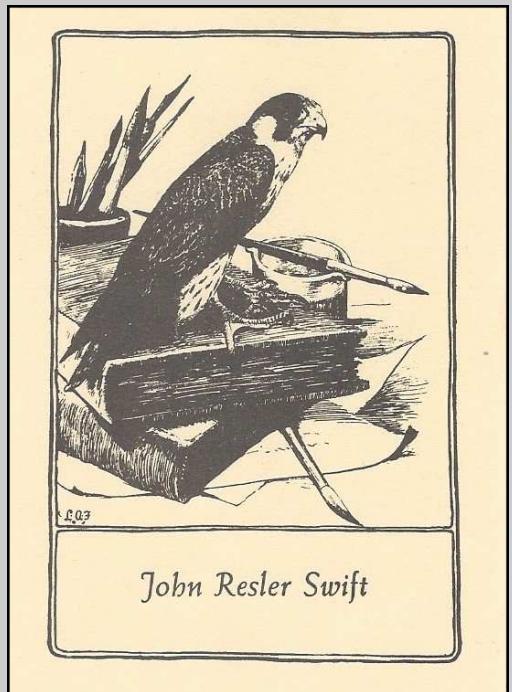
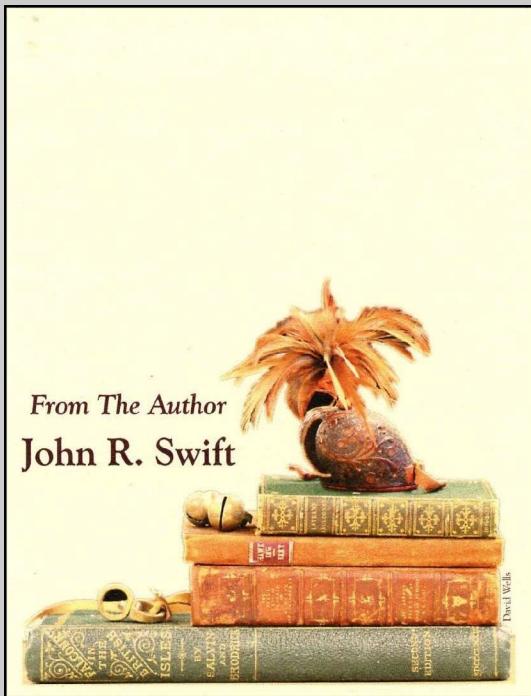


An Elucidation of a Mutinous Conspiracy

Thomas Thornton Esq. Late Lt. Colonel of the West York Militia



**John R. Swift-Retired Curator
The Archives of Falconry**



Lieutenant Colonel Thomas Thornton

John R. Swift became interested in Colonel Thomas Thornton while utilizing James Edmund Harting's *Bibliotheca Accipitraria* as a falconry book collecting guide. The Falconer's Tea Urn presented to Colonel Thornton prompted John to expand his falconry collecting to all things "Thornton". He amassed a large repository of written and pictorial evidence of Colonel Thornton's sporting activities which he utilized in his publications about Colonel Thornton. They are as follows:

Colonel Thomas Thornton Of Thornville Royal. (2014). 225 pp.

Colonel Thomas Thornton of Thornville Royal and the West York Militia. (2016). 256 pp.

The Court-Martial of Lieutenant William Wadman by Colonel Thornton, 1794. (2016). 62 pp.

The Court-Martial of Lieutenant Colonel Thornton, 1795. (2016). 66 pp.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton Esq. by Thomas Thornton, 1796. (2016). 70 pp.

An Elucidation of a Mutinous Conspiracy by Thomas Thornton, 1800. (2016). 90 pp.

Front Cover-Colonel Thomas Thornton of the West York Militia. Courtesy of Cider House Galleries.

John Russell (1745-1806) ca 1772.

Back Cover-Colonel Thomas Thornton with his Gyrfalcon *Sans Quartier*. and his Greyhound *Major*.

Note the medallion entitled The Triumph of Truth presented by the ladies at Tiverton in 1795

Courtesy of Alexander Guest. Philip Reinagle (1749-1833) ca. 1795.

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Colonel Thomas Thornton And The West York Militia

Colonel Thomas Thornton had been a member in the 3rd West York Militia since 1763 when he became an Ensign. His father Colonel William Thornton helped form the original Militia during the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745. He also became a staunch advocate of the Militia as a way to help defend England while regular troops were engaged elsewhere. Three major conflicts such as The Seven Years War (1754-1763), The American Revolution 1775-1783, and The War of the French Revolution 1793-1802 kept the regular army engaged around the world. England's Militia was "embodied" or called to duty for much of these periods of conflicts. This required local militias to report for annual "musters" in different regions of the England, which were often hundreds of miles from home. These musters required a 30-day period of training for officers and men often at great inconvenience to all. The men would be quartered on the "encampment" areas while officers would be billeted in local accommodations. Colonel Thornton fulfilled his militia responsibilities for over 30 years seemingly without conflict until an incident on July 22, 1794 with a Lieutenant William Wadman. This court-martial in September 1794 seemed to lay the foundation for Colonel Thornton's own subsequent court-martial the following year on the 17th of August 1795. The copies of these various proceedings as well as Thornton's own writings on the matters appeared to have been destroyed during the bombing of York in WWII. Recently these documents have once again come to light and are included in this important military section on his life. They have been reproduced in facsimile when possible in order to provide Thornton researchers with an accurate information and depiction of the events of that period. Thornton's personal decline seems to have originated from these events. Was it a conspiracy originating from the Duke of York over Thornton's purchase of Thornville Royal four years earlier? Hopefully this information will help the readers to their own conclusion.



Colonel Thornton's full length portrait

**An Elucidation
of
A Mutinous Conspiracy
Entered into by
The Officers
of
The West York Regiment of Militia
Against Their Commanding Officer
In the Year 1794
by
Thomas Thornton, Esq.
Late Lieutenant-Colonel in That Regiment**

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Thornville Royal During Colonel Thornton's Occupancy



The Temple of Victory



The Rhyme "The Grand Duke of York", marched his men up and down this hill.

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Prince Frederick, Duke of York 1763 to 1827



This was Colonel Thornton's final summary of all the events that led to his resignation from the West York Militia in 1795. It is 320 pages in length and contained his written comments, transcripts from several trials along with numerous letters of support from friends and militia members. Only one remaining copy has been located in a library in the UK and portions of it were abridged, transcribed and edited into modern English in order to provide the future researchers an easier opportunity to read Colonel Thornton's own words as he describes the Militia events of 1794-1795.

AN ELUCIDATION

OF

A MUTINOUS CONSPIRACY

ENTERED INTO BY

THE OFFICERS

OF

THE WEST YORK REGIMENT OF MILITIA

AGAINST THEIR COMMANDING OFFICER

IN THE YEAR 1794

DEDICATED (*SANS PERMISSION*)

TO HIS ROTAL HIGHNESS THE DUKE OF YORK

BY THOMAS THORNTON, ESQ,

LATE LIEUTENANT-COLONEL IN THAT REGIMENT

FIAT JUSTITIA, RUAT CÆLUM

LONDON:

Printed by J. Bateson, Denmark Street, Soho

1800

The Facsimile Title Page

Thomas Thornton no longer utilizes the title Colonel

An Elucidation of a Mutinous Conspiracy

The battle is not always to the STRONG
Tis mostly by the WEAKER won:
-----It is not all along
Quite so certain as a GUN!

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DEDICATION

TO HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS
THE DUKE OF YORK,
FIELD MARSHALL & COMMANDRER IN CHIEF OF
THE BRITISH ARMY

Sir,

IN dedicating the following documents to your Royal Highness, I certainly deviate from the principle, by which the writers of dedication are commonly actuated; for I mean neither to convey a compliment, nor to offer an affront; --to court favor, or solicit patronage: Nor have I any object in my contemplation, that needs your support; or that your upmost power can impede.

My purpose, Sir is to manifest to my friends, ---to the Public, ---and particularly to the County of York; that my conduct,

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for more than twenty years as Lieutenant Colonel of the York Regiment of Militia, was honorable to myself, beneficial to my country, and conducive to the good of the service: that my professional character notwithstanding hath barely been traduced; my efforts to obtain justice, have been frustrated, or over-ruled; and the grossest violations of military discipline subordination screened *because the delinquents were prosecuted by ME!*

--That I have been harassed with frivolous and vexatious prosecutions, as repugnant to the maxims, and principles of military jurisprudence as they were injurious and oppressive to me: -that the long services—the *steady, active* and DISINTERESTED attachment, manifested by my father and myself, both in the last and present reign, to your August Family; were overlooked, or forgotten, in the late appointment of a Colonel to the York regiment of Militia;

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and my pretensions to that honor, treated (*as is well known to your ROYAL HIGHNESS*) with the most contemptuous and unbecoming disregard—that I was *forced* to retire from a service, to which my personal exertions, and a considerable portion of my fortune, had been assiduously and efficaciously devoted for more than THIRTY YEARS: and lastly, that, *through the same unbenign influence* which assailed me in such various points, I was invidiously represented—in direct opposition to the avowed principles, and uniform tenor, both of my public and private conduct—as a favor of republicanism; —and stigmatized with the odious and ignominious appellation of *Jacobine*.

Being utterly unconscious of having, by any means, provoked, to warranted such desperate attempts to dishonor me; and being left, in a great degree, to conjecture,

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concerning the *instigator* of these
outrageous and *unprecedented*
proceedings: I shall merely relate the facts
and circumstances as they arose: trusting,
however, that they will clearly prove the
positions I have advanced; and fully justify
my submitting my case to the judgment of
the Public.

The liberty of addressing myself, on this
occasion to your Royal Highness, was
induced by an opinion of its *propriety*:
because the grievances I allege were
sustained in a military capacity; -because
they are of a nature of the most fatal to the
good order, and even the existence, of a
service. -Which affords to your Royal
Highness such an ample field for the
display of your military talents! your
official abilities! and your patriotic zeal! --
and because I must *presume* that your
sanction to the indignities I have specified,
was obtained *through the vilest*

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misrepresentation; ---or that your official authority had audaciously used against me, without your privity; For to think otherwise, would be inconsistent with the sentiments of respect and veneration, which illustrious birth and high station-when accompanied with correspondent virtues-irresistibly excite; and of which no man is more susceptible than,

Sir,

Your Royal Highness's

Most Obedient and

Most Humble Servant,

T. Thornton

THORNVILLE-ROYAL,
JUNE 30, 1800

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AN ELUCIDATUON,

&c. &c. & c.

