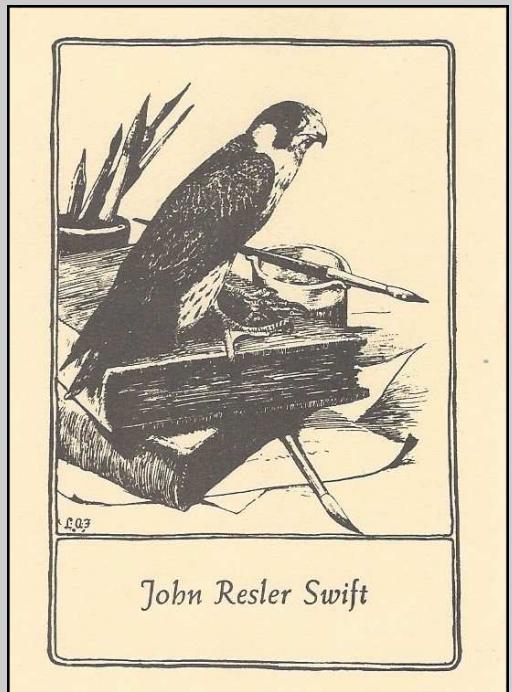
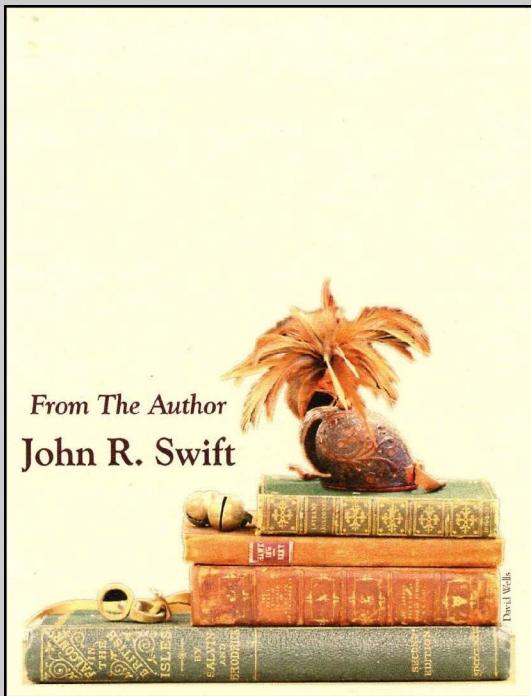


The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

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.

© 2016 by the author of this book.

The book author retains sole copyright to his or her contributions to this book.

The Blurb-provided layout designs and graphic elements are copyright Blurb Inc., 2012. This book was created using the Blurb creative publishing service. The book author retains sole copyright to his or her contributions to this book.



The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

Colonel Thomas Thornton And The West York Militia

Colonel Thomas Thornton had been a member in the 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

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

A memorial is a written statement of facts presented to a sovereign or a legislative body often in the form of a petition. This memorial was published in 1796 by Colonel Thornton to gain public empathy for his Court-martial held the previous year from August 17th, 1795 to September 14th, 1795. He chronicles all the events leading up to his Court-martial and also provides numerous letters of support from other militia officers along with other well known and respected citizens.

Each of these pages were transcribed directly from the original and formatted to replicate the original as much as possible. Many words have been rewritten into modern English spellings as well as eliminating the early use of "f" for an "s" to make it easier reading for today's researchers. There are also some rarely used or archaic words or phrases that may require a dictionary kept in close proximity. For example Thornton often uses the phrase "to send someone to Coventry".

"To send someone to Coventry" is an English idiom meaning to deliberately ostracize someone. Typically, this is done by not talking to them, avoiding someone's company, and generally pretending that they no longer exist. In a military unit this would be devastating as Thornton points out and that is one of the main points he makes in his arguments.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

THE
MEMORIAL
OF
THOMAS THORNTON, ESQ.
OF
THORNVILLE ROYAL
LIEUTENANT-COLONEL
OF THE
WEST-YORK REGIMENT OF MILITIA

LONDON:
PRINTED FOR THE AUTHOR
1796

This is the first time Thornton does not use the title Colonel preceding his name.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

To the KING'S Most Excellent Majesty.

SIRE,

YOUR Memorialist sets forth, that having been upwards of twenty-two years Lieutenant-Colonel of the West-York Regiment of Militia, and having taken upon him the active part of disciplining the same; occasionally recommending Officers; settling disputes between them and the men (and having, from time to time, met with the fullest approbation of the Lord-Lieutenant of the said Western division for the time being, and the Colonel of the said Regiment, and frequently received their thanks for the same, as well as of all the General Officers under whom he has served, particularly Lord AMHERST, Commander in Chief, in the year 1781, issued in his general orders); took ,the liberty, in April last, to recommend Count BEAUREPERE, formerly an officer of distinction in the French service, who served in the Gens d'Armes, afterwards in the Combined Armies, and is well connected in England (now an emigrant, on account of his loyalty), to his Grace

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

(6)

the DUKE OF NORFOLK, for an Ensigncy in the said Regiment, and in your Memorialist's own company; and that from a motive of humanity and suffering innocence, and service to the said corps, in constant want of subalterns. The DUKE being pleased to grant a commission to the said BEAUREPERE, your Memorialist took him down to the Regiment at his own expense; that he no sooner joined, but several of the Officers thought proper to oppose and protest against his GRACE'S nomination, under an idea that no Frenchman was eligible to serve in a Militia Corps; that in consequence of this the DUKE OF NORFOLK laid the case before your MAJESTY's Attorney-General; who is of opinion, that the measure is illegal; though of late there are several instances, both in civil and military life, to the contrary.

Your Memorialist further, observes, that the Officers' first objection, as stated by Captain HANKIN of the said Corps, was, that Ensign BEAUREPERE was ineligible on account of his having served in the Republican Armies; and the Officers of the Regiment protested against his serving, on that account. That your Memorialist was, on this occasion, branded with Republicanism, and being a favorer of Democratic Principles; though nothing could be more cruel than this aspersion, and nothing more foreign to his ideas or those of his ancestors, as your Memorialist will hereafter shew.

Your Memorialist begs leave to represent to your MAJESTY, that the mode of delivering the

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[7]

above protest however delicate the language, was unattended with the previous marks of respect: due to him as the then Commanding Officer; and which he felt the more, as being delivered by two of the Officers, and the *only two*, who disobeyed his orders the campaign before.

That your Memorialist, in consequence of his not being able at the time, either to pay that attention to the protest, which the officers expected (when meeting them in the mess room), or to reason with them on the impetuosity of their proceedings; was grossly insulted by the major part of the Officers of the said Regiment, and by Captain DAWSON in particular, who, with the rest, was deaf to all argument. That your Memorialist, incapable of adopting the measures they conceived as legal, and not complying in superseding Ensign BEAUREPÈRE, without the least authority whatever, and in contradiction to every military rule (which it was impossible for him to do, Ensign BEAUREPÈRE having received his commission, and being fully approved by the Colonel); combined and confederated to intimidate and force him to comply, by sending him to Coventry, or shewing him marks of disapprobation, and thereby rendering him odious to the whole camp where he then was; for the evident purpose of compelling him, the oldest Lieutenant-Colonel in England, to resign his commission.

That your Memorialist, convinced of his own integrity and upright conduct, and supported by the

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[8]

highest military authority, paid little attention to this unprecedented behavior of the Officers of his Regiment; who, urged by the factious ringleaders, now-combined in a mass against him, to force him to comply with their wishes; repeatedly attempted to lessen him in the opinion of the men, ever *steady* to the interest of his family and himself. But disappointed in their deep design, they adopted the mode of attempting to force the soldiers into mutiny: this also being frustrated, his authority was disputed, his orders disobeyed, and himself publicly vilified; not only in the face of his own regiment, but on the grand parade; which the proceedings of the Courts Martial on Lieutenant WADMAN (and others, likely to take place) will sufficiently testify.

