

# Moidart Local History Group

*Talk Given to the Group in 2016  
by  
Tim Robertson*



Comann Eachdraidh Mùideart

# **Imagine Glenuig 270 years ago from this hall**

Harbour as is

But no road to Lochailort or Acharacle or Fort William

In July 1745 a ship appears across the bay

Goods transferred, comings and goings

Excitement

BPC has landed !

In August he went to Kinlochmoidart

Then nothing seen across the bay until May 1746

Two French ships came and fought the Navy and escaped

Nothing more until September 1746

Then two more ships and BPC himself escapes

Reprisals afterwards throughout the Moidart district

**This is the story**

# The Young Pretender

....To begin at the beginning....

# BPC Compact - This gives an over-view of what is to follow

BPC's grandfather was James II, who fled the throne in 1688, tried a comeback at the Battle of the Boyne, failed, and died in 1701 in France, leaving a son aged 13, the Old Pretender; father and son were Catholic

Through the early part of the Eighteenth Century the Old Pretender was surrounded by a Court in exile and "wild geese" at St Germain, but the French became so fed up with him after a few feeble attempts to regain the British crown, they threw him out of France in 1719

He moved to Rome and married a Polish Princess, with Charles being born the next year in 1720 and his brother Henry 5 years later; the Old Pretender never made another move to get the British Crown

BPC was brought up thinking he was a "Royal", surrounded by sycophants and exiled Scots and Irish, and was very disappointed when Louis XV called off an invasion to England in 1744 in which he was to be involved

If the French wouldn't help him, he turned (as usual) to the Clansmen, a unique throwback to medieval chivalry, who answered the call of their clan chiefs without question, and the Chiefs in turn responded similarly to "Their King"

BPC financed two ships, but lost one to the British on the way; it was now 57 years since his Grandfather had run away from the Throne: in the meantime England and Scotland had been united as countries and the British Monarch had by law to be a Protestant

The clan chiefs were in despair when BPC arrived with no support, many refused help, but a key holding of MacDonalds and Camerons agreed to march following his emotional appeals and so he began his campaign on 19 August 1745 at Glenfinnan

The rising started well, with British troops being wrong-footed initially and dealt a serious defeat at Prestonpans

But there was no appetite or support for the Prince's cause and few additional troops were raised in the march into England, so few in fact that BPC had to turn around at Derby, with three British armies converging on him

During the winter, he skulked for three months north of the border, boosted by a few extra forces, sons of the "wild geese" serving in the French Army, and then came the total defeat at Culloden in April

For the next six months, BPC was a fugitive and during this period he earned his spurs through his resolution and courage

His flight, first on the Outer Hebrides and later in the wild uplands of the mainland, saw him cross paths with many iconic figures, including Lady Clanranald, Lady MacDonald of Sleat, Flora MacDonald, Neil MacEachain, Hugh MacDonald and Coll Barrisdale

In September 1746 he escaped back to the Continent, but never again saw his Father, who died in 1766 and who was appalled by the whole escapade

For the next 42 years, BPC flitted like a ghost around the Continent with a number of assumed names, often drunk and always unhappy, before dying in 1788

During this intervening period, many players within the Rebellion such as Felix O'Neill, Ned Burke, Neil MacEachain, Lord Elcho, Alasdair MacMhaighster Alasdair wrote memoirs and many sympathisers such as Bishop Forbes and Dr Burton collected mementos; all of these writings and collections saw the light of day in the early part of the nineteenth century; of particular note were the notes in the Lyon in Mourning, the recollections of MacEachain and the novels by Sir Walter Scott

It took another 60 years before the many differences in these accounts were all "reconciled", and in 1890 Walter Biggar Blackie produced his magnificent time line of the '45



**James II  
was Bonnie Prince  
Charlie's Grandfather**

Reigned 1685-8  
but quit the throne in The  
Glorious  
Revolution

He tried to get it back, but  
lost to William at the  
Battle of the Boyne

He married  
1 Anne Hyde  
2 Mary of Modena

Three children:  
Mary  
Anne  
James

He was Catholic as was  
his son James

**As the century turned,  
he lived in exile at St  
Germain surrounded by  
“Wild Geese”**

He died in 1701  
James Francis Edward,  
The Old Pretender, was  
13

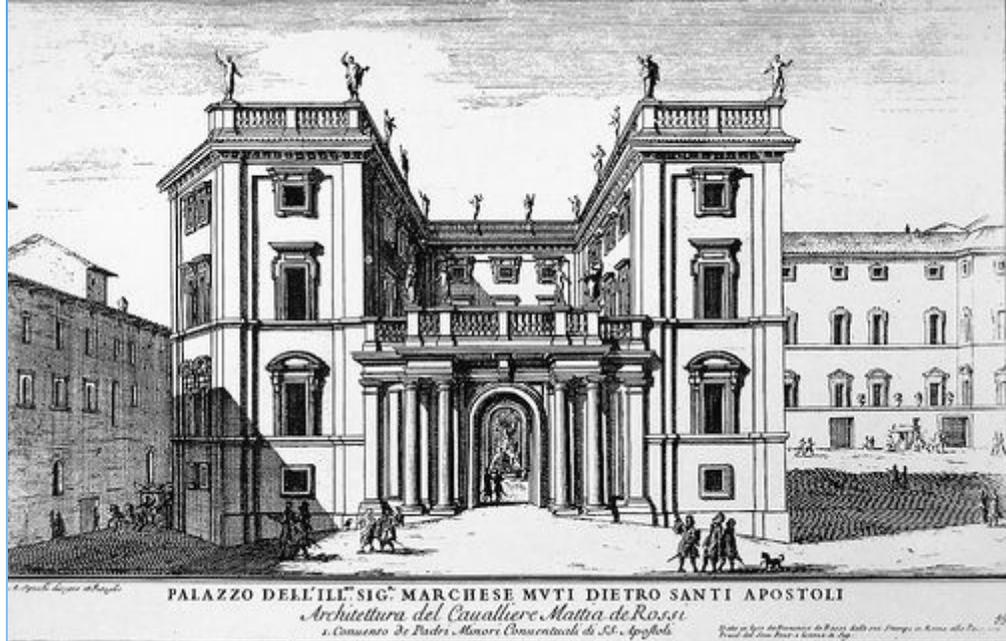




### **Old Pretender had a Charisma bypass**

- In 1708 Firth of the Forth - failed
- In 1716 Peterhead six weeks after Sheriffmuir - failed
- In 1719 Eilean Donan - failed
- By now, aged 31, he was an embarrassment
- He was not welcome in France
- In fact he was banished
- He married a Polish Princess and went to Rome

