

# The Battlefield of Sheriffmuir

## 1. Introduction

### 1 QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE

#### 1.1.

My name is Virginia Wills. I have a BA degree in History magna cum laude from The American University, Washington, D.C. As a U.S. Fulbright Scholar for two years and an American Association of University Women Scholar for one year, I undertook research in 18<sup>th</sup> century Scottish history at the University of Glasgow and the University of Edinburgh. Throughout this time my research was carried out in the National Archives of Scotland and archives through the U.K.

#### 1.2.

In the course of my research I read the entire collection of Forfeited Estates Papers and then, as a specially appointed archivist, was employed to catalogue the collection to make it available to other historians and researchers. The Forfeited Estates Papers, one of the largest collections in the National Archives, is widely recognised as one of the richest sources for the history of the Highlands for the 40 years following Culloden. The manuscripts are concerned with the forfeiture of Jacobite families throughout the country, many of them involved in the earlier rising with which we are concerned here.

#### 1.3.

From the papers I prepared REPORTS ON THE ANNEXED ESTATES, 1755-1769 and STATISTICS OF THE ANNEXED ESTATES, 1755-1756, published by HMSO, widely used by the army of Jacobite historians now actively working in the field.

#### 1.4.

I also read Scottish history at the Universities of Glasgow and Edinburgh, Scottish archaeology at Edinburgh (excavating at sites in Scotland), and Scots law at Edinburgh (working for W. Green, the Edinburgh law publisher, as editor of the SCOTS LAW TIMES and other publications).

1.5.

I have taught 18<sup>th</sup> century history at universities in the United States, with the Open University and for some years at the University of Stirling. I am a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland and a member of a number of historical societies.

1.6.

I have worked as a specialist in rare Scottish books for twenty years and have also worked on commission with the BBC in writing programmes on Jacobite and general Scottish history. I am presently completing a major work on the social and economic development of the Highlands in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, with particular reference to the administration of the estates forfeited after the last Jacobite rising. I have been working in this field for nearly half a century and my aim has always been to promote a knowledge of Scotland's history.

## 2. AIM

2.1.

As we are all well aware, the proposed Beaully to Denny pylon line would not only destroy great swathes of natural landscape but also impact disastrously on sites of historical significance. One such site is the battlefield of Sheriffmuir in the Ochils above Dunblane. My aim here is to emphasise the significance of the battle of Sheriffmuir to the history of Scotland and, indeed, Great Britain, the importance of preserving the battle site to commemorate this event and the memory of the men who fought and died there, and to demonstrate the value of this historic landscape to the economy in terms of tourism. It is essential, for many reasons, that Sheriffmuir is not destroyed, but rather preserved and protected for this and future generations.

2.2.

In the course of this precognition it will be my intention to analyse the shortcomings of the archaeological report of the battle site, which was funded by the applicants, the negative presentation by Historic Scotland and the precognition by the applicants' representative, Dr. Alan Leslie of GUARD, which is largely an echo of Historic Scotland's disappointing response to the proposed development.

### 3. SOURCES

#### 3.1

There is a wealth of information about the '15 Rising and the central event, the Battle of Sheriffmuir, much of this in the accounts of eye-witnesses and the participants themselves. A number of these accounts are presented here in copies of the original manuscripts, with transcriptions. The manuscripts have been supplied by archives throughout the UK including the National Archives of Scotland, the National Library of Scotland,, the Royal Archives at Windsor Castle, the National Archives at Kew in Surrey, and, with the assistance of the National Register of Archives, from private collections. The Board of Ordnance map has been provided by the Map Library of the National Library of Scotland. The photograph of the great painting of the battle has been supplied by Christie's in London, and other photographs come from private individuals, who are well acquainted with the Sheriffmuir landscape. Skilled cartographers have performed the difficult task of overlaying an 18<sup>th</sup> century map on a modern map, this provided by Harvey's Maps. I gratefully acknowledge all this assistance.

#### 3.2.

There are also many printed secondary sources and I have included a small portion of these for reference. It is important to note that two major works have recently been published: a comprehensive account of the '15 Rising by Professor Daniel Szechi, *1715: THE GREAT JACOBITE REBELLION* (Yale University Press) and by Dr. Margaret Sankey, *JACOBITE PRISONERS OF THE 1715 REBELLION: PREVENTING AND PUNISHING INSURRECTION IN EARLY HANOVERIAN BRITAIN* (Ashgate Publishing). They demonstrate the considerable and continuing interest in Jacobite history.