That your Memorialist is informed that the said Officers did, clandestinely, some time since, send requisitions, and in particular a memorial, through the hands of General MORRIS, Commander of the camp of Roborough; in order that it should be presented to your MAJESTY; intimating, that unless your Memorialist was dismissed the service, they would resign; and which memorial, Lord George LENOX sent to the Lord-Lieutenant*; the contents of which your

* A disturbance having arisen on the arrival of Lieut. -Colonel THORNTON at Roborough Camp, from soldiers of all the regiments there having complained in bodies to Lieutenant-General Morris, that they were oppressed by their commanding officers, obliged to wear hair powder and no allowance for it, that their pay could scarcely support them: —This, though true, having been represented to the General without having been first stated as a grievance to the Commanding Officer, and enabling him in consequence to give the necessary redress, and contrary to the articles

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[9]

your Memorialist was unacquainted with, till the last day's sitting of the Court of Enquiry, and of course has been unable to answer it; which your MAJESTY will see, strikes at all command, and is detrimental to the service, contrary to good order and military discipline.

Having stated these facts, fully corroborated by the testimonies of the Court of Enquiry and Courts Martial, beyond the possible power of contradiction;

of war, was construed to be tending to mutiny, by the *approval* of Lieut. - General MORRIS: as an example to the whole Lieut. -Colonel THORNTON ordered a Court-martial to sit on one of his soldiers for that offence, and he was sentenced by the Court to be flogged. Lieut. -Colonel THORNTON stated to the men the danger of allowing military persons to form combinations against their superiors, and how unjust it was through malice by *secretly accusing* those who had no power to defend themselves; and unwilling as he had ever been to inflict punishment, on this occasion, as a public example to crush riot, he could nor in justice to the commission he held avoid it. The sentence being inflicted, with a *manly spirit* the soldier, who was a grenadier, said "Sir, from your representation I see my crime, of which I was ignorant before. I have received, as every soldier should do, a punishment inflicted under your command *as a man*, well knowing that you would not punish unless it was necessary for the good of the service; but I do assure you, Sir, in your absence, for faults the most trivial we have been most *cruelly punished*." The Colonel's answer was, "Silence, this is not the place or time for complaint. I'll hear and redress all *reasonable* grievances properly represented. I punish as the father of the soldiers, from *NECESSITY*—but I detest oppression." A few days after, unknown to Lieut. -Colonel THORNTON, many of the officers of the York waited on Lieut. -General MORRIS, and presented the memorial alluded to to him, and he, as appears by Lord George LENOX's evidence on a Court-martial, declares that he sent it to the Duke of NORFOLK, convinced that General MORRIS had apprised Colonel THORNTON that he had received such a Memorial, agreeable to the universal practice of the army. However, on this occasion, the practice differed. The Public being in possession of this fact will judge for themselves.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[10]

your Memorialist humbly conceives that the conduct of this faction is too evident to dwell on. He trusts, therefore, that your MAJESTY will excuse the manly mode of this address, and his pointing out the dangerous tendency of Coventry to society; and particularly so in a military line, lessening authority and destroying subordination. In his opinion, some system should be adopted to prevent such impolitic and unjustifiable measures; as if pursued, under similar influence, by a regiment in garrison, or occupying a very important and distant post, the disaffection of the soldiers might be such, as to render that regiment totally inactive; and all founded, perhaps, as in this case, in the want of sense of one or two officers, who might thus *ensnare* the whole.

After this treatment, and being vilified in the public prints (those vehicles of abuse) for having discharged his duty with firmness, and on the most trying occasions, such as may not happen again in life; innocent of the frivolous charges brought against him; so much disappointed were his accusers, that on the close of the fifth day of the Court of Enquiry, the manager pretended that he would produce other charges in addition. To these the court objected; but your Memorialist convinced that, on many occasions, in political life in particular, insinuations of different kinds had been thrown out against him, he thought this the proper time to clear himself of the whole; and, conscious the rectitude of his actions and sentiments, he

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[11]

challenged the manager to produce any one charge of an unfair or improper conduct from his birth, either as an officer or a man, that he could not confute. The court now broke up till the next day.

Your Memorialist observes, that only one charge was brought forth in addition, and that not of a military nature—being the detaining of a letter ten or twelve days, taking off the impression of the seal, opening it, and resealing it.

The court, convinced of the folly and falsity of this charge, and exasperated at such conduct: would not hear of it; and after the court broke up, Captain HANKIN, at the request of Captain DAWSON, who brought forth the charge, made a kind of apology in his name, for having stated it; which, he said, *he should not have done*, unless he thought he could have proved it.

It would be considered as vanity in your Memorialist to exhibit to your MAJESTY, and the public, the services done by his ancestors and himself, to this country; did not the assertion of his favoring Republicanism and Democracy, which, as an Englishman he abhors, render it necessary for his justification; and the pressing solicitations of his friends leave him not at liberty to conceal it; they will serve to shew the invariable attachment of his family to the present succession.

1. One of the ancestors of Lieutenant-Colonel THORNTON, who married the heiress of SAVILLE, raised a regiment of horse in support of the crown, which he clothed, fed, and maintained,

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[12]

2. SIR WILLIAM THORNTON, his grandfather, was chosen and entrusted with the important and honorable charge of delivering the Articles of Union to Queen Ann, for which he was knighted. He died young.

3. His son, WILLIAM THORNTON, adhering to the same principles, raised a body of infantry in the year 1745, which he clothed, armed, and maintained at his own expense, and led to the battle of Falkirk; where most of them fell, and where he himself narrowly escaped being taken prisoner: he was three days concealed in a loathsome cellar, in wet cloths, and heard the rebels above offering one thousand pounds for his head; which however did not corrupt his generous hostess, on whom he settled an annuity for life. For this service he received personally the thanks of King GEORGE the Second, and the most flattering offers of a title or regiment (which at that time was not accepted); also the freedom of the city of Edinburgh, and a noble piece of plate from the borough of Knaresborough; and for which services the city of York chose and continued him as their representative in parliament. His confinement at Falkirk ruined his constitution.

4. Whilst in parliament, the same WILLIAM THORNTON, the father of your Memorialist, suggested the necessity of a national militia, and accordingly brought in the bill; and the York Regiment, in which he now serves, was the first raised. Your Memorialist has been in this regiment thirty years,

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[13]

twenty-two of which he has been the Lieutenant-Colonel; has had the active part of disciplining the same; and trusts, from the repeated approbation he has received from all the generals under whom he has served, it is inferior to none, even in its present convulsed state, which Lord GEORGE LENOX can testify. It is a justice to the soldiers of the York to say, that during all the encampments in the last war, there was not a single punishment in the regiment, whilst under your Memorialist's command.

5. In conclusion, your Memorialist begs leave to say, that in the year 1780, when, in his opinion, not only the metropolis, but the empire, seemed in danger; without waiting for the usual forms; taking upon himself the responsibility; he marched the York Regiment (thirty-six miles) in one day to London, and, with 36,000 rounds of ball-cartridges, encamped them in Hyde-park, before five in the afternoon, and did duty with them half an hour after, at St. James's; for which alacrity he received General RAINSFORTH'S Thanks. The particulars of this transaction Lord AMHERST can testify.

6. The last: trying occasion, when Democratic principles were too justly to be feared, your Memorialist had another opportunity of shewing his attachment to the state; this was by enrolling himself as one of the members of the Constitutional Society at the Crown and Anchor, offering his services either in town or in the country, where he had some influence, to check anarchy, and support the best of governments.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[14]

And further, in addition, offering his personal services in whatever shape government might choose to employ them, however inconvenient to his private concerns, as the subjoined letter will elucidate.

His conduct in the last war is sufficiently evident, by the annexed approbations of the different generals under whom he served; as is his conduct in this, from the testimony of General MUSGRAVE and the Magistrates of Manchester.

These facts being fully proved, he conceives it peculiarly hard that either the character of himself, or the reputation his family has maintained for so many successive generations, hitherto unsullied, should now be tainted by the groundless aspersions of one or two inveterate individuals.