NOTWITHSTANDING the boasted excellence and efficacy of the English Laws; there are numberless evils for which they afford no remedy. Many therefore are the victims of malevolence, obloquy, and oppression, whose sufferings admit of no relief or alleviation; and who have no means of defence, --no hope of satisfaction, but in availing themselves of the liberty of the press, to lay their grievances before the Public.

The circumstances in which I feel myself injured, being of this description; and the remedy perfectly adapted to the nature of my case; I must be an apathist indeed to forgo so obvious, and effectual a method of soothing my sense of injury;

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vindicating my character; and conciliating that public esteem and approbation, which I have incessantly endeavored to deserve.

I conceive, likewise, that the rank I held in the *constitutional* military force of my native country, involved a responsibility, —(as well in respect to my own conduct therein, as in matters that concerned the welfare and behavior, of the men under my command;) —not only to those for whose *particular* defence that military force was established; but—*when employed beyond its proper boundary*, --to the county at large. --- Impressed with these sentiments. I feel no humiliation in submitting the following statement of facts and proceedings, to that candor, equity, and liberality, which invariably influence and characterize the adjudications of the Public.

I have only to regret, that, in prosecuting this appeal, I must necessarily adduce many circumstances, in proof of the allegations stated in my dedication, that may lay me open to the charge of ostentation: which I should disdain to mention on any other occasion. But the defence

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of my honor being paramount to every other consideration; --I cannot, without injustice to my case, suppress anything that applies in vindication of my character, or in support of my pretensions; which are the main points of attack, --against which, the most daring, and malignant operations of my adversaries have been directed. Regardless, therefore, whom it may expose; or on whose cheek I may raise the blush of shame; --I shall fairly represent the indignities and injustice I have suffered; and contrast them with the service, on which I have the presumption to sound a right to be ranked among the most faithful of his Majesties subjects; the most ardent lovers of my country: and the most zealous supporters of the Constitution.

If I were writing on this subject *to the COUNTY of YORK only*, I should have no occasion to explain the nature of my relation, or the motives of my attachment to the corps, in which I had the honor to serve: nor to avert any *special* pretensions to that respect, and consideration, which were indispensably due (*by the established rules of society*) to my birth, my fortune, my military rank, and though last,

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not least, my demeanor in the social intercourse and transactions of my life. For the incidents, by which my ancestors distinguished themselves, are *there* known: the munificent, loyalty, and public-spirited conduct of my father are still in the remembrance of many living witnesses; and my adherence to his principles universally understood. But to the PUBLIC, it behooves me to be more explicit, and set forth my utmost claims: through my own panegyric be comprehended in the detail. I shall not presume, however, to obtrude any biographical facts or allusions upon my readers that do not strictly apply in proof of my allegations; and consequently in support of my pretensions to better usage, and a fairer portion of justice, than I have yet received.

The principles and actions of men, if I may judge from my own feelings, and observation, are more influenced by the impressions they received in their infancy, and youth; than by the reflections and experience of any later period of their lives. It is at least my lot to have received impressions at the first dawn of my reason, that never can be effaced as long as filial piety, gratitude, or moral sense, have any place in my

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heart. The precepts, the example, and the sentiments of a fond and worthy father, have consequently been the general rule of my actions: and the objects that were nearest his heart have been pursued with equal zeal, though with less ability, by *me*. Hence arose that enthusiastic attachments to the interest of the MILITIA; which, for more than thirty years was a *prominent*, and I have great reason, to believe, an *approved* feature of my character.

My fathers engagement, in military affairs commenced in the year forty-five; and was occasioned by the formidable rebellion, which, at that time, threatened, not only the destruction of our civil, and religious establishments; but aimed at the subversion of the THRONE itself. In that memorable and alarming crisis, he particularly distinguished himself by his loyal and patriotic exertions; not in the mere display of personal prowess; but by opposing himself to the enemies of his KING and COUNTRY, at the head of a large body of infantry, composed principally of his tenants, and dependants, (which he raised, clothed, armed, and subsisted, at his own expense.) of whom the greatest part were slain in

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the battle of Falkirk; from which he escaped with great difficulty, being obliged to remain three days in a damp and dreary cellar: which, added to the inconvenience of wet clothes, materially injured, and eventually destroyed his constitution. While he was in this situation, a party of the rebels (that came to the house in search of him) offered, in this hearing, a reward of a thousand pounds for his head. But, *though known to his hostess*, he generosity withstood the temptation. She kept his secret: ----and her respect to the laws of hospitality, was rewarded by her guest with a handsome annuity for her life.

For this unequivocal testimony of his loyalty, he had the honor to receive, (through the introduction of His Royal Highness WILLIAM DUKE OF CUMBERLAND,) the personal thanks of his late *Majesty GEORGE the Second*, who likewise graciously offered to confer on him a title, or to appoint him to the command of *a regiment*: both which he modestly declined; assuring the KING, that his utmost wishes were gratified by his Majesties approbation, and the consciousness of having done his duty. He was complimented on the same account with the freedom of Edinburgh:

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-----and the following memorial of his services, (engraved on a magnificent piece of plate,) was presented to him by the town of KNARESBOROUGH:

GULIELMO THORNTON ARMIGERO:
QUI CUM COHORTE MILITUM
SUMPTU SUO, NON-MEDIOCRI
SUSTENATA
PRO REGE ET PATRIA,
CONTRA SCOTOS MONTICOLAS
BELLUM INTESTINUM MOLICOLAS,
IMPROBISSIMA HYEME
RELICA CONJUGE,
BELLI PERICULIS
SESE MAGNANIMITER
OBTULIT
ANNO DOMINI MDCCXLV.
BURGUS KNARESBURGENSIS
EBUR
O. A. M. E.
D. D.

The CITIZENS OF YORK evinced the highest estimation in which *they* held his merits, by the most flattering proof they could give of their confidence and respect. They unanimously chose him their representative in Parliament; and by

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successive elections continued him in that honorable fashion; until his bodily infirmities, *immediately* disabled him from attending its duties; beyond which no persuasions could induce him to retain his seat.

In his political conduct, he preserved that independency, in which the real consequence, and respectability of an English legislature consists; and proved, by the undeniable argument of example; that patriotism and loyalty in a *British* subject are essentially the same. They are indeed equally necessary to the preservation of the CONSTITUTION; --to which the measures of the most *corrupt administration* cannot be more fatal, than the desperate projects of a *democratic faction*. Nor are they ever opposed to each other, but in the delusive harangues, of turbulent competitors for the emoluments of office; and the artful disseminations of their respective adherents, and retainers.

A standing army, from the accession of GEORGE *the First*, had never ceased to be the subject of reprobation with members of the Opposition, Its gradual increase had been represented, *by the*

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orators of the day, as an innovation upon the Constitution that manifestly indicated its intended destruction, as an innovation indicated its intended destruction.

The obvious necessity of providing against a possible renewal, of the traitorous attempt of the year of forty-five, did not prevent the usual clamor of Opposition, against the proposed augmentation of the military establishment. — They struggled however no expedient, by which the safety of the kingdom, or its government could do better of *more confidently* be secured, than by a standing army.

Tired with the everlasting, and unavailing lore; -- yet convinced that the army estimates were to be regarded with a watchful and jealous eye; my father was at length induced to submit the House, a proposition for the establishment of a NATIONAL MILITIA: which being disapproved and strongly opposed by the Ministry, was of course rejected: Not however with any expression of displeasure; but on the contrary with extraordinary token of respect; for the flattering offers of a title of a regiment were, on that occasion, renewed through the MARQUIS OF ROCKINGHAM;

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and the disinterestedness of his views again demonstrated by his refusing to accept either. The failure of his attempt did not prevent his embracing the first opportunity to repeat it: and having the mean time explained himself fully on the subject to the members of the administration, he introduced his bill; which, (after a through investigation of the proposed measure in every point of view,) was passed into law *without a dissentient voice.*

No member of the House could indeed, with more propriety, or better grace, have proposed this important measure, than my father. His independence of all party influence; but more particularly the part he had so lately taken in the suppression of the rebellion; entitled him to more than ordinary attention, on a subject of *national defence*; in which he had given such an active, and meritorious proof of his zeal.

In addition to the pleasure of having contributed in so great a degree to the introduction of a *constitutional*, and therefore an *unobjectionable*

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military force; he had the singular gratification of seeing the first Regiment on that establishment, embodied under *his own* auspices and disciplined under *his* command; The regiment was that of the West Riding of the County of York.

Few novel institutions, however evident their merit, utility, or importance, are received without some instances of popular disapprobation. — Such *was*, and still *is* the case of the Militia, among those, who regardless of public good, and approve of nothing that in the least interferes with their private interest or convenience. — Many likewise of the men, who composed the first allotment, being obliged to leave their homes and their families, execrated the occasion the subjected them to that necessity; and assembled the rendezvous with a reluctance which might have been rendered a dependence on their services extremely precarious. But the liberality and natural urbanity of my father almost instantly removed their prejudices: and the paternal attention he paid, as well as to their accommodation and the supply of their wants, as to their instruction and improvement in military

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discipline; soon reconciled them to their new occupation; and enabled him in a short time to evince, that *mildness* is at least as efficacious in the formation of soldiers, as severity; and the affection of love as powerful an incentive, both to their moral and professional excellence as that of fear. For, though the soldiers of the York Regiment were treated by their commander as his children: and he honored and regarded by them as their father; they were neither excelled in discipline, orderly behavior, or military appearance, by any regiment in his Majesties service; and when called upon to act in their constitutional capacity, performed their duty with steadiness and alacrity of veterans.

His preferring (in so critical a case) the application of lenient and conciliatory means, to measures of severity; ----and his silencing their murmurs by correcting the prejudice that occasioned them; were alike honorable to his feelings and his understanding; --and, if his conduct on that occasion be appreciated by its immediate and *consequent* effects, will not be reckoned among

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the least of my father's public services. For as the first mover of the Militia bill, and Colonel of the first *embodied* regiment on that establishment; the eyes of all who had embarked in the same service, (as if they waited the event of his proceedings) were fixed upon him. The success of his efforts, being manifested by the zeal and cordiality with which everyman of the West York regiment adopted his sentiments, promoted his purpose, and (as if actuated by inspiration) entered into the spirit of the institution; other regiments were embodied: -- the emulation which never fails to animate the breasts of Englishmen, in objects which so evidently conduce to the good and safety of their country, was naturally excited; --and the Militia of England ranked among the first military establishments of Europe.

