

LANG ANDREW, LANG JOHN

**HIGHWAYS AND
BYWAYS IN THE
BORDER**

Andrew Lang

Highways and Byways in the Border

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Andrew Lang

Highways and Byways in the Border / Illustrated

PREFACE

At the time of his death, my brother had proceeded but a little way in this task which he and I began together, and I must frankly own my inability to cope with it on the lines which he would doubtless have followed. It is probable, for example, that his unrivalled knowledge of "the memories, legends, ballads, and nature of the Border" would have led him to show various important events in a light different from that in which my less intimate acquaintance with the past has enabled me to speak of them; whilst, as regards the Ballad literature of the Border, I cannot pretend to that expert knowledge which he possessed, I do not think, therefore, it is fitting that I should attempt to carry out his intention to deal more fully with those of the Ballads which are most closely connected with places treated of in this volume.

To him, more perhaps than to any other Borderer, every burn and stream, every glen and hill of that pleasant land was

".. lull ot ballad notes,
Borne out of long ago."

It is many a year since he wrote those verses wherein he spoke of

" Old songs that sung themselves to me,
Sweet through a boy's day-dream."

But it was not alone in a boy's day-dream that they sounded. To the end, they echoed and re-echoed in his heart, and no voice ever spoke to him so eloquently as that of Tweed, – by whose banks, indeed, in a spot greatly loved, had it been permitted he would fain have slept his long sleep.

JOHN LANG

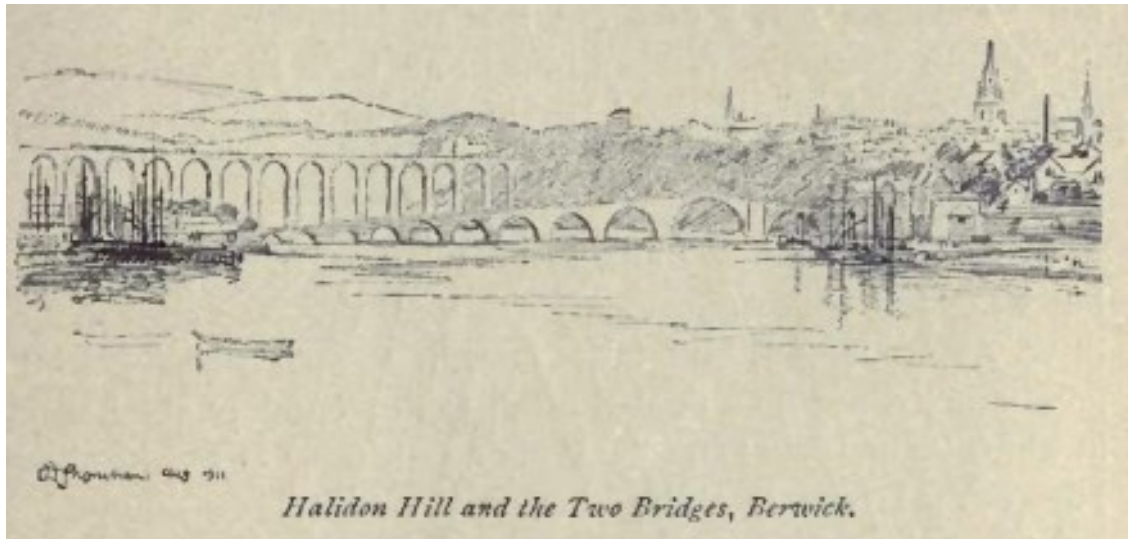
The artist wishes to call attention to the fact that his drawings were made during the long drought of 1911, when all the rivers were exceptionally low.

CHAPTER I BERWICK, TWEED, WHITADDER

The "Border" is a magical word, and on either side of a line that constantly varied in the course of English and Scottish victories and defeats, all is enchanted ground, the home of memories of forays and fairies, of raids and recoveries, of loves and battles long ago. In the most ancient times of which record remains, the English sway, on the east, might extend to and include Edinburgh; and Forth, or even Tay, might be the southern boundary of the kingdom of the Scots. On the west, Strathclyde, originally Cymric or Welsh, might extend over Cumberland; and later Scottish kings might hold a contested superiority over that province. Between east and west, in the Forest of Ettrick, the place-names prove ownership in the past by men of English speech, of Cymric speech, and of Gaelic speech. From a single point of view you may see Penchrise (Welsh) Glengaber (Gaelic) and Skelfhill (English). Once the Border, hereabouts, ran slantwise, from Peel Fell in the Cheviots, across the Slitrig, a water which joins Teviot at Hawick, thence across Teviot to Commonsides Hill above Branksome tower, to the Rankle burn, near Buccleuch, an affluent of Ettrick. Thence, across Ettrick and Yarrow, over Minchmuir, where Montrose rode after the disaster at Philiphaugh, across Tweed, past the camp of Rink, to Torwoodlee, goes that ancient Border, marked by the ancient dyke called the Catrail, in which Sir Walter Scott once had a bad fall during his "grand rides among the hills," when he beat out the music of *Marmion* to the accompaniment of his horse's hooves. The Catrail was a Border, once, and is a puzzle, owing to its ditch between two ramparts. There are many hill forts, mounds even now strong and steep in some places, on the line of the Catrail. The learned derive the word from Welsh *cad*, Gaelic *Cath*, "a battle," and some think that the work defended the Border of the Christian Cymric folk of Strathclyde from the pagan English of Northumbria. In that case, Sir Herbert Maxwell has expressed the pious hope that "the Britons were better Christians than they were military engineers." Is it inconceivable that the word Catrail is a mere old English nickname for a ditch which they did not understand, *the cat's trail*, like Catslack, the wild cat's gap, and other local cat names? I am no philologist!

Once when taking a short cut across a hill round which the road runs from Branksome to Skelfhill, I came upon what looked like the deeply cut banks of an extinct burn. There was no water, and the dyke was not continued above or below. Walking on I met an old gentleman sketching a group of hill forts, artificial mounds, and asked him what this inexplicable deep cutting might be. "It is the Catrail," he said: I had often heard of it, and now I had seen it. The old man went on to show that the Border is still a haunted place. "Man, a queer thing happened to me on Friday night. I was sleeping at Tushielaw Inn, (on the Upper Ettrick) I had steikit the door and the windows: I woke in the middle o' the night, – there was a body in the bed wi' me!" (I made a flippant remark. He took no notice of it.) "I got up and lit the candle, and looked. There was naebody in the bed. I fell asleep, and wakened again. The body was there, it *yammered*. I canna comprehend it." Nor can I, but a pah of amateur psychical researchers hastened to sleep a night at Tushielaw. *They* were undisturbed; and the experience of the old antiquary was "for this occasion only."

"My work seeks digressions," says Herodotus, and mine has already wandered far north of the old Border line of Tweed on the east, and Esk on the western marches, far into what was once the great forest of Ettrick, and now is mainly pasture land, *pastorum loca vasta*. In the old days of the Catrail and the hill forts this territory, "where victual never grew," must have been more thickly populated than it has been in historic times.



We may best penetrate it by following the ancient natural tracks, by the sides of Tweed and its tributaries. We cross the picturesque bridge of Tweed at Berwick to the town which first became part of the kingdom of Scotland, when Malcolm II, at Carham fight, won Lothian from Northumbria. That was in 1018, nine centuries ago. Thenceforward Berwick was one of the four most important places of Scottish trade; the Scots held it while they might, the English took it when they could; the place changed hands several times, to the infinite distress of a people inured to siege and sack. They must have endured much when Malcolm mastered it; and again, in 1172, when Richard de Lacy and Humphrey de Bohun, at war with William the Lion, burned the town. William, after he inadvertently, in a morning mist, charged the whole English army at Alnwick, and was captured, surrendered Berwick to England, by the Treaty of Falaise, when he did homage for his whole kingdom. The English strongly fortified the place, though the fragments of the girdling wall near the railway station, are, I presume, less ancient than the end of the twelfth century. William bought all back again from the crusading Richard of the Lion Heart: the two kings were "well matched for a pair of lions," but William the Lion was old by this time.

In 1216, Alexander II attacked England at Norham Castle, but King John, though seldom victorious, was man enough to drive Alexander off, and brute enough to sack Berwick with great cruelty, setting a lighted torch to the thatch of the house in which he had lain; and "making a jolly fire," as a general of Henry VIII later described his own conduct at Edinburgh. Fifty years later the woman-hating friar who wrote *The Chronicle of Lanercost* describes Berwick as the Alexandria of the period; the Tweed, flowing still and shallow, taking the place of the majestic river of Egypt. One is reminded of the Peebles man who, after returning from a career in India, was seen walking sadly on Peebles Bridge. "I'm a leear," he said, "an unco leear. In India I telled them a' that Tweed at Peebles was wider than the Ganges!" And he had believed it.

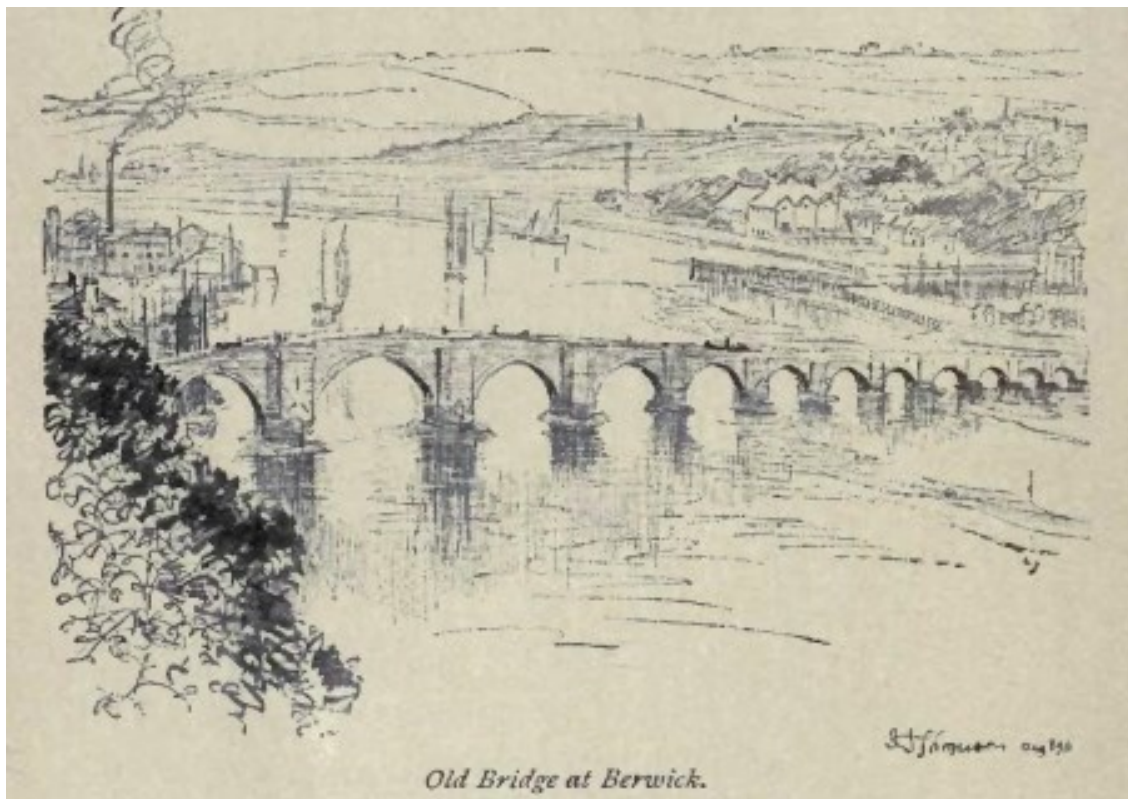
However, Berwick *was* the Scottish Alexandria, and paid into the coffers of the last of her "Kings of Peace," Alexander III, an almost incredible amount of customs dues. After three peaceful reigns, Scotland was a wealthy country, and Berwick was her chief emporium. But then came the death of the Maid of Norway, the usurpation by Edward I, the endless wars for Independence: and Berwick became one of the cockpits of the long strife, while Scotland, like St. Francis, was the mate of Poverty.

While Edward was in France, his "toom tabard," King John, (Balliol) renounced his allegiance. Edward came home and, in the last days of March 1296, crossed Tweed and beleaguered Berwick, in which were many trading merchants of Flanders. The townsfolk burned several of his ships, and sang songs of which the meaning was coarse, and the language, though libellous, was rather

obscure. Edward was not cruel, as a rule, but, irritated by the check, the insults, and the reported murder by the Scots of English merchants, he gave orders for a charge. The ditch and stockade were carried, and a general massacre followed, of which horrible tales are told by a late rhyming chronicler. Hemingburgh, on the English side, says that the women were to some extent protected. The Scots avenged themselves in the same fashion at Corbridge, that old Roman station, but the glory and wealth of Berwick were gone, the place retaining only its military importance. To Berwick Edward II fled after Bannockburn, as rapidly as Sir John Cope sought the same refuge after Prestonpans.

Berwick is, for historically minded tourists, (not a large proportion of the whole), a place of many memories. In July, 1318, Bruce took the castle after a long blockade; an English attempt to recover it was defeated mainly through the skill of Crab, a Flemish military engineer. Guns were not yet in use: "crakkis of war," (guns) were first heard in Scotland, near Berwick, in 1327. In 1333, after a terrible defeat of the Scots on the slopes of Halidon Hill, a short distance north of Berwick, the place surrendered to Edward III, and became the chief magazine of the English in their Scottish wars.

By 1461, the Scots recovered it, but in 1481, the nobles of James III mutinied at Lauder bridge, hanged his favourites, and made no attempt to drive Crook-backed Richard from his siege of Berwick. Since then the town has been in English hands, and was to them, for Scottish wars, a Calais or a Gibraltar. The present bridge of fifteen arches, the most beautiful surviving relic here of old days, was built under James VI and I.



They say that the centre of the railway station covers the site of the hall of the castle of Edward I, in which that prince righteously awarded the crown of Scotland to John Balliol. The town long used the castle as a quarry, then came the railway, and destroyed all but a few low walls, mere hummocks, and the Bell Tower.

Naturally the ancient churches perished after the Blessed Reformation: indeed the castle was used as a quarry for a new church of the period of the Civil War.

Immediately above Berwick, and for some distance, Tweed flows between flat banks, diffusely and tamely: the pools are locally styled "dubs," and deserve the title. The anti-Scottish satirist, Churchill, says,

"Waft me, some Muse, to Tweed's inspiring stream
Where, slowly winding, the dull waters creep
And seem themselves to own the power of sleep."

"In fact," replies a patriotic Scot, "'the glittering and resolute streams of Tweed,' as an old Cromwellian trooper and angler, Richard Franck, styles them, are only dull and sleepy in the dubs where England provides their flat southern bank."

Not flat, however, are the banks on either side of Whitadder, Tweed's first tributary, which joins that river two or three miles above Berwick. From its source in the Lammermuirs, almost to its mouth, a distance of between thirty and forty miles, the Whitadder is quite an ideal trouting stream, "sore fished" indeed, and below Chirnside, injured, one fears, by discharge from Paper Mills there, yet full of rippling streams and boulder-strewn pools that make one itch to throw a fly over them. But most of the water is open to the public, and on days when local angling competitions are held it is no uncommon sight to see three, or maybe four, competitors racing for one stream or pool, the second splashing in and whipping the water in front of the first, regardless of unwritten sporting law; a real case of "deil tak the hindmost."

"Free-fishing" no doubt, from some points of view, is a thing to be desired, but to him who can remember old times, when the anglers he met in the course of a day's fishing might easily be counted on the fingers of one hand, the change now is sad. Yet men, they say, do still in the open stretches of Whitadder catch "a pretty dish" now and again. They must be very early birds, one would suppose – and perhaps they fish with the lure that the early bird is known to pick up.

On both sides of Whitadder are to be seen places of much interest. First, Edrington Castle, on the left bank a few miles from the river's mouth, once a place of great strength, now crushed by the doom that has wrecked so many of the old strongholds in this part of the country – it was for ages used as a convenient quarry. Then, on the right bank, higher up, on an eminence overhanging the stream, stands Hutton Hall, a picturesque old keep of the fifteenth century, with additions of later date. The original tower was probably built by the Lord Home, who obtained the lands in 1467 by his marriage with the daughter of George Ker of Samuelton. Nearly opposite Hutton, about a mile away, are the ruins of an old castle at Edington. It is remarkable the number of names in this district, all beginning with "Ed": – Edrington, Edington, Ednam, Eden, Edrom, Edinshall, all probably taking their origin from Edwin, king of Northumbria, 626-633. Or does the derivation go still further back, to Odin?

Higher up, we come to Allanton and the junction of Whitadder with its tributary, Blackadder. Near this lies Allanbank, haunt for many generations of that apparition so famous in Scotland, "Pearlin Jean." Jean, or rather Jeanne, it is said, was a beautiful young French lady, in Paris or elsewhere loved and left by a wicked Baronet of Allanbank, Sir Robert Stuart. The tale is some hundreds of years old, but "Pearlin Jean" and her pathetic story still retain their hold on the imagination of Border folk. The legend goes that when the false lover, after a violent scene, deserted his bride that should have been, the poor lady accidentally met her death, but not before she had vowed that she would "be in Scotland before him." And sure enough, the first thing that greeted the horrified gaze of the baronet as he crossed the threshold of his home, bringing another bride than her he had loved and left, was the dim form of Jeanne, all decked, as had ever been her wont, in the rich lace that she loved, and from which the apparition derived the name of Pearlin Jean, "pearlin" being the Scottish term for lace. Tradition says nothing as to the end of the false lover, but the ghost was still known – so say the country people – to have haunted the house until it was pulled down sometime early in last century.

Sir Thomas Dick Lauder in his "Scottish Rivers" tells how an old woman then anxiously enquired: "Where will Pearlin Jean gang noo when the house is dismolded?"

That is the tale of "Pearlin Jean" as it is generally told. There is another story, however, less known but much more probable.

When the reckless extravagance of succeeding generations ended as it always must end; when cards and dice and the facile aid of wine and women had sent bit after bit of the broad lands of an old family into alien keeping, and not tardily the day had come when the last acre slipped through heedless fingers, and even the household furniture – all that remained to the last Baronet of Allanbank – was brought to the hammer, there was one room in the old house into which, ere the gloaming fell, the country folk peered with awe greater even than their curiosity. It was a room in which for near on two generations the dust had been left to lie undisturbed on table and chair and mantel-shelf, a room whose little diamond shaped window panes the storms of more than fifty winters had dimmed, and on whose hearth still lay the ashes of a fire quenched half a century back. Here it was that Pearlin Jean had passed those few not unhappy months of her life, while yet a false lover was not openly untrue to her. But into this chamber, since Jean quitted it for the last time no servant would venture by day or by night, unaccompanied, lest in it might be seen the wraith of that unfortunate and much wronged lady.