In order to prove, if necessary, that the steps taken by these officers, arose from pique, and not for the honor of the service, which has been the pretext; what will all military men think—what will the world say, when they are informed, that for no other purpose than to preclude your Memorialist from the natural rights of a manly defence, plans were deeply formed, and more deliberately executed; attempting, with all the influence of secret malevolence, to destroy his character, mark him as an assassin, and lodge him in a loathsome, goal*; in order to prevent him

* The prosecutor, Captain DAWSON, accompanied by Captain WINN, went before a magistrate, and made depositions in order to obtain a warrant against him, but the magistrate conceiving the matter of a military nature, did not grant such warrant.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[15]

from a justification of himself before so honorable a court as a Court of Enquiry. All this has arisen merely from his acting up to that true and proper spirit which a Lieutenant Colonel of a regiment and a field officer of the line ought to maintain; not with a view (as hath been laid to his charge) of breaking in upon good order and discipline.

Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal Subject,

THOMAS THORNTON.

—Lieutenant WADMAN having been set on to insult Lieutenant-Colonel THORNTON upon duty as field-officer of the line; on his desiring him to join his company, parade being ready, he said he would not obey the orders of such a scoundrel: on this the Colonel ordered him to his tent; his answer was, "you are a rascal and a villain, and I will not go to my tent for you." This being said in the streets of the encampment, and repeated on the parade, the Colonel ordered the Adjutant to conduct him to his tent, which he being unable to do, a file of men was called out for that purpose; three files came forward; and on Lieutenant WADMAN drawing his sword, saying he would not be taken, the Colonel ordered the men to secure him: in this scuffle Lieutenant WADMAN wounded himself by rushing on the bayonets; and the enemies of Colonel THORNTON perverted his words, complained to General MORRIS, and pains were taken to obtain a magistrate's warrant to commit him to prison, under a charge of attempting to assassinate an officer. The proceedings of the Court Martial will shew this fully. General MORRIS ordered the nine soldiers into confinement, kept them confined eight or nine days, without giving in any crime or cause for such confinement, contrary to the articles of war. —Lieut. -Col. THORNTON preferred a charge against Gen. MORRIS for this breach of the Articles of War, and also other charges, and they were acknowledged by the Duke of YORK to have been received, and said before Sir CHARLES MORGAN, Judge Advocate General. —The Public being in possession of this fact will judge as Englishmen for themselves. They were, at the expiration of the eight or nine days, discharged—no charge having been exhibited against them. —The evidence, which will come forward on the trials of the officers now under arrest, will prove that Lieutenant WADMAN was excited, by the cabal, to act as he did.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[16]

APPENDIX.

The piece of PLATE alluded to had the following lines engraved in its centre, and delivered by the Magistrates in form:

GULIELMO THORNTON Armigero,
Qui cum Cohorte militum
Sunrip tu suo non mediocri
Sustenata
Pro Rege et Patria
Contra Scotos Monticolas
Bellum intestinum molientes
Improbissima Hycme
Relicta Conjuge
Belli Periculis
Sese magnanimiter
Obtulit
Anno D'ni 1745.
Burgus Knaresourgensis
Ebor.
O.A.M.E
D. D.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[17]

“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, reviewed by him this day; and orders him to insert in the orderly-book, that the regiment, this day, has done what his MAJESEY'S troops *have all attempted in vain*; and that he shall make that report of them to his MAJESTY. And desires Lieutenant-Colonel THORNTON to order Adjutant WALL to instruct: the 65th regiment the last maneuver performed this day by the York.”

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[18]

“G. O. Big. Major G. *Musgrave*.

Parole HARVEY.
Countersign THORNTON.

Major-G. MUSGRAVE feels much satisfaction in expressing his approbation of the military appearance of the York West-Riding Regiment of Militia, this morning in the field; for which he begs leave to return his thanks to Lieutenant-Colonel THORNTON, the Officers, Non commissioned Officers and Men of the corps.

J. CAMPBELL,
Aid du Camp.”

“*Head Quarters, Manchester*
5th Aug. 1793.”

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[19]

“To Lieutenant-Colonel Thornton of the West
Riding York Militia.

WE, as Civil Officers of this town, for the time being, having frequent intercourse with you, always found you ready to suppress Republicanism, wherever it presented itself.

We were so well satisfied with your conduct as Commanding Officer of that regiment during the absence of Colonel HARVEY, that we therefore solicited Lord AMHERST for the regiment's continuance here, provided we were to have a corps of militia at all.

We are,
SIR,
Your humble servants,

JAMES ACKERS,
Boroughreeve in 1793.

JOHN LEAF,
One of the Constables* in 1793.”

Manchester,
Aug. 27tb, 1793.

- *In Manchester, Magistrates are called Constables,*

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[20]

EXTRACT from Mr. Steele's LETTER.

Dear Sir,

“I received your letter the 6th. I will take care that the contents of it shall be communicated to the Secretary at War; and it is no unpleasant circumstance in these times, to find a man of your description, so ready to give up the comforts, of his own home for the public service.

I am, with great respect,

Dear SIR,

Your faithful and obedient servant,

C. H. S. STEELE.”

*“Charles-street, Berkley-square,
Dec, 11th, 1792.”*

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[21]

EXTRACT of a LETTER from Captain Mosley, late of the York Militia.

“YOU must pardon my declaring my sentiments the zeal of friendship enjoins it. Having held your commission for such a number of years, with honor to your country and regiment, you must be galled, as well as your friends, with the impeachment of disrespect to the corps, by the admission or introduction of an emigrant: we know of precedents in every department; whether right or no, that is not the question. Loyal as you have ever been, surely your patriotism could not suffer. Had this alien been thought objectionable or exceptionable, the DUKE OF NORFOLK, and Colonel HARVEY would not have appointed or approved; therefore the face rests upon a very respectable principle, substantiated by incontrovertible documents; namely, the commission, and Colonel HARVEY'S approbation by letter; you are therefore exonerated from any insult to the corps, having superseded no one by the introduction of this emigrant: and by not dismissing him as the requisition enjoins you are still indemnified, as you was not authorized by law to comply; the King or a Court Martial being alone vested with such a power. I shall observe, that in all well-regulated societies the climax of

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[22]

respect should co-exist or keep pace with the dignity it attaches; consequently I think that an arraignment in an *unjust charge* ought to be made a subject of the most public refutation, and in as efficacious and as speedy a mode as wisdom can suggest. Having imparted my sentiments let me beg that you lose no time in doing away the injury you have sustained.

P. MOSELEY.”

“*Mansfield Lodge,*
Friday, Aug. 29th, 1794.”

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[23]

EXTRACT of a LETTER from Captain Barlow,
late of the York Militia.

Middlethorpe, Sept. 5th 1794.

“IT is with the greatest concern that I find there is such an unhappy misunderstanding in the corps: how it has arisen I know not. Indeed I must say, it gives me no little pain to find that a regiment, in which I have spent so many very happy years with you, in the greatest harmony and good fellowship, should be now so distracted.

J. BARLOW.”

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[24]

York, August 29th 1794.

“SIR,

Hearing that you have been accused of having been constantly in dispute with the officers of your corps, I think it a duty incumbent upon me to say, that I have been in the corps under your late worthy father many years; he was the father and protector of the whole corps, officers as well as men; and by his well-timed munificence and generosity in supporting at least twenty or twenty-five men, whom he paid and clothed above, the establishment, from his private purse; he gained, while he lived and commanded the regiment, the esteem of all; since his death I have, with my son*, served under you; and in the last war, was at all the encampments, together with my son; and am sensible that you have constantly followed your father's footsteps: and we are bound in *honor* to deny so infamous and so *diabolical* an assertion, as was said in so sacred a place as the Court of Enquiry: on the contrary we also assert, that you have done *more* for the honor, credit, and reputation of the corps upon *all occasions* than any field officer wherever we have been.

I am, Sir, your esteemed well-wisher
And obedient humble Servant,
RICHARD BURTON, Lieut.”

