

THOMAS GOW

A Biography

Thomas Gow was the third son born to Neil Gow in Inver, near Dunkeld, Perthshire, on 24 May, 1736. The families were blacksmiths. As members of the MacPherson Clan, he followed his father when he joined with Ewen MacPherson of Cluny, who had 600 men. They had joined the Stewart Army immediately after the Battle of Prestonpans. At Faulkirk they formed the front line and were acknowledged as the finest troops in the entire command. They missed Culloden, for they had been sent to guard the passes at Badenoch. During their absences, the Gow's houses were burnt to the ground and all their possessions looted. After the defeat, they had to scatter and seek refuge. His wife was driven from the land.

They crept down Loch Ericht with a small party to include Cluny, and accommodated themselves in a small cave, which has since become known as Cluny's cage on the side of Craig Dhubh. Here they were joined by Prince Charlie, who remained in hiding until mid-September of 1746, from whence he left for Skye and eventually France. Soon after, Neil Gow and his family made their way to the coast and then to Spain. In 1747, passage was acquired on a boat to the Spanish Colonies. Once in New Orleans, they made their way to Pennsylvania. The family settled in Upper Darby.

With the advent of war with France, and no chance to inherit the family fortune, at the age of 22, Thomas Gow enlisted in the 60th Royal American Regiment of the British Army. These men were of mixed descent. Mostly German and Dutch. He was placed in the First Battalion, 7th Company, under Captain Gordan. Thomas served at the Siege of Louisbourg. In this engagement, he proved himself to be a reliable soldier even though he lost the tips of two fingers. He was awarded with the rank of Corporal.