It is a story common enough, unhappily, that of Jeanne. She was the daughter of a Flemish Jew, very beautiful, very young, very light-hearted and loving, and unsuspecting of evil, of a disposition invincibly generous and self-sacrificing. In an evil hour the Fates threw across her path Sir Robert Stuart of Allanbank, then visiting the Hague during his travels on the Continent. Sir Robert was a man now no longer in his first youth, self-indulgent, callous of the feelings and rights of others where they ran athwart his own wants or desires, one to whom the seamy side of life had long been as an open book. His crop of wild oats, indeed, was ere now of rankest growth, and already on the face of the sower were lines that told of the toil of sowing. But he was a handsome man, with a fluent, honeyed tongue, and it did not take him long to steal the heart from one who, like the poor little Jeanne, suspected no evil.

To the Merse and to Allanbank there came word that the land was returning to his home. The house was to be put in order, great preparations to be made. No doubt, folk thought, all pointed to a wedding in the near future; the wild young baronet was about to settle down at last – and not before it was time, if what folk said regarding his last visit to Allanbank might be trusted. But the local newsmongers were wrong, in this instance at least of the home-coming and what might be expected to follow. When Sir Robert's great coach lumbered up to the door of Allanbank, there stepped down, not the baronet alone, but a very beautiful young woman, a vision all in lace and ribbons, whom the wondering servants were instructed to regard in future as their mistress. And though neighbours – with a few male exceptions – of course kept severely aloof, steadily ignoring the scandalous household of Allanbank, yet after a time, in spite of the fact that no plain gold band graced the third finger of Jeanne's left hand, servants, and the country folk generally, came to have a great liking, and even an affection, for the kindly little foreign lass with the merry grey eyes and the sunny hair, and the quaintly tripping tongue. And for a time Jeanne was happy, singing gaily enough from morning to night some one or other of her numberless sweet old French *chansons*. She had the man she adored; what mattered neighbours? And so the summer slid by.

But before the autumn there came a change. The merry lass was no longer so merry, songs came less often from her lips, tears that she could not hide more and more often brimmed over from her eyes; and day by day her lover seemed to become more short in the temper and less considerate of her feelings, more inclined to be absent from home. In a word, he was bored, and he was not the man to conceal it. Then when April was come, and the touch of Spring flushed every bare twig in copse or wooded bank down by the pools where trout lay feeding, when thrush and blackbird, perched high on topmost hough, poured out their hearts in a glory of song that rose and fell on the still evening air, a little daughter lay in Jeanne's arms, and happiness again for a brief space was hers. But not

for long. The ardour born anew in her man's self-engrossed heart soon died down. To him now it seemed merely that a squalling infant had been added to his already almost insufferable burden of a peevish woman.

More and more, Jeanne was left to her own society and to the not inadequate solace of her little child. Then "business" took Stuart to Edinburgh. Months passed, and he did not return; nor did Jeanne once hear of him. But there came at last for her a day black and terrible, when the very foundations of her little world crumbled and became as the dust that drives before the wind. From Edinburgh came a mounted messenger, bearing a letter, written by his man of business, which told the unhappy girl that Sir Robert Stuart was about to be married to one in his own rank of life; that due provision should be made for the child, and sufficient allowance settled on herself, provided that she returned to her own country and refrained from causing further scandal or trouble. She made no outcry, poor lass; none witnessed her bitter grief that night. But in the morning, she and the child were gone, and on her untouched bed lay the lace and the jewels she once had liked to wear because in early days it had pleased her to hear the man she loved say that she looked well in them.

Time went by, and Stuart, unheeding of public opinion, brought his bride to Allanbank. Of Jeanne he had had no word; she had disappeared – opportunely enough, he thought. Probably she had long ago gone back to her own land, and by this time the countryside had perhaps found some other nine days' wonder to cackle over. So he returned, driving up to the house in great state – as once before he had driven up.

Surely an ill-omened home-coming, this, for the new bride! As the horses dashed up the avenue, past little groups of gaping country people uncertain whether to cheer or to keep silence, suddenly there darted from a clump of shrubbery the flying figure of a woman carrying in her arms a little child, and ere the postilions could pull up, or any bystander stop her, she was down among the feet of the plunging horses, and an iron heel had trodden out the life of the woman. It was the trampled body of that Jeanne whom he had lightly loved for a time and then tossed aside when weary of his toy, that met the horrified gaze of the white-lipped, silent man who got hurriedly down from inside that coach, leaving his terrified bride to shrink unheeded in her corner. And perhaps now he would have given much to undo the past and to make atonement for the wrong he had done. At least, he may have thought, there was the child to look after; and his heart – what there was of it – went out with some show of tenderness towards the helpless infant. But here was the beginning of strife, for Jeanne's baby did by no means appeal to the new-made bride. Nor was that lady best pleased to find in her withdrawing room a fine portrait in oils of her unlawful predecessor.

And so there was little peace in that house; and as little comfort as peace, for it came to pass that no servant would remain there. From the day of her death Pearlin Jean "walked", they said, and none dared enter the room which once she had called her own. That, of all places, was where she was most certain to be seen. For one day, when the master entered the room alone, they that were near heard his voice pleading, and when he came out it was with a face drawn and grey, and his eyes, they said, gazed into vacancy like those of one that sees not. So the place got ever an increasingly bad name, and the ghost of the poor unhappy Jeanne could get no rest, but went to and fro continually. And long after that day had arrived when her betrayer, too, slept with his fathers, the notoriety of the affair waxed so great that seven learned ministers, tradition says, united vainly in efforts to lay the unquiet spirit of Pearlin Jean. So long as the old house stood, there, they will tell you, might her ghost be seen, pathetically constant to the place of her sorrow. And there may not be wanting, even now, those who put faith in the possibility of her slender figure being seen as it glides through the trees where the old house of Allanbank once stood.

Some miles above Allanton, on the left bank of Whitadder, stands Blanerne, home of a very ancient Scottish family. And farther back from the river are the crumbling fragments of Billie Castle – "Bylie," in twelfth century charters, – and of Bunkle, or, more properly, Bonkyll, Castle. All these have met the fate assigned to them by the old local rhyming prophecy:

"Bunkle, Billie, and Blanerne,
Three castles Strang as aim,
Built whan Davy was a bairn;
They'll a' gang down
Wi' Scotland's crown,
And ilka ane sail be a cairn."

A cairn each has been, without doubt, or rather a quarry, from which material for neighbouring farm buildings has been ruthlessly torn. Of Blanerne, I believe the Keep still exists, as well as some other remains, to tell of what has been; but Billie Castle is now little more than a green mound at foot of which runs a more or less swampy burn, with here and there a fragment of massive wall still standing; whilst Bunkle is a mere rubble of loose stones. AH these were destroyed in Hertford's raid in 1544, when so much of the Border was "birnd and owaiertrown."



Buttresses with Canopied Niches at Edrom.

More ruthless than Hertford's, however, was the work at Bunkle of our own people in 1820. They pulled down an eleventh century church in order to build the present edifice. Only a fragment of the original building remains, but many of its carved stones may be seen in the walls of the existing church. Possibly the old structure was in a bad state of repair. One does not know for certain; but at date of its demolition the building appears to have been entire.

Our ancestors of a hundred years ago were not to be "lippeded to" where ecclesiastical remains were concerned. They had what amounted to a passion for pulling down anything that was old, and where they did not pull down, they generally covered with hideous plaster any inside wall or ornamental work, which to them perhaps might savour of "papisty." Parish ministers, even late in the eighteenth and early in the nineteenth centuries, appear to have taken no interest in those beautiful Norman remains, numerous fragments of which even now exist in Berwickshire; of all those ministers who compiled the old Statistical Account of this county, but one or two make any mention of such

things. One fears, indeed, that to some of those reverend gentlemen, or to others like them of later date, we are indebted for the destruction of priceless relics of the past. At Duns, for instance, as late as 1874 the original chancel of an old Norman church was pulled down by order of the incumbent, "to improve the church-yard." Then, as already mentioned, there is Bunkle, an instance of very early Norman work, pulled down in 1820. At Chirnside, the tower of its Norman church was sacrificed in 1750. though great part of the old church walls remain; in the south side is a Norman doorway six feet ten inches in height to the lintel and two feet ten and three-quarter inches wide. Of Edrom church, a very beautiful Norman doorway, said to be "the finest of its style in Scotland," has been preserved, entirely owing, apparently, to the fact that it had been made the entrance to a burial vault. At Legerwood, near Earlstoun, where stands the chancel of a Norman church, the arch is still entire but is defaced with plaster. Berwickshire, however, is not the only part of the Border where such things have been done.



Higher up Tweed, at Stobo in Peeblesshire, there is an interesting old church of Norman structure, with sixteenth and seventeenth century alterations; roof and interior fittings are modern, and the building is still used as the Parish Church. Sixteenth and seventeenth century alterations have now at least age to commend them, but it is difficult to see what plea can be advanced for some of those of comparatively recent date. According to "Ecclesiastical Architecture of Scotland," the most serious injury inflicted on the building was the entire destruction of the Norman chancel arch, in order to insert a modern pointed one, at the restoration of the church in 1868.

Over in Teviotdale, too, the same passion for altering, or for sweeping away relics of old times, ran its course. In 1762, the Town Council of Hawick gave orders for the destruction of the Town's Cross. So Popish a thing as a Cross could not be tolerated by those worthy and "unco" pious persons. The treasurer's accounts of the time show that tenpence per day was paid to two men for the work of taking down the Cross, and the carved stones seem to have been sold afterwards for eleven shillings and sixpence. No doubt the worthy bailies congratulated themselves on having not only rid the town of an emblem of Popery, but on having made quite a handsome monetary profit over the transaction.

But to return to Whitadder. In his "Scottish Rivers," Sir Thomas Dick Lauder writes of Billy Castle as the scene of a grisly tale connected with the Homes. He tells how, to the best of his reckoning about a century prior to the date at which he wrote, an old lady of that family resided here in a somewhat friendless condition, but with a considerable household of servants, chief of whom was a butler who had been in her service for many years, and in whose integrity she had entire confidence. This old lady, it seems, was in the habit of personally collecting rents from her tenants, and as there were then no country banks in which to deposit the money, it was her custom to count it in presence of the butler, prior to locking the guineas away in a strong cupboard in her bedroom. The door of this room was secured by an ingenious arrangement, whereby a heavy brass bolt, or cylinder, was allowed to fall by its own weight into an opening made exactly to fit it. To an eye in the head of the cylinder was attached a cord which worked through a pulley fastened to the ceiling, and thence by a series of running blocks passed to the bedside. Thus the old lady, without troubling to get out of bed, could bolt or unbolt her door at will, and so long as the cylinder was down, no one could possibly enter the room. Now, the butler had for years witnessed this counting and stowing away of the rent monies, and temptation had never yet assailed him. He might, indeed, plume himself on his honesty, and say with Verges: "I thank God I am as honest as any man living that is an old man and no honester than I." But alas! there came a night when the guineas chinked too seductively, and the devil whispered in the butler's ear. Perhaps some small financial embarrassment of his own was troubling the man. Anyhow, it came to his mind that if he could quietly fill up the hole into which the bolt of his mistress's bedroom door dropped, he might help himself to as much money as he needed. The time of year was the cherry season. What so easy as to fill up the bolt hole with cherry stones? The "geans" grew thick in Scotland, and they were black ripe now. "At midnight," says Sir Thomas, "he stole into his mistress's chamber, cut her throat from ear to ear, broke open her cabinet, and possessed himself of her money; and although he might have walked down stairs and out at the door without exciting either alarm or suspicion, he opened the window and let himself down nearly two stories high, broke his leg, and lay thus among the shrubbery till morning, without ever attempting to crawl away. He was seized, tried, condemned, and executed."

It is grisly enough, but hardly so grisly as the real story of what happened. The scene of the murder, however, was not Billy Castle – which, indeed, had then been dismantled and in ruins for two hundred years – but Linthill House, a fine old mansion standing on a "brae" overhanging Eyewater, five or six miles from Billy. Linthill is now inhabited by families of work-people, but it is still in good preservation, and at date of Sir Thomas Dick Lauder's story (1752), must have been a very fine specimen of the old Scottish château.

The old lady's room was entered as Sir Thomas describes, but the butler did not immediately cut her throat. She was awakened by the sound of the stealthy rifling of the cupboard, or strong iron-bound box, in which her valuables were kept, and with that pluck which is characteristic of the old-time Scottish lady, she jumped up to grapple with the robber. Then he cut her throat, and leaving her for dead on the bed, proceeded with his rifling. A slight noise, nowever, disturbed him, and, looking round, a terrifying sight met his gaze; the woman whom he had believed to be dead was on her feet, blindly groping her bloody way along the wall to the bell. Before he could seize her and complete his work, she had pulled the rope with all the strength left to her, and had alarmed the other servants. Thus the murderer had no opportunity to leave by way of the stairs. He jumped from the window –

no great feat for an active man with his wits about him. But the butler was flurried; perhaps, also, he was stout, as is not uncommon with pampered servants. In any case, he missed his footing, came down badly, and broke his leg. He did not, however, lie where he fell, inert and helpless. With painful effort the man dragged himself to a field near by, where, amongst sweet-scented flowering beans, he lay concealed for some days. On the fourth day, as he lay groaning beside a tiny spring of water which still flows near the middle of the field, he chanced to be seen by some children, who gave information. The wretched man was taken, tried, and executed – the last instance in Scotland of a criminal being hung in chains. The blood of a murdered person, they say, refuses to be washed clean from any wood-work into which it may have soaked – witness that ghastly dark patch that disfigures a floor in Holyrood. Here at Linthill at least there is no doubt of the fact that those marks remain; in spite of very visible attempts to remove the stains from the wood-work by planing them out, the prints of the poor lady's bloody hands still cling to the oak wainscoting of the gloomy old room where the deed was committed. About house and grounds there hangs now an air of dejection and decay, though Eye ripples cheerily just beyond the garden foot and the surrounding landscape is bright with pleasant woods and smiling fields.

Surely if ever ghost walked, it should be here at Linthill; that midnight bell should clang, a window be thrown open, the thud be heard of a heavy body falling on the ground. But it is not mistress or man that haunts that house. It is of other things they tell who have been there; of an upper chamber, to which nightly comes the shuffling tramp of men bearing from a vehicle which is heard to drive up to the house door, a heavy weight, which they deposit on the floor. More shuffling, a room door quietly closed, the sound of retreating steps, then silence. "Hout!" say the womenfolk of those who now inhabit part of the old house, "it'll no be naething." But they look behind them with a glance not too assured, and the voice that says it is "naething" is not over-steady in tone.

A little higher up the river than Blannerne we come to Broomhouse, where also once stood a castle. In a field on this estate is a spot, still called "Bawtie's Grave," where the body of Sir Anthony Darcy – "Le Sieur de la Beauté" – Warden of the Marches in 1517, is said to lie buried. Darcy, or de la Bastie (or de la Beauté), as he was generally called, was a Frenchman, a man possessed of great personal beauty and attraction; but the fact that he had been appointed Warden of the Marches and Captain of Dunbar Castle in room of Lord Home, who had been treacherously put to death in Edinburgh, rendered him very obnoxious to the inhabitants of that part of Berwickshire in which the Homes held sway. It was through Darcy that Lord Home and his brother had been decoyed to Edinburgh, said the kin and supporters of the Home family. Vengeance must be taken.

Nor was time wasted over it. An occasion soon arose when Darcy in his capacity of Warden had to visit Langton Tower, (no great distance from Duns), in order to settle some family feud of the Cockburns, relatives by marriage of the Homes. Here, outside the tower, Sir David Home, with a party of horsemen, came up, and speedily picked a quarrel with the Sieur. Swords were out in a minute, and Home's band was too strong for Darcy and his men. Several of the French attendants of the Sieur fell, and as the rest of his party were mostly Borderers, and therefore not very eager to fight for him, the Warden found himself compelled to ride for it. He headed in the direction of Dunbar. But the ground over which he had to gallop was swampy, and de la Beauté's heavy horse sank fetlock deep at every stride, finally "bogging" in a morass some distance to the east of Duns. Darcy is said to have continued his flight on foot, but the chase did not last long; Home and his followers bore down upon him – a well-mounted "little foot-page," they say, the first man up.

"The leddies o' France may wail and mourn,
May wail and mourn fu' sair,
For the Bonny Bawtie's lang broun lucks
They'll never see waving mair."

They were on him at once; his head was fiercely hewn off, carried in triumph to Home Castle, and there fastened to the end of a spear on the battlements, to gaze blind-eyed over the wide Merse, the land he had tried to govern. Pitscottie says that Sir David Home of Wedderburn cut off Darcy's long flowing locks, and plaiting them into a wreath, knit them as a trophy to his saddle bow.

Perhaps the *Sieur* in the end got no more than his deserts, or at least no more than he may frequently have dealt out to others. He came of a stock famed in France for cruelty and oppression; and the peasants round Allevard, in the Savoie, – where stand the fragments of what was once his ancestral home – still tell of that dreadful night when *Messire Satan* himself was seen to take his stand on the loftiest battlement of the castle. And they relate how then the walls rocked and swayed and with hideous crash toppled to the ground. Perhaps it was this very catastrophe which sent the "Bonny Bawtie" to Scotland.

A cairn once marked the spot where the *Sieur's* body found a resting place. But, unfortunately, such a ready-made quarry of stones attracted the notice of a person who contracted to repair the district roads. It is many years ago now, and there was no one to say him nay. He carted away the interesting land-mark and broke up the cairn into road metal.

Home Castle still dominates this part of the Border, but no longer is it the building of "Bawtie's" day. That was pulled down in the time of the Protector, by Cromwell's soldiers under Colonel Fenwick. Thomas Cockburn, Governor in 1650 when Fenwick summoned the castle to surrender, was valiant only on paper; a few rounds from the English guns caused his valour to ooze from his fingers' ends, and sent up the white flag. That was the end of the old castle. Fenwick dismantled it and pulled down the walls; the present building, imposing as it seems, standing grim and erect on its rocky height, is but a dummy fortress, built in the early eighteenth century on the old foundations, from the old material, by the Earl of Marchmont. The original building dated from the thirteenth century, and a stormy life it had, like many Border strongholds alternately in Scottish and in English hands. In 1547, after a gallant defence by the widow of the fourth Lord Home, it was taken by the English under Somerset; two years later it was recaptured by that lady's son, the fifth Lord Home.