N. B. My son, Lieutenant BURTON, resigned in order to raise a volunteer company last spring, but these were his sentiments.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[25]

“The Non-commissioned Officers and Soldiers of the West York Regiment, applied to the Rev. Dr. TRUSLER, to request he would beg Lieutenant Colonel THORNTON'S acceptance of a sword, and a handsome piece of plate for which each man would subscribe one week's pay, as a testimonial of their love and veneration for him.”

“Witness, JOHN TRUSLER.

Roborough Down, Sept. 24th, 1794.”

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[26]

“TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

WE, the Soldiers of the West York Militia, convinced of the pains Lieutenant-Colonel THOMAS THORNTON has taken for the space of near thirty years to serve the Regiment and be the Soldiers friend, by dispensing impartial justice; and being witnesses of his great mildness and firmness on the most trying occasions, think it incumbent on us, in this open manner, to beg he will accept our warmest thanks, and this unequivocal testimony of our fullest approbation of his whole conduct.

As witness our hands this 26th day of September, 1794.”

Signed by all the regiment severally,

SECOND APPENDIX.

It is very unfortunate for Lieutenant - Colonel THORNTON'S justification to the Courts of Enquiry and Court Martial, that the following letter, dated the 6th of July, was not brought forward or re-delivered till the 29th of December, when Mrs. HANKIN gave it to the Colonel at Dulverton. Had it been produced at the Court of Enquiry, it would, doubtless, have been considered by the court as perfectly acquitting the Colonel of any neglect to his officers, which they pretended to complain of.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[28]

COPY of a LETTER from Lieutenant-Colonel
THORNTON to Captain HANKIN of the York
Regiment.

My Dear Friend,

Had Mr. BEAUREPERE ever acted as a Republican, no man in his senses would ever have thought of him as an officer for any English regiment; the very contrary is the case, he acted against them. Several of these very unfortunate gentlemen are serving in our armies; and, I understand, many in the Militia.

But lest there should be any mistake on that head, it shall be submitted to the officers of the corps, the subalterns as well as others; and if it appears to them that he is not eligible to serve, his good sense will not require me to explain their sentiments. I will fairly tell you I have stated this to him; and, with a delicacy that does him honor, he says he feels himself obliged to me; but rather than give offence, tho distressing to him, he will give up a commission he had hoped to have held with satisfaction to the corps and credit to himself, and will resign tomorrow, if necessary.

I am much surprised at all this confusion, and the more so, as I never heard any thing about it till the moment I received your letter.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[29]

"I have not yet received any military article but three hats, carriage 14s.; if everything else costs in proportion, I may have 100£ to pay, and G--d knows when I may get the rest of my things down*.

On re-perusing your letter, permit me to add, that I should be as nice as any gentleman in the regiment, in the admission of officers; but as there seems to be a total misunderstanding in the character of the gentleman in question, I will call a meeting of the officers; which, if my tent equipage does not arrive soon, I will do, with your leave, in a few days at yours; and shall endeavor to explain their mistake. Were you to see how much this young man feels himself hurt, you could not help being *affected*.

In haste, yours,
THO'. THORNTON."

Tamerton† July 6, 1794.

To Capt. HANKIN, *Stonehouse*.

* It may be observed, from the above statement, how very expensive and inconvenient it is for an officer in the Militia to be removed to so great distance from his own county, as from York to the Land's End (where the York were marched to), consequently field-officers of Militia, who have their own concerns to attend to, and whose absence is so much felt, *deserve* every credit from the country for their exertions.

†Tamerton was the Colonel's house of residence near camp, and to which place he came the 1st of July.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[30]

In order to prove how the character of a man, however innocent, may be calumniated through those vehicles of abuse, the public prints, the Committee think proper to publish a copy of the paragraph, which was inserted in *The Morning Post* of the 6th of August, and is as follows;

“The following unfortunate circumstances occurred on Sunday evening, the 2nd instant, at Roborough camp, near Plymouth: Lieutenant-WADMAN, of the West Yorkshire Militia, being incensed at the behavior of his Commanding-Officer (Lieutenant-Colonel THORNTON), and so inebriated, as to be under no control of reason, nor sense of propriety of conduct, abused Colonel Thornton in the grossest manner, calling him, several times, Scoundrel! Rascal! and Villain! and insisted that the Colonel should meet him the next morning on the public regiment parade, before the men: the Colonel then drawing, his sword, brandished it at Mr. WADMAN, and ordered him under an arrest. Mr. WADMAN drew his sword, but offered no violence to the Colonel, yet refused to obey him. Colonel THORNTON then directed the Adjutant to order out a file of men to force Mr. WADMAN to the quarter-guard; but the men appearing very unwilling to proceed to extremities with Mr. WADMAN, the Colonel immediately ordered men

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[31]

of his own company to come forward; some of whom then ran to their tents for their arms, and proceeded regularly to the place directed by the Colonel, who repeated several times, in the hearing of the regiment, "Seize him!" (supposed to mean Mr. WADMAN), "damn him! run him through!" The soldiers then run Mr. WADMAN through the throat with their bayonets, and dangerously wounded him in several places, and his life is at present despaired of.

The above false and infamous paragraph unfortunately reached the Colonel's family before a true state of the transaction was known to them; and which, though perfectly proved to be untrue at the Court Martial, yet the Colonel's family and friends suffered as he did, in the opinion of strangers, by this willful misrepresentation; and instead of the thanks which he ought to have received for his cool and collected conduct, he was absolutely marked at to strangers as an assassin.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[32]

The following NOTICE was pasted up against
the walls of the Court-Martial Room.

Whereas Colonel THORNTON and his Friends have good reason to believe, that certain unfounded stories have been industriously circulated, with all the influence of secret malevolence, to injure his character: As no man, however accurate his conduct, can contend against the circulation of falsehood and malevolent insinuations, he hereby, in the public Court-Martial Room, Nov, 1794, does offer One Hundred Guineas, to any person or persons that will give information of the author or authors, to be paid on conviction, by

Mr. CLEATHER, his Attorney, Plymouth,
THOMAS THORNTON, Lieut. Col.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[33]

Lieutenant-Colonel THORNTON's Reception by his Soldiers at Tiverton, after the Court-Martial, is expressed in the following paragraph, copied from *The Exeter Flying-Post, of Dec. 25th, 1794.*

TIVERTON, Dec. 14th, 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 the 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 his 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 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 is but justice to say they have already gained the respect of the Magistrates and the whole town.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[34]

The following Paragraph, copied from *The Exeter Flying-Post, of Jan. 22nd, 1795*, witnesses the polite Attention of the Inhabitants of Tiverton, and their universal Approbation of Lieutenant-Colonel THORNTON'S Conduct.

Dulverton and Tiverton have (during the holidays) been a constant scene of conviviality and festivity, balls, concerts, dances, &c. 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 Angular military appearance and peaceable conduct, has 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 the regiment, in a respectful manner, by the Sargent-major, in the name of every noncommissioned officer and soldier in the regiment. The Colonel, in a handsome speech, pointed out the superior advantages of our constitution, and impressing the soldiers with loyal sentiments “*to be faithful to their King,*

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[35]

respectful to their Officers, and obedient to the Laws." —The whole of the Colonel's conduct gave universal satisfaction, which was expressed by reiterated applauses from thousands of spectators. —The ladies, to certify their approbation of the soldiers' conduct, presented a garland of flowers to the Sargent-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, &c. to the honor of Colonel THORNTON and his regiment.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[36]

COPY of a LETTER inserted in several London Newspapers, and also in *The Exeter Flying-Post* of Jan. 29, 1795.

To the PRINTERS.

*London, Dec. 30, 1794,
George's Coffee-house, Coventry-street.*

Mr. Editor,

“THINKING it a duty incumbent on every man of honor, and well-wisher to mankind, to destroy fiction in the bud, has induced me, from accidental situation (perfectly uninterested in the event), attending only to facts, to become the faithful recorder of *Truths* which as yet have never met the public eye, but under a mask of *malicious insinuation*, highly prejudicial to the character and honor of Lieutenant-Colonel THORNTON (of the York Regiment), and how much his conduct to Lieutenant W----- of the same regiment, on the evening of the third of August, has been misstated to the world, the following must, clearly prove to the feelings and satisfaction of every one.”

