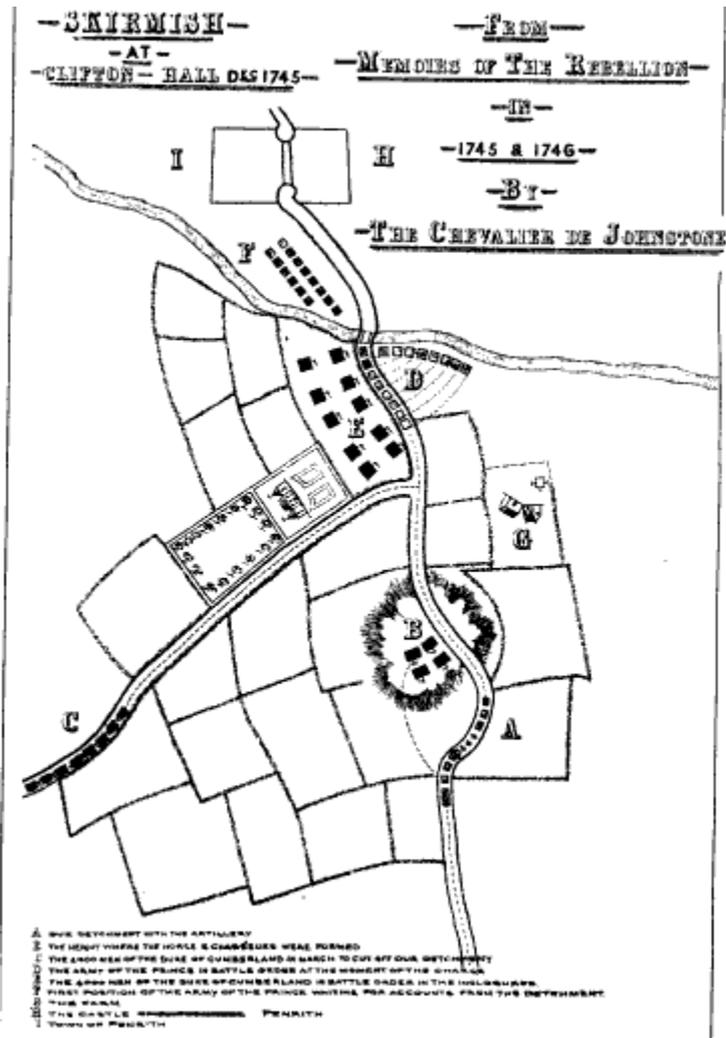
The Clifton Moor of 1745 was surrounded by enclosures on all sides, and approached at each angle by a narrow lane. A small lane running due east leads from the Moor into a small green among the eastern or Clifton enclosures. This can be identified on the ordnance map, for on it is marked "The Rebel Tree."

Plate xxv. is a rough diagram of that portion of the county of Westmoreland, through which the Highlanders retired on the 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, and 18th of December, 1745, after their surprising march to Derby. It shows the towns of Kendal

and Penrith (which last is just within the Cumberland borders); they are about 25 miles apart, and connected by a road, which, in December, 1745, must have been most trying for troops passing over the bleak moors of Shap Fell, well known to every traveller by the London and North-Western Railway. For most of the way the road was, in 1745, open to the fells and commons, but near villages it became a narrow lane passing through the enclosures which surrounded these villages. The town of Shap is on this road, 14 miles distant from Kendal and 11 from Penrith. The village of Thrimby, with its enclosures and Thrimby Hill, is about half way between Shap and Penrith.

A little north of Thrimby the road bifurcates, the main road going





through the village of Hackthorpe and its enclosures, while a mere lane runs (westward of the main road) through the village of Lowther and the Lowther enclosures, sometimes called by Lord George Murray "Lord Lonsdale's enclosures;" the lane falls again into the main road a little to the north of Lowther. The main road continues a little way and comes [or rather did in 1745] to Clifton Moor, a large right-angled triangular space which it enters at the right angle, and passes along one side, having the Lowther enclosures to the west and Clifton Moor to the east. Beyond Clifton Moor to the east are the Clifton enclosures, and beyond to the east is another moor, Brayham, in the parish of that name. The road leaves the Moor at its northern angle, where the "Foot of the Moor" and the "Town End" coincide. The town is about a third of a mile in length, and the Church and Clifton Hall are at its northern extremity, from which the road passes down a gentle slope of some half mile to the river Lowther and Lowther Bridge, beyond which, at about a quarter of a mile distance, it crosses the river Eamont by Eamont Bridge, and proceeds to Penrith, which is distant from Clifton about a mile and a quarter. Lowther Park and Hall are to the west of the Lowther enclosures, and a road leads from the north end of Clifton to Lowther Hall.

Another main road was from Kendal, by Orton and Crosby Ravensworth, to Appleby; cross roads, mere lanes, connect it with the Shap and Penrith road. There are bridges over the Eden at Appleby and Temple Sowerby, and another, lower down,

at Langwathby, in Cumberland. All these remarks apply to the condition of things in 1745.

The next plan (plate xxvi.) is an enlargement of the map from the Chevalier de Johnstone's *Memoirs*.¹ I have inserted it, as he puts it, the south at the top. This map is a very rough sketch, and the lane through the Lowther enclosures is carried down to the south of Thrimby Hill, instead of the north. He has omitted one of the two rivers, either Lowther or Eamont; and, most confusing of all, he has shifted the "Castle of Clifton Hall" into Penrith, evidently confusing it with Penrith Castle. This map represents the troops as they were at three distinct times on Dec. 18th—namely, 12 o'clock, 1 p.m., and 5 p.m. I have, therefore, made three copies, in which I have put down matters as they were at such three times—viz., noon, 1 p.m., and 5 p.m. On these plans I have corrected Johnstone's title of Clifton Hall to Clifton Moor. These will be given with the next number.

The editor of the Chevalier's *Memoirs* makes no attempt to explain the Chevalier's map, or to reconcile it with his text.

The next plan (plate xxvii.) is entitled "A plan of the Battle of Clifton Moor," and represents matters at 3 p.m. on the 18th Dec. It is taken from Dugald Graham's history of the Rebellion, written in doggerel verse.

An *Impartial History of the Rise, Progress and Extinction of the late Rebellion in Britain in the years 1745 and 1746*. The Sixth Edition. Glasgow: Printed by J. and M. Robertson, MDCCXCVI.

These three plans (Plates xxiv., xxvi., xxvii.) taken with the skeleton map of the country (Plate xxv.), when carefully studied give most important information as to the retreat of the Highlanders through Westmoreland in December 1745, and the skirmish on Clifton Moor on the 18th of that month. Previous writers have not known of the Newcastle plan; they have not understood the Chevalier de Johnstone's plan; and D. Graham's they have ignored.

They have also ignored or not known of Monsey's *Authentic Account of the occupation of Carlisle in 1745*.² It contains the correspondence of Dr. Waugh, one of my predecessors as Chancellor of Carlisle. Dr. Waugh was an active Whig, in close correspondence with the Premier, the Duke of Newcastle; he organised an intelligence department for the benefit of the Government in the south of Scotland and north-west of England. The local guides, who accompanied the Duke of Cumberland, were allies of his, probably formed by him, and in constant communication with him. The book, *Carlisle in 1745*, is indispensable, and has been strangely overlooked by Mr. Ewald and by Colonel Hozier. They have also overlooked *Walker's History of Penrith*, in which is a letter by Thomas Savage, giving a minute account of the skirmish on Clifton Moor. As this letter is not readily accessible, I have quoted largely from it, and put it *in extenso* in appendix iii.

¹ *Memoirs of the Rebellion in 1745*, by the Chevalier de Johnstone. London, 1822: Longman & Co.; third edition.

² London: Longman and Co., Carlisle; James Steel, 1846.