"Too old at forty," is the cry raised in these days – presumably by those who have not yet attained to that patriarchal age – but when a state of war was the chronic condition of the Borderland, men of vastly greater age than forty were not seldom able to show the way to warriors young enough to be their grandsons. At this taking of Home Castle in the closing days of December 1548, it was a man over sixty, one of the name of Home, who was the first to mount the wall. The attack was made at night, on the side where the castle was both naturally and artificially strongest, and where consequently least vigilant guard might probably be kept. As Home, ahead of his comrades, began to slide his body cautiously over the parapet, the suspicions of a sentry pacing at some little distance were roused, and he challenged and turned out the guard. This man had not actually *seen* anything, the night was too dark for that, but he had, as it were, *smelt* danger, with that strange extra sense that sometimes in such circumstances raises man more nearly to the level of his superior in certain things – the wild animal. However, in this case the sentry got no credit, but only ridicule, from his comrades, for examination showed that there was no cause whatever for his having brought the guard out into the cold, looking for mares' nests over the ramparts. Home and his party had dropped hurriedly back, and during the time that the Englishmen were glancing carelessly over the wall, they lay securely hidden close at its base. As soon, however, as the English soldiers had returned to the snug warmth of their guard-room, and the mortified sentry was once more pacing up and down, Home was again the first of the Scots to clamber up and to fall upon the astonished Englishman, whom this time he slew, a fate which overtook most of the castle's garrison. "Treachery helped the assailants," said the English. "Home Castle was taken by night, and treason, by the Scots," is the entry in King Edward's Journal.

Again, in 1569, it was battered by the heavy siege guns of the Earl of Sussex and once more for a time was held by-England; finally in 1650 came its last experience of war. It was at Home Castle that Mary of Gueldres, Queen of James II of Scotland, lay whilst her husband besieged Roxburgh in

1460. One hundred and six years later, Mary Queen of Scots was there on her way to Craigmillar from Jedburgh.

In days when the bale-fire's red glare on the sky by night, or its heavy column of smoke by day, was the only means of warning the country of coming invasion from the south, Home Castle, with its wide outlook, was the ideal centre of a system of beacon signals on the Scottish border. The position was matchless for such purpose; nothing could escape the watchful eyes of those perched on the lofty battlements of this "Sentinel of the Merse," no flaming signal from the fords over Tweed fail to be seen. In an instant, at need, fires would be flashing their messages over all the land, warning not only the whole Border, but Dunbar, Haddington, Edinburgh, and even the distant shores of life. "A baile is warnyng of ther cumyng quhat power whatever thai be of. Twa bailes togedder at anis thai cumyng in deide. Four balis, ilk ane besyde uther and all at anys as four candills, sal be suthfast knowlege that thai ar of gret power and menys." So ran part of the instructions issued in the fifteenth century. But almost in our own day – at least in the days of the grandfathers of some now living – Home Castle flashed its warning and set half Scotland flying to arms. Britain then lived under the lively apprehension of a French invasion. With an immense army, fully equipped, Napoleon lay at Boulogne waiting a favourable opportunity to embark. Little wonder, therefore, that men were uneasy in their minds, and that ere they turned in to bed of a night country folk cast anxious glances towards some commanding "Law" or Fell, where they knew that a beacon lay ready to be fired by those who kept watch. In the dull blackness of the night of 31st January, 1804, the long-looked-for summons came. All over the Border, on hill after hill where of old those dreaded warnings had been wont to flash, a tiny spark was seen, then a long tongue of flame leaping skyward. The French were coming in earnest at last!

Just as ready as it had been in the fiercest days of Border warfare was now the response to the sudden call to arms. Over a country almost roadless, rural members of the various Yeomanry corps galloped through the mirk night, reckless of everything save only that each might reach his assembly point in time to fall in with his comrades. Scarce a man failed to report himself as ready for service – in all the Border I believe there were but two or three. And though it turned out that the alarm fires had been lit through an error of judgment on the part of one of the watchers, there is no doubt that to the bulk of the men who turned out so full of courage and enthusiasm that night, the feeling at first, if mixed with relief, was one of disappointment that they had had no chance of trying a fall with "Boney" and his veterans. The man who was the first to fire his beacon on that 31st of January was a watcher at Home Castle. Peering anxiously through the gloom, he imagined that he saw a light flare up in the direction of Berwick. It was in reality only a fire lit by Northumbrian charcoal-burners that he saw, and its locality was many points to the south of Berwick, but as the blaze sprang higher, and the flames waxed, the excited watcher lost his head, and, forgetting to verify the position, feverishly set a light to his own beacon and sent the summons to arms flying over the Border. Had it not chanced that the watcher by the beacon on St. Abb's Head was a man of cool temperament, all Scotland had been buzzing that night like a hornets' nest. This man, however, reasoned with himself that news of an invasion, if it came at all, must necessarily come from a coastal, and not from an inland station, and therefore he very wisely did not repeat the signal.

The spirit shown on the occasion of this false alarm, and the promptitude with which yeomanry and volunteers turned out, are things of which Borderers are justly proud. Many of the yeomanry rode from forty to fifty miles that night in order to be in time; and even greater distances were covered. Sir Walter Scott himself was in Cumberland when word of the firing of the beacons came to him, but within twenty-four hours he and his horse had reached Dalkeith, where his regiment was assembled, a distance of one hundred miles from his starting point. In one or two instances, where members of a corps chanced to be from home, in Edinburgh on private business, mother or wife sent off with the troop when it marched, the horse, uniform, and arms of husband or son, so that nothing might prevent them from joining their regiment at Dalkeith. The substance of the message then sent to her

son by the widowed mother of the writer's grandfather, will be found in Sir Walter's Notes to *The Antiquary*. If in our day like cause should unhappily arise, if the dread shadow of invasion should ever again fall on our land, no doubt the response would be as eager as it was in 1804; the same spirit is there that burned in our forefathers. But of what value now-a-days are half-trained men if they come to be pitted against the disciplined troops of a Continental Power? Of no more avail than that herd of wild bulls that the Spaniards in 1670 tried to drive down on Morgan's Buccaneers at Panama.

Many a tale is still told of the events of that stirring night of 31st January, 1804. One of the Selkirk volunteers, a man named Chisholm, had been married that day; but there was no hesitation on his part. "Weel, Peggy, my woman," he said in parting with his day-old bride, "if I'm killed, ye'll hear tell o't. And if I'm no killed, I'll come back as sune as I can." A particularly "canny" Scot was another volunteer, whose mother anxiously demanded ere he marched if he had any money with him in case of need. "Na, na!" he said, "they may kill me if they like, but they'll get nae siller off *me*."

A few cases of the white feather there were, of course; in so large a body of undisciplined men there could hardly fail to be some who had no stomach for the fight, but instances of cowardice were surprisingly few. One or two there were who hid under beds; and one youth, as he joined the ranks, was heard to blubber, "Oh, mother, mother, I wish I'd been born a woman." But of those who should have mustered at Kelso, only two out of five hundred failed to answer to their names, and possibly they may have had legitimate cause for their absence. Many of the members of foot regiments were long distances away when the alarm was given. Of the Duns volunteers, for instance, two members were fifteen miles distant when the beacons blazed up. Yet they made all speed into the town, got their arms and accoutrements, marched all through the night, and fell in alongside their comrades at Haddington next forenoon. Many – all the men of Lessudden, for example – marched without uniforms. Anunpleasant experience had been theirs had they fallen, in civilian dress, into the hands of the enemy.

To return to Whitadder. – Some miles above Broomhouse we come to Cockburn Law, a conical hill of about 1100 feet in height, round three sides of which the river bends sharply. On the northern slope of the hill is the site, and what little remains to be traced, of Edinshall, a circular tower dating probably from the seventh century. According to the old Statistical Account of the Parish, the walls of this tower, – Edwin's Hall, – measured in diameter 85 feet 10 inches, and in thickness 15 feet 10 inches, enclosing in their depths many cells or chambers. Their height must once have been very considerable, for even at date of the Statistical Account – the end of the eighteenth century – they stood about eight feet high, and were surrounded on all sides by a scattered mass of fallen stones. The ground around shows traces of having been fortified, but the tower itself probably was never a place of strength. The stones of which the building was constructed were large, and close fitting, but not bound together with mortar, which indeed was not in use in Scotland so early as the date of the building of Edinshall, – hence the tower was a quarry too convenient to be respected by agriculturists of a hundred years ago. Most of the material of the ancient building has been taken to construct drains, or to build "dry stane dykes." The "rude hand of ignorance" has indeed been heavy on the antiquities of Scotland.

Where the stream bends sharply to the left as one fishes up those glorious pools and boulder-strewn rapids, there stands a cottage not far removed from Edinshall, which on the Ordnance Survey maps bears the very un-Scottish name of Elba. It has, however, not even a remote connection with the place of exile of an Emperor. The learned would have us believe that the name is derived from the Gaelic "Eil," a hill, and "both," a dwelling. It may be so; but it seems much more likely that "Elba" is merely the Ordnance Survey people's spelling of the word "elbow," as it is pronounced in Scotland; the river here makes an extremely sharp bend, or elbow. Near Elba is an old copper mine which was worked to advantage by an English company midway in the eighteenth century. Abandoned after a time, it was reopened in 1825, but was soon again closed. Copper was not there in sufficient quantity to pay; probably it had been worked out before. Four or five miles from here we come to Abbey St.

Bathans, a name which conjures up visions of peaceful old ruins nestling among whispering elms by clear and swift flowing waters. There is now, however, little of interest to be found. St. Bathans was originally a convent of Cistercian Nuns, with the title of a Priory, and was founded towards the end of the twelfth century by Ada, daughter of William the Lion. As late as 1833, the then recently written Statistical Account of the Parish says that the north and east walls of the church "still bear marks of antiquity," and that in the north wall is "an arched door which communicated with the residence of the Nuns"; but, says the Account, this door "is now built up."

"Adjoining the church, and between it: and the Whitadder, remains of the Priory were visible a few years ago." Where are they now? Built into some wall or farm building, no doubt, or broken up, perhaps, to repair roads or field drains. And where is the font, with its leaden pipe, that stood "in the wall near the altar"? Perhaps – if it still exists, unbroken, – it may now be used as a trough for feeding pigs, as has been the fate of many another such vessel. It is hard to forgive the dull, brutish ignorance that wilfully wrecked so much of the beauty and interest that the past bequeathed to us.

It is not easy to say who was the saint from whom Abbey St. Bathans inherited its name. Probably it was Bothan, Prior of Old Mailros in the seventh century, a holy man of great fame in the Border. There is a well or spring not far distant from the church of St. Bathans, whose miraculous powers of healing all sickness or disease were doubtless derived from the good Father. These powers have now long decayed, but as late as 1833 – possibly even later – some curious beliefs regarding the well were held in the neighbourhood, and its waters, it was well known, would "neither fog nor freeze" in the coldest weather.

Shortly after leaving Abbey St. Bathans, as we gradually near the Lammermuirs, the land on both sides of Whitadder begins more to partake of the hill-farm variety, where grouse and blackgame swarm thick on the stooked corn in late autumn. From the south side, a little above Ellemford, there enters a considerable stream, the water of Dye, said to be of good repute as regards its trout. One of these high, round backed hills here is probably the scene of some great battle of old times. "Manslaughter Law" is the satisfying name of the hill. There is a tumulus still remaining on the north side of it, and near at hand weapons have been dug up, says the Statistical Account. One wonders what their fate may have been. They, at any rate, would surely be preserved? It is by no means so sure. One sword, at least, that was found many years ago on the west side of Manslaughter Law, met with the fate one might expect from the kind of people who used to quarry into beautiful old abbeys in order to get material to build a pig-stye. It was taken to the village smithy, and there "improved" out of existence – made into horseshoes perhaps, or a "grape for howkin' tatties." Had it been a helmet that was then unearthed, no doubt a use would have been found for it such as that which the Elizabethan poet sadly suggests for the helmet of the worn out old man-at-arms:

"His helmet now shall make a hive for bees."

Eastward from the spot where this sword was found is a barrow which, says the Statistical Account, "probably covers more arms"; and on a hill by Waich Water, a tributary of the Dye, are the Twin-Law Cairns, which are supposed to mark the resting place of twin brothers who fell here, – perhaps in pre-historic times. Tradition says that these two were commanders of rival armies, Scottish and Saxon, and that, neither at the time being aware of their relationship, they undertook to fight it out, as champions of the rival hosts. When both lay dead, some old man, who had known the brothers in their childhood, gazing on them, with grief discovered the relationship of the slain men; and to commemorate the tragedy, the soldiers of both hosts formed lines from Waich Water to the hill's summit, and passed up stones wherewith they built these cairns.

At Byrecleuch Ridge, towards the head of Dye Water, is another enormous and very remarkable cairn called the Mutiny Stones. This great mass of piled up stone measures two hundred and forty feet in length; where broadest, seventy-five feet; and its greatest height is eighteen feet. What does

it commemorate? A great fight, say some, that took place in 1402 between the Earl of Dunbar and Hepburn of Hailes, in which the latter was killed. A prehistoric place of sepulture, hazards Sir Herbert Maxwell. But it was not here that Hepburn fell; that was elsewhere in the Merse. And they were little likely in the fifteenth century to have taken such titanic pains to hand his memory down to posterity. The prehistoric place of sepulture sounds the more probable theory. But why "Mutiny Stones"? There must surely be some local tradition more satisfying than that of the Hepburn-Dunbar fight.

The upper part of Whitadder must once have been well fitted to check hostile raids from the south whose object was to strike the fat Lothians through the passes over the Lammermuirs. In the few miles of wild hill country that sweep from its source on Clint's Dod down to its junction with Dye Water, there formerly stood no fewer than six castles, Chambers tells us, – John's Cleuch, Gamelshiel, (the lady of which was killed by a wolf as she walked near her home one evening in the gloaming) Penshiel, Redpath, Harehead, and Cranshaws. Except in the case of Cranshaws, there are now few traces left standing of these strongholds. Cranshaws, a building of the sixteenth century, is in good preservation; of Gamelshiel there remains a bit of wall, of Penshiel a fragment of vaulting; of the others no stone. Cranshaws of old, it is said, was long the haunt of one of those Brownies, or familiar spirits, that were wont in the good old days of our forefathers mysterious ly to do by night, when the household slept, all manner of domestic or farm work for those who humoured them and treated them well in the matter of food, or other indulgence affected by their kind. There was nothing a Brownie would not do for the family he favoured, provided that he was kept in good humour; otherwise, or if he were laughed at or his work lightly spoken of, it were better for that family that it had never been born; their sleep was disturbed o' nights, malevolent ill-luck dogged them by day, until he was propitiated. But leave out for him each night a jug of milk and a barley bannock, – they were not luxurious in their tastes, those Brownies, – and at dawn you would find

"... how the drudging goblin sweat
To earn his cream bowl duly set;
When in one night, ere glimpse of morn,
His shadow'y flail hath threshed the corn
That ten day-lab'ers could not end;
Then lies him down, the Lubber-fiend,
And stretched out all the chimney's length,
Basks at the tire his hairy strength;
And crop-full out of doors he flings
Ere the first cock his matin rings."

They tell that this particular Brownie at Cranshaws, being offended at some reflection made on his work, the following night took up an entire crop that he had thrashed, curried it to the Raven Craig, two miles down the river, and threw it over the cliff. Belief in the Brownie died hard in the Border I am not sure that in remote "up the water" districts he did not survive almost till the advent of motor cars and bicycles.

CHAPTER II BLACKADDER, NORHAM, FLORDEN, COLDSTREAM, WARR, AND THE EDEN

But a step over the moor from Waich Water, across by Twin-Law Cairns and down by the Harecleuch Hill we come to the head-waters of the most considerable of Whitadder's tributaries – Blackadder, "vulgarly so pronounced," says the old Statistical Account. Its real name is "Blackwater," according to that authority, because it rises out of peaty swamps that impart to its waters a look of sullen gloom. I am unable to say what now may be its reputation as a trout stream, but long years ago it abounded with "a particular species of trout, much larger than the common burn trout, and remarkably fat." The Statistical Account mentions a notable peculiarity of Blackadder, on the accuracy of which one would be inclined to throw doubt. It says that though every other stream in the country which eventually mingles its waters with Tweed, swarms with salmon in the season, yet into Blackwater they do not go; or if they enter at all, it is found that they die before they can ascend many miles. The swampy source of the stream "is commonly ascribed as the reason why the fish cannot frequent the river," says the Account. Drainage, one would be inclined to think, has long ago removed that fatal nature from the water, if it ever existed. Trout thrive on it, at all events, red-fleshed beauties, "similar," says the clerical writer of the Statistical Account of the Parish of Fogo – a man and a fisher, surely – "to those of Eden Water, which joins Tweed three miles below Kelso. The Eden rises also in a marshy district, which may be the cause of this similarity of the fish." But most Border streams take their rise in more or less marshy districts, though they may not flow direct from a swamp.

Was it in the Eden that Thomson, author of "The Seasons," learned to fish? Or was it in Jed? He was born at Ednam, – Edenham, – a village on the Eden, and he may have loved to revisit it in later years, and to catch the lusty speckled trout for which the stream has always been famous. Probably, however, he learned to throw a fly on Jed, for he passed his boyhood at Southdean – to which parish his father had been transferred as Minister long ere the son was fit to wield a rod – and he himself got his early education at Jedburgh. In Jed or in Eden, then, and perhaps in Teviot and Ale – he was much at Ancrum – he learned the art; and not unskilled in it indeed must he have been. Where in all literature can one find a description of trout-fishing so perfect as the following?

"Just in the dubious point, where with the pool
Is mix'd the trembling stream, or where it boils
Around the stone, or from the hollow'd bank
Reverted plays in undulating flow,
There throw, nice judging, the delusive fly;
And, as you lead it round in artful curve,
With eye attentive mark the springing game.
Strait as above the surface of the flood
They wanton rise, or, urged by hunger, leap,
There fix, with gentle twitch, the barbed hook;
Some lightly tossing to the grassy bank
And to the shelving shore slow dragging some
With various hand proportion'd to their force.
If yet too young, and easily deceived,
A worthless prey scarce bends your pliant rod,
Him, piteous of his youth, and the short space
He has enjoy'd the vital light of heaven,
Soft disengage, and back into the stream

The speckled captive throw; but, should you lure
From his dark haunt, beneath the tangled roots
Of pendent trees, the monarch of the brook,
Behoves you then to ply your finest art.
Long time he, following cautious, scans the fly,
And oft attempts to seize it, but as oft
The dimpled water speaks his jealous fear.
At last, while haply o'er the shaded sun
Passes a cloud, he desperate takes the death
With sullen plunge: at once he darts along,
Deep struck, and runs out all the lengthen'd line,
Then seeks the farthest ooze, the sheltering weed,
The cavern'd bank, his old secure abode,
And (lies aloft, and flounces round the pool,
Indignant of the guile. With yielding hand
That feels him still, yet to his furious course
Gives way, you, now retiring, following how,
Across the stream, exhaust his idle rage,
Till floating broad upon his breathless side,
And to his fate abandon'd, to the shore
You gaily drag your unresisting prize."