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[37]

"It has been stated in several London papers, that Lieutenant Colonel THORNTON had, in the heat of passion, been the means of depriving Lieutenant W-- of life. That Lieutenant-Colonel THORNTON did order a party of soldiers to surround Lieutenant W-- when he was in a *state of riot and mutiny*, with his *sword drawn*, bidding defiance to his Commanding-Officer, and threatening *immediate death* to the first man that should come near him, in opposition to all laws, *civil and military*; and that Lieutenant W--- was *wounded* by his own intemperance, in the shuffle that took place between him and this party of soldiers, *is true!* but that Lieutenant-Colonel THORNTON exhibited any signs, either of *passion, spite, malevolence, or ill-will*, against Lieutenant W-- , *is as untrue!* on the contrary, it appeared to me and many other *old officers*, by all the evidence produced on Lieutenant W----'s Court-martial (*who so far from being butchered by the Lieutenant-Colonel, as has been INDUSTRIOUSLY CIRCULATED, has been tried and dismissed the service*), that Lieutenant-Colonel THORNTON'S conduct was perfectly cool and gentleman-like; and it is not only my opinion, but that of every old military character, that *very few* officers would, in Lieutenant-Colonel THORNTON'S situation, have conducted themselves with that *decided firmness* and deliberate coolness which he did.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[38]

"If the sincere attachment of every individual soldier in a regiment, to one officer in particular, can reflect honor, or give pleasure to that officer, I must congratulate Lieutenant-Colonel THORNTON on the satisfaction he must feel, in that of every soldier of his regiment, whose sincerity and affection (I am authentically informed) has demonstrated itself in the *most EXTRAVAGANT marks of joy and pleasure* on his return to his regiment; and whenever he has visited any of their winter quarters. And not only the soldiers, but the *inhabitants*, taught by the soldiers to venerate Lieutenant-Colonel THORNTON, have joined and vied with them in shewing the Lieutenant Colonel every mark of sincere esteem and respect.

I should not have troubled you with so long a letter (being but little known to Colonel THORNTON), had I not thought his conduct did him *honor as a man, and credit as an officer*, except the inducement of preventing the malevolence of a great many people, who, though utter strangers to Lieutenant-Colonel THORNTON's person or character, from a cruel infatuation *not to be accounted for, secretly violate and injure his reputation*; and to such a height had this envenomed slander arose, that I saw a paper, signed by Lieut.-Col. THORNTON, sticking up in the court-martial room at Plymouth, offering an *hundred guineas reward* for the discovery of any of his calumniators; but such is

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[39]

the vitiated character of mankind, that this secret *assassinating power* was never discovered; at least I have never heard of such an event, the which would give great satisfaction (as it ought to do to all good men) to

Your humble servant,

C. B.

An old impartial Officer,

And one of a committee of officers determined to have justice done to merit; and to whom any letter addressed, directed to the care of Men TREWMAN and SON, Exeter, will be duly answered."

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[40]

COPY of a LETTER from Lieutenant BRIGGES to Lieutenant-Colonel THORNTON.

“My Dear Colonel,

*Ottery, St. Mary,
Feb. 2nd, 1795*

The petition your officers drew up, puts me out of all kind of patience, as well as the whole of their conduct. I have been an eyewitness to their behavior since July last. Believe me, dear Colonel, I never before saw such instances of injustice and unsoldier-like behavior, though I have had the honor to serve abroad in the Royal American and other regiments, and in the Militia, for many years; in either of which corps I should have certainly been broke (if not shot) had I been guilty of half the infamous treatment to any of the Commanding officers, as has been over-looked in your corps: it is also incumbent on me to add, that officers of different regiments, who have attended regularly all the courts of enquiries and courts martial, have, all in one voice, agreed that there was never known such infamous treatment.

I must tell you fairly, that when you came to camp, being unknown, the voice of the officers was against you; and being, as well as all the Monmouth,

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[41]

(except, I believe, Lord ABERGAVENNY), a stranger to you, from the reports I heard circulated, I had entertained no favorable opinion of your conduct; but no sooner did you begin to plead before the court, than, I may venture to say, one half of the officers were convinced of your *manly manner*, of your perfect: innocence, and our regiment, to a man, became your *determined* advocates and supporters; and were ready (as you know) to render you every service. Your examinations, your statements, your orders, and finally, your *firmness*, on the most trying occasions, (and wherein I have borne a part), renders it necessary for me to say to you and to the world, that you have gained the respect: and admiration of every officer, *military* or *civil*, wherever you pleaded. The Marines, one whole regiment of regulars, the army in general, and I may say, the Militia, are, in one voice, for you; and have taken a very decided part in your interest, as due to you, as an unjustly *calumniated*, *injured* man. The cause is no longer yours, it is that of the public, who all venerate your soldiers' conduct. If you have been led into heavy expenses and fatigue, don't lament it, consider that your fortune enables you to bear the one, and the laurels you have gained from the testimony of the soldiers, the ladies, the military, nay, the whole world, where you pass, more than repay the other. You have only to proceed with that good sense and moderation that has attended all your proceedings

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[42]

during the long and irksome trials, and they will applaud you. Check only, effectually, such dangerous proceedings; let me entreat you not to relax. As to the paper signed by the officers, I again repeat, all military men who have seen it, think it a most dangerous precedent, and worse than all the rest, an attempt to alarm Government. Government will see the force of your argument used in court, and which will never be forgotten, that one virtuous soldier is of more real value to a state, than a profligate general; and the sooner government gets rid of men that will not support military discipline, and the laws, the better, for these are times not to be supine.

I congratulate you on the powers you have in elocution; I understand the fair females, and even some of a lower class, could not refrain from tears when you addressed your officers at Tiverton. We understand the ringleaders have resigned; I hope the others are now at liberty to retract, which some, I find, have done, and impeached, the rest; —in short it is a horrid business. My brother officers all unite in best compliments, and wishing that you may overcome your enemies. Remember me to all friends.

I have the honor to subscribe myself,

Dear Colonel,
Your most obedient and very friend,
CLEMENT BRIGGES".

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[43]

As to officers, if any are wanted, I know of several who would be happy of the honor of serving under you,

Enclosed is a card from our officers, requesting you to do them the honor of attending their ball and supper, which is expected to be very elegant; ordered for 200. You are desired by the officers of the committee to make this public, as it's the fashion of your officers to publish the letters of their friends."

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[44]

The COMMITTEE beg this NOTE may
conclude the MEMORIAL.

It being clearly proved to all those who have attended the courts-martial and court of enquiry, that Lieutenant-Colonel THORNTON was innocent of any charge that was brought against him, and which was the pretended reason for voting him to Coventry; it is clear to every man, military as civil, how dangerous a precedent Coventry is.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

(45)

To Lieutenant-Colonel THORNTON, of the West
York Regiment.

Tiverton, Feb. 22nd, 1795.

Sir,

We whose names are hereunto subscribed, do readily signify that we were present, with a great number of others, on Saturday the third day of January last, in the neighborhood of this town, at the time you was exercising the regiment, when you formed them into a circle, and addressing the officers, expressed your regret that so much dissatisfaction had for such a length of time prevailed amongst them; and that you should be ready and willing to do every thing on your part which would terminate all disputes, and accommodate all differences, as recommended by his Majesty, which had unfortunately so long subsisted in the regiment. And to that desirable end you then proposed to bury every thing that had passed in oblivion, and to take them by the hand, which in our presence you then offered to do individually, and which was declined by all of them, except Lieutenant BRACKEN, Adjutant HAY, and Ensign THURNHAM,

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[46]

And it appeared to us, that your *whole conduct* on that day bespoke an anxious desire to be reconciled to all your officers, and to live in harmony with them.

We are,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servants,

Wm. WALKER, Mayor,
JOHN GOVETT,
GEORGE BARNE,
JOHN JONES,
JOHN H. MOORE,
S. CRAZE,
GEORGE DUNSFORD,
T. L. DUNSFORD,
ROBERT MANLEY,
NICHOLAS DENNYS,
JOHN PULLINS.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[47]

The ATTESTATION of the Rev. Dr. TRUSLER, Colonel POSSESSÉ, and Lieut. BRIGGS.