Having no longer the honor to be a member of that respectable and important establishment, I may without arrogance contend likewise; that, the institution of a NATIONAL MILITIA has been the *generative* and *efficient* cause, of that military

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and patriotic ardor from which the numerous corps of all descriptions have arisen; and whose services have so materially contributed, as well to the security of the Nation against foreign invaders as to the preservation of its domestic tranquility, -- by *over-awing* the seditious disturbers of the PUBLIC PEACE, For the free communication and cordial intercourse it opened between countries widely distant from each other, --the high, and just sense of its services, with which the Public mind has been long impressed; - -and the participation in its duties, to which every member of the community, (not otherwise employed in the service of the Public) is bound; have gradually caused a general acquaintance with military affairs, reconciled all ranks of men to the military garb and discipline, and influence even children, to throw away the usual instruments of their amusement; and like their fathers to assume the sword and firelock.

It may be stated likewise among the benefits derived from the institution of a NATIONAL MILITIA, that, it hath apparently banished that jealousy of the people, which influenced the measure of former times; and convinced the present rulers of

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the land, that, as long as self interest and preservation is an actuating principle of the human mind, the PEOPLE *must* be the *best* and *most assured* defenders of their KING and COUNTRY. The unity of their interests, in a *constitutional* view, is too obvious to need elucidation: and, while the experience and events of the present Era are remembered; no future minister can hesitate to rest the safety of the Kingdom, and the security of the Sovereign, on the spirit, --the fidelity, --and affections of the people.

From these premises, and the promptness of the Public to pay due honor to those who in any manner signalize themselves in its service, I must conclude that my father will be adjudged TO HAVE DESERVED WELL OF HIS COUNTRY.

Having witnessed from my early youth the warm attachment that subsisted between my father and the officers of his corps; --the affectionate regard he showed to every soldier under his command, --and the unremitting attention he paid to their morals and discipline; it would have been strange indeed, if I had not

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imbibed his sentiments, and determined to imitate a conduct which procured him the respect and esteem of all around him; and made me the object of the tender caresses both of the officers and the men. The impressions I received from these circumstances, naturally excited me an impatient and irresistible desire to be a soldier; --I was consequently gratified when very young, with a commission in the West York: and that from the moment to my quitting it, my solicitude was more interested for the credit, the comfort, and happiness of the regiment; than about anything that related to my private concerns. --During the years I served under the command of my father, I cooperated with him in the measures he continually suggested for the general, and individual good, both of the officers and men. Nor were the good offices they experienced from him discontinued at his disease: for though too young to succeed him in the command, --I succeeded him in the exercise of hospitality towards the one, and beneficence towards the other.

In the year Seventy-two, the command of the

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Regiment was conferred on Colonel Harvey; --- The Lieutenant-colonelcy on me; and we had the horror to receive our commissions, on the same day, from that revered PATRIOT and exalted pattern, both of PUBLIC *and* PRIVATE VIRTUE, *the* MARQUIS OF ROCKINGHAM: which made it more valuable in my estimation, than to have received it from the first monarch upon earth.

Having now assured a more ostensible station in my regiment, though still *subordinate*, it afforded me an opportunity of establishing some degree of claim, (in my own judgment), to the merit of Public service; and my personal and professional pretensions, in that respect, may fairly be estimated from the period of my promotion to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

That I may not be supposed to ascribe more responsibility, or to assume greater authority than necessarily belongs to a Lieutenant Colonel; I must beg leave to observe, for the information of my military readers, that of the York Regiment

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had, *in effect*, neither Colonel nor Major from the year seventy-two, to the year 1790. For both Colonel HARVEY and Major HEWITT were so frequently, and severely afflicted with excruciating paroxysms of the gout and stone; that, they scarcely ever saw the regiment, but when it was quartered near their own houses, The command, therefore, devolved generally to me; with the additional charge of duty which belonged peculiarly to the Major. My time was consequently so entirely devoted, during the active seasons of duty, to the Public service, as to preclude all attention to my private affairs; through which I sustained great losses, beside incurring extraordinary expenses to a very large amount.

The first occasion, subsequent to the year Seventy Two, on which the Regiment was embodied, was the breaking out of the war with France in the year 1772. York was the place of its rendezvous, and the first quarter at which it was stationed.

The plan of drawing out the Militia at a distance

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from their native counties, was early adopted, and hath since become an established maxim of government: and nothing certainly can be more averse to the nature and intention of a *provincial* Military force, nor more inconvenient to the Country Gentleman and Yeomanry, of whom the Militia is composed, than their thus being employed. Yet, the measure must, doubtless, be founded in wisdom, and practised with a view to the public good. —though neither one nor the other be perceptible to vulgar comprehension: for it could not otherwise be sanctioned by the KING, nor recommended by his MINISTERS.

Under this regulation, the West York Regiment was soon ordered to NEWCASTLE: But the Secretary at War being a native of Devonshire, (the most southern county of England,) and perhaps unacquainted, therefore, with the geography of the northern counties, directed their route by way of Sheffield. —Such, at least, was the general conjecture, concerning the cause of our being gratified with an opportunity of viewing the manufactories of that town, in our route to NEWCASTLE.

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Immediately on our arrival at Newcastle, I received orders from the Secretary at War to send a detachment of the York Regiment to Sunderland, to defend that place against the predatory visits of the enemy's privateers.

The right honorable Secretary paid a singular complement to the companies appointed for that service, by supposing them capable of doing, without ammunition—what a regular corps might have found difficult to perform without the advantage of a magazine: for he did not think it necessary to supply them with either powder, ball, or flints: but the officers, through perfectly sensible of the impressive appearance of the detachment, thought it would be no more harm in making it still more formidable, by furnishing the men with these necessary implements of defence, *at their own expense.*

Before we had well recovered the fatigue of our late march, his Majesties command arrived for the regiment to repair to Cox-heath; where some regiments, both of regulars and militia were already encamped. The distance was near four hundred miles.

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It would therefore have been mighty convenient to the poor soldiers to have been provided with the miraculous preservative, through which the garments, hose, and shoes, of the children of Israel, were prevented from waxing old, or needing any repair, during their long and wearisome journey through the wilderness. But the favors of Providence being now a days conferred a different way, --the soldiers of the York regiment arrived at the camp with tattered garments, and their feet almost bare.

We had the honor to be received, and conducted to our station in the line, by his Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, accompanied by the Honorable General Keppel, who commanded the camp. The General expressed particular satisfaction, on perceiving, when we formed, that we mustered so strong as to out-flank considerably the space allotted us; and immediately ordered the quarter-master to take as much ground from the flanks of the two regiments on our right and left, as would enable the York regiment to present its entire front.

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Colonel Harvey, who had engaged to provide tents, engage sutlers, and make the necessary preparations for our reception, had by some accident or other been prevented from doing either. The regiment would therefore have suffered great distress and inconvenience, but for the hospitality, good offices, and politeness, of the officers of the sixty-fifth, whose civilities and services I cannot too warmly acknowledge.

The great expense, in which I foresaw the subalterns of the corps must necessarily be involved during their encampment, was a subject by which my consideration had been very much occupied on the march: and when we drew near the camp, I convened the captains, and strongly pressed them to take it likewise into their consideration. I proposed to them, as the most liberal and delicate method of alleviating such expense, --That every officers should subscribe to the mess in proportion to his pay: and that the field officers and captains, whether absent or present, should be alike chargeable for their subscription. After some debate, they unanimously assented to my proposition; by which the subalterns were relieved from an

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expense, which many of them could not afford; and were supplied with a good dinner, and a pint of wine each, *for eight-pence* per day. This was the first time of my being encamped with the regiment; and I think it incumbent upon me, on this occasion, to intimate to the country gentlemen of England, as the result of my observation and experience, in that, and other subsequent encampments; that the comfort, the convenience, and *respectability* of the militia service, depend much more than they are aware, on the character, disposition, and address, of the general, under whose command it may be their lot to serve: and that many things may from thence arise, that do not so perfectly accord with the habits and feelings of gentlemen, (who are accustomed to the enjoyments of independence) *as they may possibly imagine*. But, having gone thus far, I should be unjust and *very* grateful, if I were not equally forward to declare that no general could in my opinion, have been selected more fit for the command of an encampment, composed chiefly of provincial corps: or better qualified to reconcile the militia to *any service*; than GENERAL KEPPEL.

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On the breaking up of the Cox-Heath camp, the West York regiment received its route for Hull; where it remained under my command during a part of the ensuing winter. The inhabitants of Hull were so pleased with the conduct and behavior, both of the officers and men; that, on hearing the regiment was on the point of being removed; they petitioned Government for its continuance at that place. But the popularity implied in such a petition, was much more likely to hasten, than retard its removal. For the plan of changing the quarters of the militia regiments so frequently, as to render it extremely inconvenient and expensive to a country gentlemen; was evidently an expedient of *ministerial jealousy*, -- to prevent as much as possible, the effect of that free and cordial communication between the *People* and their *Constitutional Defenders*, which commenced immediately on the establishment of a *militia*; and which was never known to exist between the people and the *standing army*. But what ever be the *motive*, the fact is indisputable, -- that, militia corps are more frequently shifted from one quarter to another, than has ever been

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practiced with regular regiments; and when Gentlemen feel themselves incommoded by marches and counter-marches, for which there is no visible or comprehensive cause; they will naturally exercise the privilege of conjecture; and express the opinions suggested by the occasion, -- however hard they may bear on those by whose orders they are so indecently harassed.

The petition of the inhabitants of Hull was immediately followed by a route for the York regiment to proceed to Doncaster. We began our march about the month of January 1780, and though it brought us into the west riding of the county, which was our proper district; and placed many of us among our families and friends; we would have rather postponed our march to a more favorable season of the year.

Our next route was for Chatham, which we commenced about the first of June, 1780. Having Advanced to the first division of the regiment to Hitching to Hertfordshire, thirty-five miles from London; I received intelligence that the Parliament

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House was beset by an immense mob: --that many of the members had been grossly insulted, and others obliged to turn back; --and that several of the Lords had suffered great personal violence: --That the Cities of London and Westminster were thrown into the utmost horror and confusion; and that the Government was agitated with the most alarming apprehensions. I learnt likewise, that there was no military force, either in or near the metropolis, sufficient to quell so formidable an insurrection; which was supposed to amount, in the first instance, to at least two hundred thousand men and had astonishingly increased every moment from its commencement.