#### 3.3.

Enduring are the Ballads which were composed at the time of the battle and throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> century, giving graphic accounts of the participants and their role at Sheriffmuir, the most famous, of course, that composed by Robert Burns, who almost certainly visited the battlefield. An original of this poem, in the poet's own hand, was recently sold at Christie's with much publicity. Greatest of all, however, are the stirring epic poems in Gaelic which recite the feats of the clansmen. All these continue to be recited and sung in our own time. This important part of our cultural heritage arises out of the events of 1715.

### 4. THE BATTLE OF SHERIFFMUIR

#### 4.1.

It is not possible here to go into any detail about these events, but it is important to consider the troops' movements in November 1715 as this will help to pinpoint the location of the battlefield, of particular concern when the site is under threat

#### 4.2.

Over a period of sixty years there were five Jacobite Risings in support of the return of the Stuart kings and, after 1707, as a powerful protest by a large number of the people of Scotland, against the implications of the Act of Union. The '15 Rising, the third of these, is regarded as 'the Great Rising', as it had by far the greatest support and posed the most significant threat to the British state. There were at the time risings in other parts of Scotland and in the north of England, but the Battle of Sheriffmuir was the central event of the '15.

#### 4.3.

The Battle of Sheriffmuir took place on Sunday, the 13<sup>th</sup> November 1715, between a small Government army commanded by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Duke of Argyll and a large Jacobite army led by the 6<sup>th</sup> Earl of Mar. Mar was set on crossing the River Forth, joining the other Jacobites on the move in the Borders and England and then pushing south to achieve control of the Government in London. Argyll had simply to prevent this happening. After camping at the King's Park in Stirling, waiting in vain for an addition to his meagre army from a Government which did not really appreciate the seriousness of the Jacobite threat, he moved out to Dunblane. He had only 3300 dragoons and foot soldiers, including a number of untried volunteers. Mar's army moved south from Perth, through Auchterarder, Ardoch and Kinbuck with over 9000 men, cavalry and foot soldiers, including a large number of Highland clansmen, the terror of the Government army.

#### 4.4.

On the night before the engagement Argyll's troops camped around Kippendavie and Dykedale beyond Dunblane, Argyll himself in a sheep cote at Dykedale. Mar's army gathered near Kinbuck in two loops of the River Allan, a dangerously enclosed position, Mar himself at Naggyfauld, which stands by the River. These places may all be found on the modern map which has been presented.

#### 4.5.

Only two and half miles from one another, both armies remained in arms through the night in preparation for the expected encounter. In the morning Argyll's troops moved towards Sheriffmuir where he felt he could most easily deploy his cavalry, while Mar formed his army on the Muir of Kinbuck below the high ground of Sheriffmuir, searching for a sight of the enemy. When this came he advanced around Whiteston and the great White Stone to the high ridge while Argyll moved up along the Dykedale Road on to the moor to meet him. Within a short time the right wing of the Jacobite army with its feared Highland clansmen, in a ferocious charge, overcame the Government left wing, driving many of them even to Stirling, where their rout was vividly described by those who looked down from the Castle, convinced from the sight of the fleeing soldiers that the Jacobite army must have been victorious, while Argyll's right wing overcame the Jacobite left, through unfortunate problems in their forming up, and, after a long struggle, drove them in a great semi-circle as far as the River Allan, where some were drowned.

#### 4.6.

Unaware fully of the outcome on either side of the field of battle because of their position and the moor's undulating nature, both commanders considered the victory theirs. Only when the remnants of the armies returned later to the body-strewn field and faced each other, this time from the opposite direction, did they fully realise how indecisive the encounter had been. For various reasons Mar, still with the larger army, did not pursue the enemy, and Argyle was left to ponder what might have happened, but for what he termed a miracle, and this he candidly reported to the London government. He realised that the encounter could easily have resulted in a victory for the Jacobites. The Battle of Sheriffmuir might have been a drawn encounter but the final outcome for the British state was of considerable significance, as many historians have emphasised. While the battle of Culloden was fought by a sadly depleted Jacobite army in retreat, Sheriffmuir saw a strong and aggressive army on the advance. That they had been halted and had turned back from this advance was of immense relief to the government and the new monarch, George I, who realised almost too late how serious the situation had been.

