

Donald Mackay was a young boy who joined the Jacobites with his father and brother on the very day of the battle. He escaped, but later surrendered and was then transported to the West Indies. He escaped again as a stowaway to Jamaica where he worked on plantations before finally returning to Scotland as an old man. This account was originally written in Gaelic.

*Friends, I am now an old man and it is a long, long time since the year of Charles. But if you want a story, I shall tell you about the battle of Culloden. At that time I was a young and strong man. I had not left home and worked the croft with my father and brother. News came to our glen that Duke William and the red soldiers were approaching Inverness and that Prince Charles and the Highlanders were preparing to fight against them. No sooner had we got the news than my father, brother, myself and quite a number of others from the glen left to go to the aid of the Prince.*

*We went through the town of Inverness and reached Drumashie where we found the Highland army in battle formation on the hill. They put us in the Glengarry regiment where we had many relatives and friends. When we reached the army a great shout of joy went up, welcoming us. Prince Charles himself, riding a white horse, was moving around among the Highland army. He was a fine fellow, a true prince. There has not been seen, and there will never be seen again in the Highlands, a prince of his equal.*

*The morning was cold and stormy as we stood on the battlefield - snow and rain blowing against us. Before*

long we saw the red soldiers, in battle formation, in front of us and although the day was wild and wet we could see the red coats of the soldiers and the blue tartan of the Campbells in our presence.

The battle began and the pellets came at us like hailstones. The big guns were thundering and causing frightful break up among us, but we ran forward and - oh dear!, oh dear! - what cutting and slicing there was and many the brave deeds performed by the Gaels. I saw Iain Mor MacGilliosa (Big Iain Gillies) cutting down the English as if he was cutting corn and Iain Breac Shiosallach (Freckled Iain Chisholm) killing them as though they were flies. But the English were numerous and we were few and a large number of our friends fell. The dead lay on all sides and the cries of pain of the wounded rang in our ears. You could see a riderless horse running and jumping as if mad.

When I saw that the battle was lost, I thought it best to leave and make for home. I said this to my brother who was near me and we made in the direction of Inverness as quickly as we could. When we reached Culcabock we stopped, feeling faint with hunger. I had some oatcakes in my bag and we got a drink of milk from an old lady who was beside the road. "How did the day go? she asked. "Badly for the Prince," we replied, and left in haste.

We went through the river near the islands above the town of Inverness and arrived home during the night. My father arrived safely in the morning and boundless was my mother's joy at having us back home safe and well.