Many a long day of Spring and Summer must the man who could paint so perfect a picture have passed, rod in hand and creel on back, by the hurrying streams and quiet pools of some Border Water, many a time have listened to the summer breeze whispering in the leafy banks, and heard, as in a dream, the low murmur of Jed or Ale. And what sport must they have had in the old days when Thomson fished – and even in the days when Stoddart fished – when farmers were ignorant, or careless, of the science of drainage, and rivers ran for days, nay, for weeks after rain, clear and brown, dimpled with rising trout. What sport indeed of all kinds must there have been here in the south of Scotland in very ancient days when the country was mostly forest or swamp, and wild animals, now long extinct, roamed free over hill and dale. It has been mentioned a page or two back how the lady of Gamelshiel Tower was killed by a wolf. Here, at the bead waters of Blackadder – as the crow flies not a dozen miles from Gamelshiel – we are in the midst of a district once infested by wolves. Westruther, through which parish Blackadder runs, was originally "Wolfstruther," the "swamp of the wolves." And all over the surrounding country, place names speak of the beasts of the field. An MS. account of Berwickshire tells how Westruther was "a place of old which had great woods, with wild beasts, fra quhilk the dwellings and hills were designed, as Wolfstruther, Raecleuch, Hindside, Hartlaw and Harelaw."

"There's hart and hynd, and dae and rae,
And of a' wilde hestis grete plentie,"

as we read in the "Sang of the Outlaw Murray.

The last-mentioned name, Harelaw, calls up visions of another chase than that of the hare. Sir Thomas Dick Lauder in his "Scottish Rivers," (written sometime about 1848), mentions that one of the most curious facts connected with Harelaw Moor was that a man, who, Sir Thomas says, died "not long ago," recollected having seen Sir John Cope and his dragoons in full flight across it from the battle of Prestonpans, breathlessly demanding from all the country people they met information as to the shortest road to Coldstream.

"Says the Berwickers unto Sir John,
'O what's become o' all your men?'
'In faith,' says he, 'I dinna ken;
I left them a' this morning.'"

He must have been a very aged man, but if "not long ago" meant any time, as late, say, as the Twenties of last century, no doubt it would be possible that as a boy of eight or ten, he might have seen the panic-stricken dragoons spurring over the moor. Such a sight would remain vivid in the memory of even a very old man. Childhood's incidents outlive all others.

Above Harelaw Moor, on a feeder of the Blackadder, is Wedderlie, formerly an old Border keep of the usual pattern, but towards the close of the seventeenth century embodied with a fine building in the Scottish style of that day. It is said to have belonged originally to that family, the Edgars, the graves of two members of which are commemorated by the Twin-Law Cairns. The family name lives still in that of the neighbouring Edgar-burn, near to which streamlet is Gibb's Cross, said to be the scene of a martyrdom for sake of the Reformed Faith; and hard by is Evelaw Tower – a house apparently without a history – still in tolerable preservation. At Wedderlie, of old time, says Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, there stood a very ancient chapel, of which some traces of a vault remain, or remained at a recent date. Local tradition had it that at time of the Reformation the monks hid in this vault all their church plate and other precious possessions, meaning at the first convenient opportunity to remove them to a place of greater safety. The convenient opportunity, it was thought in more modern times, had never come, for in a cave hard by the vault there was one day discovered a great quantity of coins – all of which, by the way, speedily and mysteriously disappeared. It is said, however, that they were not of dates that could in any degree connect this *cache* with the Reformation, and it is suggested in Sir Thomas's book that they were concealed there by the inhabitants of Wedderlie during the Religious wars of the seventeenth century. Those "in the know" may all have been killed, of course; the secret of the hiding place was not likely to be within the ken of more than one or two.

These finds of coins of all dates are by no means rare in the Scottish border counties. One would fain know something of those who hid them, and of the events which were passing at the time when they were buried. Were they the spoil of some reiver, ravished from a roof-tree blackened and left desolate south from Cheviot and Tweed; spoil for convenience sake thus put away by one to whom the chance of a more convenient season to recover it was ended by a bloody death? Or were they, sometimes, store, of coins hastily secreted by quiet country folk fleeing in terror from the violence of English soldiery – men such as they who came north with Hertford in 1544, whose orders were to put man, woman, and child to fire and the sword, without exception, if any resistance should be met with? What wonder if the harmless country people then left all, and fled for their lives and the honour of their women! For what so easy as to find excuse to carry out such orders? A child ill treated, a woman outraged; and a man – husband, father, lover – mad with horror and impotent rage, "resisting!"

Coins, in greater or less number, are continually turning up in all sorts of unlikely spots. Sometimes in a marshy field (where one would least expect buried treasure), the spade of an Irish drainer has been known to throw out Elizabethan crowns. How did *they* get there? Perhaps it might have been when the horse of some rider, bogged and struggling to get clear, in its violent efforts burst the fastenings of a saddle bag or wallet, or unseated its rider, emptying whatever may have been the equivalent of a trousers' pocket in days when men wore mail. Some of these Elizabethan coins, perhaps, found their resting place in 1570, when the English under the Earl of Sussex harried and burnt the border, in "Tyvydale bernying on bothe hands at the lest two myle, levyng neyther castell, towne, nor tower unbrent, tyll we came to Jedworth." And so on, across by Hawick and Branhholm, up by Oxnain Water and Kale and Bowmont, and round about Kelso, burning and destroying homes, and hanging prisoners. "Thus," says Lord Hunsdon in a letter to Sir W. Cecil, "Thus hathe hyr Majesty

had as honorable a revenge of the recevars of hyr rebels, and of all such as have byn common spoylars of hyr pepoll, and burners of her cuntrey, as ever any of hyr predecessors had." They were not weakly addicted to half measures in those days, whichever side was "top dog."

"And so we pray to God to send youre Majestie a longe and prosperowse raigne, and all youre enemyes to feare youe as moch as the Scottish Borderers feare youe at this present," ended Lords Sussex and Hunsdon in a despatch written by them to the Queen from "Barwick" on 23rd April, 1570.

The lost Pay-chest of Montrose's army at Philiphaugh has given rise to many a story of treasure hunted for or recovered. Sir Walter Scott tells how on the day of the battle the Earl of Traquair and one of his followers, a blacksmith, carrying with them a large sum of money, the pay of the troops, were on their way across the hills to join Montrose at Selkirk. When as far away as Minchmuir, they heard the sound of heavy firing, to which Lord Traquair attached little importance, believing it to be merely Montrose exercising his men, but which, from the long continued and irregular nature of the firing, the blacksmith made certain was an engagement. By the time they reached Broadmeadows, there was no question as to whose conjecture was the correct one. By ones and twos, like the first heavy drops, forerunners of a deluge to follow from some ink-black cloud, came men flying for their lies, on horses pushed beyond the utmost limits of their speed; then more fugitives, and more, and hard on their heels, Leslie's troopers thundering. Lord Traquair and the blacksmith turned and fled with the throng. But the money was in Lord Traquair's saddle-bags, and the weight was great; he was like to be captured, for his horse thus handicapped could not face the hill and the heavy ground. Whether the blacksmith offered to sacrifice himself to save his master, or the master ordered the servant to dismount, one does not know, but the outcome was that Lord Traquair fled over the moor on the blacksmith's comparatively fresh horse, and the blacksmith, on a spent animal, was left to make the best of his way with the silver. Leaving the press of fugitives, he fled up Yarrow at the top speed of his tired horse, but finding himself closely pursued, to save himself and to lighten the animal's load, he flung away the bags of money. He said afterwards that he threw them into a well or pond near Tinnis, a little above Hangingshaw, and many a well and many a pond has since been vainly dragged for the lost treasure. No man has yet recovered it. Probably that blacksmith knew a thing or two, and he was not likely to give away the show. Whether or no, however, it is certain that many silver coins having dates of about the time of the battle were in Sir Walter's day ploughed up on the river haughs of Tinnis. And at a much later date, a quantity of coins and some silver plate were unearthed nearer Philiphaugh, on the actual scene of the fight. These coins were claimed by the Exchequer. A dozen wine bottles, also, of old pattern, were found buried here, but what had been the liquor contained in them it was not possible to say; the bouquet had entirely perished, and even the colour.

There is a pool in Yarrow, near Harehead, into which tradition says that Montrose flung his treasure chest, telling the Devil to keep it till he should return to claim it. Up to the present the Foul Fiend has not released his care, for when – as is said, – the pool was run dry, or nearly dry, a good many years ago, only a Lochabar-axe was found in it. A somewhat more probable story of the chest is that the bearer, as he hurried past, flung it into a cottage, near Foulshiels, and then rode for his life. Some of Leslie's men got it there, and looted it.

Whose is the portrait that is contained in the little locket which was found, years ago, on the field of Philiphaugh? On the one side is the representation of a heart pierced by darts, and the motto "I dye for Loyalty"; on the other, a long straight sword is engraved. Inside is a portrait, and opposite the portrait, the words "I mourne for Monarchie."

Sometimes coins have been found, too, as at Blackcastle Rings, on Blackadder, at its junction with the Faungrist Burn. Here, on the northern bank of the river, is what must once have been a strongly fortified camp; opposite, on the southern side, and running along the river's bank for fully half a mile, after which it branches to the south, is a well marked line of entrenchment. Eighty years ago, or thereabouts, an old silver chain was unearthed in the camp; and in the trench, a little distance away, when turf was being removed, they came upon quite a number of gold and silver coins of the

reign of Edward III. It was somewhere in this neighbourhood, (though probably nearer Duns,) that Lord Percy the English Warden, at the head of seven thousand men, lay encamped in the year 1372, when (as is mentioned by Redpath), his host was dispersed, or at least was said to have been compelled to retire across the Tweed, on foot and without their baggage, owing to a simple stratagem of the Scots. To scare away from their poor little crops the deer and wild cattle that were wont when night fell to ravage the ill-cultivated patches, the country folk of that district were accustomed to sound at frequent intervals a primitive kind of drum. To the ends of long poles were fixed what may best be termed huge rattles, made of dried skins tightly stretched over semi-circular ribs of wood. Inside each skin were put a few round pebbles. Obviously, when shaken vigorously, these rattles would give out a noise quite terrifying to any four footed animal, especially when heard in the stillness of night. Accordingly, one pitchy night, in the hour before dawn when sleep lay heavy on the invading force, a certain number of the Scots, bearing with them those unwarlike instruments, stole quietly through the tangled growth to the heights on either side of the English camp.

Then broke out a din truly infernal. Picketed horses, mad with terror, strained back on their head-ropes, and breaking loose, stampeded through the camp, trampling over the recumbent forms of men wearied and even yet but half-awake, many of the younger among them more than ready to share the panic of their horses. If the tale be not exaggerated, daylight showed an army deprived of its transport animals, its horsemen compelled to foot it, their steeds the prey of the wily Scots; a baggageless force compelled to fall back in disorder across Tweed.

In this part of Berwickshire you may still faintly trace here and there the outline of a ditch and earthen rampart called Herrits Dyke, which, local tradition says, once ran from Berwick inland to near Legerwood on Leader Water, – a work not dis-similar to the Catrail, (which cuts across something like fifty miles of the Border, from Peel Fell in the Cheviots to Torwoodlee on Gala), but without the double wall of Catrail. There are various sections of defensive works of this nature in the Border – if they were defensive, for instance, on the hill less than half a mile from the old castle of Holydean, near St. Boswells, in Roxburghshire, there is a particularly well-marked ditch and double rampart running for some distance across the moor. It can scarcely be a continuation of Herrits Dyke, for its construction is different, and its course must run almost at a right angle to Herrits, which is, indeed, many miles away from Holydean. This ditch points almost directly towards Torwoodlee, but it is out of the accepted Catrail track, unless the latter, instead of stopping at Torwoodlee, (as one has been taught), turned sharply and swept down the vale-of Gala, and once more crossed Tweed. It is curious, if these works are defensive, that no ancient weapons have ever been found in or near them.

Down the water a few miles from Blackcastle Rings stands the little town of Greenlaw, a settlement which dates from very early times, but not on its present site. Originally the village stood about a mile and a half to the south east, on the isolated green "law" or hill from which it takes its name. The history of the present town goes no farther back than the end of the seventeenth century, a date about contemporaneous with that of its Market Cross, which stands now on the west side of the place. This cross is said to have been erected by Sir Patrick Home of Polwarth (afterwards created Earl of March-mont) in the year 1696. In 1829 it was pulled down, to make room for something else – in the maddening fashion that possessed our ancestors of the period – and, in the usual manner, it was chucked aside as "auld world trash." In 1881, however, the cross, or at least the greater part of it, minus the top, which originally bore a lion rampant, was discovered in the basement of the old church tower, and was then re-erected where it now stands.

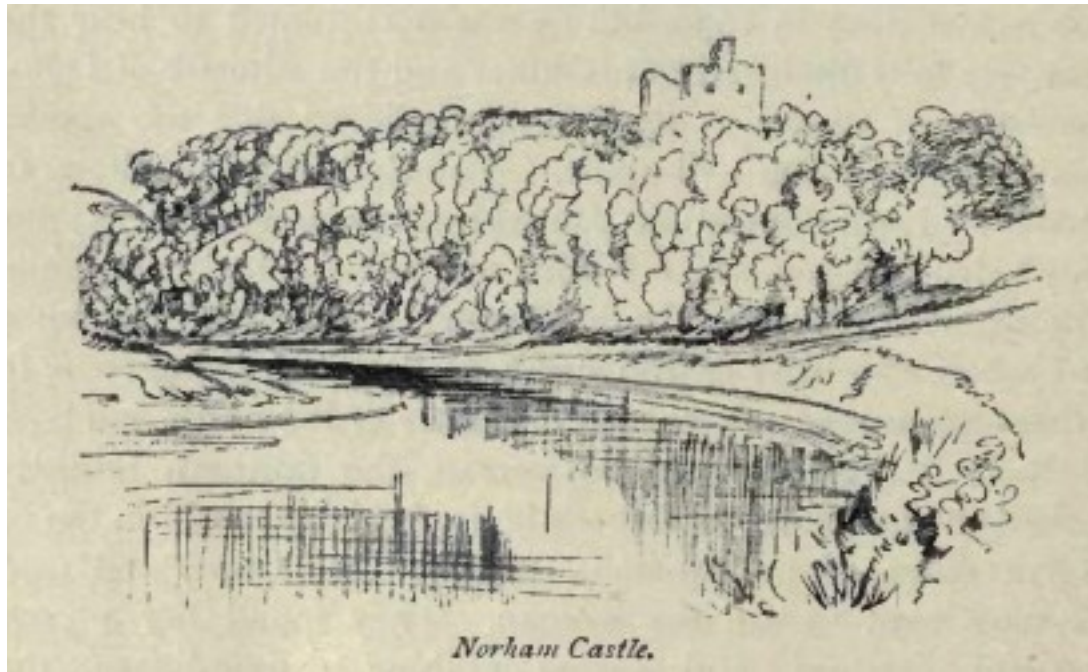
Still farther down the river is the Roman camp at Chesters. But even as long ago as 1798, the writer of the Statistical Account of the Parish of Fogo complained that the old camp was "very much defaced," and that the stones had mostly been "removed to make room for the plough." The rage for agricultural improvement was in 1798 but in extreme infancy; and as no Society for the preservation of ancient monuments came into existence for many a long year afterwards, and interest in such things was confined to the very few, it is safe to infer that not a great deal of this camp now exists.

From Chesters to Marchmont is but a step. Marchmont House dates from about 1754, and was built by the third Earl of Marchmont, near the site of Redbraes, the residence of his grandfather, that Sir Patrick Home of Polwarth who erected the cross in Greenlaw. The village and church of Polwarth are at no great distance. The original church was consecrated in the tenth century, and was restored in 1378, from which date it stood till 1703, when Sir Patrick Home (then Earl of Marchmont) rebuilt it. In the family vault of this church, Sir Patrick lay in hiding for several weeks in 1684, when the search for him was hot and discovery would have cost him his head. The secret of his whereabouts was known to three persons – to his wife, his daughter Grisell (whose name as Lady Grisell Baillie, lives still in the affectionate remembrance of the Scottish Border), and to Jamie Winter, a faithful retainer. Grisell Home, then a girl of eighteen, during all the time of his concealment contrived, with very great risk and difficulty, to convey food to her father in his gruesome lodging. Each night, she slipped stealthily from the house, and – sorest trial of all to the nerves of an imaginative Scot, – made her cautious way in the darkness across the "bogle" – haunted churchyard to her father's lair. Many a shift were she and her mother put to in order to get food sufficient for their prisoner without rousing suspicion among the servants, and more than once the situation was all but given away by the innocent but embarrassing comments of young and irresponsible members of the family. Sometimes the servants cannot have been present at meals, one would think; or else they smelt a rat, and were discreetly blind. One day at dinner, Grisell had with careful cunning succeeded in smuggling an entire sheep's head off the dish on to her own lap, thence presently to be borne surreptitiously from the room, when her young brother, with the maddening candour and persistency of childhood, called the company's attention to his sister's prodigious appetite, which not only enabled her to gobble up in next to no time so much good meat, but even rendered her able to make the very bones vanish.

