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By Llewellyn Frederick William Jewitt, John Charles Cox, John Romilly Allen [Page 205](#).

Thomas Savage<sup>1</sup>, of Clifton End Farm, a worthy member of the Society of Friends, gives the following account of the “Battle of Clifton Moor”;

“Clifton, 29<sup>th</sup> 12mo 1745.

“ESTEEMED FRIEND RICHARD PARTRIDGE,

“By this know thine I received, and shall hereby give thee the results of the affair here, as it was from the beginning to the end. I being both an eye and ear witness to the truth thereof. But in the first place I cannot easily avoid acknowledging the favour and protecting hand of Power to us manifested, as thou, by the following account may understand.

- (1.) First, as to the rebels, when they came south, we did not suffer much, but they seemed to have great confidence that they would proclaim their King in London, on the 24<sup>th</sup> of last month, and crown him on New Year’s day, and then they would send Geordy, as they called him, over to Hanover, and would tread down his turnip-field dykes; highly disesteeming the Duke, calling him Geordy’s lad and Geordy’s Wully, with many more opprobrious speeches;
- (2.) But on their return north, they were cruelly barbarous and inhuman when here, for their leaders gave them liberty to plunder for four hours, and then to burn Lowther, Clifton, ...and Penrith, and some say for six miles around; but thanks to the Most High, whose power is above the power of man, often preventing wicked designs, it certainly was the Lord’s doing in bringing forward the noble Duke and his men in the very hour of great distress; as for my own part, I must ever love and esteem him as a man of worth.
- (3.) Now I shall give thee to understand the beginning and the end of the engagement.
- (4.) First, the rebel hussars being gone past to Penrith, came riding back to my door in haste, between one and two in the afternoon. Then in an hour after, came back again, driving up the rear of their army to my door, and some others then took their place, and they wheeled off and set themselves in ambush against my barn side, being so inclosed with cross houses that our King’s men could not see them until close to them, we not knowing their

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<sup>1</sup> This letter is printed in “The History of Penrith,” published in 1858 by B. T. Sweeten of that place, without any author’s name on the title page; a second edition without date was published by Hodgson, of Penrith, in which the author’s name is given as T. Walker. The letter is said to be printed from a copy of the original letter in the possession of Mr. John Mason, of Eamont Bridge, and Mrs. Mason is stated to be a descendant of Thomas Savage, but this is probably an error for Mr., as Esther, daughter of Thomas Savage, married John Mason, of Bleach Green, Eamont Bridge. As these books are not very accessible, I print this letter *in extenso*, but for greater convenience broken up into numbered paragraphs.

design, but I firmly believed it to be evil, and so went into my house, yet could not long be easy there, and returned forth again, and looking about me, I espied the commanders of the King's men appearing upon the hill, at about 400 yards south of my house, whereupon my very heart 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 son<sup>2</sup> 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, and the King's hussars, with some of the Yorkshire hunters, came down, and so soon as they came opposite 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 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 hard up to the Duke.

- (5.) Then all was still about an hour, 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 green 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 then pistol, but neither would fire, so he escaped and came in a little after.
- (6.) 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 running down and 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 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 cast his eyes about him, and see how the town was filled and hedges lined, after which he returned, and then a party was dismounted and sent down to meet the rebels;
- (7.) And, in the time of quietness, as above, they had sent off a party of their horse 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. Now, it beginning to grow dark, the rebels, were so thick about my house, we had no hopes of saving ourselves, but we concluded on leaving the house, and go into the fields, if we could but get there. In the middle of the orchard we were parted by the rebels, one part of us driven into the fields, and the other part into the house, severely threatening our lives, never expecting to see one another alive again. A son-in-law and his family were under like circumstances, for they seemed more severe upon us than upon others.

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<sup>2</sup> From Ray we learn that this son was named Jonathan; he was married, and as his father was a widower, his wife acted as mistress of the house. During the fighting she concealed herself in a large cupboard, and did not emerge, until the Duke entered the house, who addressed her "Madam, we come to protect you, not to do you any harm."

- (8.) Now, to come to the matter above again, we were not all got to the fire-side, before the firing, on all hands, was dreadful, which continued half-an-hour, in which time were killed 10 of the King's men and 21 wounded, and the Duke's footman taken prisoner, who was recovered; and of the rebels, 5 killed and many wounded.
- (9.) Early next morning were 30 prisoners under custody.
- (10.) 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 begun 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.
- (11.) Much on his head I could say, if it would not be tedious to thee, and yet I shall mention one thing more to thee, very remarkable, which was, our cattle were all standing amongst the slain men, and not one of them hurt, and them that were banished from our house came in again next morning, which the Duke's men said was a wonder they were not all killed, our next neighbour<sup>3</sup> being shot at the same time.
- (12.) Thou mayest know, also, I had the Duke of Richmond and the Duke of Kingston, with about too more, and as many horse. I have not yet mentioned a scaffold erected by the rebels, behind a wall, at the corner of my house, as we believe, to cut off any that night coming to my court, which if it had not been that they had fled, the noble Duke had stood a bad chance there. I am afraid thou can scarcely read this; but, if thou thinks proper to show this to anyone, I would have thee copy it fair, and show it whom thou wilt, even if it be to the King, I should be easy, because I know it to be the truth. I will conclude, with true love.

THOMAS SAVAGE.

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<sup>3</sup> I have not found this person's name.