#### 4.7

The losses in the Government army were considerably more than in the Jacobite army. . Argyll lost 377 men (23 officers), 153 wounded (11 officers), and 133 were taken prisoner; Mar reported 60 killed, 90 wounded while 82 men were taken by Argyll's troops. Dead was the gallant Earl of Forfar, while the Jacobites mourned the popular young Earl of Strathmore and the beloved Ailean Dearg, the Captain of Clanranald, one of the most remarkable men of the time. He had gone into battle on horseback with his MacDonald clansmen and was a conspicuous target for the enemy. It was as he fell and the clans wavered that Alastair Dubh of Glengarry famously cried out: " Blows today, mourning

tomorrow!’ and rallied the men. Ailean Dearg was carried in honour from the battlefield to Drummond Castle, where he died, and buried at Innerpeffray, but the ordinary soldier was left on the field or buried in mounds, as at the Gathering Stone, where there are long mounds with trenches. Human bones were excavated from one of the mounds at the centenary commemoration of the battle in 1815. Strong traditions refer to other burials on the field, including that of a Government dragoon and his horse above the Wharry Burn bridge. It is important to remember that Sheriffmuir is also a burial ground and it would be a desecration to disturb this further.

4.8.

Among the men who fought at Sheriffmuir, many were already distinguished when they came to the fight, whilst others were to gain fame in Scotland’s history. The Duke of Argyll and soldiers in both armies had served with Marlborough in the wars on the continent, the Jacobite General Hamilton had earlier commanded Dutch troops, General Alexander Gordon of Auchintoul, who commanded the Highland clansmen in the battle and throughout the campaign, had earlier served the armies of Tsar Peter the Great.

Of those with the future before them, the young George Drummond, a firm supporter of the Government, was to become six times Lord Provost of Edinburgh and the driving force behind the creation of the New Town, while James Keith, the younger brother of the Earl Marischal, both staunch Jacobites, would one day become commander-in-chief of the armies of Russia and governor of the Ukraine, and later commander serving Frederick the Great. That great character Alexander Robertson of Struan, the Robertson clan chief, was already on his way to becoming the much-loved Gaelic poet, while Alastair Dubh of Glengarry, who saved the day for the clansmen, is described as “one of the most celebrated warriors of his age”, a most remarkable man and revered throughout the Highlands. They had all fought at Sheriffmuir. The Battle of Sheriffmuir was not simply a skirmish between unknown soldiers. It was a large scale encounter, with Scots on both sides, involving some of the most prominent men of that generation. This too is certainly part of our cultural heritage.

4.9.

There are two monuments on the battlefield by the road from Dunblane and these are sought out by visitors. A large cairn with a commemorative inscription in Gaelic, with an English translation, was erected by the Clan MacRae in 1915, the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the battle. The MacRaes, a small clan, saw their fighting force almost obliterated in the battle. A small monument nearby was erected just a few years ago by the ’45 Association. On the

moor behind the MacRae Monument, along a well-worn path is the Gathering Stone. Now under a protective grill, its significance in the past is uncertain, but it is now where the White Cockade Society, in 18<sup>th</sup> century dress, gathers to commemorate the battle on the Sunday nearest to the 13<sup>th</sup> of November.

## 5. SITE OF THE BATTLE

### 5.1. MAPS AND PLANS OF THE BATTLEFIELD

#### 5.1.1.

There has been controversy over the location of the battlefield, and this was obviously of concern to the applicants, largely because of the huge protest over its possible destruction, but the many accounts left by the participants, including Argyll and Mar themselves, leave little doubt regarding the route which the armies followed in what was to be an encounter battle. The prime source, however, is the contemporary Board of Ordnance plan of the battlefield in the Map Library of the National Library of Scotland. Only the left hand portion remains, in three copies, the right hand portion having been missing since at least 1934. However, the remaining plan, with the manuscript accounts written on the day of the battle or shortly afterwards, plus familiarity with the terrain of Sheriffmuir, and this is of particular importance, allows an extrapolation to be made. It is worth noting that the military historians cited here agree on this location.

#### 5.1.2.

Three copies of plans of the battlefield from or based on the Board Ordnance plan are presented here : a) the original Board of Ordnance plan, with a transcription of the Explanation in the lower left hand corner, giving an account of the battle, b) a modern land-line map with the original plan overlaid, and c) Harvey's map of The Ochils with this information incorporated. It is clear from this that the proposed giant pylon line will run right through the heart of the battlefield, just as the present pylon line does.