I did not conceive it to be the absolute and indispensible duty of a commanding officer of *militia*, to regulate his conduct on so critical an occasion, by the strict rules of military etiquette; which the commanding officer of a *regular regiment* might have thought himself bound to observe. The *constitution* was in danger—and the militia its *natural* and *legitimate* DEFENDERS.

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I determined, therefore, to go immediately to town. Concluding, if the account I had heard was in any degree true, that the services of the West York regiment might be acceptable; and have given positive orders, that both the officers and men should be in readiness to march at a moments notice the next morning, I set off without further deliberation or delay.

I had made great allowances for the usual exaggerations of public report; but found, to my utter astonishment, that the state of the town was infinitely more dreadful and calamitous than had been represented to me. —I therefore instantly went to Lord AMHERST—acquainted him that the York regiment was at Stevenage, waiting his commands; that he might depend on their fidelity; and that I would bring them in a few hours to the scene of action. His Lordship was pleased to bestow great commendation on the zeal I had shewn; and expressed his personal approbation of the measure I proposed; but did not think he was officially competent to authorize my carrying it into execution.

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He allowed me thus far to use his name, and to depend on his countenancing me in any event of the proceeding; enjoining me, however, to remember that it must be entirely an affair of my own.

A much less encouragement than this, *on the word* of Lord AMHERST, would have determined me to proceed. -Regardless, therefore, of the possible consequence of breaking my route, -of entering the metropolis with an armed force, without orders, —and engaging, perhaps, in a conflict, in which many of his Majesty's subjects might fall; I returned with all possible expedition to the regiment, and in less than twelve hours, the division I commanded was formed in Hyde Park, completely equipped and ready for action, being previously provided with thirty-six thousand rounds of ball-cartridges; which, at the moment, were of great importance, as no ammunition could be obtained from the tower without the utmost hazard of its being intercepted by the rioters.

I received on the spot the commendations and

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thanks of General Rainsforth, who commanded; and, within twenty minutes from my arrival, the first division of the York regiment was under arms at St. James's.

I was immediately honored with complimentary visits by many persons of high rank, who were impressed with much causeless doubt and apprehension, concerning the disposition both of the Regulars and the Militia; and were therefore, the more pleased with the step I had taken: But I had the satisfaction of inducing them to entertain very different sentiments of the confidence that might be placed in the Military; among whom I assured them there was not a single regiment of either description, that would, in my opinion, be less prompt than the West York had been, to discharge their duty to their King and Country.

Though such doubt and apprehension could only have been suggested by the terrors of the moment; it would be well if they sometimes occupied the reflections, and acted in a less powerful degree on the imagination of the Great.

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The effect would be honorable to themselves, and conducive to public happiness: it would check the insolence of aristocratic pride, —evince the instability of human greatness; —and, like the daily memento of the king of Macedon, inculcate that humility, moderation, and philanthropy, which dignify the possession, and conciliate the exercise of POWER.

The Speaker of the House of Commons was particularly solicitous for our accommodation: through his influence, the garden of the Museum was appropriated to our use, and continued to be our head-quarter until the rioters were entirely subdued, and public tranquility restored. Detachments of the Regiment were then sent to Gray's Inn and the Temple, where they were treated with the same polite consideration, they had experienced from the gentlemen of the Museum,

While we were encamped in the garden of the latter place, the KING condescended to take a view of the York Regiment, and was graciously pleased to bellow some flattering commendations

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both on its conduct: and appearance. His Majesty's approbation of my proceeding was likewise communicated to me through the Marquis of Rockingham, and Lord Amherst, who had the honor to attend him on that occasion.

When our continuance in London was no longer necessary, our former route for Chatham was countermanded, and orders given for our encampment at Blackheath; where the regiment remained until the following spring. Fresh orders were then issued for its removal to Chatham.

An event of a very different nature from that of which we had been witnesses in the former year excited our admiration, and furnished ample subject of conversation, during a part of the time we were encamped at that place.

The defeat of the Dutch fleet, on the Dogger Bank, by Sir Hyde Parker, occasioned a circumstance as flattering to that brave admiral and the fleet under his command, as it was agreeable to all ranks of people from London to

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Sheerness. His Majesty was pleased to render that victory peculiarly memorable, by condescending to be himself a spectator of the glorious accession it brought to the British navy.

Nor was the camp at Chatham without a considerable share in the honor of the King's visit to Sheerness; for his Kentish Subjects were further gratified, on his return, with the splendid spectacle of a royal military review of the regiments of that encampment; preparatory to which, the York regiment was reviewed by Lord AMHERST, who attended the KING in this excursion.

On the same day, the following note was given out in the general orders of the camp; than which (I freely confess) nothing could have more pleased or gratified me; because the excellence, to which the regiment had attained, was principally the result of my exertions:

GENERAL ORDERS, *Chatham Lines*, 1781. "Lord AMHERST requests Lieutenant Colonel THORNTON to accept his thanks and approbation for the very military appearance of the York regiment,

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reviewed by him this day and orders him to insert in the orderly book, that the regiment hath this day done what his Majesty's troops *have all attempted in vain*; and that he shall make that report of them to his Majesty. Lord Amherst desires Lieutenant Colonel Thornton to order Adjutant Wall to instruct the sixty-fifth regiment in the last maneuver performed this day by the York."

The Field-marshal, (who never forgot nor omitted an opportunity of rewarding the lightest instance of meritorious conduct) not only pointed out the York regiment to the King's particular notice; but made such honorable mention of *my services*, in the events of the preceding year, on *presenting me to his MAJESTY*, that I was honored with the mod gracious and flattering intimations of royal approbation.

On the breaking up of the camps the York regiment was ordered into winter-quarters, at COLCHESTER, and at the opening of the ensuing campaign, in the spring of 1782, received orders to march to *Harwich*; where it continued until the

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Conclusion of the war. An order was then issued for its return to York; there to be disembodied, and once more to resume their domestic duties, and to partake, with their neighbors, their friends, and their kindred, the inestimable blessings of PEACE.

I cannot refrain from mentioning, in this place, a circumstance in which I feel great exultation; and which redounds, in a peculiar degree, to the credit, both of the morals and discipline, of the non-commissioned officers and privates, of whom the York regiment was then composed. The circumstance I mean, is, their having gone through five years of constant service, chiefly under my command, without a single punishment being inflicted in the regiment: —which, I believe, is an occurrence that has no parallel in military history.

From that time, to the year ninety-three, the militia corps were no otherwise interrupted in their respective occupations, than by the month's attendance, annually appropriated by the Act of Parliament to their instruction in military exercise and discipline; which I regularly attended.

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Before I proceed to state the extraordinary events that happened subsequent to the York regiment being next embodied; I must beg leave to make my readers acquainted with some intermediate incidents, which (though seemingly unconnected with the main object of this Appeal) will throw considerable light on several points of my case, that cannot be so clearly elucidated in any other manner: and, as the most trivial actions of the *Great* are interesting to public curiosity, the *superlativeness* of the subject will, I hope, excuse the digression.

When his Royal Highness the Bishop of OSNABURGH came of age, and was created DUKE of YORK, inquiries were set on foot for the purchase of an estate, either in Lincolnshire, or the county of York; amounting, as nearly as possible in value, to the accumulated savings of his Episcopal revenue, during his minority. Mr. HALL, of Scarborough, was the confidential agent of his Royal Highness, in this inquiry; nor could

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he have employed a more able or a more honorable man. The Duke was, besides, particularly fortunate in another respect. Circumstances had arisen in the affairs of Lord GALWAY, which determined him to dispose of *Allerton*, one of the finest and best-conditioned estates in the county. That estate was, consequently purchased by his Royal Highness, at a price very much below its real value, and constituted the first instance I ever knew of an ENGLISH estate being bought with GERMAN MONEY.

It was immediately rumored, that the Duke would make Allerton his chief residence; and the preparations that were ordered for his reception soon confirmed the report. His Royal Highness was, *at that time*, supposed to possess some bright and popular talents; and his choice of a residence, at so great a distance from the court, was attributed, among other conjectures, to some great political object: —no less, in the opinion of many wise-acres of the county of York, than the subversion of the ROCKINGHAM INTEREST; or, at least, to form a counterpoise to its influence!

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That the Ministry might contemplate such object with desire, is extremely probable; for the resistance they experienced from the Marquis of ROCKINGHAM, and those of *his* friends, who were actuated by the same genuine patriotism; was not dictated by that captious, and indiscriminate disapprobation of their measures, which invalidate, and frequently render contemptible, the opposition of their *systematic* opposers. They never had any thing to apprehend from his interference in *the ordinary measures of administration*; --but in matters which *threatened innovation on the confutation, or militated against the public good*, they had every thing to fear. The amiable Marquis must, therefore, have been regarded by them as the most formidable of their opponents. But, their entertaining any hope of forming a counterpoise to the influence of his surviving friends, *through the Duke of YORK!* was utterly impossible:—for, a veneration of the public character and principles of LORD ROCKINGHAM, the remembrance of his private virtues, and the respect universally paid to his memory, are so indelibly impressed on the hearts of all ranks of people in the county of *York*; that the slightest

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attempt to depreciate his merit, or to weaken the interest, which he created, and which was so honorably supported by his successor; would have excited alarm, and diffused a general *presentiment* of some daring and unpopular measure being in contemplation.

In the month of August, 1786, the Duke of York made his *premier entree* at *Allerton*. I was then on a shooting party in the highlands of *Scotland*; but returned in a short time. My first attention was paid to my new neighbor. I immediately wrote to one of the Duke's aids-du-camp (with whom I was acquainted,) requesting to know whether I might, with propriety, pay my respects to his Royal Highness; and having learned that the Duke was particularly fond of fox-hunting, desired he might be informed, at the same time, that my fox-hounds would be at his Royal Highness's service, while he stayed. My letter was instantly answered with a gracious acceptance of my offer, and a polite invitation to *Allerton*. I consequently dined with his Royal Highness the next day; and had the unexpected pleasure of meeting some of my old London acquaintances at table. The Duke was in high

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spirits, and perfectly unreserved. He condescended to assume the character and manners of a country gentleman; in which he acquitted himself *so well*, that multitudes of His Majesty's liege subjects are of opinion, that, his ever having relinquished it for any other, is very much to be regretted.