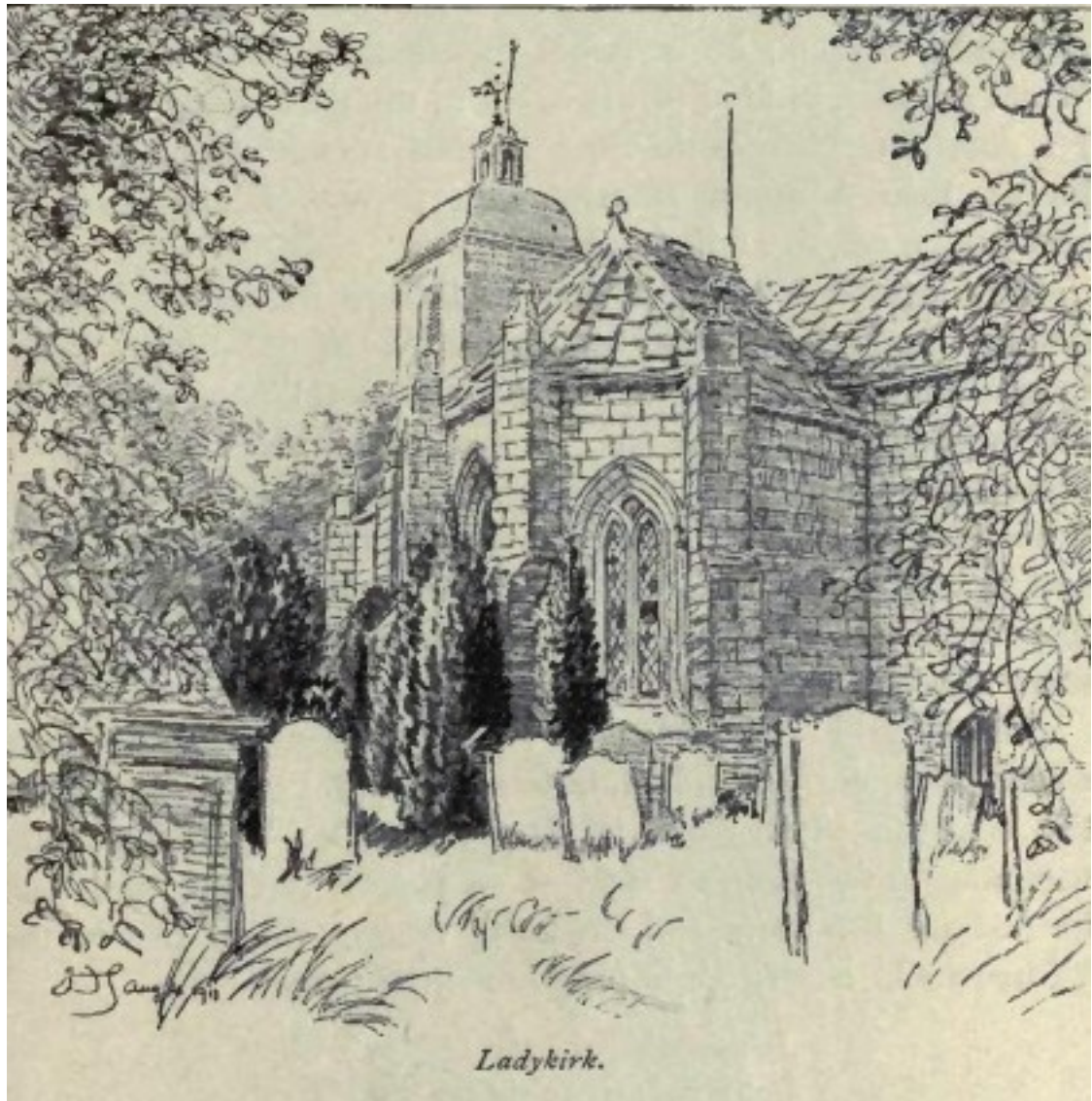
But the scent at length began to grow hot; they had nearly run the fox to his earth. Suspicion hovered over the neighbourhood of the church, and no longer could the vault be deemed even a moderately safe hiding place. A new den was necessary; and a new den was found, one perhaps even more cramped than the old quarters, if a trifle less insanitary. A large deal box was made by the faithful Jamie Winter, and was secretly conveyed into a cellar at Redbraes, of which Lady Home kept the key. But to get the "muckle kist" snugly into its resting place, it was necessary to scrape away the earthen floor of the cellar under the flooring hoards, so that the box might be entirely hidden when the boards were re-laid. This work could not be done with pick and shovel, lest the noise should betray what was going on. Grisell, therefore, and Jamie Winter literally with their own hands carried out the arduous job; the earth was *scraped* away, and poor Grisell Home's nails had almost entirely disappeared ere the work was finished and the hiding place made ready for her father. It was scarcely an ideal place of concealment; water oozed in so quickly that one night when Sir Patrick was about to descend into his narrow lodging, it was found that the bedding on which he was used to lie was afloat. And, with its other drawbacks, it had not even the advantage, as a hiding place, of being above suspicion. Had it not been, indeed, for the presence of mind of a kinsman and namesake, Home of Halyburton, a party of dragoons had certainly captured Sir Patrick one day. But Halyburton's liquor was good, and after their thirty mile march from Edinburgh, the temptation to wet their whistle could not be resisted. It did not take long, but it was long enough; a groom on a fast, powerful horse slipped away over the moor to Redbraes, bearing with him no word of writing, but a letter addressed to Lady Home, of which the contents were nothing but a feather, – a hint sufficiently well understood. Ere the dragoons arrived at Redbraes, Sir Patrick was clear away and well on the road to the coast and Holland, and safety.

As we travel down Blackadder towards its junction with the Whitadder, about equidistant between the two rivers we come to the only town of any importance in the district – Duns, or Dunse as it used, not very appropriately, to be spelled from 1740 to 1882, in which latter year the ancient spelling was revived. The original hamlet or settlement stood on the Dun or Law which adjoins the present town. But Hertford wiped that pretty well out of existence in 1545, as he wiped out many

another stronghold and township in the south of Scotland. What was left of the place soon fell into utter decay and ruin, and a new settlement on the present site, then guarded On three sides by a more or less impassable swamp, sprung up in 1588. Duns is one of several places which claim the honour of having been the birthplace of the learned Duns Scotus (1265-1338), but even though she be unable quite to substantiate this claim, her record of worthy sons is no short one. And was not that woman, famed in the seventeenth century, she who was possessed of an evil spirit which caused her, an illiterate person, to talk fluently in the Latin tongue, a native of Duns! The Privy Council Record, under date 13th July, 1630, contains an order for bringing before it Margaret Lumsden, "the possessed woman in Duns," along with her father-in-law and her brother, that order might be taken in the case, "as the importance and nature of such a great cause requires." A fast for her benefit was even proposed by sundry clergymen; interest in her case was acute and widespread. Twenty-nine years later, an account of the circumstances was written by the Earl of Lauderdale, and was published in Baxter's "Certainty of the World of Spirits." Lord Lauderdale was a schoolboy in 1630, but he was accustomed to hear the case very fully discussed by his father and the minister of Duns, the latter of whom, at least, firmly believed that the woman was possessed by an evil spirit. The Earl wrote as follows to Baxter: "I will not trouble you with many circumstances; one only I shall tell you, which I think will evince a real possession. The report being spread in the country, a knight of the name of Forbes, who lived in the north of Scotland, being come to Edinburgh, meeting there with a minister of the north, and both of them desirous to see the woman, the northern minister invited the knight to my father's house (which was within ten or twelve miles of the woman), whither they came, and next morning went to see the woman. They found her a poor ignorant creature, and seeing nothing extraordinary, the minister says in Latin to the knight: '*Nondum audivimus spiritum loquentem.*' Presently a voice comes out of the woman's mouth: '*Andis loquentem, audis loquentem.*' This put the minister into some amazement (which I think made him not mind his own Latin); he took off his hat, and said: '*Misereatur Deus peccatoris!*' The voice presently out of the woman's mouth said: '*Dic peccatricis, dic peccatricis!*'; whereupon both of them came out of the house fully satisfied, took horse immediately, and returned to my father's house at Thirlestane Castle, in Lauderdale, where they related this passage. This I do exactly remember. Many more particulars might be got in that part of the country; but this Latin criticism, in a most illiterate ignorant woman, where there was no pretence to dispossessing, is enough, I think." It was, of course, an infallible sign of demoniac possession that the victim, mostly an illiterate person, should break out into Latin or Greek, Hebrew or what not. That was how the devil usually betrayed himself; he could by no means control his weakness for talking – generally very badly – in foreign tongues.



The wonders of Duns in the seventeenth century by no means ceased, however, with this demon-possessed Margaret Lumsden. In 1639, when Leslie camped on Duns Law with the Covenanting army and its superfluity of ministers, there occurred a remarkable land-slide which the excited imaginations of those witnessing its effects could not fail to interpret as an assured sign that Providence meant to fight on their side. A bank on the slope of the hill near to the camp slid down, – it had probably become water-logged as the result of heavy rain. – disclosing "innumerable stones, round, for the most part, in shape, and perfectly spherical... like ball of all sizes, from a pistol to fixed pieces, such as sakers or robenets, or battering pieces upwards." Men looked on them with awe, and bore about with them specimens in their pockets, gravely showing them to excited throngs. "Nor wanted there a few who interpreted this stone magazine at Duns Hill as a miracle, as if God had sent this by ane hid providence for the use of the Covenanters."



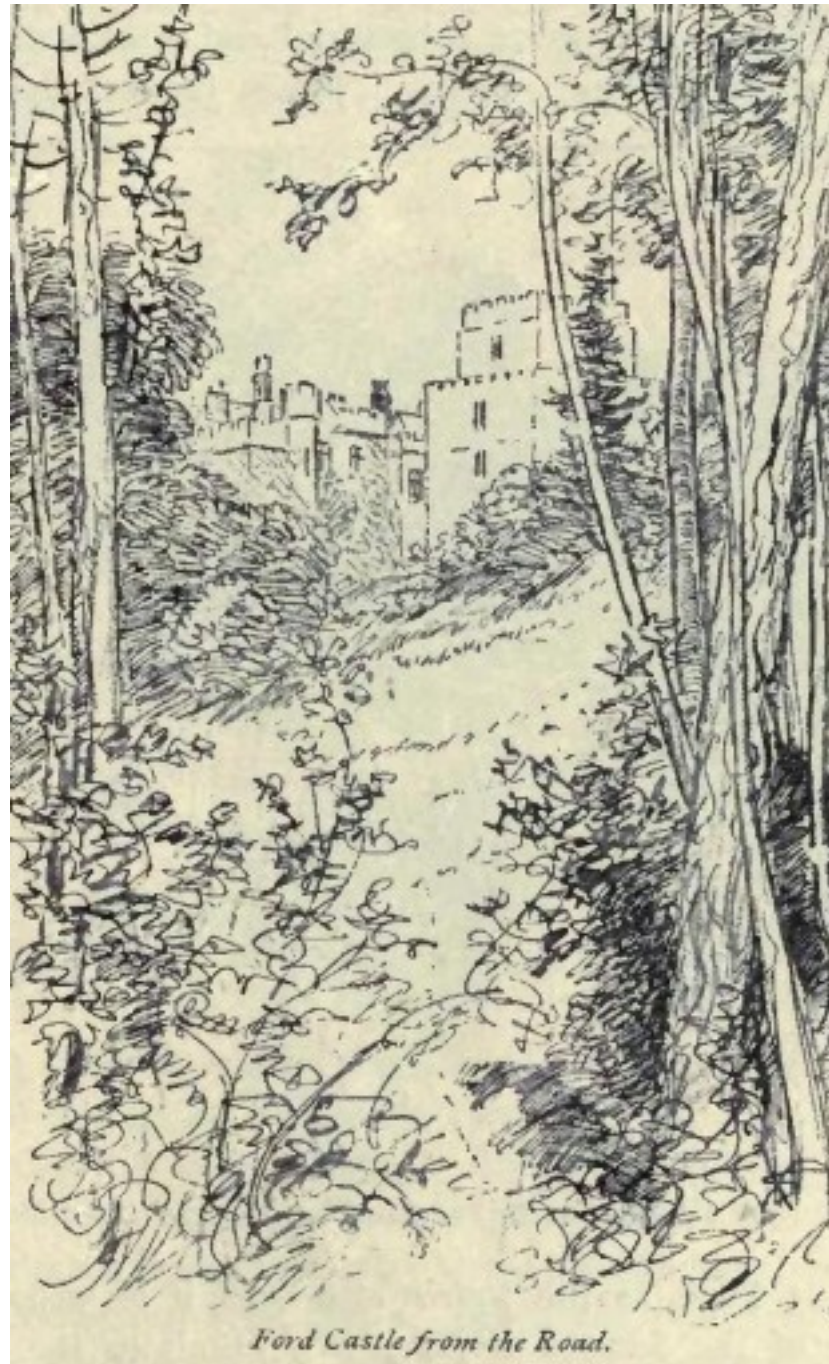
We return now to Tweed, where on a steep slope stand the mighty ruins of Norham Castle, guarding the ford; we all know the scene, castle and ford in the gloaming, from Turner's beautiful plate in *Liber Studiorum*. Bishop Flambard of Durham built the castle to bridle the wild Scots, in 1121; some twenty years later it was taken, under David; but the eastern side shows the remains of the warlike prelate's work. "The Norman Keep still frowns across the Merse," and few of the castles of the age of chivalry display more of their ancient strength than Norham. Yet it yielded promptly to James IV. in the first week of the campaign which closed in the terrible defeat of Flodden Edge. In this castle, in the Lent of 1200, William the Lion kept his fast on fourteen kinds of fish, including salmon; he certainly "spelled his fasts with an e." While Berwick yielded to the Scots in the dark days of Edward II., good Sir Thomas de Grey, of that ancient Northumbrian house, held Norham stoutly, with pretty circumstances of chivalry, as his son tells in *Scalacronica*.

Over against Norham is Ladykirk, with its ancient church, dedicated, tradition says, by James IV. to the Virgin Mary, in gratitude for his narrow escape from death here when fording the swollen Tweed. A field to the east of the village shows some remains of military works, ramparts for guns probably, from which to fire on Norham. In a line between this spot and the castle there was found in the river a stone cannon-ball, fifty-seven inches in girth, probably one fired from "Mons Meg" when she was here in 1497.

Following the light bank of Tweed we reach Carham burn, where Malcolm II. won Lothian in battle; from Carham to the sea the right bank is English. The next important tributary on the English side, as we ascend the stream is Till, formed by Bowmont and Breamish Waters, which rise in the "Cheeviots," as the Scots pronounce the name.

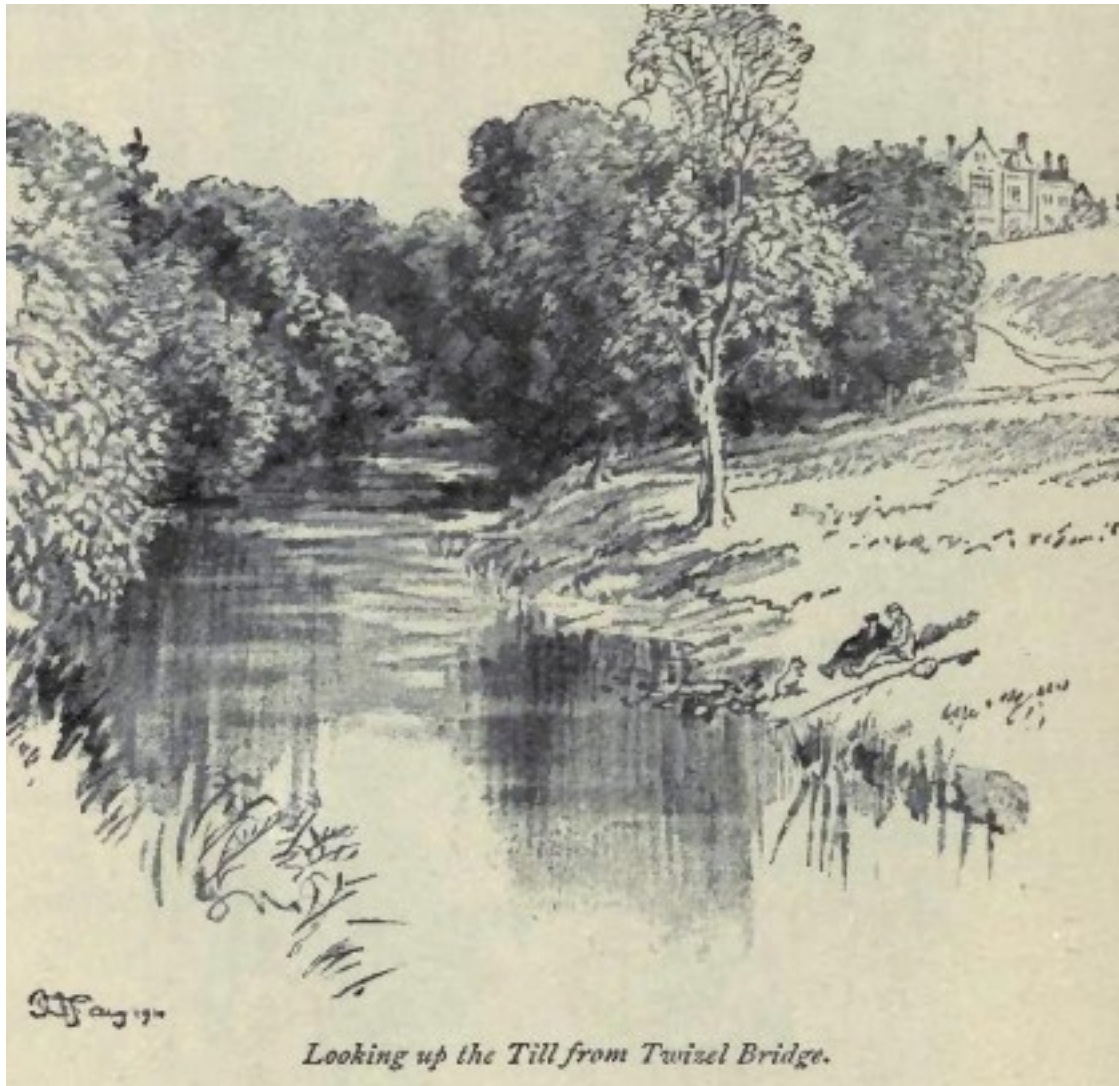
"T weed says to Til'
'What gars ye rin sae still?'
Says Till to Tweed,
'Though ye run wi' speed,
And I rin slaw,
Whaur ye droon ae man,
I droon tw'a.'"

The ominous rhyme sounds with the slow lap of the green-grey waters of Till among her alders, and appears to hint at the burden of the ruinous fight of Flodden.



Ford Castle from the Road.