#### 5.1.3.

Confirmation of the site indicated comes from John Leslie's Plan for the Division of the Commonty of Sheriffmuir of 1766 (copy presented) and James Stobie's magnificent great map of Perthshire and Clackmannanshire of 1783. (too large for presentation). These were in part compiled with the assistance of the people who had lived there at the time of the battle or were of only the next generation. This was certainly the case with the 1766 map

as evidence was taken from a large number of the inhabitants of the Sheriffmuir area regarding the division of the common lands there and the voluminous document, which I have read, remains in the National Archives of Scotland.

## 5.2. PAINTING OF THE BATTLE OF SHERIFFMUIR

### 5.2.1.

There is a large, splendid oil painting of the Battle of Sheriffmuir, painted only a few years after the battle at most (copy presented here). It was sold at Christie's in Glasgow on the 12<sup>th</sup> June 1996 in the sale 'The Jacobites and their Adversaries.' The National Galleries of Scotland were unable to purchase the painting at that time so it is now in private hands in London, but they seek to purchase it, should it again be brought to sale, in order to add it to the national collection. Staff at the Galleries are much behind the protection and preservation of the battlefield of Sheriffmuir for its importance to Scotland's history, but also in anticipation that this painting may one day come back to Scotland..

### 5.2.2.

The painting has been attributed to 'the Dutch school' and also to John Wootton, the well known artist, but it may well have been painted by his friend Peter Tillemans, the Flemish artist, who came to live in Britain in 1708, and, like Wootton, had a passion for painting battlefields. Certainly Tillemans painted 'The Battle of Glenshiel', the principal event in the 1719 Rising, in the Scottish National Portrait Gallery Collection. 'The Battle of Sheriffmuir' could well have been painted by the same artist on his visit to Scotland following on the battle of Glenshiel.

### 5.2.3.

It is clear that the artist of 'The Battle of Sheriffmuir' visited the battlefield as it includes a number of recognisable features, including the Dykedale Road, the Old Mill Lade and the Ochils in the background.. He was also familiar with the regiments involved in the battle, although he presented the troops of both armies in the standard formation familiar in 18<sup>th</sup> century warfare, and again he may well have met some of the men who had taken part or witnessed the battle. What is clear is that the first encounter is portrayed as having occurred in the same part of Sheriffmuir as indicated by the other maps and plans already mentioned. The view is from near the Government side, across the battlefield towards Glentye. In the original painting it is possible to see indicated the local people watching the event from the top of Glentye Hill, and it is the tradition that they gathered on Little

Hunt Hill nearby, the church services having been abandoned that morning. Tradition also has it that it was Rob Roy with his men, waiting for the outcome of the battle with a view to plunder, but he, was, in fact, several miles away at Broomhill of Cromlix and this is made clear at the end of the Board of Ordnance Explanation.

## 6.. ARCHAEOLOGY OF THE BATTLEFIELD

### 6.1

When the applicants planned the route of the proposed pylon line they obviously considered that there could be no possible objection to running it through what they considered to be just a remote moorland where there were few houses, some standing stones and a monument or two. They were clearly taken aback at the huge protest against the destruction of the field of Sheriffmuir and the surrounding landscape. No doubt to mollify the protesters, who clearly knew their history, the applicants sought the help of Historic Scotland and commissioned GUARD to carry out an archaeological survey of some part of the possible battle site.

### 6.2

Dr. Tony Pollard of GUARD and his team, using metal detectors, proceeded, in the spring of 2006, to carry out this work in their usual exemplary manner. GUARD'S SHERIFFMUIR BATTLEFIELD: DATA STRUCTURAL REPORT, Addendum 2, Annex 3A of the planning application, is a thoroughly prepared document with GUARD'S finds recorded. There are factual errors in the report and these are being conveyed to Dr. Pollard before publication, but they do not substantially alter his findings and conclusion. Unfamiliar with the wider terrain of the battlefield and interpreting the documents quoted to produce an unlikely initial encounter between the armies on an east-west alignment along the modern road from Dunblane, but admitting uncertainty, Dr. Pollard's chosen site would also be affected adversely by the pylon line and access road. Further survey by the River Allan, to which the right wing of the Government army drove the Jacobite left wing, has produced nothing, not surprisingly as there is no evidence to indicate where that occurred.