**It is reported that French courtiers considered him “extremely boring”**

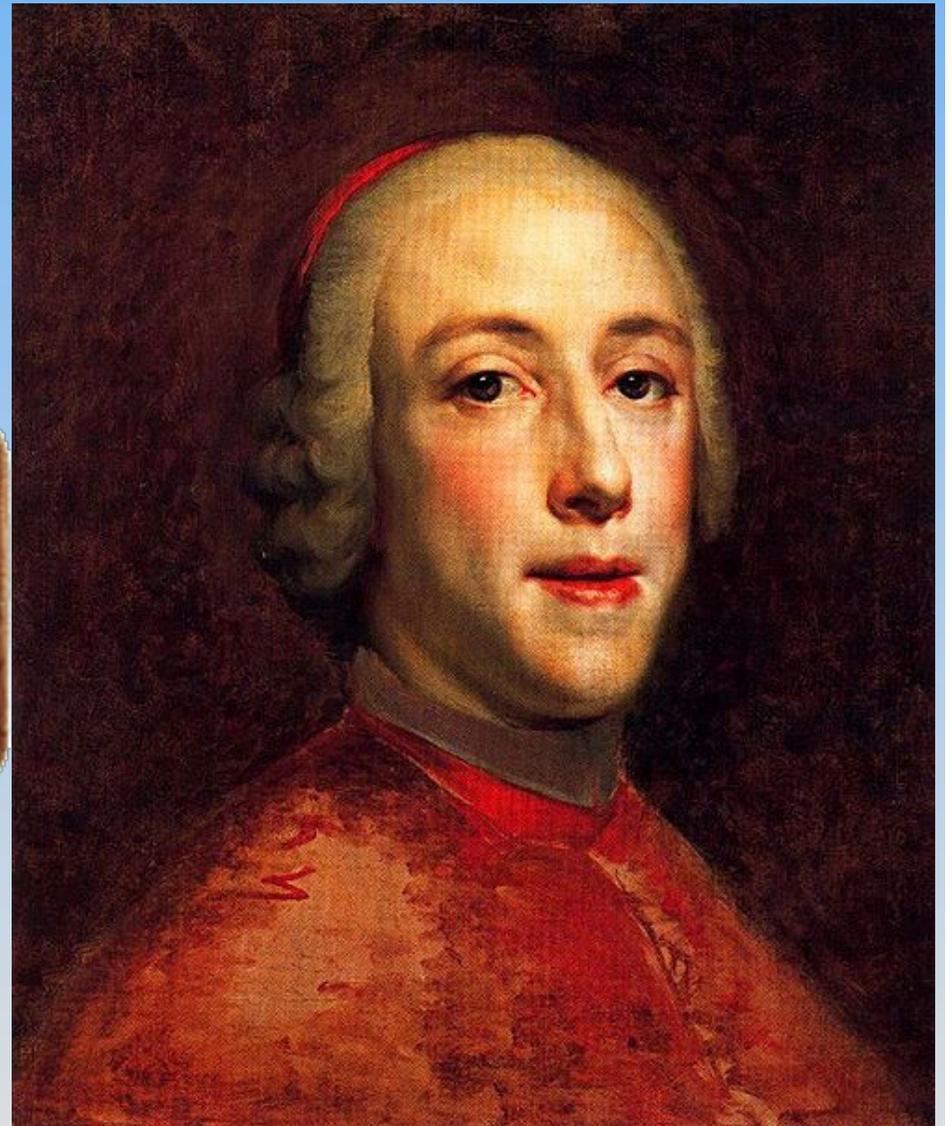


He lived at the Palazzo Muzi for the rest of his life



**Bonnie Prince Charlie was born in 1720**

His younger brother Henry, who was born in 1725, became a Cardinal and never married





## Charles kept in the public eye

- Aged 12, painted by Antonio David
- The Stuart Court-in-Exile still maintained its trappings
- Paintings and coinage bearing Stuart images were frequently issued
- They were treated like virtual Royalty

**The Prince's Canteen:**  
Twenty First Birthday  
present in 1741

Made in Edinburgh  
by silversmith Ebenezer  
Oliphant





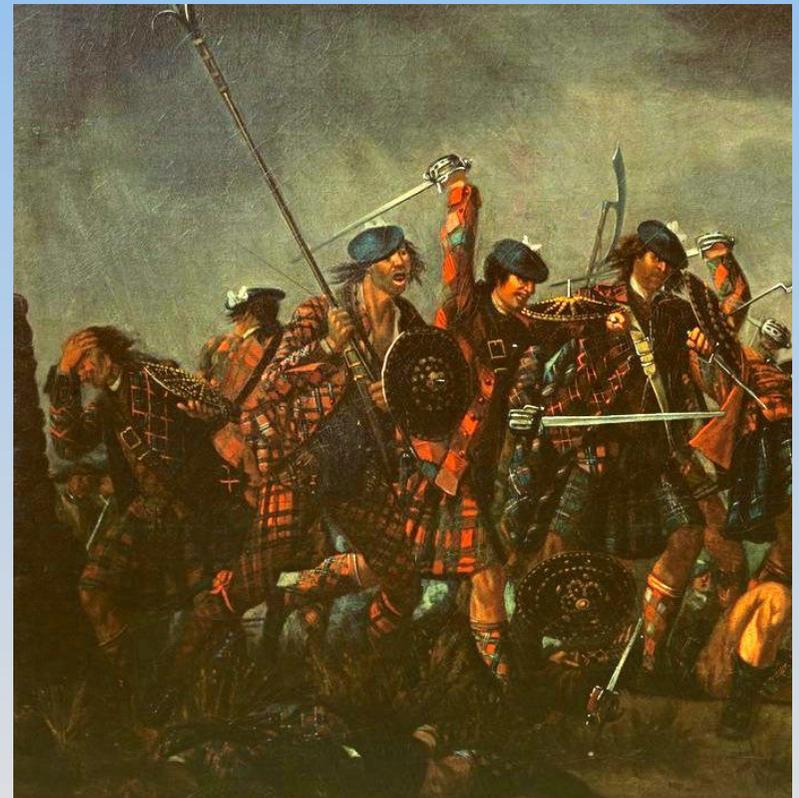
## By now Bonnie Prince Charlie was becoming all fired up