Several succeeding days were spent in the same social and convivial way; during which I had the honor to be particularly distinguished by his Royal Highness; being the only gentleman of the neighborhood who had yet had the honor of waiting on him. The conversation several times turned on the late noble proprietor of *Allerton*. I did not suffer the opportunity of doing justice to the hospitality, good nature, and sociability of Lord GALWAY, to escape me; for, in these properties he certainly was not exceeded by any gentleman in *England*. I expressed my hopes that his Royal Highness had purchased the contents of his Lordship's cellar, as his wines of every sort were excellent; but was told he had not.

The Duke (who was too good a judge of wine, to be indefensible that his wine-merchant had deceived him,) apologized for the wine we drank,

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And requested me to inform him where he could be better supplied. My answer was, of course, extremely mortifying to a company of *bonvivants*; for I knew no place from whence His Royal Highness could improve his cellar; as the gentlemen of the north of England *imported* their French wines; and that, of course, there were no wine-merchants in that country, from whom such wines could be procured.

This reformation was the more distressing to the Duke, as an express arrived, almost at the moment, informing His Royal Highness, that the PRINCE was on the road, and purposed dining with him that day.

Nothing could exceed the confusion into which the family was thrown by this intelligence; and not, indeed, without reason; for the house was as deficient in proper furniture, for the reception of the royal visitor, as the cellars. In a few hours the PRINCE arrived. He was attended by his equerries, the Colonels HANGER and LAKE; the former of whom had been *long*, and *very deservedly*, his favorite: for, I do not believe His Royal Highness's favors could have been conferred, or

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his friendship placed, (notwithstanding his eccentricities,) on a more honest, faithful, and worthy servant than GEORGE HANGER.

I could not, on this occasion, avoid entering a little into the Duke's feelings; for he appeared to be extremely hurt, at being unable to gratify his Royal Brother with a glass of good wine. Recollecting I had a considerable stock of very old hermitage, which I appropriated (on account of its peculiar excellence) to the use of a select party of my friends, who annually spent some time with me, in the sporting season, at *Thornville*; I offered to present His Royal Highness with as much of that wine as would serve him while the Prince stayed; which he condescended *most graciously* to accept. I consequently conveyed eighteen dozen of it by hand, from *Thornville* to *Allerton*; and so highly was it prized by the Duke, that he scarcely drew a single cork for the entertainment of the Prince; but had it carefully removed (at his return to LONDON) to YORK HOUSE.

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On the Prince's arrival, I was introduced, in the most favorable manner, to His Royal Highness, by the Duke of YORK; and was received with that peculiar grace and politeness, which distinguish every action of the HEIR-APPARENT. The festivity, which had before prevailed, now reigned in full glee. The mornings were devoted to hawking, courting, mooting, or fox-hunting: the evenings to mirth and jollity; to which nobody contributed half so much as the Prince; who entered freely into the spirit and humor of the company, without deviating from the native elegance of his manners, or derogating from the dignity of his exalted rank. He sung most agreeably, but particularly some *anacreontic songs*, which he sung with exquisite taste; he was, in short, "all things to all men," and fascinated everybody with his affability, condescension, and good humour.

Soon after the PRINCE's arrival, I had the honor to entertain the Royal Brothers, and their attendants, at a public breakfast, at my house; at which they permitted me to introduce to them, all the members of the *Thornville Hunt*, and a great number of my friends, relations, and other

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persons of distinction, who were of the party. The Duke, however, took care to prevent their presuming too much upon the honor he did them, by previously requesting me to signify, both to the gentlemen present, and to the county in general, that it was not his intention to receive, or pay any visits, during his *present* stay at *Allerton*. I would gladly have been excused from being the medium of this communication; from which my situation with His Royal Highness should, in point of delicacy, have exempted me; for it was not a very pleasant office to *notify* to gentlemen, at my own house—or to my friends and acquaintances any where—that they were *excluded* from an honor to which I was freely admitted. I took the liberty, however, to soften the intimation, by imputing it to his being *unprovided* for a general reception of company.

I attended their Royal Highnesses in viewing my paintings, which form a large and valuable collection; of which they were pleased to express great admiration. There were two pictures among the family portraits, which attracted their particular notice. The one was my grandfather,

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presenting the Act of Union between *England* and *Scotland*, to Queen ANNE; for which he was Selected, on account of the active part he had taken in effecting the accomplishment of that important event. The other was a painting of my father, dressed in the uniform of the corps, which he raised, as before stated, and led, in the year forty-five, to the battle of Falkirk. Their Royal Highnesses took that opportunity to intimate to me, how sensible they were of the value of such subjects as my family had always been; and bestowed great commendation on the forwardness I had shewn to serve and support government, without being influenced by any other motive or consideration than pure loyalty and love of my country. They assured me the King was as sensible as themselves of my pretensions; and that I might depend on their serving me in any manner I should desire. My acknowledgements of their goodness and condescension, were, of course, expressed under the strongest sensations of gratitude; for though I had not the most distant idea of availing myself of His Majesty's, or their favor; I could not but be highly gratified by the flattering processions,

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with which their Royal Highnesses were pleased to honor me. They afterwards hunted with my fox-hounds, and after a good day's sport returned to *Allerton* to dinner, at which I had the honor to be of their party: and I almost daily visited them, and partook of their diversions, from that time to their return to London. The company then at *Allerton* confided of their ROYAL HIGHNESSES—the Arch-bishop of YORK—the Duke of MONTAGUE—Sir CHARLES THOMPSON—General BUDE—Colonel HANGER—Colonel LAKE—Colonel ST. LEGER—and Mr. Henry BUNBURY.

My intercourse with the royal party, gave me frequent opportunities of observing, that “*all is not gold that glitters.*” The petty feuds and jealousies that continually infest the palaces of the Great began, in a short time, to shed their baneful influence at *Allerton*. When I left the party one evening, the Duke desired I would show a brace of my best greyhounds the next day; which I, of course, engaged to do; and attended with them accordingly, at the hour of breakfast. As soon as I appeared, their Royal Highnesses took me hastily aside, and informed me, that after I was gone, an altercation arose

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between Colonels HANGER and ST. LEGER, which had been carried to such extremities, that they were seriously alarmed for the which had been carried to such extremities, that they were seriously alarmed for the consequences and earnestly requested me to use my utmost endeavors to reconcile them. I was a member of several clubs with both the gentlemen, and had long been on friendly terms with them: I, therefore, readily undertook the *office* of mediator, in which I was authorized to use their Royal Highnesses' names. I had the good fortune to succeed and harmony was, for the present, restored, before we entered upon our intended diversion.

Though nothing was *openly* said in objection to the terms on which the reconciliation was effected, appearances strongly indicated, that *all* of the party were not alike pleased: but, as no objection, or cause of complaint, was alleged, I could only apply what I observed, as a lesson for my future conduct.

The heart-burning occasioned by this *unavowed* and *unfounded* displeasure, was manifested by several splenetic and childish attempts to mortify me, by depreciating the breed and properties of

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my greyhounds; than which, nothing could betray greater folly; as the next hour would, in all probability, bring them to a test, and demonstrate their excellence. The particular pride I had expressed in possessing both the *knowledge* and *means* of gratifying my passion for all kinds of sporting; in a degree of perfection, and variety, above every gentleman in England, might otherwise have been somewhat piqued. The insinuations that were thrown out on this subject were strongly countenanced by the Duke; who supported his opinion, by offering, “to back the hare against the dogs.” I wished to decline the challenge, from an apprehension, that it might lead, in some way or other, *through the incidents and feelings of the moment*, to a dispute; but, being farther urged by His Royal Highness, with more earnestness than I could well account for, I betted with him a few guineas in favour of my clogs. The hare was soon started; and (though not more than one hundred and fifty yards from a cover) was killed on her second turn. One of the party, thereupon, whispered something to the Duke, who instantly said- “Colonel, this is no bet—no bet.” Not comprehending His Royal

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Highness, I asked him—Why? He replied, hastily, “Tisn’t a hare; —it’s a leveret —a leveret—a leveret.” It certainly was *full-grown*, but might have been a hare of that year. I then said, “We have nothing to do, Sir, but to find another.”

The true characters of men, particularly *great men*, are more accurately known from trifling incidents, than from great and important transactions; for the forms which etiquette requires to be observed in the latter, presents them literally in masquerade; which cannot be supported by the most consummate hypocrite, in his *ordinary concerns*—or *in the hours of relaxation*.

In a very little while an *indubitable hare* was started; and her fate, after as fine a course as was ever seen, obliged the Duke, though reluctantly, to pay his bet, and to bear testimony to the superiority of my greyhounds.

Being very solicitous that the Prince should be present at the second trial, I sent a messenger to request the honor of his company; but he was too intent on his own amusement to leave it for

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any other. He had *killed* several deer, and wounded one, which he had lost.

As soon as my bet with the Duke was decided, I hastened to join the Prince, who was still in eager pursuit of the wounded deer, and seemed greatly mortified that none of his attendants could discover his retreat. Being myself *au fait* at that sport, I told His Royal Highness would find him, if he would order the keepers to fall back. "What!" said the Prince, "are you more expert than the Duke's *yagers** who have given him up?"

I said I would answer his question presently; which I soon did, by shewing his horns to His Royal Highness—one half of his body being immersed in water, and the other half completely covered with flags and rushes. The Prince was delighted with the discovery; and, lest he should again lose him, instantly took aim and fired; —lodging his charge so judiciously, that the next moment presented him floundering in the agonies

* The German term for *keepers*. —The persons employed in that capacity by the Duke, were Germans, who are supposed to excel those of any other nation: and the Prince had been taught to believe that the *Duke's keepers* were unparalleled, even in their own country.

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of death. His Royal Highness did not wait for the interference of his attendants, but dashed into the water, and, seizing the deer in his last struggles, completed his triumph, by dispatching him with a *coup de grace*. I had the honor to second His Royal Highness in this part of the exploit; but it was not accomplished till he had completely besmeared us with blood and dirt, which afforded us a hearty laugh at each other. We thought ourselves, however, amply recompensed by our success; and the Prince, I believe, returned home as happy, and as well pleased with his dress and appearance, as he had ever been in a birthday suit. The usual party assembled at dinner; and the exploits of the morning contributed very much to the mirth of the evening; —all symptoms of ill-humour having entirely disappeared.

Being alone with the Royal Brothers (some days after) in the dining room at *Allerton*; the Prince asked if I had a horse of any kind that would suit him? I declared I would not sell him a horse for the world; for that jealousy and envy were so prevalent among his and the Duke's attendants, that whatever the one *commended*, the other

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would infallibly *depreciate*; and I would not expose myself to the hazard of incurring the blame or displeasure of either of their Royal Highnesses, for ten times the value of the best horse in Christendom. The Prince admitted what I said to be true, and commended my caution; but assured me, he took upon him, in such cases, to judge entirely for himself; and I am persuaded he was perfectly right, for I do not know any gentleman who is a better judge of a horse than His Royal Highness.