### 6.3.

A part of the battle site is now under plantation and could not be surveyed. In addition the important field before the Sheriffmuir Inn, where evidence indicates the first encounter

took place, although otherwise undisturbed, is covered with rough vegetation, making it impossible for the GUARD team to carry out their thorough metal detector survey there. The archaeological survey, therefore, was, of necessity only partial, covering a small area in an extensive battlefield, extending from the old drove road, which passes near the Inn, to Stonehill on the modern road to Dunblane.. There were incidents, along the Wharry Burn, which flows through Sheriffmuir, and as far away as Pendreich and the Kinbuck area. A partial survey, although helpful and of interest, cannot begin to tell the whole story. Nor did GUARD make use of all the available literature on the battle, as is claimed. As we know, the sources are extensive.

6.4.

Battle sites present special problems for the archaeologist. The armies in disposing of their dead would collect whatever they could from the battlefield in the way of arms and equipment, of their own or of their enemy, particularly if the enemy in the end melted away as did Mar's army, With the soldiers away the scavengers would arrive to plunder. It would be surprising if anything remained to be collected up. GUARD, however, did find a number of items and these are listed, with their location, in the Report. Some items found in the past are now in Dunblane Museum and The National Museum of Scotland. Other people have searched the battlefield in more recent times. In the 1930s, for example, the innkeeper of the Sheriffmuir Inn, regularly walked over the big field in front of the Inn, the site of the first encounter, as I have indicated, and one area which was not properly surveyed, and he collected quantities of artefacts, their whereabouts now unknown, although it is known that he carried them to Edinburgh.

6.5.

Once GUARD had submitted its report, the applicants were obviously in a difficult position. Artefacts clearly confirmed that there had been a battle at Sheriffmuir, the documentation that it had been of significance to the history of the nation. Where then to place the pylon line and access road? Silencing those who had taken part in the survey, the applicants proceeded, in Addendum 2, Annexe 3B, to present a convoluted discussion of two other alternative routes for the pylon line to cross the Sheriffmuir area, with clearly no intention of pursuing either of these. Then sweeping aside all of the findings of the archaeologists, they came to the final decision that there was no other alternative but to run the line through the battlefield, as no doubt they had intended from the very beginning..

## 7. PROTECTING BATTLEFIELDS

### 7.1.

Seven years ago there took place at Glasgow University a Fields of Conflict conference in which speakers emphasised that efforts needed to be made to preserve battlefields as significant to a country's history. It was at this conference that Dr. Ann MacSween of Historic Scotland announced that it was planned to list battlefield sites in Scotland. Further such conferences have followed the theme of this first conference. From that time onward I have corresponded with those in a position to take steps to implement this worthwhile plan and I have letters in reply from staff working for Historic Scotland, the body one would expect to do everything to protect these sites, and all have responded in a similar way. I quote from one of these, from a Principal Inspector of Historic Buildings: "I share your evaluation of the battle site (Sheriffmuir) as extremely important in terms of cultural history."

### 7.2

A year ago, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> October 2006, it was announced in the press that Historic Scotland was preparing a list of battle sites in Scotland, in line with English Heritage's Register of Historic Battles. At work on this is Dr. Iain Banks, Director of GUARD and Executive Director of the Centre for Battlefield Archaeology, and at that time six battlefields had already been assessed, one of these Sheriffmuir. Both he and Dr. Pollard have been requested by the applicants to refrain from appearing as witnesses at this inquiry. Like the staff of Historic Scotland, they are passionate about the preservation and protection of battlefields, not least Sheriffmuir, but they are not permitted to defend this view.

### 7.3

The listing of battlefields in Scotland, would not necessarily afford legal protection for them, but would remind planning authorities of their significance in our history and the importance of maintaining this historic landscape. Several National Planning Policy Guidelines have been issued to urge protection::

- a. NPPG5. Archaeology and Planning: "...the Government seeks to encourage the preservation of our heritage of sites and landscapes of archaeological and historic interest, so that they may be enjoyed today and passed on in good order to future generations."

- b. NPPG 18. Planning and the Historic Environment (1999): “The historic environment is a fundamental part of Scotland’s cultural heritage and exists as an irreplaceable record which contributes to our understanding of both the present and the past.”

#### 7.4.

In spite of these Guidelines battlefields continue to remain without protection. Word has now come from Historic Scotland that a policy is being developed to manage and promote battlefields within the Scottish Historic Environment Policy series, but there must be consultation on this and the consultation period will not begin until the end of March 2008. Perhaps by the time this consultation occurs and possible legislation follows there will be no battlefield site at Sheriffmuir left to protect. The applicants, with their proposal to destroy Sheriffmuir, certainly intend to take advantage of the current situation.