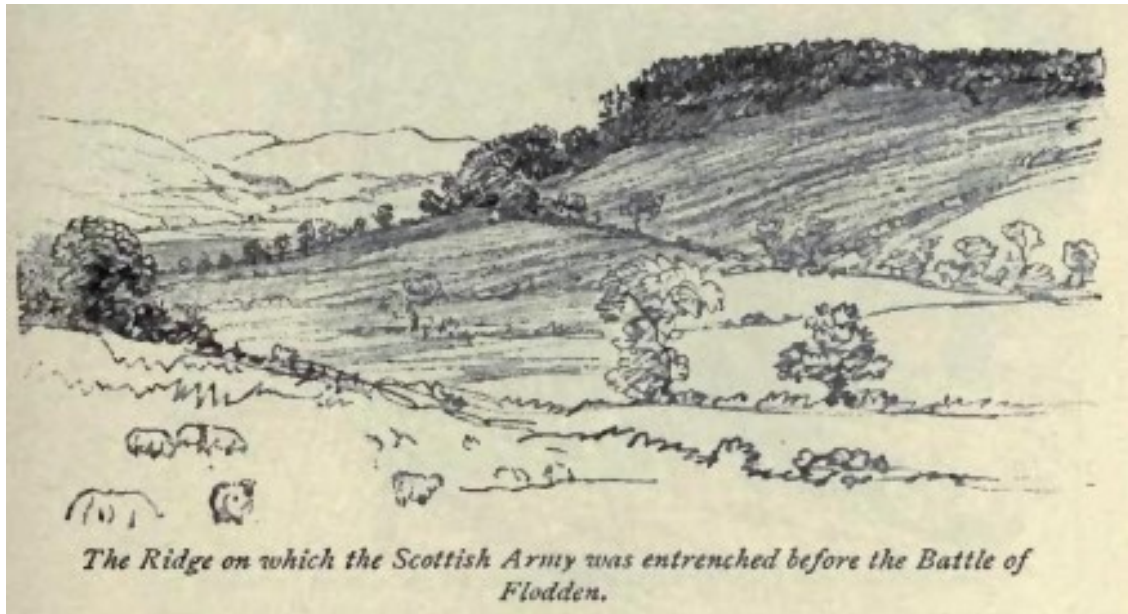
On August 22nd, James IV., "a fey man," kept his plighted word to France, which Henry VIII. was invading, and led the whole force of Highlands and Lowlands across the Border. He made his quarters at Ford Castle, where he did not, as legend says, dally with Lady Heron, still less did his young son, the Archbishop of St. Andrews, fleet the time carelessly with her daughter. James cleared his position by capturing Wark (now scarcely visible in ruin), Chillingham, and Eital castles.



Looking up the Till from Twizel Bridge.

Surrey with the English levies, including the Stanleys, sent a challenge from Alnwick. On September 3rd, the Scots are said to have wrecked Ford Castle, now a substantial and comfortable home, still containing the king's rooms. James crossed the Till by a bridge at Ford, as the tourist also does, if he wishes to see the field of the famous battle. We climb to the crest of Flodden Edge; look south to the wooded hills beyond the Till, and northwards note three declivities like steps in a gigantic staircase.

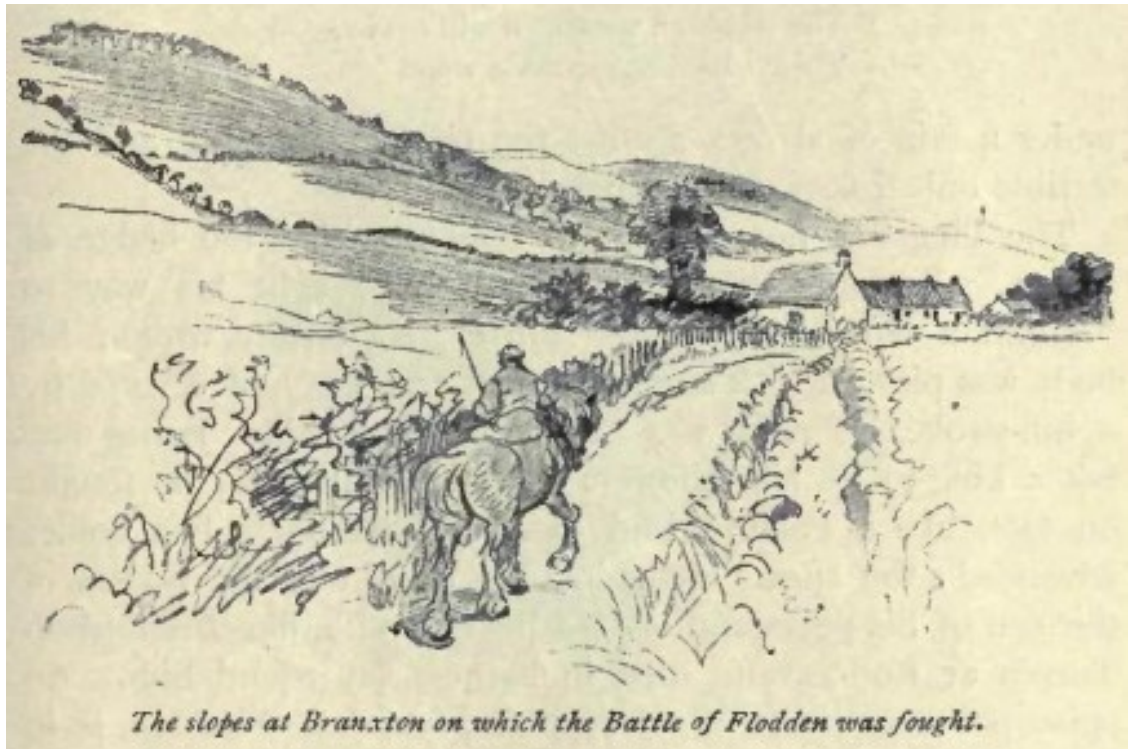
The Scots were well provisioned, and should easily have held the hill-crest against Surrey's way-worn and half-starved mutinous men.



They pitched their camp on the wide level of Wooler haugh, six miles to the right of Flodden; and on this plain Surrey challenged James to meet him, "a fair field and no favour." For once chivalry gave place to common sense in James's mind: "he would take and keep his ground at his own pleasure." But he neglected his scouting, though he had hundreds of Border riders under Home, who should never have lost touch of Surrey. That wily "auld decrepit carl in a chariot" as Pitscottie calls him, disappeared; James probably thought that he was retiring to Berwick. Really, he was throwing himself, unseen, on James's line of communication with the north: he camped at Barmoor wood, and then recrossed Till by Twizel bridge. Scott, in *Marmion* and elsewhere, blames the king for failing to see this manouvre and discuss Surrey before his men could deploy after crossing by Twizel bridge and at Millford. But Twizel bridge you cannot see from Flodden Edge; Sir Walter had forgotten the lie of the ground. Unseen, the English crossed and formed, advancing from the north towards the second of the three great steps in the declivity, called Branxton hill. In the early evening, *Angli se ostentant*, the English come into view. In place of holding his ground, which he is said to have entrenched, James yielded to his impetuous temper, fired his camp, and his men throwing off their boots, for the ground was wet and slippery, rushed down to the Branxton plateau.



"The haggis, Cott pless her, could charge down a hill," like Dundee's men at Killiecrankie, but the expected impetus must have been lost before James's Highlanders under Lennox and Argyll, his right wing, could come to sword-strokes. James's right, in addition to the clans, had a force led by d'Aussi and Both well, with whom may have been the ancestors of John Knox, as the Reformer told the wild Earl, Queen Mary's lover. The main body, the centre, under the flower of Scottish *noblesse*, were with the king; who "always fought before he had given his orders," says Ayala, the ambassador of Spain. His left was led by Crawford and Errol; his extreme left by Huntly with the gay Gordons; and Home with his Border spears, mounted men. The English front appears to have been "refused" so that Edward Howard was nearest to Home, and, slanting back wards to the right of James, were the forces of Edmund Howard, the Admiral, the Constable, Dacre, Surrey with the rear, and the large body of Cheshire and Lancashire, led by Stanley.



The Admiral sent a galloper to bring Surrey forward; and Home and Huntly charged Edward Howard, while Dacre's Tyneside men ran, as he advanced to support Howard. The Borderers, fond of raiding each other, could never be trusted to fight each other in serious war; they were much intermarried. Brian Tunstal fell, Dacre stopped Huntly; Home's men vanished like ghosts, no man knew whither; for they appeared on the field next morning. Probably they were plundering, but "Down wi' the Earl o' Home," says the old song of the Souters of Selkirk. In the centre of the vanguard the Admiral and the Percys clashed with Crawford and Errol. Both leaders fell, and James threw the weight of his centre against Surrey. To slay that general with his own hand was the king's idea of the duty of a leader. But the English guns mowed down his ranks, and the Scots could not work their French artillery. The king pressed in with Herries and Maxwell at his side; the ranks of England reeled, but the Admiral and Dacre charged James's men in flank. "Stanley broke Lennox and Argyll" on the king's right; the noble leaders fell, and the nimble Highlanders rapidly made a strategic movement in the direction of safety. Stanley did not pursue them, but fell on James's right, which now had the enemy on each flank and in front.

"The stubborn spearmen still made good
Their dark impenetrable wood"

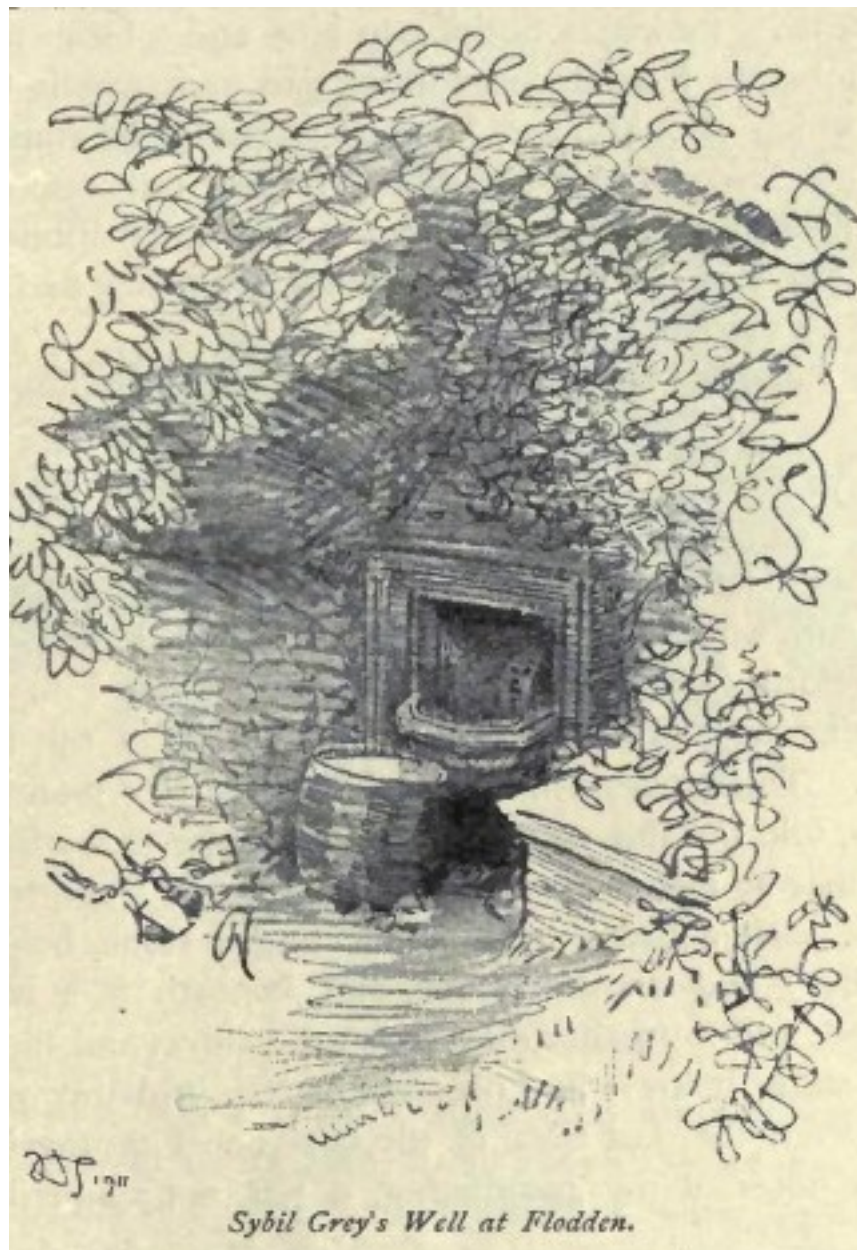
under a rain of arrows, against the charging knights, and the terrible bill strokes of the English infantry.

The king was not content to remain within the hedge of spears. Running out in advance, he fought his way to "within a lance's length" of Surrey, so Surrey wrote; his body was pierced with arrows, his left arm was half severed by a bill-stroke, his neck was gashed, and he fell. James was not a king to let his followers turn his bridle-rein; he fought on foot, like a Paladin, and died with honour. His nobles advanced; the spears defended the dead, and the bodies of thirteen of his peers and of two Bishops who, like Archbishop Turpin at Roncesvaux, died in harness, lay round him. An episcopal ring with a great sapphire, found at Flodden, is in the Gold Room at the British Museum.

Such was the great sorrow of Scotland; there is perhaps not a family of gentle blood in the Lowlands which did not leave a corpse on Branxton slope, where

"Groom fought like noble, Squire like Knight,
As fearlessly and well."

As matter of plain history, this honourable defeat was to my country what, as matter of legend, the rear-guard action of Roncesvaux has been to France. It was too late in literary times for an epic like the *Chanson de Roland*; the burden of the song was left for the author of Marmiot. But Flodden, till my own boyhood, left its mark on Scottish memories. When any national trouble befell us, people said, "There has been nothing like it since Flodden."



My friend the late Lord Napier and Ettrick told me that when his father took him to Flodden in his boyhood, tears stood in the eyes of the senior.

This is the difference between us of the north, and you of the south. Along the Border line, my heart, so to speak, bleeds at Halidon and Homildon hills, where our men made a frontal attack, out-flanked on either hand by lines of English archers, and left heaps as high as a lance's length, of corpses on corpses, (as at Dupplin); but an Englishman passes Bannock burn "more than usual calm," and no more rejoices on the scene of the victories of his ancestors, than he is conscious of their defeats. Pinkie is nothing to him, and a bitter regret to us! Dunbar to him means nothing; to us it means the lost chance which should have been a certainty, of annihilating Cromwell's force. Our preachers ruined our opportunity, bidding Leslie go down, in accordance with some Biblical text, from his safe and commanding position, after they had purged our army of the Royalist swords.

Surrey "had his bellyful" at Flodden. In Edinburgh which was hastily erected. But the English general had enough, and withdrew southwards. I visited Flodden Edge on my return from the west of Ireland, where I found the living belief in Fairies. I picked up a trifle of the faith at Flodden. The guide, a most intelligent elderly man, named Reidpath, told me this yarn: "A woman came to my brother," (I knew that he meant a woman of the Faery), "and told him to dig in such a place. He would find a stone, below it a stone pillar; and another stone, and beneath it a treasure. My brother and my father dug, found the stone, and the pillar, and the stone below – but no treasure!" Probably you will not find even this last trace of the fairy belief on the Border, but, from notes of my grandfather, it was not quite dead in his day.

"The old men girt on their old swords,
And went to man the wall,"

Here we leave Till to those who choose to fish it up towards the Cheviots, and move up the right bank of Tweed towards its junction with Teviot.

Before reaching that point, however, there are one or two places to notice on both sides of the river – Coldstream, for example, where Leet water enters Tweed; Eden water, a few miles higher up; and, on the English side, Wark Castle.

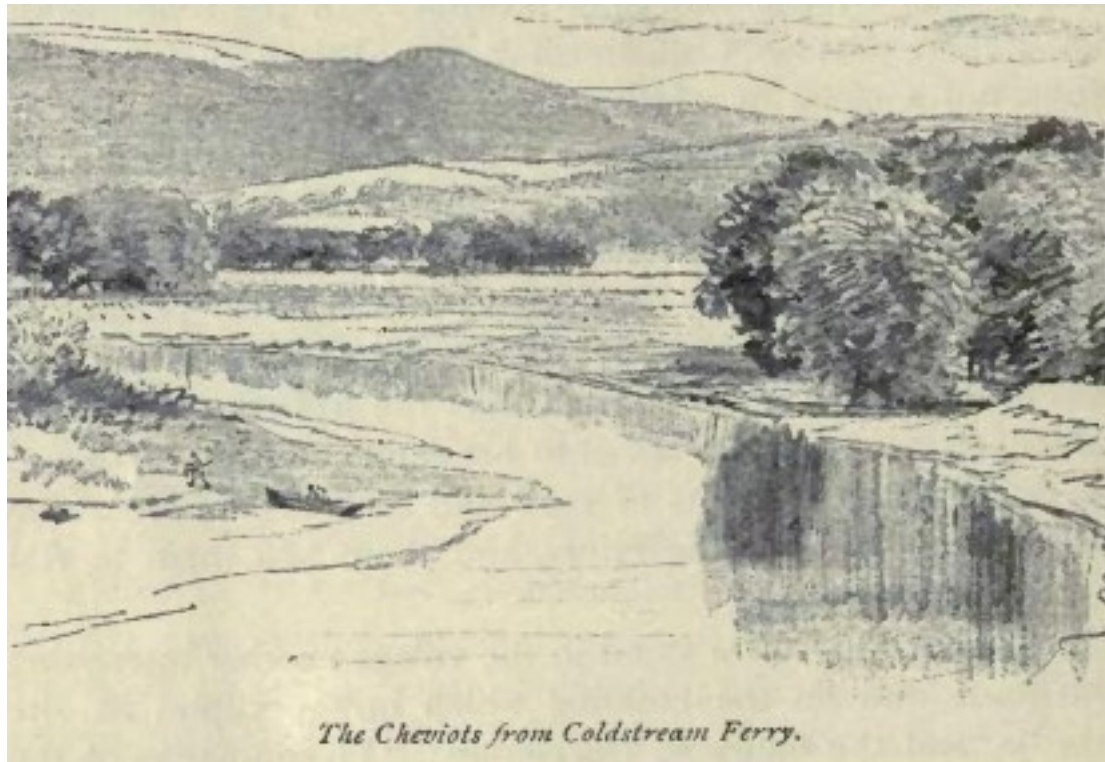


Regarding the Leet, in order to find oneself filled with envy and with longing unutterable, it is only necessary to read Stoddart's account of the fishing to be had in his day in that curious little stream. "Of all streams that I am acquainted with," says Stoddart, "the Leet, which discharges itself into the Tweed above Coldstream, was wont, considering its size, to contain the largest trout. During the summer season it is a mere ditch, in many places not above four or five span in width, and, where broadest, still capable of being leapt across. The run of water is, comparatively speaking, insignificant, not exceeding on the average a cubic foot. This, however, as it proceeds, is every now and then expanded over a considerable surface, and forms a pool of some depth; in fact, the whole stream, from head to foot, pursuing, as it does, a winding course for upwards of twelve miles, is a continued chain of pools, fringed, during the summer, on both sides, with rushes and water-flags, and choked up in many parts with pickerel weed and other aquatic plants. The channel of Leet contains shell marl, and its banks, being hollowed out beneath, afford, independent of occasional vines and tree roots, excellent shelter for trout. Not many years ago the whole course of it was infested with pike, but the visit of some otters, irrespective of the angler's art, has completely cleared them out, and thus allowed the trout, which were formerly scarce, to become more numerous. On the first occasion of my fishing Leet, which happened to be early in April 1841, before the sedge and rushes had assumed the ascendancy, I captured, with the fly, twenty-six trout, weighing in all upwards of twenty-nine pounds. Of these, five at least were two-pounders, and there were few, if any, small-sized fish." On another occasion, in June 1846, Stoddart caught in the same water, in four hours, three dozen and five fish, the biggest of which weighed 3 lbs., and a dozen of the others 1 lb. apiece. This stream, in its characteristics so unlike the usual Scottish burn, is not open to the public, but it may be assumed that no such fishing is now obtainable there, any more than it is to be got elsewhere in Scotland. Once they establish themselves and make unchecked headway, pike are very hard to extirpate; it is not in

every stream that one finds otters so accommodating, and so careful of the interests of anglers, as they appear to have been in Leet in Stoddart's day.