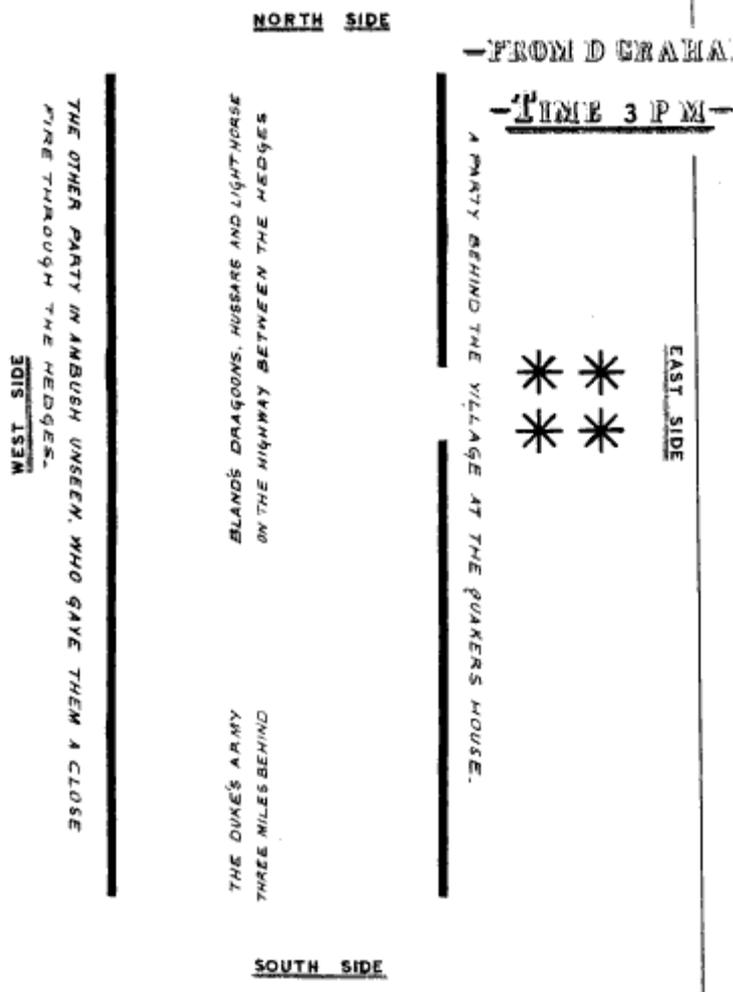
In appendix iv. I have put another important letter, hitherto unprinted, from Tom Tinkler.³

On the 4th of December, 1745 (O.S.) Prince Charles concentrated his army at Derby, and his advanced guard occupied the strong position of Swarkeston Bridge, which, nearly a mile in length, spans the Trent and the lowlands adjoining. On the 5th the Prince held a council of war; on the 6th he commenced his retreat. It is foreign to my purpose to discuss why he did so, or to speculate on what might have happened, had he pushed on for London, where the sensation produced by his arrival in Derby was intense. It was apprehended that he would evade the armies both of Marshal Wade and of the Duke of Cumberland, and march directly upon London. Wade's army he had already evaded; that commander expecting the Highlanders to enter England by the eastern route, awaited them at Newcastle until too late; he then marched to Hexham, only to learn that Carlisle had surrendered, and to return to Newcastle, from which

³ I applied to my friend, Canon Machell, the owner of the "Hill MS. collections towards a History of Westmorland," and asked if any information was contained in the eleven magnificent volumes about Clifton skirmish. The Canon kindly searched and found a reference to the Chevalier de Johnstone's map, and to some curious map or maps of the skirmish said to be at Downing College, Cambridge. I have to thank the Master of Downing and Mr. Courtney Kenny, M. P. for searching among the Downing archives, but with no result.

Canon Machell found an account of the burial of those who fell at Clifton Moor, which will be added in its place.

A PLAN OF THE BATTLE OF CLIFTON MUIR



place he was marching through Yorkshire to the south, to intercept the Highlanders, if he could.

The Duke of Cumberland, with an army of about 8,000, occupied at Stone the passages of the Trent between Newcastle-under-Lyne and Lichfield, and barred the way TOWARDS the west, while a third army, famous by Hogarth's well-known picture, assembled on Finchley Common for the protection of London.

The Highlanders commenced their retreat on December the 6th, and passed the night at ASHBOURNE: the Chevalier de Johnstone says:—

On the 7th we reached Leek, the 8th Macclesfield, the 9th Manchester, 10th Wigan, and the 11th Preston, where we remained during the 12th. We arrived at Lancaster on the 13th, where we recruited ourselves during the 14th, and on the 15th we reached Kendal.⁴

⁴ The 15th was a Sunday: as will presently be told, an advanced party of Scotch Hussars went through Kendal on Saturday, the 14th.

So soon as the Duke of Cumberland heard of the retreat, expresses were sent to the deputy-lieutenant and the magistrates, ordering them to rouse the country, to break up the roads, and to break down the bridges. The Duke of Cumberland commenced his pursuit of the Highlanders on the 8th December, when he marched north with the whole of his cavalry and a number of infantry, mounted upon horses, which were supplied by the gentry of the neighbourhood. Wade returned to Newcastle, but sent his cavalry, under Major-General Oglethorpe, to join the Duke of Cumberland, which they did at Preston, on the 13th December, having marched, spite of weather, 100 miles in three days.

The principal difficulties the Highlanders encountered in their retreat occurred on their passage through Westmorland.⁵ The deputy lieutenants of that county, on the 14th of December, in obedience to the command of the Duke of Cumberland, raised a part of the COUNTY to demolish Wastall Bridge and break up the road down Graynigge hawse⁶ in order to make the road from Kendal to Shap impassable for artillery and wheel-carriages. Whether this was done or not I do not know. The sequel shows that the roads were bad enough in their own natural state. The deputy lieutenants were a little late in moving in the matter, for an advanced party of the Highland army arrived at Kendal on the morning of that same day (Saturday, the 14th). It consisted of 110 or 120 hussars, under the Duke of Perth, who, according to Lord George Murray's account, had been sent off to make his way to Scotland to bring up men and to carry dispatches. This force was accompanied by a chaise, in which was "a person in woman's clothes." Another account says two ladies, and the suggestion was thrown out that one was Prince Charles himself, in female attire, endeavouring to get back to Scotland. The reception the Duke of Perth got from the Kendal people was a warm one. Hodgson, in his *History of Westmorland*, says, quoting, I fancy, the *Gentleman's Magazine*:—

They passed quietly till they came into Finkle street, when the mob suddenly fell upon them with clubs, stones, and anything they could pick up in their hurry. The Duke's men made a short stand, a little below the Fish Market, and fired several shots, by which four people received wounds of which they died. OF the rebels none were killed on the spot,⁷ but four made prisoners, one of them Perth's servant. The rebels then pushed briskly forward, and were pursued near a quarter of a mile to Stramongate bridge, by the enraged populace annoying them with stones. Then they made another stand here, and seemed as if they would return; but a townsman having crept privately to the bridge, fired at the foremost, who immediately let his gun and cloak fall, and could not turn his horse; but by the help of his companions they got to Shap, from which place they proceeded that afternoon to Eamont bridge; but perceiving Penrith beacon on fire, they enquired the reason, and being told that it

⁵ On their advance through Cumberland and Westmorland the Highlanders neither molested the country people, nor were molested by them. At first, supposed to be cannibals, they became mere objects of curiosity. *Carlisle in 1741*, p. 106. An account will be found in the same book, p. 116: (also in Ray's *History of the Rebellion*, and in Tom Tinkler's letter—Appendix iii. to this paper) of how Penrith volunteers captured a marauding party at Lowther Hall.

⁶ Wastall Bridge, now called Wasdale Bridge, is over Wasdale Beck, and is on the main road between Kendal and Shap, three-and-a-half miles south of Shap.— See plate xxv.

⁷ Kendal parish register contains the following entry:—"1745, Dec. 16th.— John Slack Kild by ye Scotts. Same day a Scotch rebel, name not known.

Slack was a respectable farmer. Tradition mentions Richard Pindar, a shoemaker, as wounded, and also an ostler, name unknown. Further accounts of this affray will be found in Ray's *History of the Rebellion* and in *Carlisle*, in 1745, pp. 130, 131, 132. Ray states he had seen the grave of one of the hussars, on the roadside, about four miles from Kendal, where he dropped off his horse and died.

was to raise the country, and that all the hedges from that place to Penrith were lined with armed men,⁸ they returned to Shap, where they halted during the night.

The ARRIVAL of the Duke of Perth in Kendal had been preceded by an anonymous letter to the Mayor, containing a report that the Highland army had been severely defeated by the Duke of Cumberland. The fact that the Duke of Perth and his hussars rode through the town without a halt would tend to confirm the Kendal men in the idea that they were fugitives, and might be mobbed, and stoned, and shot, things which they would hardly have indulged in had they known that the Highland infantry in full force, and undefeated, was close behind the horsemen.

To return to the Duke of Perth, whom we left halted for Saturday night the 14th, at Shap. The unfounded report of a Highland defeat had got well into circulation,⁹ and not only were the Penrith people in arms to cut off stragglers, but even Dalston, Sebergharn, and Brough turned out strong parties, armed as best they could, who guarded Armathwaite and Sebergham Bridges.¹⁰ On Sunday the 15th the Duke of Perth and his hussars made an attempt to get into Scotland, by the route along the eastern bank of the river Eaden (plan ii.) They went by Cliburn Temple Sowerby (where they crossed the Eden by Temple Sowerby Bridge) and Culgaith to Langwathby Moor. But the Penrith men crossed the river lower down at Langwathby Bridge, and with a number of country men got within pistol fire of the hussars at Appleside Hill on Langwathby Moor in Cumberland. They mobbed the hussars out of Cumberland, and through Westmoreland, through Culgaith, Newbiggen Moor, Kirkby House, where the hussars pressed one Jack Boucher as a guide, through the river Eden at Bolton, through Moorland, Newby by Mill Flat, and Reagill to Shap, thence to Orton Scan, where they left them. The hussars refreshed at Horton, and got back to Kendal on Sunday night, after a somewhat exciting, if somewhat inglorious two days' excursion through the two counties of Cumberland and Westmorland. One wonders that a party of over 100 hussars could not cut their way through a mob of Penrith townsmen and country people.¹¹

The Highlanders levied a fine on Kendal for the death of their hussar, and when the bulk of THEIR army reached Penrith on the 17th they threatened to burn the town for "Sunday Hunting." Tinkler tells us that ere the Highland army arrived most of the Penrith men made themselves scarce, and that Wade's 120 soldiers marched out to Gamelsby.