During the time that I was with Colonel THORNTON, at Roborough and Plymouth, his conduct to the gentlemen of his regiment was irreproachable. I wish I could say as much in favor of his opponents. Both as an officer and a gentleman, he acted with propriety; and I am ready to declare on oath, that, had the officers of his regiment been as peaceably disposed as he was, none of the disturbances would have taken place as have done; and, so far from deserving censure, he is entitled to *public thanks*.

March 16, 1795. JOHN TRUSLER.

We think it incumbent on us to declare to the Public, that we (with other officers not at present in London) did attend to all the transactions that happened between Lieut. -Colonel THORNTON and the Officers of the York, not only in the field, but in camp, and at the different Courts-Martial that took

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[48]

place at Roborough Down, and Plymouth, but also since at winter quarters; that Lieutenant-Colonel THORNTON'S conduct was *irreproachable*; that the conduct of the Officers caballing was highly *blameable* was our opinion, as it also was that of all those who attended to the transaction; it is but justice to say, that the Colonel's conduct was *manly, humane, and spirited*; and by this uniform steady line of conduct he gained the respect of all men, military or civil.

London,
March 16, 1795.

C. POSSESSE, Lieut.-Colonel,
C. BRIGGS, Lieutenant.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[49]

TO LIEUT. -COL. THORNTON,

COBHAM, April 20, 1795,

“Dear Sir,

YOU desired me to tell you what passed at the Hon. Colonel HANGER'S the day the respectable number of Officers of rank, &c. attended to hear the statement of your proceedings: I have the pleasure to inform you, that on my relating every circumstance fully to them, from the origin of the disturbances to your having had Lord DOWNE put over your head, and from the documents before them, to which they were attentive, they were *unanimously* and *decidedly* of opinion, that the whole was a dangerous *Cabal*; that you had been throughout exceedingly and undeservedly ill treated; that your conduct in *every instance* had been truly *commendable* and *military*; and that of your opponents the *reverse*; that the officers of your regiment had, by their conduct, lost the character that entitled them to any satisfaction front Gentlemen; and that, should they at any time attempt to demand it, they ought to be prosecuted: And, lastly, as the drift of the whole proceedings *latterly* was evidently to give you disgust, and thus urge you to quit the regiment, it was a duty you owed yourself, the soldiers of the regiment who had so nobly supported you, and *the army in general*,

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[50]

to continue in it, and not to leave it; and that the letter sent to Lord GEORGE LENOX, and signed by fifteen officers, being in their opinion libelous, that you ought to prosecute *every one* of them. They requested me to state this to you, and said, they would be ready at all times to support this their *Unanimous* opinion by *viva voce* evidence. Thus, my dear Sir, you have the satisfaction to know, that, after all the troubles you have encountered, you stand clear of the *smallest censure*, 1 and have met with the *approbation* and *applause* of all who are made acquainted with the affair.

I have the honor to be, Sir,
Your most humble Servant,
JOHN TRUSLER."

I declare this to be a true copy,
ROBINSON BARLOW.

PRESENT AT THIS MEETING.

Lord BLANEY, President, Col.
Hon. GEORGE HANGER, Col.
Sir T. WALLACE, Bart. Col.
Sir T. APRECE, Bart. Col.
LE STRANGE, Col.
THOS. TOMLINSON, Major,
-----BOND, Captain,
-----MARSHALL, Captain,
Sir G. FARMER, Bart. Do. Navy,
J. ANDERSON,
DR. TRUSLER,
ROBINSON BARLOW,

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[51]

At a Meeting on the 8th of May, at the Turf Tavern, composed of near forty Officers of the first rank, the subject was again discussed, and the conduct of the soldiers of the York was applauded in the warmest terms, and all the soldiers and non-commissioned officers then in London, who were present, presented the residue of the plate voted to Lieut. -Col. Thornton, and where every thing was said to them that could inspire them to virtue. The decree of the Meeting at the Hon. Col. HANGER'S was fully approved; and Lord DOWNE'S letter to Lord GEORGE LENOX being read, it was the *unanimous opinion*, that Col. THORNTON, for the good of the service, should immediately join the York, and take such steps as were directed. The Colonel, in consequence, came down to Tiverton, and found the regiment marched for Bristol; from thence he was given to understand (for reasons that will be given hereafter), that they were gone to Canterbury. Having some business of consequence, relative to the above transaction, he proceeded to Plymouth. He pledges himself to develop scenes to the military world that would petrify the Inquisition, and make the *detested* "Star-Chamber blush". *Veritas et in hoc signo vinces*. May in, 1795. It is thought necessary to state, that prior to the meeting at the Hon. Colonel HANGER'S, Lieut. -Col. THORNTON stated to his Majesty's ministers, that

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

(52)

he was not only ready but *desirous* of meeting any further investigation of his conduct, and requested that a Board of Officers of rank would be appointed for that purpose. The answer was uniformly, "Your conduct: is no way blamable, and consequently it would be an improper precedent." But as law, though sure, is slow, the Colonel, to clear any imputation on his character, suffering from the ignorance of some, and the malice of others, gave notice to his Majesty's ministers, that the meeting at Colonel Hanger's would take place as dated, and requested them to send proper officers to hear and explain what passed there, and the Secretary at War and the Commander in Chief have seen the decision,

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[53]

TO FIELD MARSHALL HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE DUKE OF YORK,

COMMANDER IN CHIEF OF HIS MAJESTY'S FORCES IN
GREAT BRITAIN, AND CAPTAIN GENERAL

THE MEMORIAL OF

THOMAS THORNTON, Esq.

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL OF HIS MAJESTY'S REGIMENT OF
WEST-YORK MILITIA;

Sheweth

That your Memorialist hath held a commission for above thirty years in this regiment, and for these twenty-three years past Lieutenant-Colonel of the said regiment, during all which time his unremitting attention has been uniformly directed towards the good order and discipline of that corps, and to the maintenance of the harmony so essentially requisite therein.

That during the whole of that period the said regiment had deservedly sustained a character for respectability, equal (if not superior) to any other regiment of militia in his Majesty's service; and the same hath constantly been acknowledged by his Majesty's General Officers, in terms not less honorable to the regiment than flattering to your Memorialist.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[54]

That your Memorialist is concerned to date to your Royal Highness, that some discontents have appeared among certain of the officers in the said regiment, which have been carried of late to such an extent, as if not checked by the interposition of the Commander in Chief, threaten the welfare, not only of that regiment in particular, but the whole of the military service in general.

That your Memorialist's best and most earned endeavors have been exerted, though in vain, to allay those dissents, that every thing in his power that was *conciliatory*, and (when that failed) every thing that the law allowed him that was *coercive*, has been adopted, to put a stop to those alarming proceedings, but without effect.

That your Memorialist, anxious that his conduct should be investigated, submitted it to a Court of Enquiry, by which he was declared free from blame; that afterwards being; brought before a Court Martial, at the instance of Captain DAWSON, and other officers under his command, although your Memorialist was reprimanded for certain orders which he had issued, and which (however exceptionable in themselves, as your memorialist is *prepared to prove*, from their not being well understood at that *time*), appeared objectionable to the Court, your memorialist, from motives of *peculiar delicacy*, finding himself *then* prevented from explaining their meaning, yet he was:

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[55]

honorably acquitted of all the material charges adduced against him.