- Plots
  - Intrigues
  - Disaffected exiles
  - Romantics
  - Military men
  - Lairds from Scotland
  - Relics from earlier risings
  - Grand Tour spiritual Jacobites
- 
- He was raring to go
  - In 1743 he slipped away from Rome
  - 1744 Gravelines to Maldon called off

**So, he turned yet again to the clans**

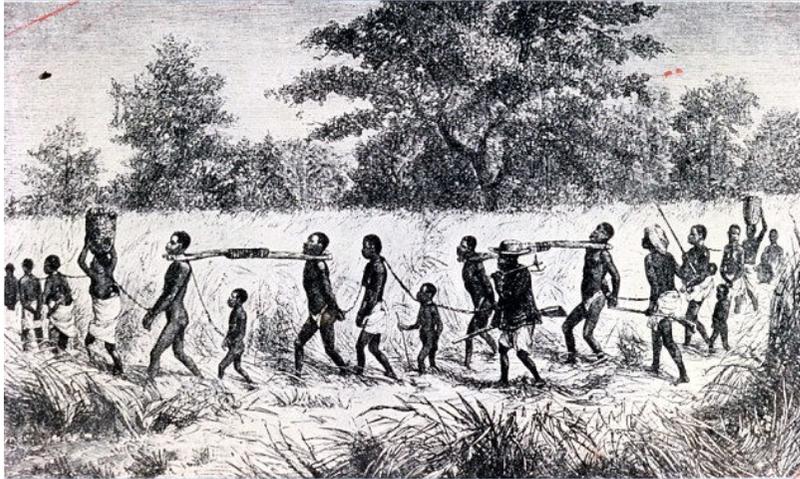
**In the Highlands of Scotland the Clan system was unique in Europe**

They were a virtual private army



## The Prince prepared to sail to Scotland

- Two armed privateers set off on 16 July 1745
- Funding came from Aeneas MacDonald, a banker in Paris and brother of Kinlochmoidart
- Antoine Walsh, a Frenchman of Irish descent, involved in the slave trade and the owner of the du Teillay, came too



### **Their second ship was crippled**

In mid-Channel the Lion engaged them and Elizabeth had to return to port, together with her men, arms and supplies





**The Prince  
landed at  
Eriskay  
23 July 1745**

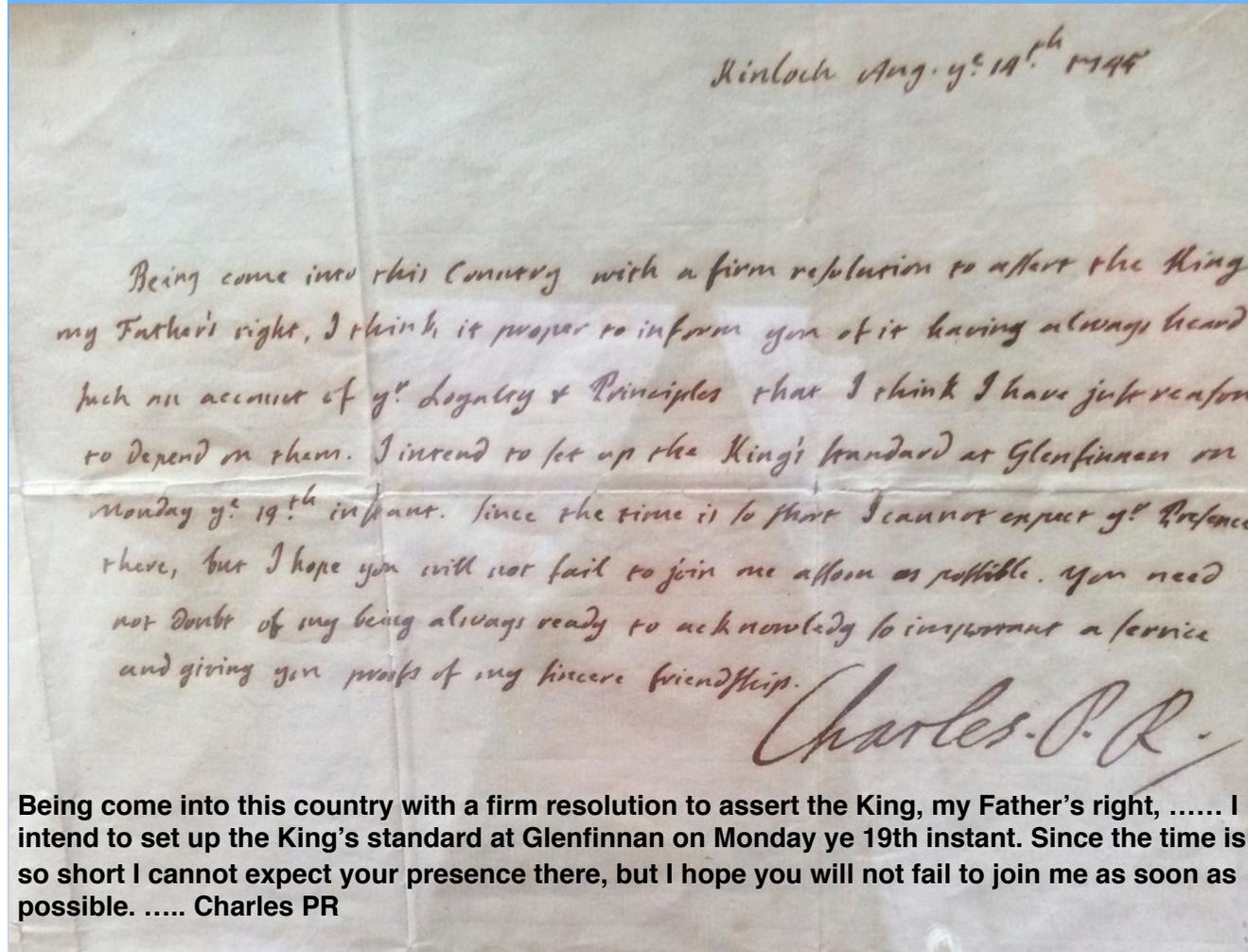
- Boisdale came from Kilbride and met the Prince
- Expecting 3,000 men but finding only 7 he said, “Go home”
- Bonnie Prince Charlie is said to have famously replied “I am come home”