The HUSSARS having now rejoined the Highland army at Kendal, we have the whole Highland army to deal with.

⁸ Tom Tinkler's letter (Appendix iv.) details the preparation made at Penrith. He says that Wade had sent 120 soldiers to Penrith; that these—some 50 volunteers and some countrymen—lined the road from Eamont Bridge to Penrith at proper distances; that the Penrith Beacon was fired, and the whole countryside assembled on Penrith Fell.

⁹ See Tom Tinkler's letter in appendix iv. The report at Penrith took the form that the Highlanders were surrounded at Lancaster.

¹⁰ Another report was of a battle at Ellelmoon, five miles south of Lancaster; *Carlisle in 1745*, p. 131. *Carlisle in 1745*, p. 132.

¹¹ The 120 soldiers, whom we are told by Tinkler, Wade sent to Penrith, do not appear to have been in this "Sunday Hunting," as Tinkler calls it, nor were the hunters militia or lighthorse, for the Highlanders had captured all the arms of these troops at Carlisle.

On Monday, December the 16th, the whole Highland army left Kendal at daybreak hoping to reach Penrith that night, a distance of about 25 miles. This march is well described by the Chevalier de Johnstone, who at this time served as a captain in the Lowland regiment of Scotch, known as the Duke of Perth's; and the company which he commanded was, with three others of the same regiment, detailed off for the arduous duty of escorting the artillery. The rear of the march was brought up by the commander-in-chief, Lord George Murray, who was under the impression, an erroneous one, that Marshal Wade's army was within two miles, and that an engagement was imminent; as a matter of fact, Wade's infantry were making for Newcastle, and his cavalry under Major-General Oglethorpe in company with the Duke of Cumberland and his cavalry and probably some mounted infantry only reached Kendal on the following day, Tuesday the 17th.

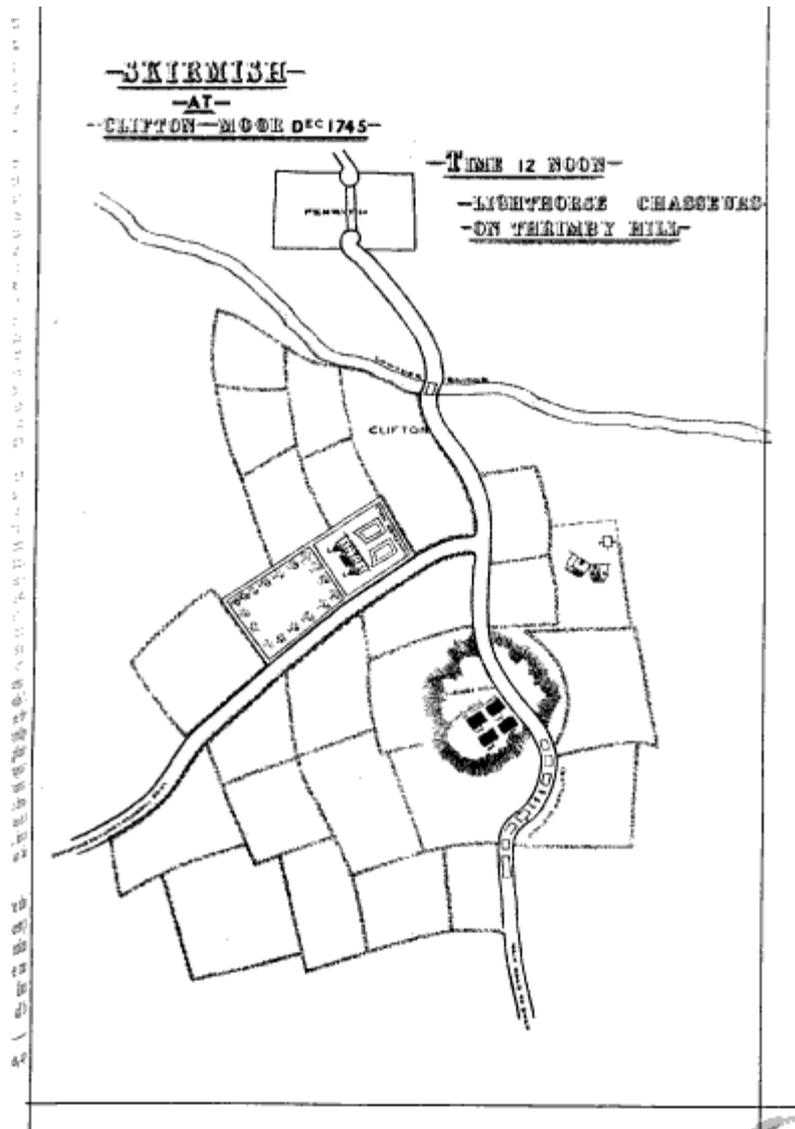
Owing to the bad state of the roads and the weather, the Highland army got on Monday, the 16th, no further than Shap, where they stayed the night; their artillery did not even get so far, some ammunition waggons broke down about a league and a half or *SOME* four miles from Kendal, and the artillery and its escort passed the night on the high road in a storm of wind and rain. On Tuesday, the 17th, the Prince with the bulk of the army arrived at Penrith, but the artillery and its escort, now reinforced by the Macdonalds of Glengarry, to the number, the Chevalier says, of 500 men, but I think of only 300, only managed to reach Shap, and that with great difficulty at nightfall. It will be convenient to here give the Chevalier's own account of the first part of the next day's proceedings:—

We set out from Shap by break of day, on the 18th, to join our army, which waited for us at Penrith; but we had scarcely begun our march, when we saw a great number of the enemy's light-horse continually hovering about us: without venturing, however, to come *WITHIN* musket shot. The appearance of these light horsemen appeared the more extraordinary, as hitherto we had seen none in the whole course of our expedition into England. Having arrived at mid-day, at the foot of an eminence [Thrimby Hill], which it was necessary to cross in our march to Penrith, about half way between that town and Shap, the moment we began to ascend, we instantly discovered cavalry, marching two and two abreast on the top of the hill, who disappeared soon after, as if to form themselves in order of battle, behind the eminence which concealed their numbers from us, with the intention of disputing the passage. We heard at the same time a prodigious number of trumpets and kettle-drums. Mr. Brown, colonel in the train of Lally's regiment, was at the head of the columns with two of the companies, which the Duke of Perth had attached to the artillery, and of which mine was one. After them followed the guns and ammunition waggons, and then the two other companies attached to the artillery. Lord George was in the rear of the column with the regiment of Macdonalds.

We stopt a moment at the foot of the hill, everybody believing it was the English Army, from the great number of trumpets and kettle-drums. In this seemingly desperate conjuncture, we immediately adopted the opinion of Mr. Brown, and resolved to rush upon the enemy, sword in hand, and open a passage to our army at Penrith or perish in the attempt. Thus, without informing Lord George of our resolution, we darted forward with great swiftness, running up the hill as fast as our legs could carry us. Lord George, who was in the rear, seeing our manoeuvre at the head of the column, and being unable to pass the waggons in the deep roads confined by hedges, in which we then were, immediately ordered the Highlanders to proceed

across the inclosure, and ascend the hill from another quarter. They ran so fast that they reached the summit of the hill almost as soon as those who were at the head of the column. We were agreeably surprised, when we reached the top of the hill to find, instead of the English army, only three hundred light horse and chasseurs, who immediately fled in disorder,¹² and of whom we were only able to come up with one man, who had been thrown from his horse, and whom we wished to make prisoner to obtain some intelligence from him; but it was impossible to save him from the fury of the Highlanders, who cut him to pieces in an instant. From the great number of trumpets and kettle-drums which the light horse had with them, there is every reason for supposing that it was their design to endeavour to induce us to turn aside from the road to Penrith, by making us believe that the whole English army was on the hill before us, and if we had fallen into the snare which was laid for us, in a few hours every man of our detachment would either have been killed or taken prisoner.

¹² Lord George Murray, a more experienced soldier than the Chevalier, says, “they moved off at top gallop, and gave me no more trouble.”



This episode, which is represented on plate xxviii., took place about mid-day. The light horse and chasseurs have generally been put down as local militia: in reality they were light horse, from a column under General Oglethorpe, which was moving parallel to the main column of the Duke of Cumberland, and marching through Orton and Crosby Ravensworth (plate xxv.). None of the historians of the occurrences of the 18th December mention that Oglethorpe was thus operating with a detached column, but it is proved by a letter from Mr. Lamb, printed in Mounsey's *Carlisle in 1745*, p. 136. Mr. Lamb says—

On Wednesday morning, I carried some letters tp General Oglethorpe, at Orton, who the Duke expected would have been with the Rear Guard of the Rebels the night before. I went with them till they took ye road to Strickland Head, then I took the Shap road, and at Shap Thorn¹³ (See plan ii). I came in sight of the Duke's army, about 120.¹⁴

¹³ Shap Thorn is on the road between Kendal and Shap, two miles to the south of Shap.

