

succours from being thrown into Stirling Castle. He then despatched James of Douglas, and Sir Robert Keith, the Mareschal of the Scottish army, in order that they might survey, as nearly as they could, the English force, which was now approaching from Falkirk. They returned with information, that the approach of that vast host was one of the most beautiful and terrible sights which could be seen—that the whole country seemed covered with men-at-arms on horse and foot—that the number of standards, banners, and pennons (all flags of different kinds) made so gallant a show, that the bravest and most numerous host in Christendom might be alarmed to see King Edward moving against them.

It was upon the 23rd of June (1314) the King of Scotland heard the news, that the English army were approaching Stirling. He drew out his army, therefore, in the order which he had before resolved on. After a short time, Bruce, who was looking out anxiously for the enemy, saw a body of English cavalry trying to get into Stirling from the eastward. This was the Lord Clifford, who, with a chosen body of 800 horse, had been detached to relieve the castle.

"See, Randolph," said the King to his nephew, "there is a rose fallen from your chaplet." By this he meant, that Randolph had lost some honour, by suffering the enemy to pass where he had been stationed to hinder them. Randolph made no reply, but rushed against Clifford with little more than half his number. The Scots were on foot. The English turned to charge them with their lances, and Randolph drew up his men in close order to receive the onset. He seemed to be in so much danger, that Douglas asked leave of the King to go and assist him. The King refused him permission.

"Let Randolph," he said, "redeem his own fault; I cannot break the order of battle for his sake."