The day fixed for their departure was at this time very near. I, therefore, took occasion to observe to their Royal Highnesses, that I was too sensible of the great honor done me, by the freedom to which they had condescended to admit me; —and too well acquainted with the world, to be without apprehensions, that efforts might be made, through envy, to prejudice me in their opinions: and, therefore, earnestly entreated, if any thing unfavorable was insinuated or reported of me to their Royal Highnesses; that, they would indulge me with an opportunity of justifying myself, *before they gave it credit, or suffered it to cause any diminution of the good will they had expressed toward me.*

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The Duke reminded me of the conversation we had at my house; and, in the kindest manner, repeated the same flattering professions, both for himself and the Prince; adding, likewise, in answer to my request, that I might rely on their doing me justice on all occasions; and that no person whatever should persuade them to blame, or condemn me unheard.

The conversation then turned upon the pleasures and inconveniences of a country life. The Duke was pleased to express great admiration of my style of living, and the manner in which I spent my time (which I had fully explained, at his request, in a former conversation); but said, there was one defect in my arrangement, which, in his opinion, was a great drawback on the perfection of my plan. I requested His Royal Highness to name it. I had made, he said, no provision for hazard; the most delightful of all amusements! — Nothing could exceed his astonishment, on my telling him I had never played hazard in my life. “Brother! Brother! Brother” said he to the Prince, “the Colonel never played hazard!

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Strange! Wonderful! Amazing!! ---How have you existed without hazard.?"

"By avoiding all places," I replied, "where hazard is played; and forming my taste to amusements that neither subject my fortune, my character, or my constitution to the chance and legerdemain that determine the events of a hazard-table." I assured His Royal Highness, that the possession of his *Allerton* estate, if I was obliged to hold it on so precarious a tenure, would rather lessen than increase my portion of happiness. I begged pardon for declaring an opinion so widely different from His Royal Highness, on a subject, of which the mere mention had affected him with such pleasurable sensations. The Duke was silent; but the Prince good-naturedly replied, "You have said nothing, Colonel, that needs an apology." I was glad, however, that the entrance of some others of the party, gave me a fair opportunity to change the subject.

A few days only intervened before their Royal Highnesses left *Allerton*, which I spent with them in the most agreeable manner; and we parted on the best terms imaginable.

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In a short time after the departure of the Princes, a hunting meeting was held at Boroughbridge; of which their Royal Highnesses graciously consented to become members; and were consequently proposed and admitted. This honorable accession to our club exhilarated the company, and naturally enough occasioned a more free circulation of the bottle than was usual. It was my fate to be seated by a gentleman, who, though agreeable and polite when sober, was intolerably troublesome and disagreeable, if his libations to Bacchus chanced to be more copious than ordinary; which happened, at that time, to be the case. I was myself, perhaps, too much elevated to make the allowance his situation might have claimed, and which I should undoubtedly have made, if I had drank less. An altercation arose between us; in which I do not presume to decide either upon his conduct or my own; but I am free to say, that I received the approbation and thanks of *twenty-eight gentlemen* out of thirty, which was the precise number of the company present; and further, that the gentleman himself, when he recovered, made a handsome apology for his behavior.

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The consequences that arose from this incident will, I hope, excuse my introducing it, and evince that it is not obtruded *impertinently* upon the reader.

In the spring following, I was told by Mr. PLUMER, of *Bilton*, that he had seen the Duke of York, and that His Royal Highness had mentioned to him the *Boroughbridge fracas*, in a manner highly discreditable to me. That he assured the Duke he was himself present; and that the true state of the case was the direct contrary of what His Royal Highness had been told. Mr. PLUMER advised me, notwithstanding, to take the first opportunity to speak of it myself to the Duke. I accordingly waited on His Royal Highness, who then resided in the *Stable Yard*, at *St. James's*. He received me familiarly, and, as I thought, cordially. On my intimating a desire to speak to him in private, he went with me into another room. I began with reminding him of his promise, "never to condemn me unheard;" and told him I came on that pretention to acquaint His Royal Highness with the true circumstances of my affair with Mr. ___ at the *Boroughbridge* club, of which I understood

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His Royal Highness had received a very unfair and incorrect account; assuring him, at the same time, that my wishing to trouble him with so trivial a matter, was the mere effect of my solicitude to retain His Royal Highness's good opinion. The Duke bowed, and desired me to proceed. I related to him the particulars of the affray, and he apparently listened with polite attention; but, at the instant I concluded, he set up a vulgar horselaugh, and ran precipitately out of the room, without saying another word. My first sensation was that of anger, which indeed was but momentary; for recollecting where I was, my indignation almost instantly gave place to a sentiment better suited to the occasion. But I was too much of an Englishman, notwithstanding, to leave the Duke's house without feeling great regret, that a PRINCE *of the HOUSE of BRUNSWICK* should descend to the meanness of doing, *under the privilege of impunity*, what would have subjected a less dignified offender to the discipline of a *horsewhip*.

I believe it will be admitted, that there are few stable-yards in which a gentleman could be

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treated with less hospitality, or greater rudeness by its inhabitants, than I experienced at this interview with the Duke of YORK, *in the Stable-Yard of St. James's*. Being unable to comprehend, or on any principle to account for this conduct; I shall leave the elucidation of it to those who have more knowledge of human nature, or of His Royal Highness in particular, than I have; and without further digression resume my detail.

The immense quantities of all kinds of materials for building; the still greater quantities contracted for; and the extensive plan of improvement in the house, gardens, and pleasure-grounds; in which a considerable progress was made, before the Duke's excursion into *Yorkshire*—plainly indicated His Royal Highness's intention to spend a great part of his time at *Allerton*. Twenty additional bed-chambers, with dressing rooms, were completed in the subsequent year; and such vast preparations going forward for the enlargement of his stables, &c. as suggested a natural, and universal presumption, that *Allerton* would be as celebrated for hospitality under its *present*, as in the time of its former master: and

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that, too, on a scale proportionably enlarged, according to the great difference, both in rank and revenue, between the DUKE OF YORK and LORD GALWAY. Nothing was talked of *over the bottle* but the Duke's improvements; and the darling topic of female eloquence was banished from the tea table, to make room for a subject more new and delightful. For the galas, routs, and festivities that were expected to take place at the Duke's return, so entirely occupied the imaginations of the *Yorkshire* ladies, (those especially of the West-riding); that the voice of gratulation only was heard among them. The peasantry were elate with the prospect of employment in the service of His Royal Highness, whose taste for improvements had already engaged a great number of them in his daily pay; while the poor and needy exulted in the confident expectation of finding a solace of their indigency, *in his bounty and benevolence*. There was scarcely, in short, a human being in the county, who was not agog, from some motive or other, for the Duke's arrival: but FORTUNE, alas! had otherwise determined.

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When their expectations were raised to the highest point of impatience, *a rumor from the south* announced, that the luxuriant beauties of the groves of *Allerton*; the unparalleled fertility of its wide domain; the consummate elegance of its park, gardens, and pleasure grounds; with the matchless splendor and magnificence of that princely mansion—were upon the point of being described by *the poetic pen* of Mr. CHRISTIE. To speak plainly, *Allerton* was consigned to that paragon of auctioneers; and soon after advertised for sale. The buildings and improvements were consequently discontinued, and every body employed about them discharged.

When the advertisement had been continued occasionally, about two years, without effect; an event arose, from which the greatest calamity that could befall the nation, was apprehended: through which the appointment of REGENCY became the subject of parliamentary deliberation, and discussion. The advertisement was then withdrawn; the works at *Allerton* resumed with redoubled vigor; and the most confident hopes of the Duke's return into *Yorkshire* resumed by

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those whom it concerned. The first symptoms of *convalescence*, which diffused through the kingdom the joyful hope of the King's recovery, occasioned a considerable relaxation in the proceedings at *Allerton*; but the providential consummation of that hope, in the final and complete restoration of His Majesty's health, produced so total a change in the *mind* and arrangements of the Duke, that his *purpose of retirement* was totally laid aside; the aggrandizement of *Allerton* again abandoned; and the sale of it by public auction announced by Mr. CHRISTIE; who, supposing the magnitude of the purchase to have been the chief impediment to his procuring a purchaser in the former case, judiciously proposed felling it in lots; which, if it had been practicable, would not only have facilitated the sale, but would, doubtless, have made it much more productive. But this plan, likewise, was found, on investigation, to be encumbered with insurmountable difficulties; and it was, consequently, determined to dispose of it by private contract. Curiosity now led me to inquire the terms; and finding the upset price to be only one hundred and twenty thousand pounds, I determined, without hesitation, to be

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the purchaser. A negotiation was immediately opened on my part, by Mr. Hill, an eminent and respectable barrister, at *Tadcaster*, who procured an abatement of ten thousand pounds, on my agreeing to pay the sum of one hundred and ten thousand pounds in the manner following: viz. Ten thousand on signing the covenant (which took place on the first of January, 1791); twenty thousand at the end of ten days, —the house, park, furniture &c. being then to be given up; and the further sum of thirty thousand pounds on the *New Michaelmas Day* following; when the Duke was to put me in full possession of the estate, *rents, profits, &c.*—It was likewise agreed, that the remaining sum of fifty thousand pounds should be paid at any time within the year ; that I should pay an interest thereon at the rate of five per cent per annum, until such payment of the said fifty thousand pounds should be made ; and, lastly, that on failure of payment of the above-mentioned installment of *thirty thousand pounds*, on *New Michaelmas Day*, or within ten, days after that date, I should incur the forfeiture of five thousand pounds.

In the month of July, Mr. HALL, the Duke's

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principal steward came to me, in great agitation, to the Gray's *Inn Coffee-House*, and informed me, "There was sad confusion at YORK HOUSE." "That," I said, "did not in the least surprise me." He proceeded to acquaint me, that Messrs. ATKINSON and FARRER, the Duke's solicitors, had committed a great error, in naming *New Michaelmas Day* for the Duke's giving me full possession of the estate; which he could not do, because the occupiers of the farms being tenants at will, and their leases commencing at Old Michaelmas, their notices to quit would not expire until that day. I told him, I was extremely sorry that any doubt of my acting with becoming liberality, should have occasioned a moment's anxiety or confusion, at YORK HOUSE; and desired he would assure his Royal Highness, that I should think myself deserving of his utmost contempt, if I were capable of taking a paltry advantage of the omission or mistake of his solicitor; and that I would pay the money whenever it suited His Royal Highness to give me possession of the estate. The honest old gentleman seized both my hands; returned me a thousand thanks on behalf of the Duke; and said,

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“You allow me, then, to name Old Michaelmas Day?” I answered, “Yes, with all my heart:” and on that day I received possession, and paid the thirty thousand pounds.