## The Seven men of Moidart plus limited supplies came ashore at Loch nan Uamh

The Seven Men included three of note, namely William Murray, Marquis of Tullibardine, Col John William O'Sullivan, Irishman in the French Army and Aeneas MacDonald, a Parisian Banker from Kinlochmoidart

It was now 57 years since the Prince's Grandfather had quit the throne

After he had landed, and determined to press on, the Prince wrote seeking support from the Clans



Being come into this country with a firm resolution to assert the King, my Father's right, ..... I intend to set up the King's standard at Glenfinnan on Monday ye 19th instant. Since the time is so short I cannot expect your presence there, but I hope you will not fail to join me as soon as possible. .... Charles PR



Cameron of Locheil spent three weeks trying to persuade the Prince his cause was hopeless

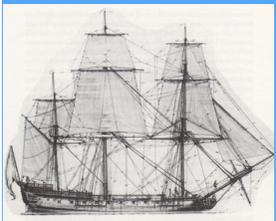


### **Glenfinnan 19 August 1745**

(This romantic image is slightly unrealistic, many were poorly armed at this stage)



**On towards Edinburgh over the Corrieairack**

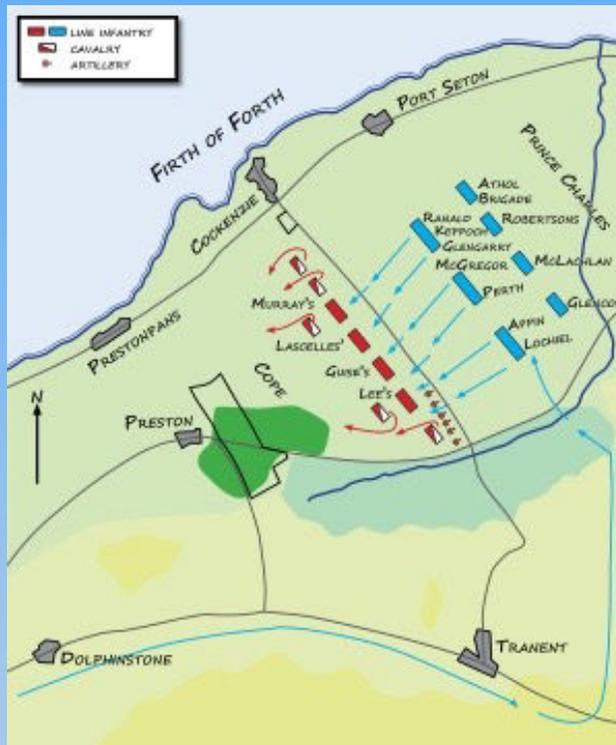


**Perth**  
**4 September**

The Prince was joined by the Duke of Perth and Lord George Murray who played a major role in the campaign

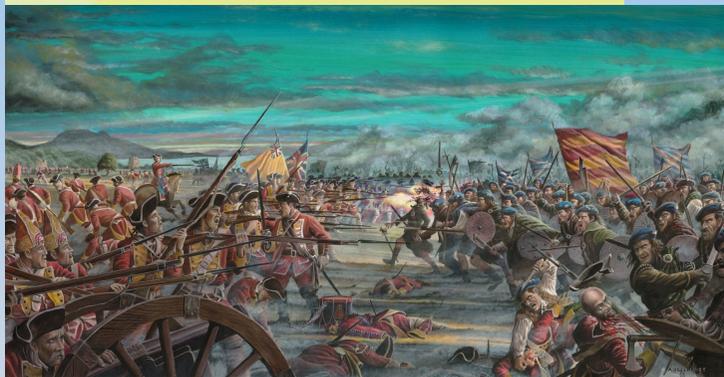


**Edinburgh 16 September**



## Prestonpans 21 September 1745

- Highland Charge at first light, coming unexpectedly from the East
- Total victory to the Jacobites
- Note the MacDonalds (here called Ranald) in their normal position of honour on the right flank
- Afterwards half the Prince's army went home with booty or to take in the harvest



## Hey Johnnie Cope

*Cope sent a challenge frae Dunbar,  
Sayin 'Charlie meet me an' ye daur;  
An' I'll learn ye the airts o' war,  
If ye'll meet me in the morning.'*

### **Chorus**

*Hey! Johnnie Cope are ye waukin' yet?  
Or are your drums a-beating yet?  
If ye were waukin' I wad wait,  
Tae gang tae the coals in the morning.*

## The Ecossais and the Irish Picquets

- Lord John Drummond arrived in Montrose in November with 150 troops
- These were later joined by others
- making 800 in all
- Although of Scottish and Irish descent, these fighters were technically French
- They did not immediately join the action
- After November only a very few more blockade-runners got through
- The noose tightened as the British Navy took control





## Derby, 4 December

The Prince's Council advised turning round in view of growing opposition, the lack of support in England and no sign of it from France

The Clansmen marched north again



## Skirmishes in the New Year

- Fochabers, Keith, Grantown and elsewhere
- Merely tactical positioning
- The pressure was building



**Meanwhile The Duke of Cumberland (third son of George II) was training his army to meet a Highland Charge**

If all this failed, a diagonal bayonet thrust to the Highlander on your right beneath his raised right arm wielding a claymore was pretty effective



## Mad march to Nairn and back 15th April 1746

The night before Culloden, the Prince marched his men in pitch darkness towards Nairn, planning to surprise Cumberland. But it took too long and he had to turn around



## Next day - Culloden

Total defeat of the Jacobites





### **The Generals blamed each other**

- Unkind things were said: “That damned cowardly Italian”....Lord Elcho
- Bonnie Prince Charlie never spoke again to Lord Murray (who blamed O’Sullivan)