#### 7.5.

Considering the mentioned Guidelines and the views expressed over the years by individuals working with Historic Scotland, it came as a great surprise and a considerable disappointment to see its response to the application: “...we are satisfied that the applicants have demonstrated that they have had regard to the protection of nationally important elements of the historic environment and have taken all reasonable measures to mitigate adverse impacts.” An inquiry to Historic Scotland as to who had been responsible for the preparation of this extraordinary response brought the reply that it had been ‘a corporate affair’. This raises serious questions which, unfortunately, cannot be explored here. What is clear from this, however, is that Historic Scotland is in no way concerned about the destruction of a nationally important site.

### 8. PRECOGNITION FOR THE APPLICANTS

#### 8.1.

Historic Scotland’s response to the application under consideration contains unbelievable and extravagant claims, not least relating to the steps which would be undertaken by the applicants to try to mitigate the disastrous impact which the pylon line and accompanying access roads would have on our historic landscape, so extravagant that they are not worth addressing, but I would like to respond to the precognition of the applicants’ representative, Dr Alan Leslie, archaeologist and a non-executive director of GUARD, who, like his colleagues, must have found it difficult to take on this role. As indicated

above, he largely echoes the views of Historic Scotland, but some of the points he makes are worth examination..

## 8.2.

Throughout Dr. Leslie's precognition there is reference to "archaeology and cultural heritage", without anything to explain or support what is encompassed by the second of these terms. (1.2.1; 14.1. ). Obviously 'cultural heritage' includes history, song, tradition and more, supported by archaeology. It is not archaeology alone. Although the GUARD report goes some way to address this, there is little indication that Dr. Leslie or Historic Scotland value, or even understand, the importance of our 'cultural heritage' in their preoccupation with archaeology. Reference is made in several places to historical considerations but it is never clear what these are.(4.6.3.7).

## 8.3.

Dr. Leslie points out that "...there is a growing opinion that they (battlefields) should be considered an important component of the cultural heritage and archaeology..." and reminds us that Historic Scotland is compiling a National Register of battlefield sites in Scotland (.2.27) Nothing in his statement of case follows from this.

## 8.4.

Incredibly he argues that " significant potential adverse effects and significant potential beneficial effects of the development on the setting of cultural heritage features may result from the operation of the overhead transmission line or the dismantling of the existing 132kV line.", and agrees that for a time the two lines will remain side by side. (6.3.2.7).

He admits here "It is with the operation of the 400kV overhead transmission line that long-term significant adverse effects will be found."

## 8.5.

He points out that Historic Scotland, having expressed initial concerns about the threat to the battlefield, were reassured by the further assessment reported in Addendum No. 2 , namely the archaeological survey " and felt that this demonstrated "...that the proposed route will not have a significant adverse impact on the site of the Battle of Sheriffmuir, nor add significantly to the impact on its setting" (12.2). This is another incredible statement, which is, of course, simply not true. This survey was informative, but with the applicants

now ignoring it in their decision making, it is difficult to see where this leaves Historic Scotland, or indeed Dr. Leslie.

8.6.

Then when Historic Scotland has betrayed its role as protector of Scotland's historic remains, and Stirling Council has expressed objection to the proposal in relation to the White Stone, as well as the battlefield, the Council is attacked. "Since both sites named by Stirling Council appear to fall...within the purview of Historic Scotland, it is difficult on the face of it, to understand what grounds the Council feels it has to override Historic Scotland." (9.3.1)

8.7.

Dr. Leslie's conclusions are, like Historic Scotland's, simply beyond belief: "...I consider that it is a significant achievement that the worst impacts, i.e. potential direct impacts, have been successfully reduced to an almost negligible level with respect to known archaeological remains through a combination of carefully considered route planning and appropriate mitigation proposals." (14.2) In view of all the evidence it is difficult to understand how anyone could come to such a conclusion in relation to the battlefield of Sheriffmuir.

8.8.

The incredible statements are endless. The responses to the application from Historic Scotland and the applicants' representative are largely convoluted verbiage intended to impress and convince that what is proposed for our historic landscape would be of enormous benefit, or at least not the disaster we envisage. The reason for this quite obvious betrayal is not yet clear. What is clear, however, is that those responsible for the preservation and protection of our historic landscape would rather connive at its destruction.