That His Majesty was therefore pleased to express his royal pleasure, that all subsisting differences in the regiment should be amicably, terminated; in obedience to which your memorialist exerted his best endeavors towards the accomplishment of so desirable an object. Notwithstanding which, in defiance of his Majesty's recommendation, several of the officers, under the command of your memorialist, renewed those fatal animosities with increased acrimony, conspiring together, as your memorialist hath reason to believe, to remove him from his station in the regiment; and in pursuance of which design, a letter dated the 17th of December, 1794, and signed by fifteen officers of the regiment, was addressed to Lord GEORGE LENOX, the Commander of his Majesty's forces in the Western district of Great Britain, wherein, without stating any specific charge against your memorialist, they in general terms assert, "that he hath not scrupled to debase the honor of the service by using the most unjustifiable means—by which the power and authority vested in him, as commanding officer, has afforded a plausible pretext to exercise, to the injury of themselves and of their brother officers; and, after declaring themselves much aggrieved by the conduct of your memorialist, they, in consequence thereof, request the permission of Lord George Lenox to withdraw their services, as they can no

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[56]

longer serve under the command of your memorialist."

Your Memorialist is fully satisfied that your Royal Highness cannot but be sensible of the *mischievous* tendency of such a measure, at once so *clandestine* and irregular; that their complaints, if founded on truth, *were* and *are* open to redress in the regular course of military law. Conscious however of the rectitude of his own conduct, your memorialist challenges and defies the proof. Your memorialist had *confidently* hoped, that a proceeding, so injurious to his character, so destructive of the subordination, and thereby of the best interests of the service, would have been received with the strongest marks of disapprobation; how mortified then must your memorialist have been to find that, after the resignation of Colonel HARVEY, your Memorialist's long and laborious services were overlooked, and a cause of triumph given to the faction that opposed him, by the appointment of Lord Downe, a *perfect stranger* not only to the regiment, but to all military life, to succeed to the vacant command. That after so many years spent in the service of his country, such an appointment, under any circumstances a matter of concern to your memorialist, could not but at this juncture, after what had passed, be peculiarly mortifying. That your memorialist, independent of the injury which he conceives himself to have received by his unmerited supersession, submits to your Royal Highness's most serious

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[57]

attention, the discouragement given to independent country gentlemen to enter into the militia service, if, as is the case of your memorialist, the most accurate discharge of professional duty shall not be the certain road to professional honors, and whether from the success, which has apparently attended the confederacy formed against him (for to that, it matters not how truly) will the marked neglect of your memorialist be attributed, a *dangerous tendency* may not be made subversive of all order, and discipline, and government in the army, because tending to incite and encourage military persons, of all ranks, to form combinations against their superiors.

That your memorialist is concerned to state to your Royal Highness, that the officers in the cabal have given LORD DOWNE, on the 26th of April, to understand that they are *determined* not to join the regiment unless your memorialist is dismissed the service; and LORD DOWNE, not only adopting their language, but as it would seem their sentiments, says, "That they all declare that they have received so many indignities, and have been treated so little like gentlemen, that nothing could induce them to continue to serve so long with him; and they are resolved to quit, if Colonel Thornton does not." And LORD DOWNE again adds, "They have been kept so long in suspense, and will repeat their very words, in saying, that nothing but their wish

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[58]

serve their King and Country could induce them so long to remain in so disagreeable a situation."

It is unnecessary for me to point out to your Royal Highness the dangerous tendency of such measures, as they may spread through the army.

Relying upon your Royal Highness's honor, wisdom, and justice—relying on your Royal Highness's zeal and attachment to the service, your memorialist sincerely hopes (what he *confidently* expects) that you will point out such measures to be taken as may give relief to your memorialist, and may restore harmony to a distracted regiment, and a true sense of discipline to his Majesty's forces.

THOMAS THORNTON.

Delivered to his Royal Highness, notes and explanations being made on every passage; and the Colonel took leave, saying that he should, agreeable to the opinion of the Committee, go down to the regiment, and put the ringleaders under an arrest, trusting that his Royal Highness would order a court martial to sit and try them at the Horse Guards.

York House, May 21, 1795.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[59]

COPY of a LETTER to the Right Honourable LORD GEORGE LENOX,

My Lord,

In consequence of a letter your Lordship has been pleased to communicate to us from Sir CHARLES MORGAN, wherein it appears his Majesty has noticed with concern the dissensions and animosities that prevail in the West-York Regiment, We the officers concerned first think it our duty to declare, that your Lordship has endeavored by every means to conciliate and compose these unhappy differences without effect. ---We nevertheless trust that the sincerity with which we avow our sentiments will not be construed to our disadvantage, when, in justice to our feelings, we declare that we cannot appear to be reconciled, while we entertain inward dissatisfaction and disgust, in as much as Lieutenant-Colonel THORNTON has not scrupled to debase the honor of the service by using the most unjustifiable means by which the power and authority veiled in him as Commanding Officer has afforded a plausible pretext to exercise, to the injury

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[60]

of ourselves and many of our brother officers. At the same time we feel truly aggrieved that any proceedings on our part should have incurred censure, and that our conduct; has not appeared to have been strictly conformable to the rules and discipline of the service. —We moreover declare, that notwithstanding the peculiar and aggravated circumstances under which we are placed, we have endeavored to suppress every emotion arising from private pique and resentment, and we feel ourselves so much aggrieved by Lieut. -Col. THORNTON's behavior that we do not hesitate thus publicly to declare our sentiments, trusting his Majesty will not be displeased with us, since we have submitted to these grievances solely from the duty and allegiance we bear towards his Majesty's most sacred person and from our attachment to the laws and government of this country.—It is with extreme concern we admit that such dissensions are no less injurious to the service than dishonorable to those concerned in them, we therefore request your Lordship would be pleased to signify our wishes, that his Majesty would permit us for the present to withdraw our services, which is the more particularly mortifying to us at this time yet, in justice to ourselves and the respect, we owe to our country, we can no longer serve under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Thornton; at the same time we beg leave to add, that our secession from the service arises from no other

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[61]

other motive than from the ill-treatment we have experienced under his command.

We have the honor to be,

&c. &c. &c

EDMUND MARK WINN, Captain.

KIRBY TORRE, Captain.

STANHOPE HARVEY, Captain.

GEORGE DAWSON, Captain.

GEORGE ANN, Captain.

THOMAS MAUDE, Captain.

JOSEPH MARSHALL, Lieut.

JAMES HIGGINS, Capt.-Lieut.

CHARLES HUTCHINSON, Lieut.

MATTHEW FOWLER, Lieut.

BARTHOLOMEW OXLEY, Ensign.

JOHN SINGLETON, Ensign.

EDWARD HARE, Ensign.

TIMOTHY THURMAN, Ensign.

J. T. WATSON, Ensign.

To the Right Honourable

Gen. Lord George Lenox,

& c. & c.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[62]

AFFIDAVIT of J. Watson and Charles S, Hutchinson, Lieutenants in the West-York Militia,

Bow Street, Aug. 15th, 1795.

I hereby do declare, that Captain GEORGE DAWSON of the West-York Militia, at the time under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel THORNTON, did compel me and others, to sign a paper bearing date of the 7th of December 1794, at Tiverton, and sent to Lord GEORGE LENOX, and signed by other officers. In justice to Lieutenant-Colonel Thornton we are *bound* to declare that the said was presented to us (really we believe) by Captain WINN of the same Regiment, in company with the other Officers who signed the said paper; and that Capt. DAWSON was then (as he was on all other occasions) the spokesman; and that he *compelled* us to sign the said paper by *threats*, and that he positively refused me and others to see the contents, and also constantly *obliged* us to act in the unjustifiable manner (we since understand we did), by alluring *us* and *others* that his Majesty would dismiss the said Lieutenant - Colonel THORNTON from the service. Having had it explained to us how we had been duped, in justice, as the

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[63]

the only retribution we can make to Lieutenant-Colonel Thornton, we are ready at all times to appear to the above and assert, we swear, it is *strictly the truth*. And we also further swear, we never gave Lord Viscount DOWNE any authority to state to Lord George Lenox, in April last, that we would not serve with the said Lieutenant-Colonel THORNTON, and believe the whole to be an unjustifiable conspiracy against the said Lieutenant-Colonel THORNTON.

J. WATSON, Lieut.

I swear to all the parts herein contained except to what relate to Lord Downe.

CHARLES S. HUTCHINSON, Lieut.

Sworn this 15th Day of

August, 1795 before me

RUPT. CLARKE.

