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The St Mary's Heritage Project

The Downfall of Cockburn's Meeting House, 1714.

SOURCE: *James Maidment (Ed): A New Book of Old Ballads. 1885.*

The attack on the chapel took place a few days after the death of Queen Anne and accession of George I. William Cockburn had opened his qualified Episcopal chapel in November 1712. Its location is not known. The tune has not been identified.

'The Cross' is Glasgow Cross; 'Jamie' - the Old Pretender; the 'Highland King' - Sir Donald Macdonald of Sleat, a member of the congregation; see William Cockburn's sermon of 1713.

[RGE 2009]

The Downfall of Cockburn's Meeting House, 1714.

To the Tune of *Come Sit Thee Down my Phillis*.

'The following song of triumph upon the destruction of the Episcopal chapel of the Rev. Mr. Cockburn in Glasgow has been carefully preserved by Wodrow, and is now in the Library of the Faculty of Advocates. It is a most delightful specimen of the Presbyterian muse, and is worthy of the important national event it was intended to commemorate. "Curate" Cockburn, as he was designated by his opponents, was a bitter thorn in the side of poor Wodrow, - he was zealous, able, and popular, and had occasioned much annoyance by his denying the validity of Presbyterian baptism, - hence the destruction of his chapel, or meeting-house, as it was then contemptuously called, was a laudable act in the eyes of the rigidly righteous. This striking illustration of puritanical zeal occurred in August 1714. See the *Wodrow Correspondence*, vol. i. p. 562.'

The Downfall of Cockburn's Meeting House, 1714.

To the Tune of *Come Sit Thee Down my Phillis.*

We have not yet forgot, Sir,
How Cockburn's kirk was broke, Sir;
The pulpit gown was pulled down,
And turned into nought, Sir.

The pulpit cloth was rent, Sir,
Unto the Cross was sent, Sir;
The boys that did convey it
Were into prison put, Sir.

The chess-windows they were broke, Sir,
Out o'er the window cast, Sir;
With a convoy of *holo hoi*,
Unto the streets were sent, Sir.

The French are disappointed,
Their wicked plots disjointed;
Poor Cockburn he's affronted,
But the Whigs they're advanced.

Long necked Peggie H[ome], Sir,
Did weep and stay at home, Sir;
'Cause poor Cockburn and his wife
Were forc'd to flee the town, Sir.

And after they were gone, Sir,
They went to Stirling town, Sir;
They thought with their heart and mind
To get poor Jamie home, Sir.

But they were disappointed,
And their wicked plots disjointed;
We'll make them all run and cry,
Oh! we're disappointed.

Their Highland king for fear, Sir,
Was put in such a steer, Sir;
We made his breeks have such stink,
That none could him come near, Sir.

Macdonald is his name, Sir,
Of him you may think shame, Sir;
A Highlander whose name stinks,
You popish rogue go home, Sir.

The chess-window did reel, Sir,
Like to a spinning wheel, Sir;
For Dagon he is fall'n now,
I hope he'll never rise, Sir.

Some say thir lines were compos'd,
By boys in grammar school, Sir;
What they've said, they are ador'd;
Amen, so let it be, Sir.