¹⁴ Mr. Mounsey does not say who or what Mr. Lamb was, and I have been unable to ascertain. But he was a local man, in the confidence of the Chancellor of Carlisle, and serving with the Duke of Cumberland, as guide, etc.

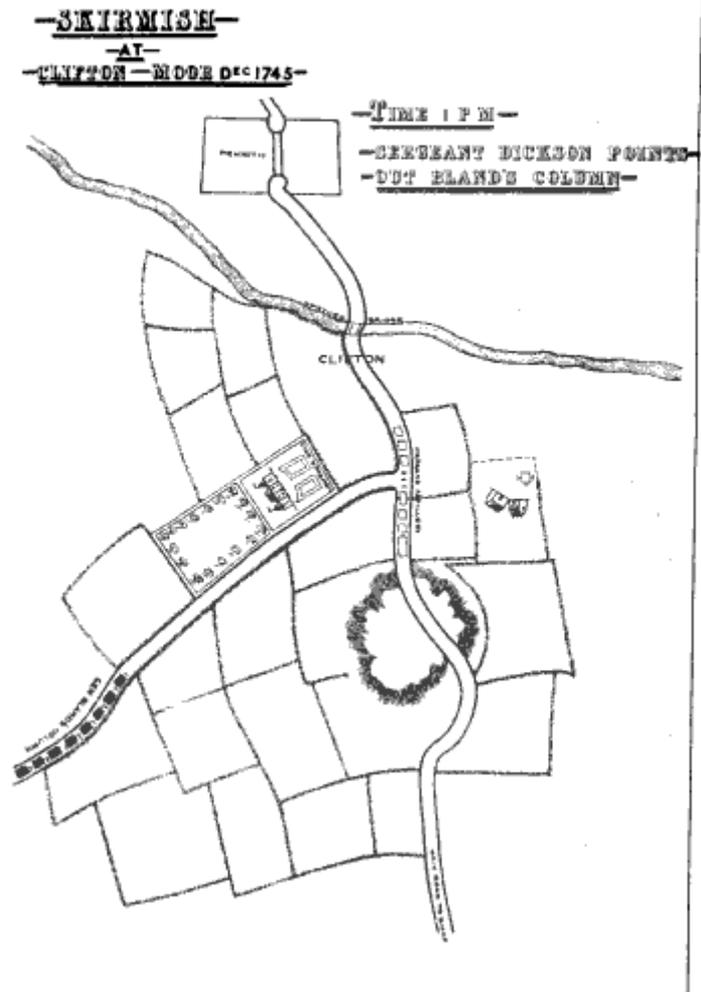
Now if Oglethorpe's column marched by Little Strickland they would come out on the Penrith and Shap road, close to Thrimby Hill, the place which I have indicated as the scene of THIS encounter; and there can be no doubt that the 300 chasseurs (light horse), trumpeters, and kettle-drums had been hurried on from Oglethorpe's column to intercept the lagging Highland train of artillery and its escort, and cut it off from the Highland army.

At 12 o'clock we get the position thus: the Duke of Cumberland's army at Shap¹⁵; the Highland artillery and its escort (four companies of the Duke of Perth's regiment and the Macdonalds) ascending Thrimby Hill, beyond which was Oglethorpe's light horse, chasseurs, trumpeters, and kettledrummers, including no doubt some of the Royal or Yorkshire Hunters, while Oglethorpe himself, with Ligonier's dragoons, was somewhere between Thrimby and Orton.¹⁶ The situation was serious; had the Highlanders halted or left the road, a short time would have seen them between the columns of the Duke of Cumberland and General Oglethorpe. But they were able to brush away the light horsemen and chasseurs, and with their charge up the hill ends Scene I. of the military drama played in Westmoreland, on Wednesday, the 18th December.

(To be continued.)

¹⁵ The Duke's army here means only a part of his army, the cavalry. He brought to Clifton moor the following cavalry regiments, viz., Cobham's, Kerr's, Bland's, and Montagu's dragoons, and Kingston's light horse: and some of the Royal or Yorkshire Hunters. *See* Appendix I.

¹⁶ Ligonier's dragoons were not with the Duke of Cumberland, and so must have been with Oglethorpe, whose column must also have included some of Kingston's light horse, and of the Yorkshire Hunters, the "light horse and chasseurs" mentioned by the Chevalier de Johnstone.



THE RELIQUARY.

OCTOBER, 1888.

The Retreat of the Highlanders through Westmoreland in 1745.

BY R. S. FERGUSON, F.S.A., LOC. SEC. S.A. FOR CUMBERLAND; CHANCELLOR
OF CARLISLE.

(Continued from page 179.)

I SHALL AGAIN put the Chevalier de Johnstone into the witness box, and he shall give an account of Scene II., which is, in the language of the theatre, a mere carpenter's flat, between two more important scenes.

We immediately resumed our march, but in less than an hour¹⁷ one of our ammunition waggons having broken from the badness of the roads, we were obliged to halt. The singular adventure of the light horse had filled me with some uneasiness, as I was unable to account for their audacity, unless the army of Marshal Wade were much nearer us than we imagined, and I communicated my fears to Mr. Grant, an officer of great talents, who commanded our artillery, and acted as our engineer at the same time; and, in order that we might not lose time in repairing the broken waggon, I suggested to him that we should go to a farm which we saw on our right, about a quarter of a league from us, and try to procure one. He consented; and we took seven or eight men with us, of whom my sergeant, Dickson, was one. Having found a waggon in the courtyard of the farmer, we immediately carried it off¹⁸ (see Plan xxix.); and our march was retarded no longer than the time necessary for transferring the ammunition from one waggon to another. In returning from the farm, Dickson called our attention to something which appeared blackish to us, on a hill about a league to our left; and he alone, contrary to the opinion of every one else, maintained that he saw it moving, and that it was the English army advancing towards us. As we took what he saw for bushes, and as nobody, excepting himself, could distinguish anything, I treated him as a visionary; but he still persisted, till I ordered him to be silent, telling him that fear alone could have filled his imagination with the idea of an army. However, his last word was that we should see in an hour whether or not he was in the right. When we had advanced about two miles,¹⁹ we were soon convinced that Dickson's eyes were much better than ours. The Duke of Cumberland, having followed us by forced marches, with two thousand cavalry, and as many foot-soldiers²⁰ mounted behind them, fell suddenly on the Macdonalds, who were in the rear of the column, with all the fury and impetuosity imaginable. Fortunately the road running between thorn hedges and ditches, the cavalry could not act in such a manner as to surround us, nor present a larger front than the breadth of the road. The Highlanders received their charge with the most undaunted firmness. They repelled the assailants with their swords, and did not quit their ground till the artillery and waggons were a hundred paces from them and continuing their route. Then the Highlanders wheeled to the right and ran with full speed till they joined the waggons, when they stopt again for the cavalry, and stood their charge as firm as a wall. The cavalry were repulsed in the same manner as before by their swords. We marched in this manner about a mile, the cavalry continually renewing the charge, and the Highlanders always repulsing them, repeating the same manoeuvre and behaving like lions.

The plan given by the Chevalier de Johnstone (Plates xxvi. and xxix.) shows that the column seen by Sergeant Dickson, was marching, not on the main road between Shap and Clifton, through Hackthorpe, but on a loop road or lane to the west of the main road, running through Lowther and the Lowther enclosures: from Dugald Graham we learn that it was commanded by General Bland, and consisted of Bland's dragoon's, Kingston's light horse, and the Yorkshire Hunters;²¹ and that the Duke of Cumberland with his force was three miles behind, and no doubt on the main road, while Bland was pushing forward along the side lane through the Lowther enclosures, to get between the Highland artillery and Penrith (Plate xxix.) This he probably would have done had any delay taken place over the broken waggon, but the Chevalier's presence of mind prevented this. The cavalry, however, got touch of the rear of the Highland artillery escort immediately after the junction of the two roads; the Chevalier talks of a running fight for a mile, which is about the distance

¹⁷ hat will make the time a little before one o'clock.

¹⁸ I do not know if tradition preserves the name of the farm: Thrimby Hall suits the description of the place, or it may have been nearer Hackthorpe. It is marked on the Chevalier's plan.

¹⁹ Two miles would take about an hour to march; this brings the time of day to 2 p.m. We shall see the artillery passed Clifton Town End about 2.30, the charge mentioned in the text must have taken place about half-a-mile or rather more from the Town End.