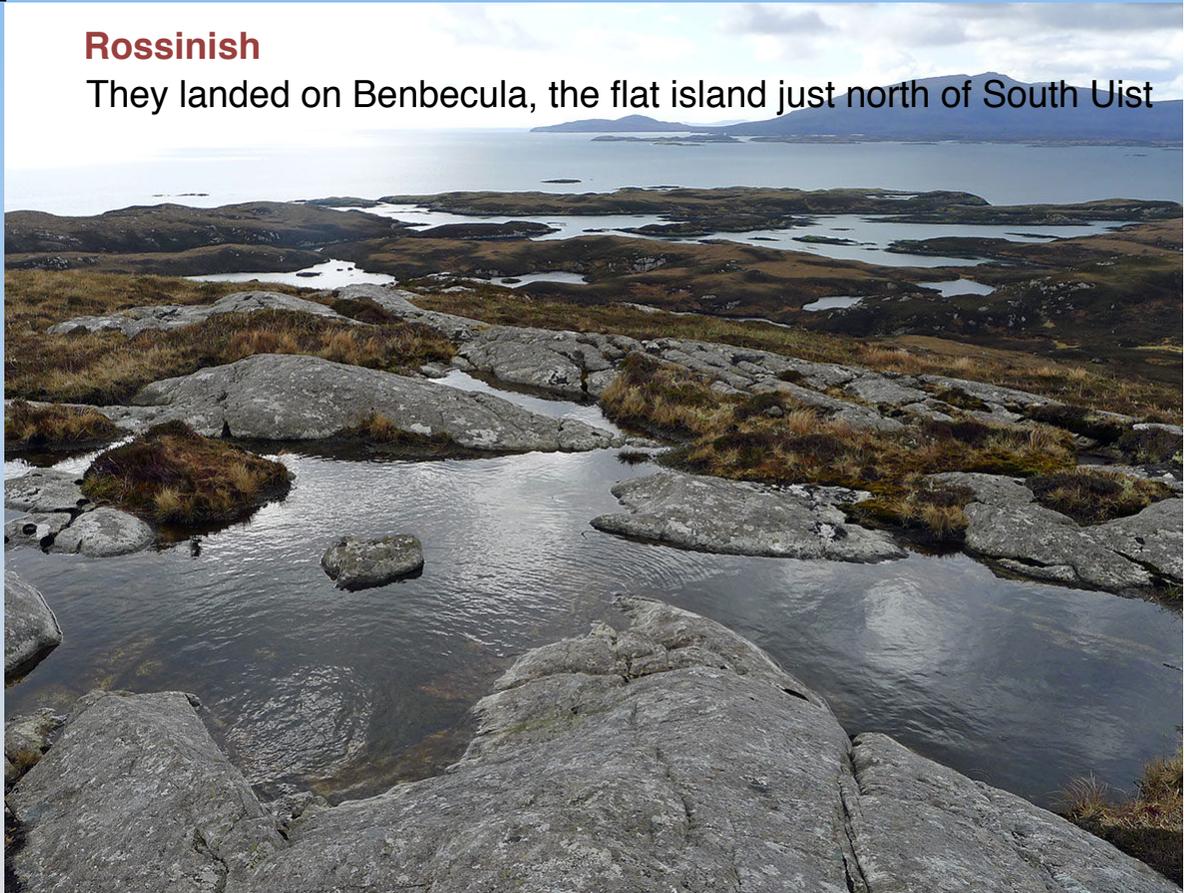
### **Loch nan Uamh**

Bonnie Prince Charlie slipped away on 26 April with Col O'Sullivan, Capt O'Neil, Allan MacDonald, Donald MacLeod, and Edward Burke plus eight boatmen



### **Rossinish**

They landed on Benbecula, the flat island just north of South Uist





**About this time, on 3 May, the Battle of Loch nan Uamh was fought  
Le Mars and La Bellone, landed arms and gold, and survived a British Navy attack**

- Duke of Perth, Lord John Murray, Lord Elcho and Sir Thomas Sheridan got away to Nantes
- Many wounded too, but most died (85) and a further 67 from fever. Perth died 8 May
- Old Pretender was outraged the ships returned without his son and summoned Sheridan
- The gold which had been landed, caused trouble for years to come (Arkaig treasure)