The conveyance was executed at Messrs. COUTTS', the Duke's bankers; where I had the honor to meet His Royal Highness for the first time, after my extraordinary interview with him in the *Stable Yard*. Whatever were the Duke's feelings, he was too accomplished a courtier to betray any embarrassment. He at first accosted me merely as an acquaintance; but, perceiving I attended as a party in the business of the meeting, he said, “What! Colonel, are you the purchaser?” which I, of course, answered in the affirmative. This pretended ignorance, of what could not be unknown to him, convinced me he was affected with sensations which he meant by this artifice to hide; and if I had been at all influenced by the remembrance of his childish behavior at our last meeting, I could not have had a fairer opportunity of retorting it: but I had no desire to mortify, or disconcert him. When the business was concluded, we chatted familiarly for a few minutes, and parted in apparent good humor

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with each other.

A few days only had elapsed (after the payment of the last mentioned installment, and my obtaining possession of the estate), when I received a letter from the Duke's agent; informing me, "that he was directed by His Royal Highness to demand the *five* thousand pounds I had forfeited, by not paying the thirty thousand pounds on New Michaelmas Day, as I had covenanted to do." I read the letter with surprise; but a moment's consideration suggested that it must, have been written unknown to the Duke; and that the writer was unacquainted with the reason, on which the payment of that installment was postponed to *Old* Michaelmas Day. I thought it proper, notwithstanding, to answer it through Mr. HILL, who had conducted the negotiation, and completed the purchase. He consequently related the circumstances that caused the delay, as they are above stated in my conversation with Mr. HALL: but his explanation was not satisfactory. The demand was repeated; and his Royal Highness's reasons assigned for insisting on it: *viz.* "that though the case was precisely as Mr.

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Hill had represented—"I had taken no legal discharge from the obligation" and that the sum was much "too large to be sacrificed to any considerations of honor." I made no reply to this profligate avowal; and being no more troubled on the subject for many months, I concluded His Royal Highness either disapproved, or was *ashamed* of the application. I was therefore, unprepared for a circumstance, which eventually proved, that greatness of mind is not always the concomitant of illustrious birth.

At the expiration of the year, I went with my solicitor to the house of Messrs. Coutts, the Duke's bankers, to make my last payment of fifty thousand pounds. I had not the honor of seeing the principals of the house, but was referred to a clerk, who acted on that occasion under the particular directions of the Duke. On my laying down bank notes to the amount of fifty thousand pounds, and requiring a discharge; he declined taking it as a *final* payment, unless it was accompanied with the forfeited penalty of five thousand pounds; which, he said, was peremptorily insisted on by the Duke.

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I informed him in reply, that the gentleman who accompanied me was my solicitor; that having tendered in his presence the full sum I owed to his Royal Highness, I had done all that was incumbent on me to do: and that I should return immediately into *Yorkshire*, without giving him, his Royal Highness, or myself, any further trouble on the subject. I, accordingly, replaced the notes in my pocket book, and had nearly reached the door; when the clerk, with great earnestness, entreated me to allow him, before I went away, to communicate what had passed to the Duke; and said he should be back in a few minutes. I laid my watch on the counter, and told him I would wait half an hour, but not a moment longer.

Being left, in his absence, to my cogitations, I was extremely satisfied with myself, in having complied with his request; because it gave me time to recollect, that the Messrs. COUTTS might be more affected by the Duke's pertinacity than himself; as nearly the whole of the installment must necessarily be theirs: for the estate, when I purchased it, was mortgaged to them for the

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enormous sum of ninety-seven thousand pounds; which would certainly have determined me, at all events, to leave the money in some way or other, in their hands.

The clerk returned within a minute of the time allotted him, and the account he gave was, in effect: as follows: —He had first, he said, inquired for His Royal Highness at the *Round-House*, * were he was told, the Duke had been out some time, and that his return was very uncertain. He made several unsuccessful efforts to obtain further intelligence; but after much entreaty, and declaring his business to be of the utmost importance; he was informed by an officer of the Duke's household, that he might certainly see his His Royal Highness at the Tennis Court;

*Lest any of my readers should imagine, as I did, the first mention of the Round-House, that His Royal Highness had been just liberated from, the custody of the guardians of the night, it may be necessary to inform them, that the Duke's mansion, at Whitehall, where he then resided, was so denominated by the lower orders of wits, from a spacious circular saloon, in the Italian style, which His Royal Highness added to the house he purchased from Sir Harry Featherstonehaugh—now in the possession of Lord Melburne.

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but would find it extremely difficult to obtain a *moments audience*.

There doubtless must be some infatuation in the game of Tennis that does not affect me. But I much wonder that in times like the present, it mould be tolerated, as it clearly promotes the republican principle of equality; for when persons of high degree, *familiarize* and *hold-commerce* with the *menial attendants*, adventurers, and idlers of a tennis-court; and enter into the *purposes* and *transactions* of such assemblies, they unquestionably degrade themselves to a level with their companions and playfellows, or raise their playfellows and companions to a level with themselves; and, in either case, EQUALITY is the result.

The commis, notwithstanding the discouragement he received at *York House*, proceeded, with all possible haste, to the tennis-court; and being told that the Duke was there, he sent in a note to his Royal Highness; earnestly requesting to be allowed immediately to communicate his

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business. The Duke, however, was *too deeply engaged* to think any thing of greater moment than his game: he was, therefore, obliged, several times, to intimate to his Royal Highness, that a minute's delay might frustrate the purpose of his waiting on him. His importunity at length procured him an audience. The Duke was at first extremely disconcerted on hearing my determination; but, when the first emotions, occasioned by the failure of his maneuver, had subsided, he revoked his former order; and, (whether actuated by considerations of convenience, a sense of propriety, or an eagerness to return to his amusement) consented to receive the sum I had tendered, in full discharge of his demand; which, of course, was paid: and it can scarcely, I think, be necessary to add, that the incidents I have stated, completely extinguished in me every spark of ambition to be any longer numbered among the friends or acquaintances of THE DUKE OF YORK.

A synopsis of the remaining 320 pages of this work is provided so that any future researcher may determine if additional information is desired and necessary for their research.

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(70-71)

A Letter to the Right Hon. Thomas Steel from Thomas Thornton. In the light of Colonel Harvey's ill health Thornton offers to raise a regiment of Riflemen (6 Dec. 1792 at his own expense and his father did in 1745 during the Jacobite Rebellion. Likely Thomas Steele 1753-1823, Major in Sussex Militia.

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A acknowledgement from Mr. Steel that the matter would be communicated to the Secretary of War (11 Dec. 1792).

(73-83)

A further account of events from the embodiment of the regiment in early 1793 during the beginning of the war with France.

(84-94)

Description of a court-martial of a private Anderson and subsequent investigation into Anderson's commanding officer Captain Dawson which suggests that the court-martial should never have taken place.

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(95)

A Letter from Major General Musgrave honoring Lieutenant Colonel Thornton and expressing his satisfaction with the West Riding Regiment.

(96-99)

Some further accounts of the Regiment's movements and duties under the command of Thornton.

(100-134)

Some correspondence to Colonel Thornton on the subject of Count Beaurepere, a French emigrant, and who was previously an officer in the Gens d'Armes. There is an account of other officers' dissatisfaction with the appointment of Beaurepere to Ensign, which caused disagreements and some resistance from officers over Thornton's support for Beaurepere.

On the 22nd July 1794 Thornton refused to insert an order signifying that Beaurepere was no longer fit to hold a commission in the regiment, and on the motion of Captain Dawson a meeting of the officers decided that Thornton's should be "sent to Coventry". The conspirators called upon Mr. Wadman to prove his loyalty by putting himself in conflict with his commanding officer,

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which resulted in Thornton requesting a court-martial of Lieutenant Wadman accusing him of inciting men under his command in mutinous behavior.

(135-168)

The Court-Martial of Lieutenant William Wadman by Colonel Thornton The entire Court-Martial proceedings are published as The Court-Martial of William Wadman published by John Resler Swift in 2016.

(169-182)

An explanation of circumstances which led to a court-martial brought by Captain Dawson against Thornton for behaving in a manner unbecoming the character of an officer and gentleman, tyrannical abuse of his power of a commanding officer and improper conduct.

(183-265)

The Court-Martial of Lieut. Colonel Thornton.

An account of the court-martial, and verdict in which Thornton was acquitted on certain charges but given a reprimand in public for addressing soldiers in an attempt to inflame their minds.

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(266-294)

The Court-Martial of Captains Torre and Marshall, Winn and Dawson (the conspirators against Thornton). These court-martials commenced on 31st October 1794 for Torre and Marshall; for Winn and Dawson commenced on 11th November 1794 and closed on 13th November.

The charges were summarized as follows:

“That of having conspired with other officers of the West Yorkshire Regiment of Militia, not only to disparage and scandalize me [Thornton] with the soldiers of the regiment I had the honour to command; but to render the contemptible in the eyes of the whole encampment, by uniting, with the said other officers, in a resolution to shew me marks of disapprobation, and carrying the same into execution”.

The judgments were as follows:

Captain Torre

“The Court, having duly considered the evidence for and against the prisoner upon the several charges exhibited against him, do not find him guilty of any of them and they do therefore acquit him.”

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Lieutenant Marshall

“The Court are of the opinion that the method which the prisoner Lieut. Joseph Marshall adopted, of showing his disapprobation of his commanding officer’s conduct (as contained in the second part of the first charge) was highly improper. They do therefore find him guilty of misdemeanor, in virtue of the second articles of the twenty-third section of the Articles of War; and do adjudge, that he be privately reprimanded by the General commanding the district.”

Captain Winn

“The court having duly considered the evidence brought against the prisoner Capt. Winn, on the first charge, as well as that produced in his defence, and wishing to discountenance all meetings of officers, where marks of disapprobation are agreed to be shewn to a commanding officer, let their cause of complaint be what it may, do think that the charge amounts to a misdemeanor, in virtue of the second article of the 23d section of the Articles of War, and do adjudge the said Edmund Mark Winn to be privately reprimanded by the General commanding the district.”