²⁰ The Duke of Cumberland had no infantry with him on the 18th Dec; they were a day's march behind. The force that Dickson saw was a column under General Bland, consisting of Bland's dragoon's, Kingston's light horse and some Yorkshire Hunters, which was endeavouring to get in front of the Highland artillery by a lane through the Lowther enclosures. The Duke with the main body was three miles behind.

²¹ Or such of these last two regiments as were not with Gen. Oglethorpe; but even those that were with Oglethorpe's column, and were at the affair at Thrimby, might after that have joined Bland's column.

between the junction of the roads and Clifton moor. This running fight must have taken place about 2 p.m.; messengers had been sent to Penrith by Lord George Murray, and a body of Highland infantry under Cameron of Lochiel had moved from Penrith and taken post at Lowther Bridge behind the river Lowther to assist the Highland train of artillery, and the Scotch cavalry had come out to Clifton. Here ends Scene II., and I will dismiss the Chevalier de Johnstone from the witness box, for though he continues his story, he was no longer an eye witness, as the train of artillery and the four companies of Perth's regiment did not stop for the fighting at Clifton, but proceeded at once to Carlisle, not stopping at Penrith, except for a short rest.

was in pain for believing that a great number might be cut off before they were aware; so our care was to give the king's men notice, for which my son²⁵ ventured his life, and gave them notice about 300 yards before they came to the place; when in the meantime a second ambush was laid, about 100 yards nearer to our king's men,²⁶ and the king's hussars with some of the Yorkshire Hunters, came down, and so soon as they came opposite to the first ambush, the rebels fired upon them, but did no execution; and then issued out the ambush at my doors and a furious firing they had, the king's men acting the quickest and nimblest that ever my eyes beheld, not one of them receiving any harm. Some horse followed the former, so that in a few minutes the rebels ran away like mad men, and just by my door one of the rebels was brought down, and taken, and a Captain Hamilton was also taken at the same time. They were both had up to the Duke,

This happened about 3 o'clock, and is shown on the sketch (Plate xxvii) given by D. Graham, who tells us that the hussars engaged on the English side were Kingston's light horse, and that the horse were Bland's dragoons, and that Bland ordered his cavalry to retire. The Newcastle map also has this scene laid down upon it, the Scotch hussars filling the town, and Kingston's light horse, who are marked "The Forlorn Hope," riding on them. I have reproduced this from the Newcastle map, as a separate map (Plate xxxi.) Bland, after being warned by Jonathan Savage, would not consider it prudent to attack the enemy until the Duke of Cumberland came up in force; from Graham we learn the Duke was three miles (say an hour) behind Bland. Thomas Savage says the "rebels ran away like mad men;" this may seem strong language, but Lord George says:

Our hussars, upon seeing the enemy, went off to Penrith. One of their officers, Mr. Hamilton, with two or three of his men, had dismounted (being ashamed of the going off of the others), and ... taken prisoners.²⁷

Hamilton took refuge in a cottage a little detached from the town; one of the Duke's hussars (said by D. Graham to be an Austrian) fired through the window, and drove Hamilton out: a single combat ensued, but the hussar captured Hamilton, who was much cut about the head; the other prisoner was one Ogden, of the Manchester regiment. No other casualties are recorded as having occurred during this spirited little rally, which forms Scene III.

Scene IV. is a carpenter's flat, which Thomas Savage shall tell.

Then all was still about an hour,²⁸ in which time I abode in the house, the king's troops still standing upon the common; in which time my son went over a little green²⁹ to see if he could get the cattle brought into the houses, but seeing that in vain, came homewards again, when four rebels on horseback seized him, calling him a spy and had him down under their horses' feet, swearing desperately many times they would shoot him; three of them commanded the fourth to shoot him, which he attempted with his gun, and pistol, but neither would fire, so he escaped, and came in a little

²⁵ Jonathan Savage. The Newcastle map shows the route by which he went to warn the king's hussars, namely, through the fields at the back of his father's house; by a mistake it calls him Thomas.

²⁶ This is shown on the sketch (Plate xxvii.) given by D. Graham, who marks a Quaker's house on the east side of the road, the opposite side to the Town End farm house, which was Savage's house, and is generally known in connection with the 18th Dec, 1745, as the Quaker's house. The house on the east of the road was also a Quaker's house, belonging to a son-in-law of Thomas Savage, named Josiah Walker.

²⁷ The Sunday hunting had probably demoralised them.

²⁸ This would bring the time to 4 p.m., when the popping shots Lord George mentions began.

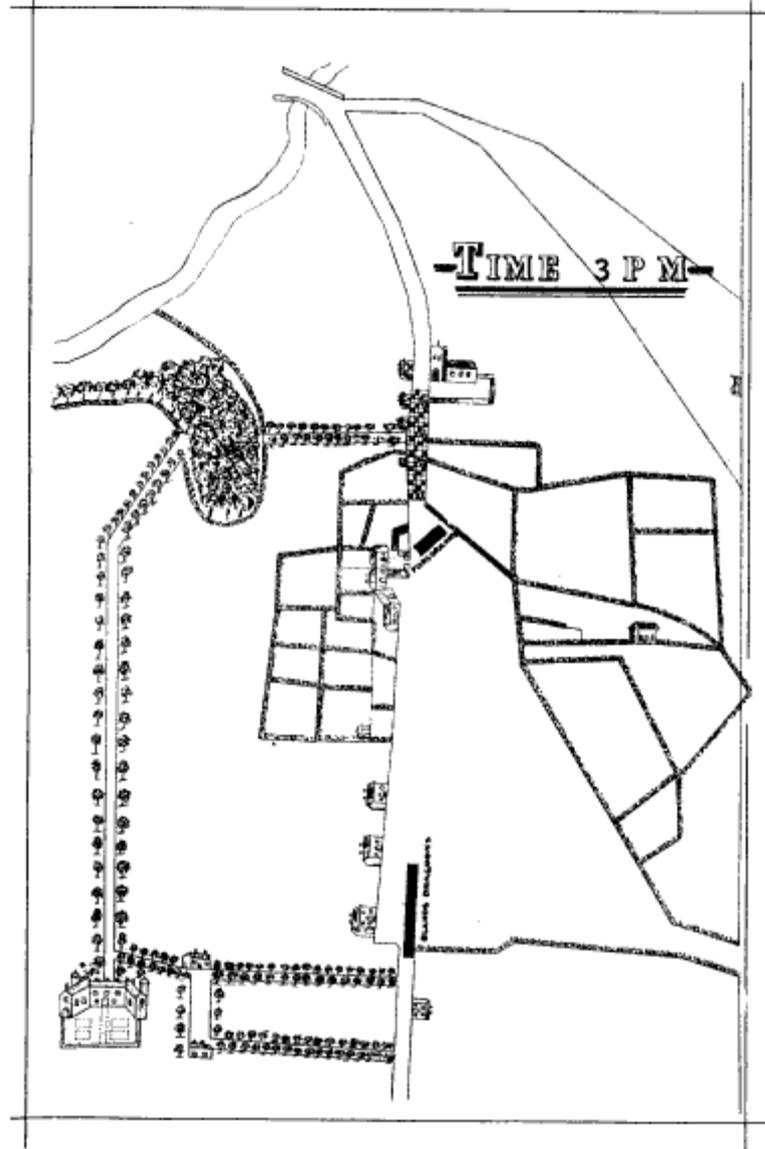
²⁹ The little green is to be seen on the Newcastle map; the place marked 14, where Col. Honeywood was afterwards wounded; it is by the "Rebels' Tree."

after. ... and in the time of quietness as above, they had sent off a party of their horse³⁰ to plunder and burn Lowther Hall and town, and were also plundering our town, leaving nothing they could lay their hands on, breaking locks, and making ruinous work, even to all our victuals and little children's clothes of all sorts.

This ends Scene IV. Lord George Murray had, in sending horse to Lowther Hall (he accompanied them himself) a much more important object than that of plunder. He tells us that his object was to fall upon the Duke's army in the narrow lane through the Lowther enclosures, where he calculated that

“If but twenty of their horse could be killed, it would make such an embarrass in the lane, that it would put them to confusion, and choke up the only road they had to retreat except the Appleby road, and that might also be secured, which would give us an advantage that perhaps we should not meet the like again.”

³⁰ A party of horse would be a detachment from the Scotch lifeguards, of which there were two troops, commanded by Lords Elcho and Balmarino; the hussars, who had gone off to Penrith, were commanded by Lord Pitsligo.