Coldstream, where Leet joins Tweed, was of old chiefly known for its ford, the first of any consequence above Berwick. It was here that the invading army of Edward the First crossed the river into Scotland in 1296; here, indeed, it was that most armies, English or Scottish, plunged into country hostile to them once they had quitted their own bank of the river; it was here that all Scottish travellers, from royalty to peasant, must halt when southward bound, and await the falling of the waters should Tweed chance to be in flood. Consequently, at a very early date a settlement sprang up, and in it many an historical personage has temporarily sojourned. Sir Thomas Dick Lauder says that as late as his own day an old thatched two storied building in the village was pointed out as the house in which "many persons of distinction, including kings and queens of Scotland, are enumerated by tradition as having resided... occasionally several days at a time," waiting till the river was fordable. It was not till 1766, when Smeaton completed his fine bridge, that any other crossing of the stream than by the ford was possible. In pre-Reformation times, there was in Coldstream a rich Priory of Cistercian Nuns, not a stone of which, however, now remains. But in its little burial ground, between the river and what used to be the garden of the Priory, in 1834 there was dug up a great quantity of human bones, and a stone coffin. The bones were supposed to be probably those of various Scottish persons of rank who fell but a short five or six miles away on the fatal field of Flodden. Tradition tells that the Abbess of that day, anxious to give Christian burial to her slain countrymen, caused the bodies of many Scots of rank and birth to be borne from the field of battle to the Priory, and there laid them to rest in consecrated ground.

Till about 1865 there stood in the village another interesting old house, and on the building which now occupies its site may be read the following inscription: "Headquarters of the Coldstream Guards, 1659; rebuilt, 1865." Here it was that General Monk formed that famous regiment, than which there is but one in the British army whose history goes further back, none which in achievements can surpass it. In one of his works on England at the period of the Restoration of Charles the Second, M. Guizot, the French historian, records that Monk "spent about three weeks at Coldstream, which was a favourable spot for the purpose, as the Tweed was there fordable; but he seems to have found it a dismal place to quarter in. On his first arrival, he could get no provisions for his own dinner, and was obliged to content himself with a quid of tobacco. His chaplains, less easily satisfied, roamed about till they obtained a meal at the house of the Earl of Home, near by." This place, to which the fine instinct of those preachers guided them, was no doubt The Hirsell, which is at no great distance from Coldstream.



There is yet another thing for which this little town was famed in former days. In the time of our grandsires, and indeed, down to as late a date as 1856, when clandestine weddings were prohibited by Act of Parliament, it was a common sight to see a post-chaise come racing over Coldstream Bridge, or, in days before a bridge existed, splashing through the water from the English side, bearing in it some fond couple (like Mr. Alfred Jingle and the Spinster Aunt), flying on love's wings from stony-hearted parent or guardian. Coldstream was almost as famous a place for run-away marriages as was Gretna Green itself. At the former place, the ceremony was usually performed in the toll-house at the Scottish end of the bridge, where "priests" were always in readiness to tie up the run-away couples, and to issue to them thereafter a Certificate of Marriage, such as the following, which is a copy of one issued in 1836: "This is to certify that John Chambers, Husbandman, from the Broomhouse, in the Parish of Chatton, with Mary Walker from Kelso, in the Parish of Kelso, in Roxboroughshire, was married by me this Day. As witness to my hand, William Alexander, Coldstream, 15th Dec., 1836. Witnesses' names: Miss Dalglish, Miss Archer."

But though for convenience' sake, and probably for speed of dispatch, the toll-house was chiefly patronised, those who had command of money and were not unduly pressed for time could arrange to have their nuptials celebrated in less public fashion than would probably be the case at the bridge-end. It is I believe an undoubted fact that in 1819 Lord Brougham was married in the chief inn of the village.

Those irregular marriages were in the eighteenth century a great source of trouble and annoyance to the Kirk Session of Kelso. A good many of them at one time were celebrated by a certain Mr. Blair, whom the Privy Council had ejected from the incumbency of Coldstream in 1689 because he had refused to pray for the King and Queen, (William and Mary), and would neither read the proclamation of the Estates nor observe the national thanksgiving. Mr. Blair, however, after the loss of his incumbency continued to live in the village, and, it was alleged, was, in the matter of these marriages sometimes over accommodating and good-natured regarding dates; in his certificates he did not always rigidly adhere to the true day of month or year in cases where it might be represented to him that a fictitious date would be less compromising to the contracting parties. Mr. Blair was "sharply rebukit" by the Session. The reverend gentleman was not in Coldstream later than 1728,

and he died at Preston, in Northumberland, in 1736, at the age of eighty-five. The following is the epitaph composed on him:

"Here lies the Reverend Thomas Blair,
A man of worth and merit,
Who preached for fifty years and mair,
According to the spirit.
He preached off book to shun offence,
And what was still more rare,
He never spoke one word of sense —
So preached Tammy Blair."

In examining Scottish Border records of those times, nothing strikes one more than the power of the Kirk Sessions; it is indeed hard to imagine a country more priest ridden than Scotland in the eighteenth century. The "Sabbath" was then as easy to break as a hedge-sparrow's egg, and there were a thousand – to modern eyes not very heinous – ways of breaking it. What in the way of punishment may have been meted out to the unfortunate who fell asleep under the infliction of a long, dull, prosy sermon in a stuffy, ill-ventilated church on a warm summer's day, one hardly cares to conjecture, so rigidly enforced was the duty of listening to sermons; whilst to be abroad "in time of sermon" was sin so heinous that Elders were, so to speak, specially retained to prowl around and nose out offenders. Walking on the Sabbath day – "vaguing," they called it, – was looked on with horror, and called for stern reprimand. In 1710, it was observed that sundry persons in Kelso were "guiltie of profaning the Sabbath by walking abroad in the fields after sermons," and the Session called on the parish minister to "give them a general reproof out of the pulpit the next Loird's Day, and to dehort them from so doing in time coming, with certification that the Session will take strict notice of any one guiltie of it." For less than "vaguing," however, a man might be brought before the Session. In 1710, Alexander Graemslaw of Maxwellheugh was "dilated for bringing in cabbage to his house the last Lord's Day between sermons," and was "cited to the next Session." ("Dilate" is probably less painful than it sounds). He was only "rebuked" about the cabbages: but then they fell on him and demanded an explanation of his not having been at church. Altogether they made things unpleasantly warm for Alexander. In 1708, Alexander Handiside and his son, and a woman named Jean Ker were had up for "walking to and fro on the Sabbath." At first they "compeared not" on being cited, but on a second citation Handiside "compeared," and vainly advanced the plea that his walking to and fro was occasioned by the fact that he had been attending a child who had broken a leg or an arm. He "was exhorted to be a better observer of the Sabbath." A Scot, apparently, might not upon the Scottish Sabbath draw from a pit his ox or his ass which had fallen in. This same year, "those who searched the town" discovered two small boys "playing on the Sabbath day in time of sermon." The Session dealt sternly with the hardened ruffians. Amongst other cases that one reads of there is that of Katherine Thomson. One's sympathies rather go with Katherine, who when reproved by a sleuth-hound Elder for "sitting idly at her door in time of sermon," abused her reprover. But the Session made it warm for a woman who thus not only, as they said, "profaned the Sabbath," but was guilty of "indescreeet carriage to the Elder." One trembles to think how easy it was to slip into sin in those days.

But over and above this Juggernaut power of the Session, there was another weapon much used by eighteenth century ministers, whereby they kept a heavy hand on the bowed backs of their congregations. It was their habit, where the conduct, real or fancied, of any member of their flock offended them, to speak *at* the culprit during service on Sundays, and to speak at him in no uncertain voice. The practice is probably now dead, even in remote country parishes, but fifty years ago it was still a favourite weapon in the hands of old-fashioned ministers, and in the eighteenth century it seems to have been in almost universal use. The Reverend Mr. Ramsay, minister of Kelso from 1707 till

his death in 1749, was a dexterous and unsparing wielder of this ecclesiastical flail. It chanced once that there "sat under" him – as we say in Scotland – a Highlander, a man who had deserted from the ranks of the rebel army in the '15, and had afterwards managed to get appointed to a post in the Excise at Kelso. This man's seat in church was in the front pew of the gallery, immediately facing Mr. Ramsay, and his every movement, therefore, was likely to catch the minister's eye. Now, the exciseman had a habit which greatly annoyed Mr. Ramsay. As soon as the sermon commenced, the Highlander produced a pencil, with which he proceeded to make marks on a slip of paper. He may, perhaps, have been making calculations not unconnected with his duties as exciseman, – a scandalous proceeding when he should have been all ears for the Word as expounded by the minister; or, again, on the other hand he may really have been devoutly attentive to the sermon, and engaged in making notes on it, – a thing perhaps not over and above likely in an ex-Highland rebel. In any case he annoyed Mr. Ramsay, and one day the irritation became acute. Pausing in his discourse in order to give emphasis to his words, and looking straight at the exciseman, he cried: "My brethren, I tell ye, except ye be born again, it is as impossible for you to enter the Kingdom of Heaven as it is for a Hielander no to be a thief! Man wi' the keel-o-vine," he thundered, "do ye hear *that*?" (For the benefit of non-Scottish readers it may be necessary to explain that a "keel-o-vine" is a pencil).

A few miles above Coldstream, after a course of about four and twenty miles, the beautiful little Eden Water joins Tweed. Its capabilities as a trout stream are spoken of elsewhere in this volume, and the little river is now mentioned only to record a tragedy of unusual nature which occurred in it in the earlier half of the nineteenth century. Two young ladies, sisters of the then proprietor of Newton Don, a beautiful estate on the right bank of Eden, had come from Edinburgh to pass the summer and autumn at their brother's house. With them was a friend, a Miss Ramsay. It chanced that one afternoon these three young ladies were walking along the banks of the river, on the side opposite to Newton Don. They had strolled farther than at starting had been their intention, and time had slipped past unnoticed, and while they still had some distance to go on their return way, they were surprised by the sound of the house bell ringing for dinner. Now, a little below the spot where they then were, it was possible to cross the river by stepping stones, an easy, and to every appearance a perfectly safe way by which anybody beyond the age of childhood might gain the other side, without much risk even of wetting a shoe. The three girls, accordingly, started to go over by these stones. The water was low and clear, the weather fine; there had been no thunderstorm that might have been capable of bringing down from the hills a sudden spate; the crossing could have been made a million times in such circumstances without peril greater than is to be met with in stepping across a moorland drain. Yet now the one thing happened that made it dangerous.

At some little distance up stream there stood a mill, the water power of which was so arranged, that if the sluice of the mill should for any reason be suddenly closed, that body of water which normally flowed down the mill dam after turning the wheel, was discharged into the river some way above the stepping stones. In the narrow channel of the Eden at this point, this sudden influx of water was quite sufficient to raise the stream's level to a height most dangerous to anyone who at the time might be in the act of crossing by these stones. Unhappily, at the exact moment when the three poor girls were stepping cautiously and with none too certain foot from stone to stone, and had reached to about mid-channel, the miller, ignorant of their situation and unable from where he stood to command a view to any distance down stream, closed his sluice. Down Eden's bed surged a wave crested like some intrushing sea that sweeps far up a shingly beach. In an instant the three girls, afraid to make a dash for the safety of the bank, were swept off the stones where they clung, and were carried shrieking down the swollen stream. One, Miss Ramsay, buoyed to a certain extent by the nature of her dress, floated until she was able to grasp the overhanging branch of a tree, and she succeeded in getting out. The other two, rolled over and over, buffeted by the sudden turmoil of waters, were swept away and drowned. No one was near to give help; none even heard their cries.

On the southern bank of Tweed, a mile or two up the river from Coldstream and Cornhill, stands all that is left of Wark Castle, a place once of formidable strength, and greatly famed in Border history. Except a few green mounds, and portions of massive wall, there remains now but little to speak of its former greatness, or to remind one of the mighty feats that were performed here during its countless sieges and bloody fights. But the old Northumbrian saying still tells its tale with grim simplicity:

"Auld Wark upon the Tweed
Has been mony a man's dead."

Regarding this couplet, the following comment is made in the *Denham Tracts*: "Mark's history, from the twelfth down to at least the sixteenth century, is perhaps without a parallel for surprises, assaults, sieges, blockades, surrenders, evacuations, burnings, restorations, slaughters. These quickly recurring events transformed the mount on which the castle stood into a Golgotha, and gave a too truthful origin to the couplet which still occurs on the Borders of the once rival kingdoms." The castle was erected during the reign of King Henry I., by Walter d'Espece, somewhere about the year 1130; and before it had been many years in existence, in 1135, David I. of Scotland captured it. From that time onwards, at least down to 1570, when Sussex spent a night within its walls on his way to harry Teviotdale, there is not one item of that formidable list of "surprises, assaults, sieges, blockades, surrenders, evacuations, burnings, restorations, slaughters," that has not been amply borne out by its history, many of them again and again. David took it in 1135, but restored it to England in the following year. Twice afterwards, the same monarch vainly attempted to take it by storm, but finally, after the fall of Norham, he reduced it by means of a long blockade. After this it remained in Scottish possession till 1157, when England again seized, and at great expense rebuilt, the castle. In 1216 it was destroyed by fire; in 1318, reduced by King Robert the Bruce; in 1385, taken by storm by the Scots. Then in 1419, William Halliburton of Fast Castle surprised the English and took the castle, putting all the garrison to the sword. But the same fate was dealt out to the Scots themselves a few months later; Sir Robert Ogle and his men gained access to the building by way of a sewer from the kitchen, which opened on the bank of Tweed. Creeping up this unsavoury passage, they in their turn surprised and slew the Scotsmen. Again in 1460, after the widow of James II. had dismantled Roxburgh and razed it almost to the foundations, the Scots forded Tweed and retook Wark. But they did not hold it long. More valuable now to the English than ever it had been before, owing to the loss of Roxburgh, it was partially repaired by them, only, however, to be again pulled down by the Scots before the battle of Flodden; after which Surrey for the last time restored and strengthened it. After the accession of James VI to the throne of England, Wark, like other Border strongholds, began to fall into decay; the need for them was gone. Buchanan, the historian, has left a description of Wark as it was in 1523, when he was with the Scottish army at Coldstream, which then besieged it. "In the innermost area," he says, "was a tower of great strength and height; this was encircled by two walls, the outer including the larger space, into which the inhabitants of the country used to fly with their cattle, corn, and flocks in time of war; the inner of much smaller extent, but fortified more strongly by ditches and towers. It had a strong garrison, good store of artillery and ammunition, and other things necessary for defence."

On this occasion the Scottish commander sent against the castle a picked force of Scottish and French troops, supported by heavy siege artillery, all under the command of Ker of Fernihurst. "The French," says Sir Walter Scott, "carried the outer enclosure at the first assault, but were dislodged by the garrison setting fire to the corn and straw laid up in it. The besiegers soon recovered their ground, and by their cannon effected a breach in the inner wall. The French with great intrepidity mounted the breach, sustaining great loss from the shot of that part of the garrison who possessed the keep; and being warmly received by the forces that defended the inner vallum, were obliged to retire after

great slaughter. The attack was to have been renewed on the succeeding day, but a fall of rain in the night, which swelled the Tweed and threatened to cut off the retreat of the assailants to the main army, and the approach of the Earl of Surrey, who before lay at Alnwick with a large force, obliged the Duke [of Albany] to relinquish his design and return into Scotland."

Wark, it is said, once belonged to the Earl of Salisbury, and the tale is told how, in the time of King David Bruce, a gallant deed was done by Sir William Montague, Lord Salisbury's governor of the castle. King David, returning from a successful foray into England, passed close to Wark, making for the ford over Tweed at Coldstream, and his rear-guard, heavily laden with plunder, was seen from the castle walls by Montague's garrison. The rear was straggling. Such an opportunity was not to be wasted. The Governor, with forty mounted men, made a sudden dash, slew a great number of the Scots, cut off one hundred and sixty horses laden with booty, and brought them safely into the castle. David instantly assaulted the place, but without success; and he thereupon determined to take it by siege. There was but one way whereby the place might be saved; a message must be conveyed to King Edward III., who was then on his way north with a great army. The risk was great; failure meant death, and the castle was closely invested. Sir William himself took the risk. In a night dark and windy, with rain falling in torrents, the Governor dashed out on a swift horse and cut his way through the Scottish lines before almost the alarm had been raised; and so rapidly did Edward advance on hearing of the plight of the garrison, that the rear of the Scottish force was barely over the ford before the English van had reached the southern bank of Tweed. It is of this occasion that the more or less mythical tale of King Edward and the Countess of Salisbury's Garter is told. In the great Hall of Wark Castle the story finds a dubious resting place.

The countless war-like events that have taken place in and around Wark give to the place an interest which is perhaps hardly appreciated by the majority of us, and that interest is largely added to when one thinks of the many characters noted in history who from time to time sojourned within its walls. King Stephen lay here with a large army in 1137; Henry III remained in the castle for some time with his queen in 1255; in 1296 Edward I paid it a visit: Edward II mustered here his army in 1314 before his crushing defeat at Bannockburn, and, as already stated, Edward III, after he had driven off the Scottish marauding force, was entertained here for a time by the Countess of Salisbury.