**There was £30,000 on the Prince's head**

Independent Companies, recruited by Duncan Forbes were being deployed all over

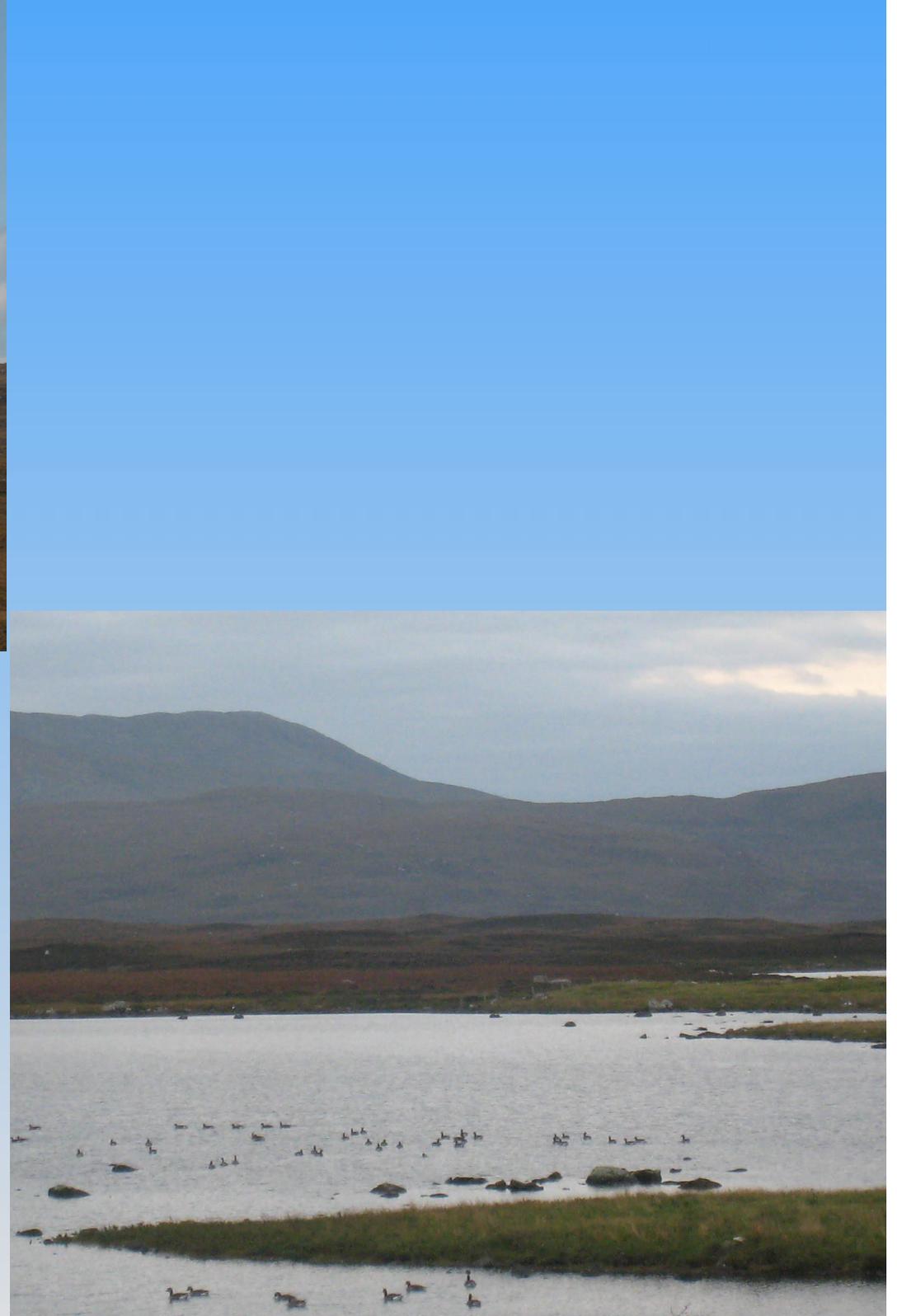


### Heading for Stornaway

- Prince sailed to Scalpay near Tarbert in Harris
- Then up Loch Seaforth and a long walk to Arnish in Lewis
- But word had got out from MacAulay that he was there
- The folk in Stornaway wanted nothing to do with him
- He fled south to Uist again

### Neil MacEachain

Neil joined the Prince and the party spent three weeks at Coradale fishing and shooting between 15 May - 5 June





### Waiting for news

After meeting Flora the Prince lurked in a cowherd's cottage  
Hugh MacDonald of Baleshare said when he saw him "..."

*"He was then in kilt indifferent plaid face weather beaten. Well but hungry. Very canty and jocose. He was fed bread and chicken and filled his bonnet with water from the loch to drink. His hose was burnt where he had tried to dry it this morning by holding it before a fire and falling asleep."*

### Nunton

Meanwhile Lady  
Clanranald was  
making a dress  
for him





**Flora MacDonald**

On 21 June they met near Ormacleith  
Arrangements were made through her step-father Hugh, a Captain in the local Militia

Historical questions still remain as to who was in on the plan

**“Over the Sea to Skye” on 28 June 1746**

- He went to Skye dressed as “Betty Burke” (an excellent spinner of lint)
- It was agreed he made a very bad woman
- They landed at Monkstadt and slipped over to Kingsburgh

*Flora was arrested a week later, spent time on remand in London and was released in 1747*

Monkstadt (restored 2015)  
home of Lady MacDonald of Sleat



Kingsburgh (a later version, unrestored)  
home of Alexander MacDonald the factor