This, however, Lord George was unable to effect. The Duke of Cumberland's forces were through the lane, and drawn up on the Clifton Moor before Lord George could intercept them; and Lord George's horse did nothing beyond capturing a militia officer in green, probably a Yorkshire hunter, and the Duke of Cumberland's footman. Lord GEORGE himself returned from Lowther Hall to Clifton, and saw to the disposition of the forces he had with him. He had sent the artillery off to Penrith, or rather, to Carlisle. His first object was, of course, to secure its safety. His hussars had bolted, but he had with him about 1,000 men, Highlanders and Lowlanders, most of whom had come out to him from Penrith. (Plates xxx. and xxxii) The Athol brigade had also advanced from Penrith to a position³¹ on the north side of Lowther Bridge, and there waited for orders. Lord George's account of how he disposed his forces is printed in several books, but Plate xxxii. shows it at a glance. The Glengarry men were in the enclosures, on the right of the road— Lord George's right, that is, the west

³¹ Lord George is the authority for this; according to the Chevalier de Johnstone, Cameron of Lochiel had previously occupied this position, but he crossed the bridge to rescue Lord George and the Glengarry Macdonalds from the English cavalry.

side, the same side as Savage's house at Town End. Appin's and Cluny's men were in the enclosures on the left, or east side of the road, with Roy Stewart's men (the Edinburgh regiment) on the side of the lane, or highway, close to the village (Plates xxiv. and xxxii.) Lord George says—

“The ditches at the foot advanced more towards the muir on the right than on the left; and that part was also covered by Lord Lonsdale's other enclosures, so that they could not easily be attacked, but had the advantage that they could with their fire, flank the enemy when they made an attack on our left. The lane, which was the high road between these small enclosures was not above twenty feet broad. It was now an hour after sunset, pretty cloudy, but the moon, which was in its second quarter, from time to time broke out and gave good light; but this did not continue above two minutes at a time. We had the advantage of seeing their disposition, but they could not see ours.”

Ray says the SAME, and that the buff belts of the dragoons made them conspicuous.

The Duke of Cumberland's forces were by now drawn up in two lines (see Plates xxiv. and xxxii.) on the high end of the common, Bland's, Kerr's, and Cobham's forming the first line, and Montagu's and Kingston's the second; a detachment faced the Appleby road and the Duke's baggage was in the rear of the second line. The left regiment of each line was wheeled up inward, to the right, or east.

I have now got the flats set and scenery fixed, and will go on with Scene V. — the most important of all (see Plate xxxii.) Lord George gives us the time of its commencement—an hour after sunset, which on Dec. 18th would be about 5 p.m. Mr. Lamb in a letter printed in Mounsey's *Carlisle in 1745*, says the firing began about 4 p.m. —the “popping shots” no doubt, which Lord George mentions, as I shall presently show.³² I will again put Thomas Savage into the witness box. He says—

“I was again growing uneasy to go out, which I ventured to do; and looking about me, I saw the king's men standing as before upon the common; turning me about I saw the rebels filling the town street, north of my house, and also lining the hedges and walls, even down to my house on both sides. Then I was in great pain for the Duke and his men, it beginning to grow darkish; but I ventured my life, and stood a little way off, and waved my hat in my hand, which some of them discovering, one of them came riding down towards me, and I called to him, bidding him to cast his eyes about him, and see how the town was filled, and hedges lined, after which he returned.”

I need not relate the personal adventures of the worthy Quaker, for they will be found in his letter in the appendix; his evidence fails us now, for he, wise man that he was, locked himself into his house during the fight that presently ensued, and his daughter-in-law, the mistress of his house, hid in the kitchen cupboard. About this time Lord George received an important order from the Prince, and he shall tell what the order was and how he replied thereto. He says—

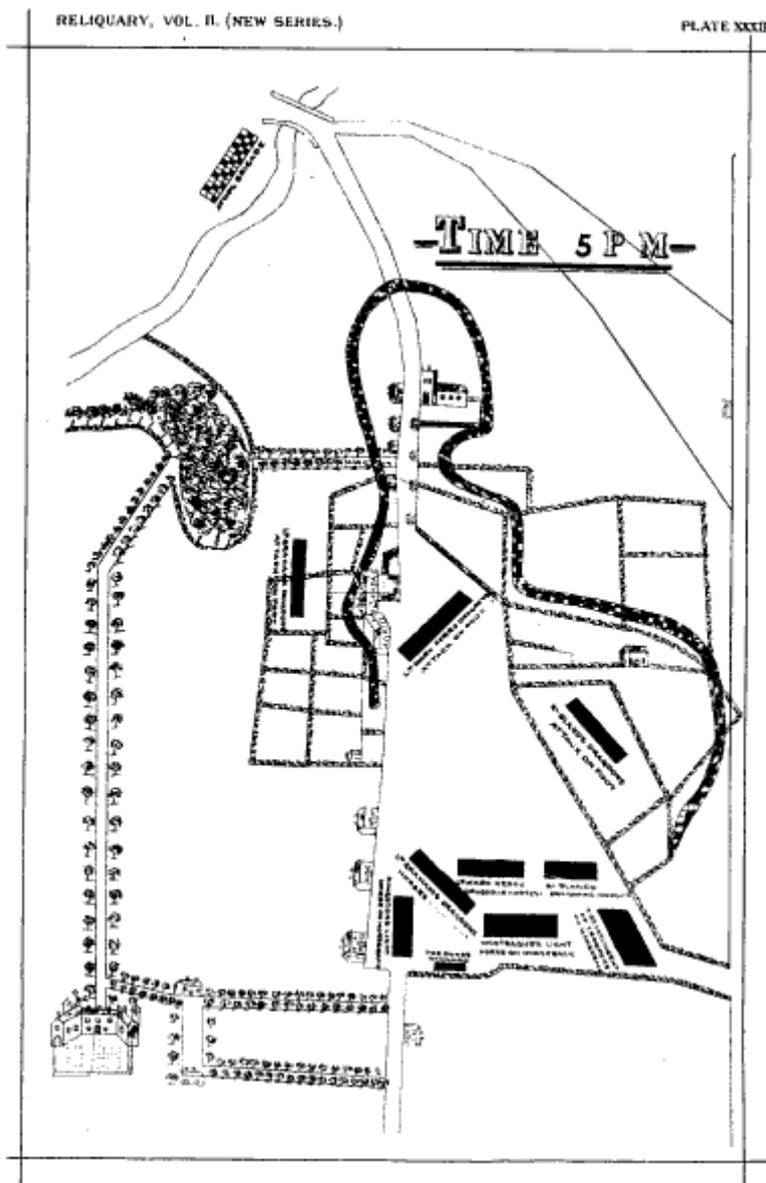
Colonel Roy Stewart returned to me from Penrith. He told me his royal highness had resolved to march for Carlisle immediately, and had sent off the cannon before, and desired me to retreat to Penrith. I showed Col. S. my situation with that of the enemy. They were by this time shooting popping shots among us. I told him if I retreated, being within musket shot of the enemy, they would follow up the lane, and I must lose a number of men, besides

³² It would be about 4 p.m., when Thomas Savage came out and looked round; 5 p.m. when the dragoons and Highlanders came to close quarters.

discouraging the rest; that from Clifton it was a narrow road and very high walls, so that I could not line them to secure my retreat; and that probably my men would fall into confusion in the dark; and that the enemy by regular platoons in our rear, being encouraged by our retreat, must destroy a great many; and by taking any wounded man prisoner, they would know our numbers; whereas I told him I was confident I could dislodge them from where they were by a brisk attack, as they had by all that I could judge not dismounted above 500. Their great body was on horseback, and at some distance; and Cluny and he owned that what I proposed was the only prudent and sure way, so we agreed not to mention the message from the prince.

Lord George then visited the Glengarry men (see Plate xxxii.) and cautioned them to reserve their fire until the enemy were close, and not to fire across the road; further, when the enemy retired, they were to give them a flank fire, but not to follow them up the moor. He next returned to the left of his line east of the road.

We must now go to the Duke of Cumberland; he had dismounted some of his men, namely, portions of Bland's, Kerr's, and Cobham's dragoons (see Plate xxxii.), who advanced against the Highlanders, leaving their horses in charge of their comrades. Bland's dismounted dragoons went into the enclosures east of the road, Kerr's went straight up the road, while Cobham's went through the enclosures and got in rear of the Glengarry men. Then the fighting began. Thomas Savage can tell no more than that "the firing on all hands was dreadful and continued half-an-hour." Lord George's account is as follows—



We advanced and had a good deal of fire on both sides. After the Highlanders on that side³³ had given most of their fire they lay close at an open hedge, which was the second in these fields. We then received the whole fire of the dragoons that were at the bottom, upon which Cluny said "What the devil is this?" Indeed the bullets were going thick enough. I told him we had nothing for it but going down upon them sword in hand, before they had time to charge again. I immediately drew my sword and cried "Claymore." Cluny did the same, and we ran down to the bottom ditch, clearing the diagonal hedges as we went. There were a good many of the enemy killed at the bottom ditch,³⁴ and the rest took to their heels, but received the fire of the Glengarry regiment. Most of Ardshiel's³⁵ men, being next the lane, did not meet with so much opposition.³⁶ I had given orders that our men should not pass the

³³ The west side, where were the Macdonalds of Glengarry.

³⁴ The bottom ditch means the last ditch between the enclosures and the moor; the Newcastle map shows Bland's dragoons between the diagonal hedges, and just in front of this ditch.

³⁵ That is the Appin men; Stewart of Ardshiel commanded Stewart of Appin's men.