We also swear that a letter wrote by Lieutenant-Colonel Thornton, dated Tamerton, July 6, 1794, to Captain Hankin, relative to regimental business was concealed from our knowledge.

J. T. WATSON,

CH. S. HUTCHINSON.

Sworn this 15th Day of

August 1795, before me,

RUP. CLARKE.

N. B. Captain HANKIN, Lieut. BRACHEN, and Lieut. FOWLER, have, before witnesses, acknowledged the above. (See page 28)

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[64]

And I further do declare, that Captain TORRE intimidated me (being a young officer in the Service) at a court-martial held at Tiverton, in January, February, or March last, and told me that no soldier should ever be punished that Lieut. - Colonel THORNTON should bring to a court-martial, let his crime be what it might.

J, T, WATSON,

Bow-Street Aug. 15, 1795.

*Sworn before me, this 15th
Day of August,*

RUPT. CLARKE,

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[65]

Goodwood, 25th Octr. 1795.

Sir,

In consequence of a letter I have received from his Grace the Duke of PORTLAND, one of his Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, to whom it has been reported that you had offered to bring MONS. DE SENOVERT to London, although his Majesty's confidential servants have not judged it proper to allow MONS. DE SENOVERT a passport for that purpose; I am to intimate to you that such conduct is highly improper, and particularly so in your situation.

I am,

Sir,

Your most obedient,
Humble Servant,

RICHMOND;

Lieut. -Col. THORNTON, &c.

My Lord Duke,

In looking over some papers, I find a letter from your Grace, wrote at the desire of the Duke of PORTLAND, stating, that I had brought a French Commissioner to town. Had he chose to have taken a seat in my carriage he was certainly welcome, nor do I know of any law against it; politeness is always due to a stranger: the fact however is this, he was refused

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[66]

leave and did not come. The heads of the conversation I had with MONS. DE SENOVERT, I will indulge you with, by informing you that it was chiefly relative to a MADAME DERVIEUX, who lived with me at the same time that MADEMOISELLE ST. CLAIR (who I also knew) lived with your Grace.

This is many years ago; but we northern country gentlemen are not so much debauched by the corruptions of a court as to have lost the noblest feature in the character of man, *Gratitude*, and to which most great men are strangers.

I desired MONS. SENOVERT, to take her a handsome gown of Canterbury manufacture. Another circumstance I confess; I was desirous of comparing the character, ability, and virtue, of the ministers of a Republic, with those of a great and free nation; in justice I must say they did not, in my opinion, lose by the companion, to *artifice*, *collusion*, and *trick*, they were utter strangers. As to the last part of your Grace's letter, I must add that if his Majesty's ministers were as much attached to the Constitution and the King as I am, he would be much better served,

Business of greater consequence to me than military concerns has prevented me, after being kept under an arrest, I may say, for two years, purposely to prevent justice being administered, and great delinquents from having their deserts. I have been obliged to attend to my estates, and having resigned my commission not without explaining and perfectly satisfying the country in general, at the county

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[67]

meeting; I have, I say, been obliged to attend to my concerns, and it will give all my friends particular satisfaction to know that I have increased my income to above three times the rental I had as a Lieutenant Colonel, and am fitting myself quietly down with every thing I want in this world, and particularly happy by the congratulations of my friends, that I have, after two years persecution, grown fat upon it, and have been thought to have through *consistently*, and never more *wisely* than when I left bad company.

If you with in future for any correspondence with me, I beg it may be (as my answer shall) through the medium of a newspaper, and am with all due respect,

Your Graces's most obedient, &c.

*Falconers Hall,
16th March 1796.*

To Lieut. Gen. The Duke of Richmond.

F I N I S

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

DEAR SIR,

IN answer to your letter, I shall premise, that from my first entering into life to the present time we have been connected in politics, and never varied but in shades; our object was the same.

I have in that time been so well acquainted with the shuffling tricks of Ministers, that I have not hesitated to speak pretty freely, and have foretold them in my speeches at the different Court-Martial and in my letters, all that has happened—that their unc—nst—nal schemes of barracks, bribery, notorious injustice, f- rg-d asstignats, false imprisonment of the soldiers under my command and of myself, and endless tricks, would produce that situation this country and Ireland are now in. But, strongly linked together, they impudently gloried in schemes which the lowest class of Attorneys would not dare to justify: —had I not full proof of all I assert, you may be sure my language would not be so strong.

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[2]

Irritated as I must be to see our glorious constitution—a constitution, the envy and admiration of all surrounding nations—trampled upon, and justice deeply violated; yet I am of opinion, that it is more for the public good at this juncture to suspend our resentment; let a peace be the first object to every well-wisher to his country; till that takes place, let us not encourage our enemies by our private dissensions, and thus be the cause of the effusion of more human blood: —a peace being effected, let us join in a hearty determination, by steps well digested, and firmly supported, crush the arbitrary unconstitutional proceedings of a set of men who are grown callous in iniquity, deaf to all reason, and that are a disgrace to the name of Britons: —let them have (what they never gave me or my soldiers) a fair and liberal trial; if convicted of those enormities, let them be dismissed their country; and thus shew to future ministers that there is, when roused, a sufficient degree of virtue in the land to emancipate it, to recover its laws, and to punish all those who have impudently and wantonly sacrificed its interests.

These, Sir, are my sentiments: —As various and rapid changes have taken place in this and our sister kingdom, from the impending form may Heaven protect us! —a few days, nay, a few

The Memorial of Thomas Thornton

[3]

hours may have given a different turn to the sentiments of the Gentlemen, whose names you enclosed to me—should mine have any weight, I shall be most happy.

I have the Honor to be, Sir,

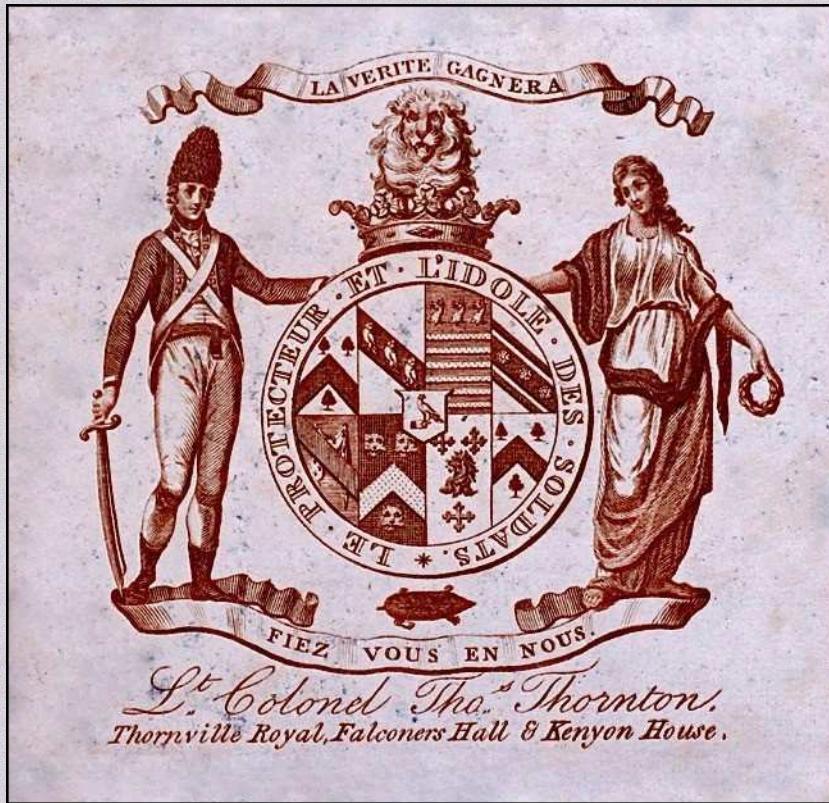
Your most obedient Servant,

and a steady Friend to my Country,

*Thornville Royal,
MAY 23, 1797.*

THOMAS THORNTON.

To the Rev. C. WYVIIIX,
Burton Hall, near Bodale, Yorkshire.



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*