## 9. TOURISM

9.1.

My aim, as stated at the beginning, has been to emphasise the significance of the battle of Sheriffmuir, the location of the battle site, the men who took part, and the importance of the event in the history and literature of Scotland, our cultural heritage. There are those, however, who require to see these things in terms of money and their value to the economy. As an example of this attitude, one gentleman from a renewable energy firm, who wondered why there was such a stir about the proposed power line and its impact on the landscape, visited the battlefield, previously unknown to him, and observed that there was not much point in saving a battlefield that had no visitor centre! After these other considerations, tourism is, of course, important and in dealing with this in terms of Sheriffmuir I complete this precognition

## 9.2.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century many travellers, like Daniel Defoe, made a point of visiting the site of the battle, leaving a record of their visit. This has been the case ever since. There is a permanent plaque on the wall of a public building in Bridge of Allan, and books and tourist brochures invite visitors to make their way up into the Ochils to the battlesite. Young tourists from the continent are brought weekly in mini-buses to visit the battle monuments. and the Gathering Stone. On the weekend nearest to the 13<sup>th</sup> November there are large gatherings there to commemorate the event and honour the dead. Daily counts indicate that about 800 per month visit the battlefield, and this without the added attraction of a visitor centre. There is clearly scope for making the most of this interest. Overseas visitors, when hearing of the threat to the battlefield, comment that destruction of such a significant site would not be permitted in their country. To them it seems that Scotland alone fails to preserve its historic sites.

## 9.3.

In addition to the passing tourist, there are now a great many ancestor- hunting visitors coming to Sheriffmuir. It is worth remembering that many Highland clans, great and small, were in the Jacobite army, that there are records on both sides of those who died or were wounded, and the lists of prisoners taken by the two armies remains available. The records are more complete than for many other battles.

## 9.4.

Quite apart from the battle site, Sheriffmuir itself has a great attraction for people. Unspoiled but for plantations, it is a rare green space with its own glen and rivers, a mecca at weekends in particular when there is a considerable flow of visitors, with several

hundred vehicles over the Wharry Burn bridge each day. A great many visit the popular Sheriffmuir Inn, or run, walk, or cycle and in general enjoy a favourite landscape. Their opposition to the proposed pylon line running through Sheriffmuir is complete, and we have interviewed a large number of these visitors. They bring business to Stirling, Bridge of Allan and Dunblane, in particular. Why discourage tourism by destroying a favourite landscape?

9.5

Sheriffmuir was also the scene recently of a major company filming for a large screen production, the location chosen, according to the director, because it was unspoiled countryside. Those who propose despoiling Sheriffmuir would do well to consider the contribution made to the economy by tourism.

9.6.

Visitors often ask why there are not facilities at Sheriffmuir to inform the public, comparable with those at Culloden, with its new visitor centre. The answer, of course, lies in ownership. The battlefield is owned by several landowners, Culloden by the National Trust for Scotland. The landowners give little sign of emulating the Trust in providing even greater attraction for the visitors, but there remains great potential.

9.7.

It has been argued that Sheriffmuir is so covered in plantation that there is really no point in saving it, but it is worth recalling that 70% of the recovered battlefield at Culloden was under plantation when the Trust acquired the land. The plantations at Sheriffmuir were largely planted some 35 years ago with no concern for the archaeology of the site. The Forestry Commission assures us that this cannot happen now. One landowner has expressed his intention of felling his extensive woodland.. Gradually the landscape might be returned to its original appearance, as in the presented early photograph. of open moorland. At Sheriffmuir much is possible providing the landscape is not destroyed before this can happen.

9..8.

Finally, one of the most lame arguments yet presented to justify this destruction, is that as there is already a 132kV pylon line running through the battlefield, there is no reason why

there should not be another, much bigger, more intrusive and, by far more damaging. This line of argument shows just how desperate developers can become.

#### 10. CONCLUSION

A major historical site like the battlefield of Sheriffmuir should have been restored and protected long ago, with much more done to present it to the public as the scene of an important event in Scotland's history. It should not be necessary for the public to have to defend this landscape day after day against those who speak, without knowledge or understanding, about our cultural heritage, and propose its destruction. The applicants must think again about the route they have chosen for the Beaully to Denny power line. The obvious solution, which should satisfy every concern, is to underground it, not across Sheriffmuir and the Ochils but in the carseland to the west of Stirling.

[END]