### **Scorched earth**

Raasay burnt, Kinlochmoidart  
burnt, Borrodale burnt,  
Achnacarry burnt

and

many others



Executions of some ringleaders

Death on prison ships and  
transportation for others



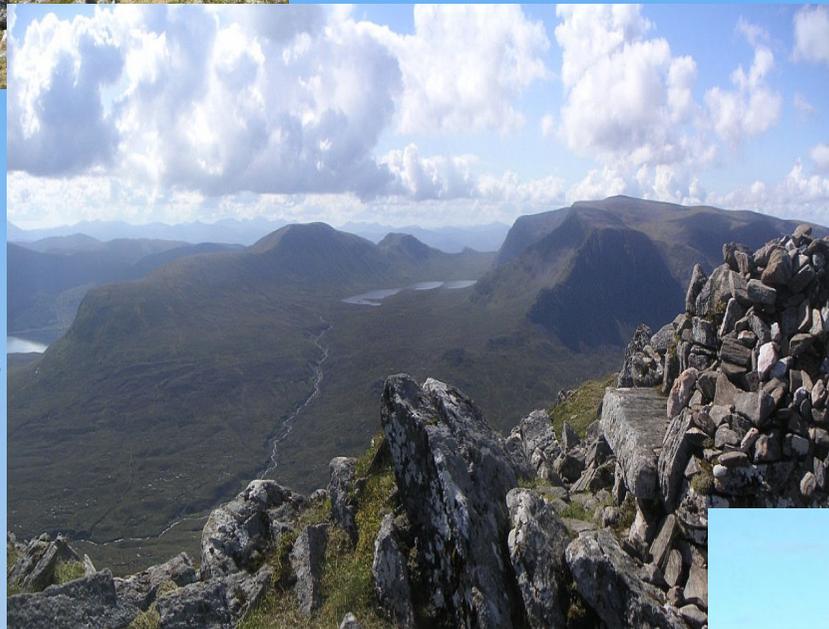




**On the run from Glen  
Affric to Cluny's Cage**

At last, escape through  
Loch nan Uamh with  
Coll Barrisdale in chains

19 September 1746





### The Prince and the Aftermath

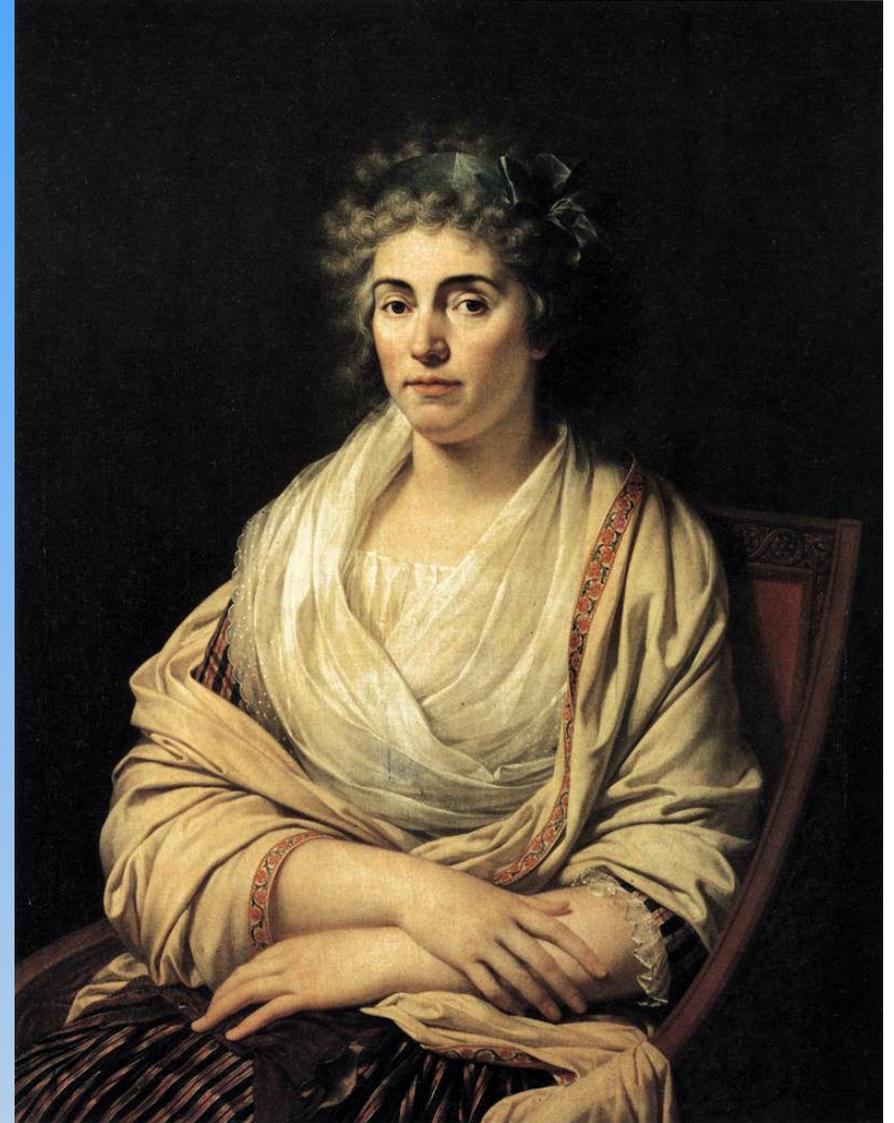
- After his Scottish adventure, the Prince was not a happy man. He drank very heavily and found it hard to face reality
- He behaved as if the French were bound to support another invasion, which they were not
- Because of these tensions, he was forcibly deported from France
- He became a nomad with sightings in London, Basel, Luneville, Ghent and Avignon
- Often in disguise as a priest or a doctor, he called himself Mr Benn, Mr Douglas, M Dumont, Mr Thompson, Mr Smith, Mr Mildmay and a number of other names
- He later settled on being called The Count of Albany, when he wasn't *incognito*

**His father never saw him again**



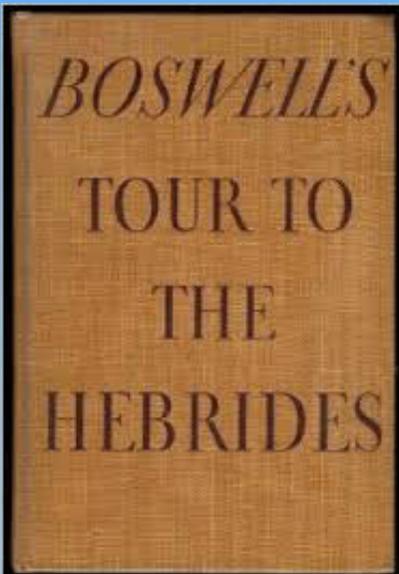
### **The Prince had a mistress and a daughter**

Clementina Walkinshaw became Bonnie Prince Charlie's mistress in 1752 and they had a daughter called Charlotte



### **Marriage**

- In 1772, at the age of 52, Bonnie Prince Charlie married Louise of Stolberg aged 20
- They remained childless
- She left him in 1784



**Tourism - 1773**

“It was near five in the morning when I got to bed. I awaked at noon, with a severe headache”

*Boswell on Skye*





FLORA MACDONALD

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PRESERVER OF  
PRINCE CHARLES EDWARD STUART

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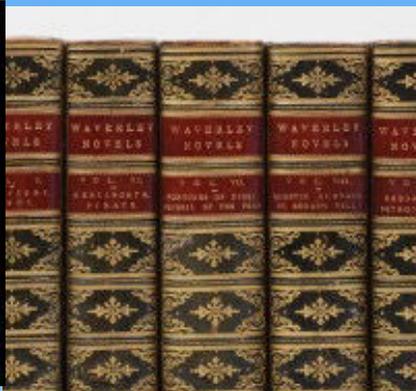
HER NAME  
WILL BE MENTIONED IN HISTORY  
AND IF COURAGE AND FIDELITY  
BE VIRTUES  
MENTIONED WITH HONOUR

Epitaph composed by Dr Johnson, who stayed with Flora on Skye, during his tour of the Highlands with Boswell

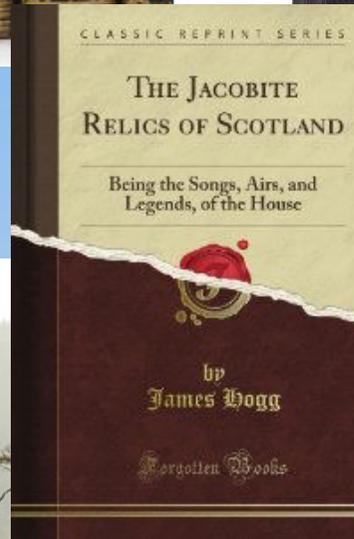
**Charles Edward Stuart**  
**1720 - 1788**