³⁶ The main fighting was between the Macphersons under Lord George and Cluny, and Bland's dragoons under Colonel Honeywood; the dragoons evidently (see the Newcastle map) penetrated from the moor over two diagonal hedges to the place marked 14, as where Colonel Honeywood was wounded; from this place they were driven back to the moor. Except that Kerr's lost one man killed, and Cobham's three, I have found no details as to these two regiments.

bottom ditch to go up the muir, for they would have been exposed to the fire of the Glengarry regiment that could not distinguish them from the enemy. We had now done what we proposed, and, being sure of no more trouble from the enemy, I ordered the retreat; first Roy Stewart, then Appin, Cluny and the Glengarry men; and it was half an hour after the skirmish before we went off.³⁷ The Atholl brigade had come the length of a bridge, within half a mile of Clifton, hearing of my being in sight of the enemy, and there waited for orders. Had the rest of the army come out, and following the plan that was proposed, they would have been on the flank of the dragoons that were on horseback by the time we attacked the others.

I will now give the Duke of Cumberland's account of this skirmish, quoting it from Ewald's *Life of Prince Charles*.

After a ten hours' march our cavalry came up with the rebels just beyond Lowther Hall: nay, we heard that their rear was in possession of it, but they left it on our approach, and threw themselves into the village of Clifton, which we immediately attacked with the dismounted dragoons, and though it is the most defensible village I ever saw, yet our men drove them out of it in an hour's time, with a very small loss. Cobham's and Mark Kerr's behaved both extremely well. As it was quite dark before the skirmish was over, we were obliged to remain content with the ground we had gained. What the rebels may have lost I can't tell; we have four officers wounded, none mortally, and about forty men killed and wounded. The regiment which suffered the greatest loss was the King's Own Regiment of Dragoons. By some confusion in the two dismounted squadrons commanded by Colonel Honeywood, they firing at 150 yards distance, and then giving way, the rebels came out with broadswords and wounded several of the officers, and some of the men. When the officers of the King's regiment were wounded, the rebels cried "No quarter, murder them," and they received several wounds after they were knocked down.³⁸

These two accounts fit into one another very well; it is clear Bland's dragoons broke—the regimental records say they were ordered to retire a few paces, which the Highlanders took for a retreat and rushed on them Ray gives the following account—

"The action was very sharp and desperate while it lasted, but at last ended in our favour, notwithstanding the rebels, from their situation, had greatly the advantage of us, we being obliged to go over the hedges up to the boot tops in water; not only so, but it being late in the evening, they could see our buff belts and laced hats, when we could not so well discern their blue bonnets and dark colour'd plaids, so that we directed our fire at their fire, which was very hot on both sides. Notwithstanding these disadvantages we pushed them with such intrepidity that in about an hour they quitted the field and village and fled to Penrith."

For what happened next, I will go again to Thomas Savage. He says:—

"And after the heat of firing was over, all seemed still a little space, after which some came and broke in at my court door, calling sharply to open; but we believed it to be the rebels, and would not open, when they began to be sharp, and orders were given to fire—they supposing the house to be full of rebels; but I called and said I would open as fast as I could, and the first words said to me were "Could the Duke lodge here to-night?" to which with pleasure I answered "Yes;" and pleasant agreeable company he was—a man of parts, very friendly and no pride in him."

³⁷ The skirmish began at 5 p.m.; Savage says the firing lasted half an hour; half an hour more brings the time of the Highland retreat to 6 p.m.

³⁸ At Thrimby Hill it was impossible, says the Chevalier de Johnstone, to save a prisoner from the fury of the Highlanders, who cut him to pieces in an instant.

Young Mrs. Savage also emerged from the kitchen cupboard, and was saluted by the Duke with: "Madame, we come to protect you, not to do you any harm." One local legend I have picked up concerning Colonel Honeywood, who commanded the dismounted squadrons of Bland's. One of the Highland prisoners was asked about the fight, how his side got on. His reply was: "We gat on (no)³⁹ vary weel, till the lang man in the muckle boots came ower the dyke, but his fut slipped on a turd, and we gat him down." The "lang man in the muckle boots" was the luckless Colonel Honeywood, who had but recently recovered from wounds received at Dettingen, namely, 23 broadsword cuts and two musket balls, which were never extracted. On this occasion he received three sword cuts about the head; he was removed to Howgill Castle, of which he was the owner, through his mother, the heiress of the Sandfords, of Howgill. He was afterwards M.P. for Appleby from 1754 to 1784, and died in 1785, having attained high rank in the army. He lost his sword at Clifton, which was carried off by Cluny, chief of the Macphersons, as a trophy. According to Mr. Savage and Lord George the fighting must have been over about 5.30, but Mr. Lamb, in a letter printed in *Carlisle in 1745*, says it lasted until 8 o'clock. I imagine that when the Highlanders began to retreat after the skirmish the Duke's light horse followed them up, and that, "popping shots" continued for long to be exchanged between stragglers from both sides. The Newcastle map marks a spot north of Lowther Bridge as the Rebels Last Fire.

One episode of the fight remains to be mentioned, for which the Newcastle map (see plan i.) is the sole authority. The figures 10, thrice repeated, are explained as "The place that Oglethorpe first appeared; the way that he went to engage a partie of rebels at Pillar Hill, who fled." The place is Brougham Common, east of Clifton. Oglethorpe was, as mentioned before, moving up with Ligonier's dragoons from Orton. Nothing is said as to what time he appeared on Brougham Common; of his light horse and chasseurs we heard early in the day, but of Oglethorpe and Ligonier's dragoons we know nothing, except what the map says. If Oglethorpe was on Brougham Common before Lord George retreated from Clifton he should have cut Lord George off from Lowther Bridge and Penrith. We can only suppose he was unable to get up in time.

The Highlanders, after the skirmish at Clifton, went off to Penrith, and marched at once from that place to Carlisle, marching all night; the whole Highland army arrived at Carlisle early next morning in a sorry condition, and straggling over eight miles of road. The Duke and his forces occupied Clifton that night, the main bulk of them standing under arms on the moor.

The number of the killed and wounded on each side has been the subject of much discussion. Captain Hozier says the total number of the English killed or wounded exceeded one hundred men, while the Highlanders lost but twelve. Let us see what the actual witnesses say. Thomas Savage says: "Ten of the King's men were killed and twenty-one wounded, and five rebels." Mr. Lamb rode over the field at eight o'clock next morning, and saw "Seven of our men dead, and there was thirteen wounded. ... I only see four rebels killed." Ray says eleven of the King's men were killed and twenty-

³⁹ The "no" is a conjectural emendation of mine; it makes the story tally with Cluny's surprised exclamation of "What the devil is this," which looks as if at first things were not going well with Cluny's men; no doubt matters were much improved for Cluny when the commander of the dragoons went down.

nine wounded, and he specifies the killed as seven of Bland's, three of Cobham's, and one of Mark Kerr's. The wounded included Colonel Honeywood, Captain East, and Cornets Owen and Hamilton. The English official account was 40 killed and wounded. The parish register at Clifton agrees exactly with Ray's account, except in giving one man less from Bland's; it agrees exactly with the number of dead given by Savage, viz., ten; but one man of Bland's lingered and was buried on the 8th of January, 1745, O.S. The following are the extracts from the register:—

“The 19th of Dec, 1745, Ten Dragoons, to wit, six of Bland's, three of Cobham's, and one of Mark Kerr's Regiment buried, who was killed ye evening before by y^e Rebels in y^e skirmish between y^e Duke of Cumberland's army and them at y^e end of Clifton Moor next y^e Town.⁴⁰

Robert Akins, a private Dragoon of General Bland's Regiment, Buried y^e 8th Day of Janry., 1745.

Savage and Lamb were eye-witnesses, so was Ray, but he had the opportunity before he wrote his book of correcting his information by the official returns. The regimental records of the three regiments engaged make the killed twelve; the discrepancy of one man may be accounted for by a desertion, or a wounded man dying subsequently at Carlisle.⁴¹

Against these statements must be put one by the Chevalier de Johnstone, that “whole platoons of forty and fifty men might be seen falling all at once under the swords of the Highlanders. He also says some puts the English loss as high as 600, *i.e.*, at more than the number at which Lord George estimated the whole number of men dismounted for the attack. The Chevalier was not an eye-witness, for he marched on to Penrith with the artillery, and what he says are “mere camp shaves,” and may be paired off with the statements of the “eye-witness” cited in Hodgson's Westmoreland, who says he saw scores of Highlanders fall, and “I am sure they never rose again while I kept my station.” All accounts agree that only five of the Highlanders were found dead on the field. Canon Machell has supplied me with the following interesting note by Mr. Hill, from the Hill Collections for a history of Westmoreland:—

27th Oct. 1847. Being in company with Mr. William Brougham⁴² in Clifton church this day, when he was speaking of levelling the earth immediately about the church and removing it to another part of the burial ground, I mentioned the foregoing extract,⁴³ and expressed my surprise that no parochial record appeared relative to the interment of the devoted Highlanders who were known to have fallen in the skirmish, when Mr. Brougham stated they had all been buried in a field now belonging to him, near the upper end of the village, where their place of sepulchre had, many years ago, been pointed out to him by old Rachel [Quere Rachel Younger, of Penrith, buried at Clifton, 14th July, 1823, aged 89], who died some 30

⁴⁰ I have been told that before the English dragoons were buried, “the clerk's wife stripped their holland shirts from them, and that woman never did a day's good after.”