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Captain Dawson

“The Court having duly considered the evidence brought against the prisoner, Captain George Dawson, together with that produced in his defence, are of the opinion that he is not guilty of the first, second, third, fourth or fifth charges and do therefore acquit him.”

“The Court are also of the opinion, that the accusation contained in the sixth charge, not being founded on anything that happened within the district commanded by George Henry Lennox (under whose orders the Court assembled) they are not competent to inquire into that charge.”

“The Court is further of the opinion, that the method which the prisoner adopted, of shewing his disapprobation of the conduct of his commanding officer, as stated in the second part of the seventh charge, was highly improper. They therefore, find him guilty of a misdemeanor, in virtue of the second Article of the 23d section of the Articles of War, and do adjudge the said Capt. George Dawson to be privately reprimanded by the General commanding the district.”

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(295-320)

An account of events after the judgment of Dawson and also some extracts of letters of support for Thornton.

End of *An Elucidation of A Mutinous Court-Martial*

At the conclusion of all the Court-Martial's in November 1794, celebrations were held in nearby Dulverton and Tiverton in which Colonel Thornton was recognized for his Militia services. The newspapers carried the following accounts.

The Exeter Flying Post December 25th, 1794.

On Friday last the Inhabitants of this Town witnessed, with pleasure, the uncommon marks of respect paid to Lieutenant Colonel Thornton, the commanding officer of the second West-York Regiment of Militia. The soldiers met him near a mile from town, and in spite of the Lieutenant-Colonel's remonstrance, requesting the men not to degrade themselves, they could not be prevailed on to desist from drawing a carriage from that place through the town and to the Angel Inn, in the midst of the acclamations of at least a thousand spectators, bells ringing, &c. And on his attending the corps to church, the

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ringers paid him the same compliment on Sunday. The orderly conduct of this body of men has been as much noticed, as their uncommonly fine appearance; and it but justice to say they have already gained the respect of the Magistrates and the whole town.

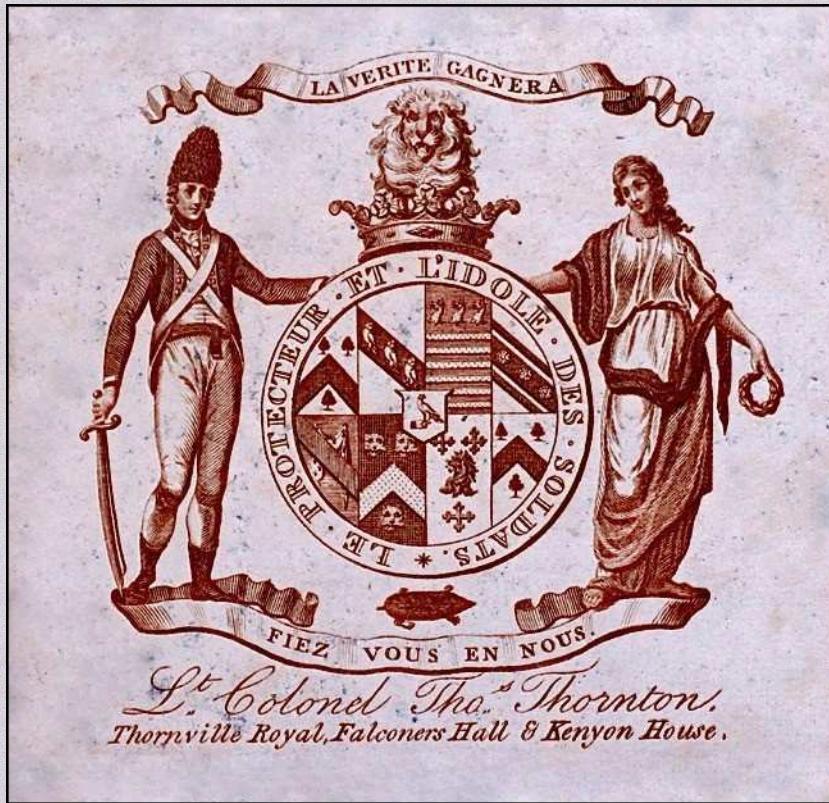
The Exeter Flying Post January 22nd, 1795.

"Dulverton and Tiverton have during the holidays been a constant scene of conviviality and festivity, balls, concerts, dances, etc. On one of these days at Tiverton, the head-quarters of the West York Militia, an ox, ornamented with ribbons and wreaths of flowers sent by the ladies, paraded through the streets, and after the soldiers had fired three volleys, was by Lieutenant Colonel Thornton given to the soldiers, whose unalterable attachment to him, and their singular military appearance and peaceable conduct, have been the astonishment and admiration of all. On another day a handsome sword with an inscription testifying their attachment to him, for his upright and manly conduct for above twenty years' service, together with a noble piece of plate, was presented to him at the head of his Regiment in a respectful manner by the Sergeant-

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Major, in the name of every non-commissioned Officer and soldier in the Regiment. The Colonel in a handsome speech pointed out the superior advantages of our constitution, impressing the soldiers with loyal sentiments, 'to be faithful to their King, respectful to their Officers, and obedient to the laws'. The whole of the Colonel's conduct gave universal satisfaction, which was expressed by reiterated applause from thousands of spectators. The ladies, to testify their approbation of the soldiers' conduct, presented a garland to the Sergeant-Major, another was given to the Colonel, and also an elegant medallion has been ordered for him by the ladies, to commemorate the good opinion which the magistrates and every individual present expressed on his humane and manly conduct. In the evening the ladies gave a ball, the room was adorned with loyal epithets, wreaths of laurel, etc., in honour of Colonel Thornton and his Regiment."

These events of 1794 would lay the foundation for the final court-martial of Colonel Thornton in August 1795 when his men would once again remove his horse from the carriage and draw him into camp cheering him with "huzzah's.



Heraldic Arms of Lt. Colonel Thornton

The bookplate illustrates eight "quartered" Arms
This is a method of joining several different arms together in one shield by dividing the shield into equal parts and placing the different arms a person is entitled to bear in each division.

The Arms of Colonel Thornton are in the first and eight quarters

Top Row are: Thornton, Savile, Myster, Ames.

Bottom Row: Norton, Wentworth, Armitage, Thornton.

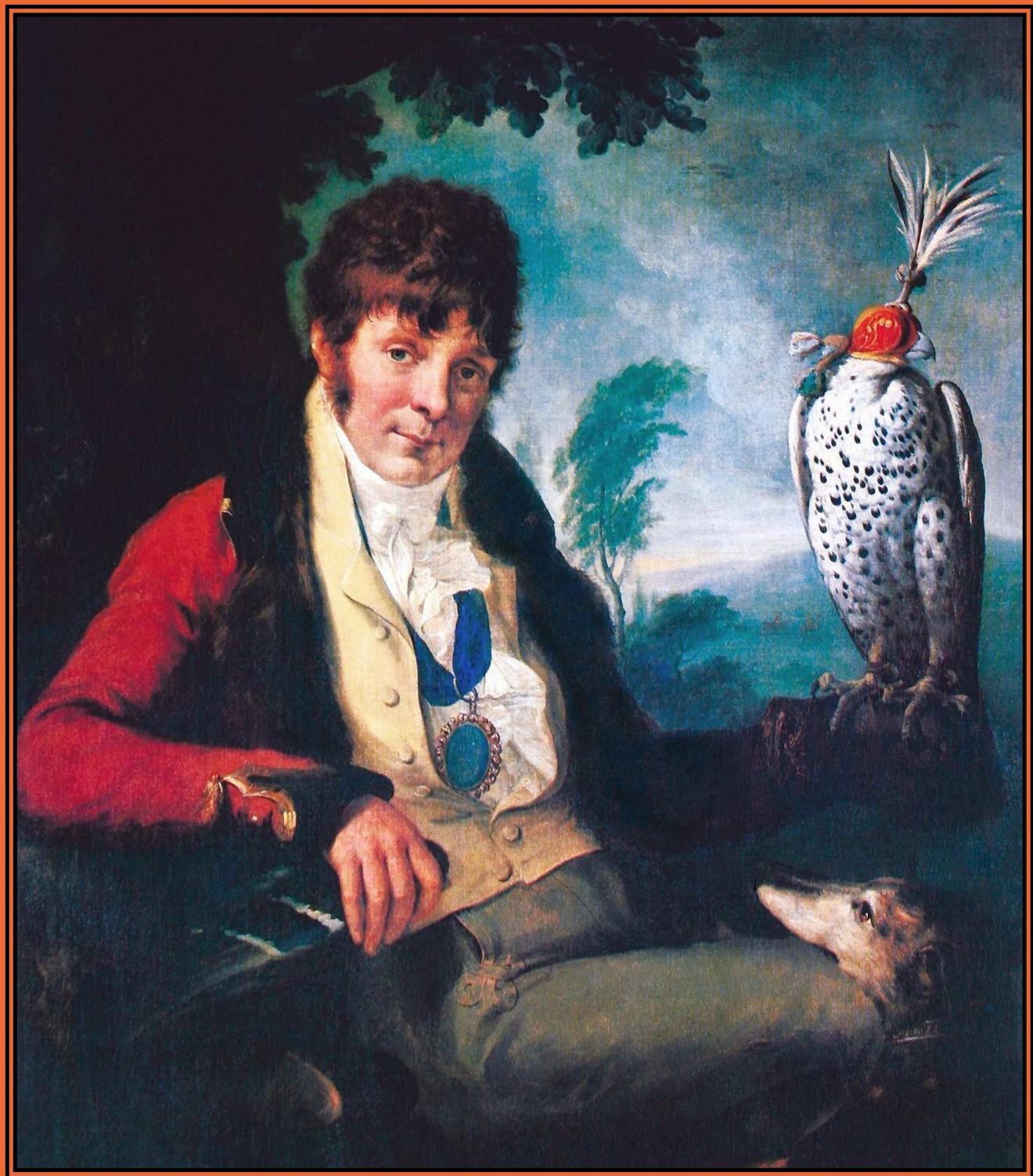
Latin Inscriptions:

La Verite Gagnera -"The True Winner."

Le Protecteur et L'Idole Soldats- "The Protector and the Idol of Soldiers."

Fiez Vous En Nous-"We trust you."

Colonel Thomas Thornton of Thornville Royal



Colonel Thornton with his Greyhound *Major*
and Gyrfalcon *Sans Quartier*