Buried by his brother  
Prince Henry, Cardinal of  
York at Frascati





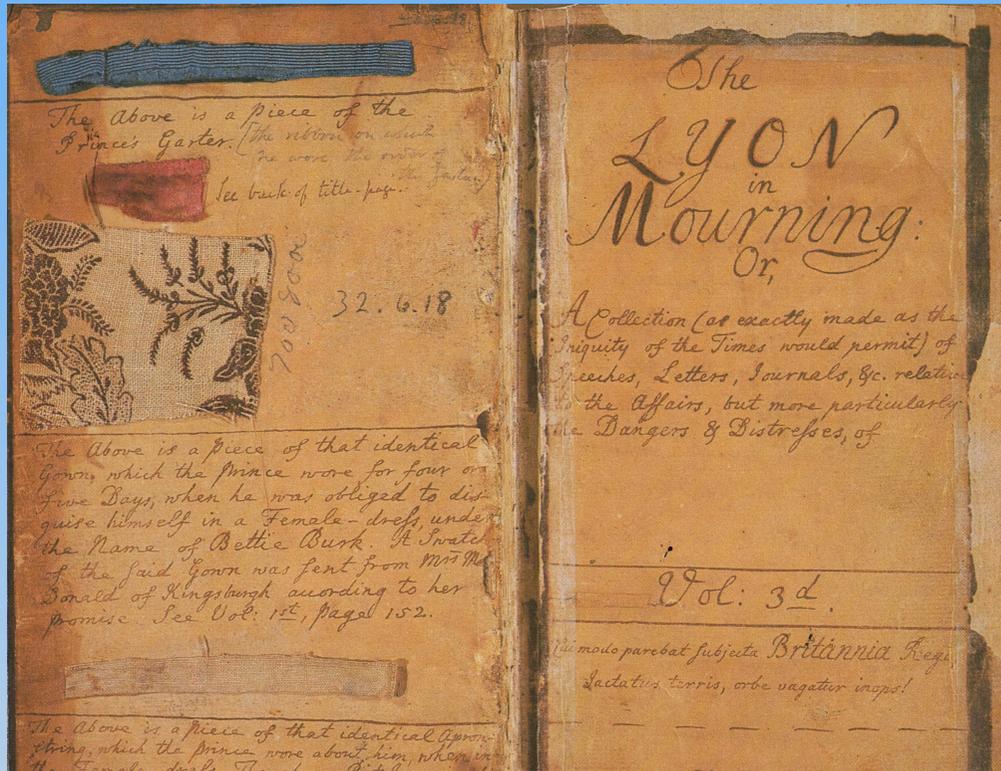
Here are some Jacobite relics and memorials, many dating from about 1820, thirty years after the death of Bonnie Prince Charlie and fully seventy years after the rebellion



## Memories



## The Lyon in Mourning came out in 1834



Bishop Forbes collected material for *The Lyon in Mourning* from 1745, published in ten volumes, 60 years after his death.

Accounts of the '45 were also produced by:-

- Felix O'Neil
- Chevalier Johnson
- Ned Burke
- Neil MacEachain
- Lord Elcho
- Donald Roy
- Alexander MacDonald
- Alasdair MacMhaighster Alasdair
- Dr Burton
- and others

All of this material was merged into *Itinerary of Prince Charles Edward*, Walter Biggar Blaikie's authoritative time-line, produced in 1896 for the Scottish History Society



## Reviewing the man and the myth:

**The man:** Bonnie Prince Charlie made a genuine attempt to wrest the Crown for the Stuarts against what proved to be impossible odds

For his principles he should be admired

He behaved with courage and dignity when on the run after Culloden

But he had little left to live for after the failed bid and fell apart

That was the man

**The myth:** The myth was not of his own making. It was made by others

*“History is a matter of facing the facts about the past, however painful some of them may be; mythology is a way of refusing to face the historical facts.”*

*Quoted from an essay “History of Irish Mythology” by Professor T.W. Moody*

# Did you know....

## Interesting trivia

- Tearlach is the Gaelic for "Charles" and is pronounced "Charlie"
- Bonnie Prince Charlie was christened Charles Edward Louis John Casimir Silvester Severino Maria Stuart
- Ethnically he was a quarter each Polish, German and Italian. The rest was mainly French and Danish with a fraction Anglo-Scots. He was born and brought up entirely in Italy
- The end of the direct Stuart line was reached with the death in 1807 of Bonnie Prince Charlie's unmarried brother, Henry Benedict Thomas Edward Maria Clement Francis Xavier Stuart, Cardinal Duke of York
- The current Stuart heir through collateral relationships is the Duke of Bavaria (a bachelor aged over 80), and next in line is the Duchess of Lichtenstein
- MacDonald of Keppoch, when questioned about his low income retorted, "I can call out and command 500 men"...
- General Wade said "The clans in the Highlands most addicted to rapine and plunder were the Camerons, the MacKenzies, the MacDonalds of Keppoch, and the MacGregors ... They go out in parties from ten to thirty men, and drive stolen cattle in the night time"...
- Quote: "The Edinburgh Jacobites shouted for Bonnie Prince Charlie, but would not march for him"
- Edinburgh Castle held out under Generals Preston and Guest. They fired at anything that moved in the Lawnmarket. The Prince asked them to stop, otherwise he would set fire to Preston's house in Fife. Preston retorted that if he did so, HMS Fox in the Forth would destroy Wemyss Castle, Lord Elcho's family home on the shore.
- The Irish Brigade fought alongside the Royal Ecosais which was raised by Lord John Drummond in France. The Irish were drawn from Lally's, Rooth's and Dillon's existing regiments in French Service. Although many were of Irish or Scottish ancestry, those captured were treated as Prisoners-of-War and not rebels
- The Jacobites were properly armed at Culloden and conventionally equipped with firelocks, many of them of French or Spanish origin. This is borne out by what was surrendered after the battle and what was left on the battlefield itself
- The Skye Boat Song was written and first published in 1884
- Captain Ferguson of HMS Furnace wrote in his log "I went ashore at Loch Moidart at four o'clock. Took 20 barrels of gunpowder and set the laird's house on fire at eight"
- The Dress Act of 1746 forbade the wearing of Highland clothes or plaid to all except serving soldiers of the Crown
- Highland estates forfeited by attainted rebels (as they had been after the 1715 insurrection) were subsequently returned in 1784 upon the payment of any debts incurred during annexation
- The Old Pretender wrote to Cameron of Locheil after the Rising saying : "I thank God, I had neither a hand in, nor knowledge of, the unfortunate undertaking, and whoever encouraged it has much to answer for"
- Prince Henry, Cardinal of York was impoverished by the French Revolution and granted a pension by George III in later life. He died in Frascati in 1807

[www.moidart.org.uk](http://www.moidart.org.uk)

There is loads of stuff on the site about the Young Pretender,  
including a copy of the Memoires of  
Mac Mhaighstir Alasdair



Agriculture	Archaeology	Bonnie Prince Charlie	
Censuses, Statistics	Churches & Religion	Councils, Commissions	Courts and Police
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