⁴¹ Bland's dragoons buried several men at Carlisle, but not necessarily wounded men; so did the following foot regiments—Guise's, Herbert's, Pultney's, Bocland's, Perry's, Richbell's, Lord Bury's, General Wolf's, the Old Buffs, the Welsh Fusiliers, y^e Royal Irish, the 7th, 56th, 12th, and the train of artillery; about a man daily for six months after the Duke of Cumberland retook Carlisle; there was an equal mortality among the prisoners taken and kept at Carlisle. *Transactions Cumb'd and West'd Antiq. Society*. Vol. II., p. 350.

⁴² The late (second) Lord Brougham.

⁴³ The entry in the register about the dragoons.

years ago, in about her 90th year, and who told him she had seen them all laid side by side in one grave, under a hedge; it was several years since he had been upon the ground, but he thought he could still find the place.

They were buried by “The Rebel Tree.” The legend that 30 or 40 dead Highlanders were thrown into Clifton Mill Dam is very doubtful, in fact I take it that in the dark both parties fired high and wide; there is proof of this in the fact that Thomas Savage’s cattle were in the thick of the fray, and were unhurt. The Chevalier de Johnstone says the total loss of the Highlanders at Clifton was only twelve, and their total loss in England, including these twelve, only forty. But letters printed in *Carlisle in 1745* and written by Messrs. Hutchinson, Lamb, and Nicolson⁴⁴ state that from 40 to 70 Highland prisoners were taken after the Skirmish at Clifton. This is corroborated by an inscription on the gilt chandeliers in Penrith parish church:—

These chandeliers were purchased with the fifty guineas given by the most noble William, Duke of Portland, to his tenants of the honor of Penrith, who, under his Grace’s encouragement, associated in defence of the government, and town of Penrith, against the rebels in 1745. The rebels after their retreat from Darby, were put to flight from Clifton and Penrith, by His Royal Highness, William, Duke of Cumberland, after a short skirmish nigh Clifton moor, which began at four in the afternoon, on Wednesday, the 18th December, 1745.

Rebel prisoners taken by the tenants of Penrith and the neighbours, were upwards of 80.

The question has been much mooted as to which army was victorious in this, the last engagement ever fought on English ground. Both commanders claimed a victory. Most writers put it down as a defeat for the English, which checked their pursuit of the Highlanders, and Ewald, in his life of Prince Charles, accuses (very groundlessly it seems to me) the Duke of Cumberland of a want of veracity in his account of the action. But the very account cited by Ewald as proof of the Duke’s want of veracity agrees most singularly with the real facts of the action as detailed by the witnesses I have called. The Duke says:—

After a ten hours’ march⁴⁵ our cavalry came up with rebels just beyond Lowther Hall—nay, we even heard that their rear was in possession of it, but they left it on our approach, and threw themselves into the valley of Clifton, which we immediately attacked with the dismounted dragoons, and though it is the most defensible village I ever saw, yet our men drove them out of it in about an hour’s time, with a very small loss.

This agrees exactly with what Savage and Lord George say: The firing lasted half-an-hour, and half-an-hour after it ceased Lord George retired. The Duke continues:—

“Cobham’s and Mark Kerr’s behaved both extremely well. As it was quite dark before the skirmish was over, we were obliged to remain contented with the ground we had gained.”

I shall have something to say on this presently.

“What the rebels may have lost I can’t tell; we have four officers wounded, none mortally, and about forty men killed and wounded.”

⁴⁴ pp. 136, 137, 138.

⁴⁵ Twenty miles of difficult country and bad roads.

All this is strictly correct and true. He then goes on to say that the King's Own Regiment (Bland's) suffered severely, got into confusion and gave way; he does not conceal it. He further says that—

“The little affair at Clifton, though but trifling, has increased the terror and panic which has daily been coming on among the rebels.”

Mr. Ewald cites this with the remark “H.R.H. coolly says.” H.R.H.'s remark was, however, quite justifiable. The way in which the Scotch hussars were Sunday-chased all round Westmoreland by a few rustics justifies it. Of the conduct of the same hussars at Clifton Lord George says:—

“Our hussars, upon seeing the enemy, went to Penrith. One of their officers, Mr. Hamilton, with two or three of his men, had dismounted, being ashamed of the going off of the others.”

That is “terror and panic” enough, bolting and leaving their officer. The whole Highland army was, after Clifton, in a very disorganised condition. What does Lord George himself say of it?—

“It was lucky I made the stand at Clifton, for otherwise the enemy would have been at our heels, and come straight to Penrith; where, after refreshing two or three hours, they might have come up with us before we got to Carlisle. I am persuaded that night and next morning when the van entered Carlisle there was above eight miles from van to our rear, and mostly an open country full of commons.”

I will not say Lord George Murray was under the influence of “terror and panic,” but clearly he was in a very anxious frame of mind.

But why did not the Duke pursue the Highlanders in their hurried retreat? He says:—

“He dared not follow them because it was so dark, and the country between Clifton and Penrith so extremely covered; besides his troops, both horse and men, were so fatigued with their forced marches.”

Mr. Ewald calls this an excuse; it seems a very reasonable one. His troops had marched that day 24 miles in 10 hours; it was dark; after 6 p.m. on the 18th of December; the country between Clifton and Penrith such as could be most easily defended; two rapid and broad rivers, Lowther and Eamont, crossed by narrow bridges, are situate between these places; the road was a narrow lane between high walls. Lord George indeed says he could not have hindered the Duke from following him into Penrith, and that he could not have lined the walls. Lord George is quite right—with the Duke at his heels he would have had no time to loophole and line the walls, and form ambushes, but the Highlanders, who remained in Penrith and never appeared on Clifton moor, might easily have loop-holed and lined every wall, defended Lowther and Eamont bridges, and turned every house (and there are some very suitable ones) into forts. No prudent commander would by night venture into such country unless he were first aware of the sort of opposition he would meet with.

Mr. Ewald indulges in the following sneer at the Duke, for which I think there is not the slightest foundation.

“History teaches us that the Duke of Cumberland is not the only commander who has represented a defeat as a victory in his despatches.”

The Duke fought his enemy, drove him off the ground, and bivouaced for the night on it; by all the laws of war he is entitled to score a victory. He did not follow up his advantage for three good reasons:—His troops were fatigued, the country was difficult, it was dark, after night-fall.

Lord George himself, as we have seen, only writes of the affair as a “stand,” a successful one indeed, and he withdrew at once after he had made it; he did not (as Mr. Ewald says) send for reinforcements *after it* that he might improve it; he sent for reinforcements *before it* in order that he might make a flank attack on the dragoons while in the lanes to the south of Clifton moor. These reinforcements he did not get, so that he could not carry out his intention. But he did get his artillery off safe, and that artillery must have been for the last two days a matter of great apprehension to him. It seems that the events of the day are creditable to the military skill of both generals, and each was probably justified in considering he had got the better of his rival. I think that neither of them is open to the charge of falsifying despatches; one admits his hussars bolted, the other that Bland’s dragoons broke.

APPENDIX I.

REGIMENTS PRESENT AT CLIFTON MOOR.

It may be interesting to identify the various cavalry regiments which figure in the fight, with the names by which they are now known in the Army List.

Lord Cobham’s dragoons are the present 10th Hussars, to whose colonelcy, F. M. Lord Cobham was appointed the 14th May, 1745. Lord Mark Kerr’s dragoons are the present 11th Hussars, whose colonelcy was held by that officer from 1732 to 1752. Gen. Bland’s dragoons are the present 3rd Hussars, formerly the K.O.L.D. Ligonier’s dragoons were afterwards the 8th Horse, but are now the 7th Dragoon Guards. Kingston’s Light Horse has no representative in our present army; it was raised by the Duke of that name on the occasion of the 1745, and was disbanded in the next year, immediately re-embodied as the 15th Light Horse, but disembodied in 1749. Two regiments in 1745 bore the name of the Duke of Montagu, one, that now known as the Bays or 2nd Dragoon Guards, and formerly known as the Queen’s Horse; the other, a regiment of Light Horse, raised like Kingston’s on the occasion of the 1745, and disbanded in the following year; the regimental records show that the Bays (2nd D.G.s) were at Clifton. There were also present a “large body of gentlemen volunteers, well mounted, who appeared under arms, served at their own expense, and put themselves under Major-General Oglethorpe, styled the Royal Hunters.” (*Ray’s History of the Rebellion.*) They are more frequently called the Yorkshire Hunters, and were afterwards with General Hawley in Scotland.