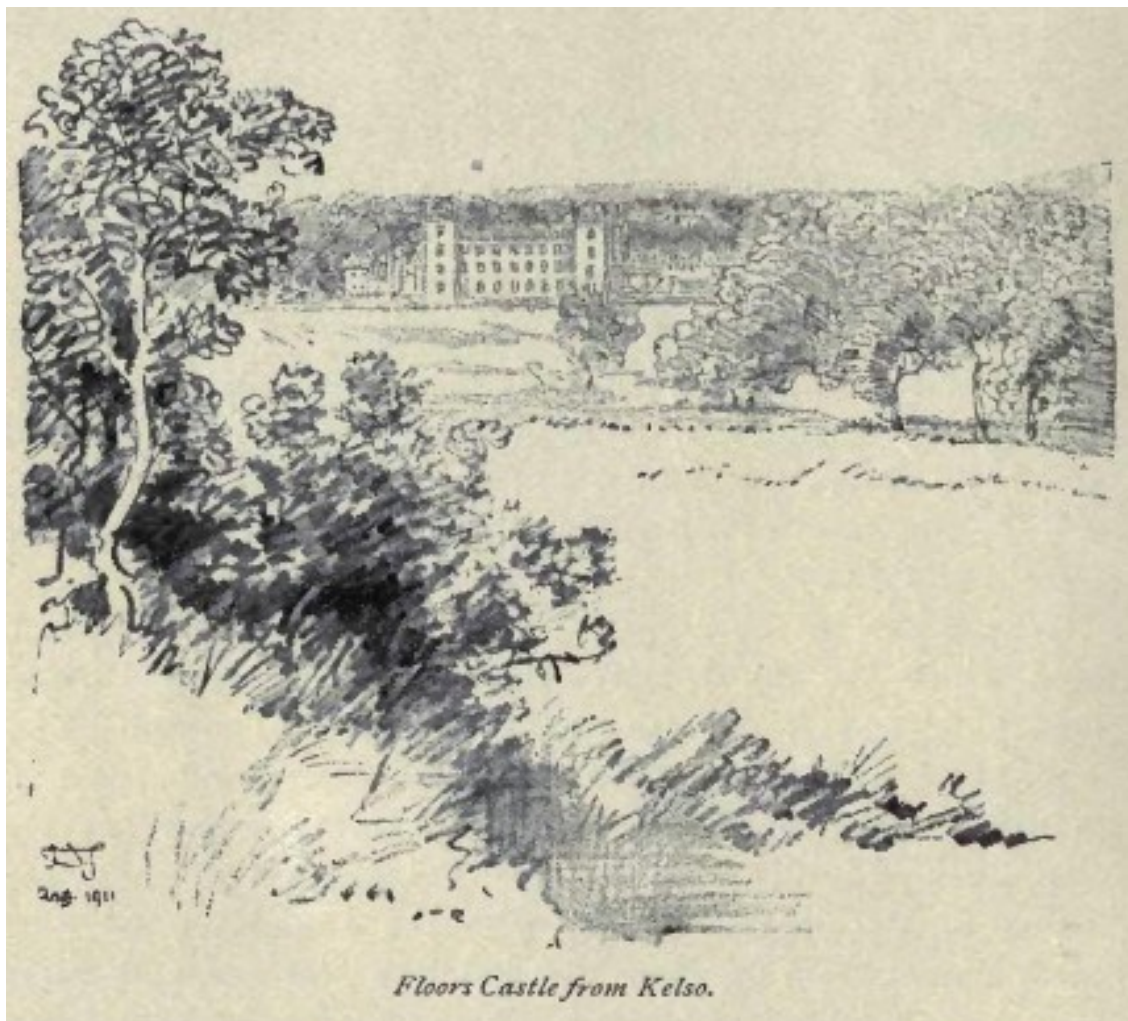
Wark, one thinks, would be an ideal place in which to conduct excavations, – though, indeed, a little in that line has already been undertaken. In the volume for 1863-68 of the "Proceedings of the Berwickshire Naturalists' Club," it is recorded that a good many years ago Mr. Richard Hodgson had traced a wide sewer to the north of the castle, opening on to the river bank. This sewer is said to be so wide that it might easily have been used for the passage of men or material. Probably it was by this bidden way that Sir Robert Ogle in 1419 forced his way into the interior. But if the opening was so wide, how came it to be undefended? Was there a traitor inside who kept guard that night, a Northumbrian perhaps, masquerading as a Scot, whose burr did not betray him? In the course of his investigations Mr. Hodgson came also on a "long flight of stone steps leading from the keep to the outer court, with a portcullis about half way." Quantities of cannon balls have also been found, but there must surely be unlimited scope for the discovery of such like treasure trove in the fields surrounding the castle, and down by the ford where so many armies of both nations have crossed Tweed. They did not always make a leisurely and altogether unmolested passage.

CHAPTER III KELSO, ROXBURGH, TEVIOT, KALE, AND OXNAM

Coming now to Kelso, – with Melrose the most pleasing of the towns on Tweed, – we pass the meeting of the waters of Tweed and its largest affluent, Teviot. Kelso has a fine airy square, good streets, and an air of quiet gentility, neighboured as it is by Floors, the palatial seat of the Duke of Roxburghe, and by the trees of Springwood Park, the residence of Sir George Douglas.

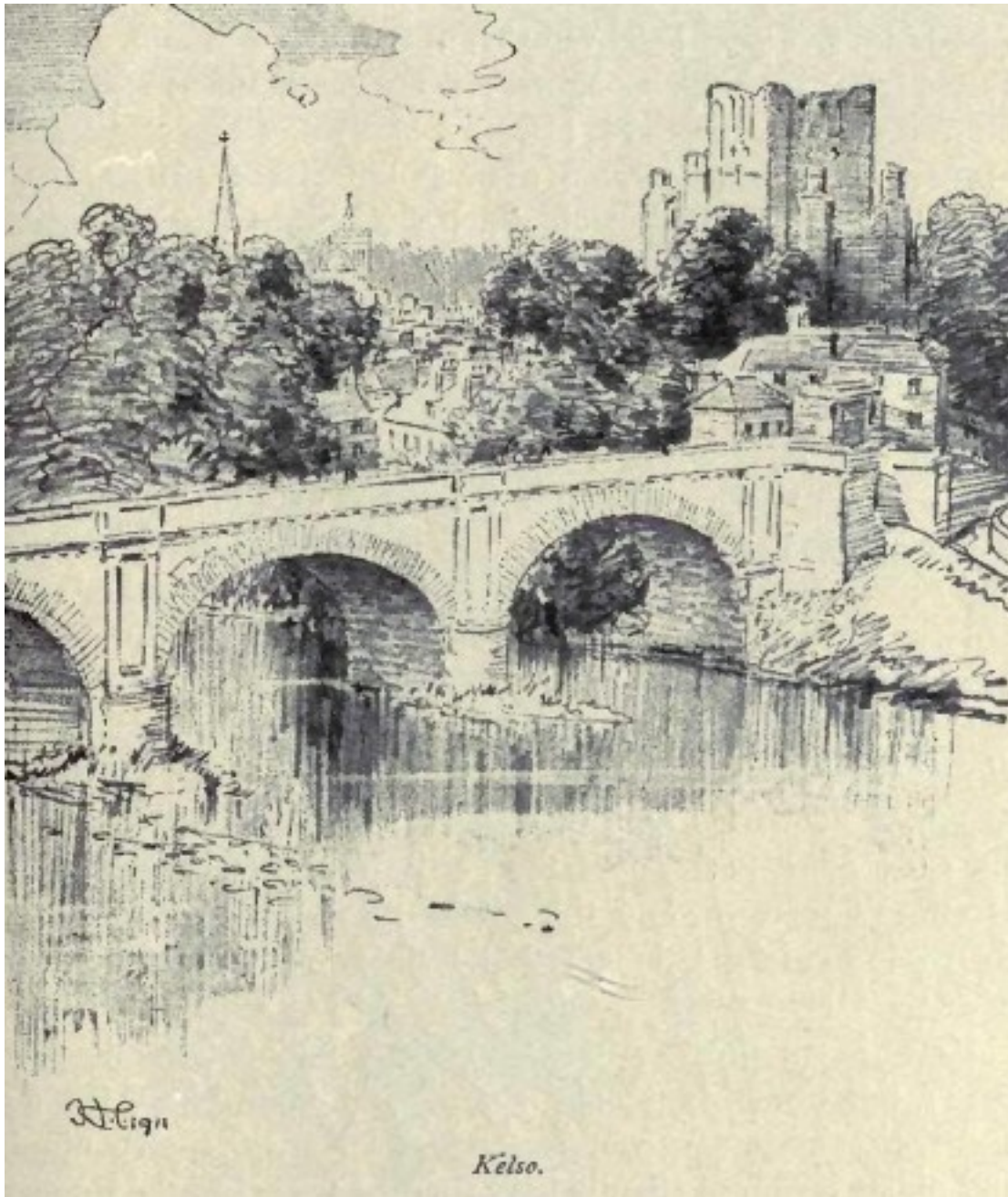
We are now in the region of the clan of Ker of Cessford, from which the ducal family descends: while the Lothian branch descends from the Kers of Fernihurst. The name, Ker, is said to mean "left handed," and like the left handed men of the tribe of Benjamin, the Kers were a turbulent and grasping-clan, often at deadly feud with their neighbours and rivals, the Scotts of Buccleugh. These, with the Douglasses, for long predominant, were the clans that held the Marches, and freely raided the English Borderers, while they fought like fiends among themselves.

It is in the early sixteenth century that the chiefs of the two branches of Ker, or Kerr, and of the Scotts, become more and more prominent in history, both as warriors and politicians. From these Houses the Wardens of the Border were often chosen, and were not to be trusted to keep order; being more disposed to use sword and axe. Within a century the chiefs throve to Earl's estate, and finally "warstled up the brae" to Dukedoms.



Meanwhile the Douglasses, for long the most powerful House in Scotland, the rivals of the Crown, were crushed by James II, and of the Douglasses, Sir George, of Springwood Park, is descended from the House of Cavers, (on Teviot, below Hawick), scions sprung from Archibald, natural son of the Earl of Douglas who fell at Otterburne (1388) and is immortal in the ballad. The whole land is full of scenes made famous by the adventures of these ancient clans; they may be tracked by blood from Hermitage Castle to the dowie dens of Yarrow and the Peel Tower on the Douglas burn.

Sir Herbert Maxwell, in "The Story of the Tweed" (p. 139) not unnaturally laments the "sadly suburban" name of Springwood Park, standing where it ought not, in place of the ancient name of Maxwell, originally "Maccus whele," "the pool of Maccus," on Tweed.



Maccus was a descendant of the primeval Maccus, who, before the Norman Conquest, signed himself, or was described, as Maccus Archipirata, "the leading pirate." To a later Maccus David I gave the salmon fishing at Kelso; the pool, called "Maccus whele" became Maxwell, and the lairds

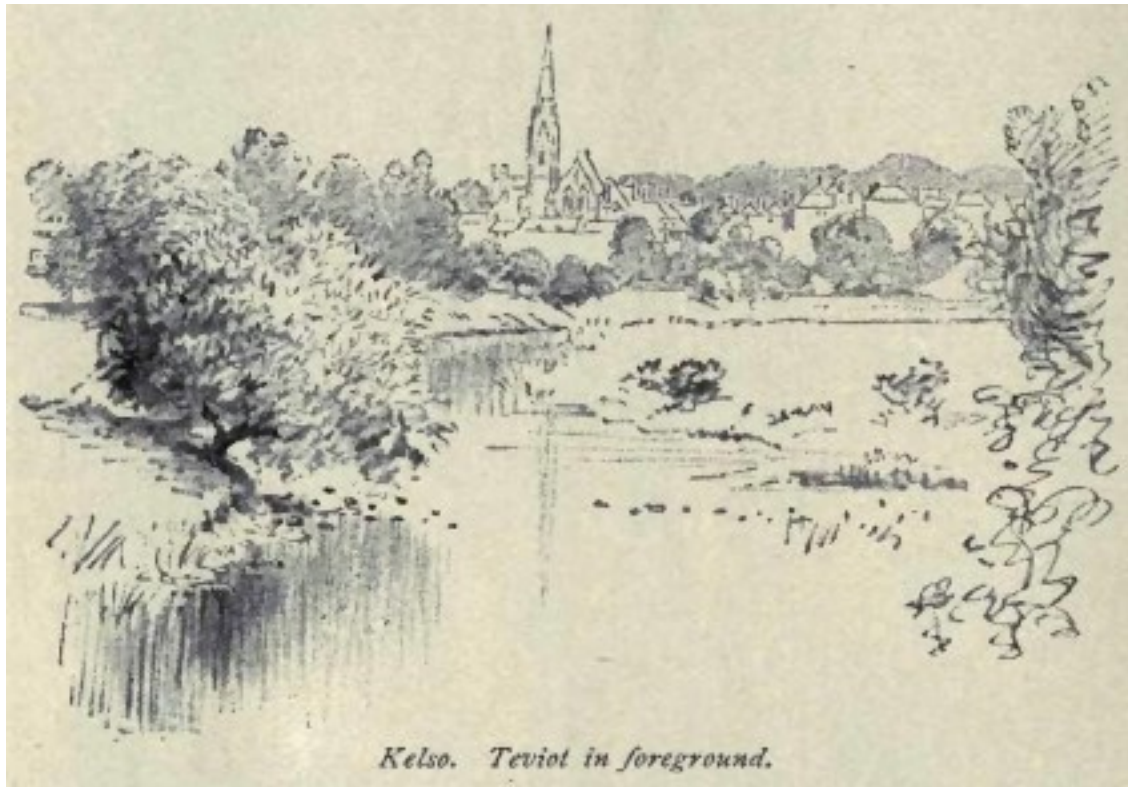
"de Maxwell." The Maxwells moved to the western Border to Caerlaverock and into Galloway; and of all this history only the name, "Max wheel," of a salmon cast below the pretty bridge of Kelso, is left.

The name Kelso is of Cymric origin: *calch myadd*. "Chalk hill." To be sure, as the man said of the derivation of *jour* from *dies*, the name is *diablement change en route*. The ruins of Kelso Abbey are the chief local remains of the Ages of faith. When David I, not yet king, brought French Bénédictines to Scotland, he settled them in Ettrick Forest. Here they raised the schele chirche – the Monastery, on a steep hill above Ettrick (now Selkirk), and here they "felt the breeze down Ettrick break" with its chill showers, and wept as they remembered pleasant Picardy; the climate of Selkirk being peculiarly bitter. David, when king, moved his Benedictines to the far more comfortable region of Kelso, or "Calkow," where they began to build in 1128. The style of their church is late Norman, and the tower was used in war as a keep in the fierce wars of Henry VIII. The place was gutted and the town burned by Dacre, in 1523; and suffered again from Norfolk, in 1542, and Hertford in 1545. Henry VIII chivalrously destroyed this part of the border from the cottage to the castles of the Kers and the pleasant holy places of the Church, during the childhood of his kinswoman, Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots. His aim was always to annex Scotland; and, of course, to introduce the Gospel. In 1545, after overcoming the garrison of the church tower, Hertford's men wrecked the whole place, leaving little more than we see to day; though that little is much compared with what the Reformers have left of St. Andrews and Lindores.

Kelso saw more than enough of very ugly fighting in those days; not even her monks stood aloof when blows fell fast and their cloisters were threatened. In 1545, twelve monks and ninety laymen gallantly held the Abbey against the English, and when at length Hertford's guns created a practicable breach, they retreated to the church tower. Hill Burton says, in his History of Scotland, that then "the assault was given to the Spaniards, but, when they rushed in, they found the place Kelso Abbey. cleared.



The nimble garrison had run to the strong square tower of the church, and there again they held out. Night came before they could be dislodged from this their last citadel, so the besiegers had to leave the assault till the morning, setting a good watch all night about the house, which was not so well kept but that a dozen of the Scots in the darkness of the night escaped by ropes out at back windows and corners, with no little danger of their lives.



When the day came, and the steeple eftsoons assaulted, it was immediately won, and as many Scots slain as were within." So may Kelso Abbey be said to have been finally wrecked; though, fifteen years later, the Reformers did their own little bit of work in the same line.

The Abbey buildings, however, or part of them, continued to be used long after this date; from 1649 to 1771 the transept, roughly ceiled over, served as the parish church, but it was given up in the year last mentioned owing to a portion of the roof falling in whilst service was being held. The kirk "skailed" that day in something under record time; Thomas the Rhymer's prediction that "the kirk should fall at the fullest" was in the people's mind, and they stood not much upon the order of their going.

Kelso was the most southern point reached by Montrose in his efforts to join hands with Charles the First after his year of victories. The Border chiefs who had promised aid all deserted him; the Gordons and Colkitto had left him, and he marched north to the junction of Ettrick and Tweed and the fatal day of Philiphaugh.



In 1745, Kelso for two days saw Prince Charlie, in his feint against General Wade; from Kelso he turned to Carlisle, his actual, and by no fault of his, hopeless line of invasion of England. The Prince's own strategy, as he wrote to his father, was "to have a stroke for't," as near the Border and as promptly as possible. He therefore wished to cross the Tweed near Kelso, and beat up the quarters of the senile Marshal Wade at Newcastle. If he discussed Wade to the same tune as he had settled Cope, English Jacobites might join him. Holding Newcastle, he could thereby admit French reinforcements, while, if defeated, he was near the sea, and had a better route of retreat than if he were defeated going by Carlisle and the western route, in the heart of England. His council of chiefs, unhappily, forced him to take the western route. Halting at Kelso, he sent the best of the Border cavaliers, Henry Ker of Graden, to make a feint on Wade; he rode as far as Wooler, near Flodden. Next day the Prince marched up Teviot, and up Jed, to Jedburgh, with the flower of the fighting clans; then up Rule water, another of the tributaries of Tweed, to Haggiehaugh on the Liddell, and so into England near Carlisle. Of old he would have picked up the Kers, Elliots, and Scotts; Haggiehaugh, where he slept, is Larriston, the home of the Elliot chief, "the Lion of Liddesdale." But the tartans waved and the bagpipes shrilled in vain, and the Blue Bonnets did not go over the Border. One of the writers of this book possesses the armchair in which the Prince rested at Haggiehaugh.

It was at Kelso, one remembers, that Sir Walter Scott first met James Ballantyne, with whose fortunes his own were afterwards to become so inextricably blended. Scott was then but a growing boy of whose health had been giving trouble, and he was sent by his father to stay for six months with an aunt "who resided in a small house, situated very pleasantly in a large garden to the eastward of the churchyard of Kelso, which extended down to the Tweed." During the time of Scott's stay, Ballantyne and he were class-mates under Mr. Lancelot Whale, master of the Kelso Grammar School. The acquaintance then formed was never quite broken off, and all the world knows the story of its outcome.

We now follow Prince Charles into a rich, well-wooded grassy land, cultivated of old under the Benedictines of Kelso.

"Pleasant Teviotdale, a land

Made blithe with plough and harrow,"

Little more than a mile from that town, by the road leading to St. Boswells up Tweed's southern bank, on a wooded ridge overhanging Teviot and separated from Tweed by but a narrow flat haugh, stands all that is left of Roxburgh Castle, – a few isolated portions of massive wall defended on the north and, east sides by a ditch.



At the west end a very deep cutting divides this ridge from the high ground farther to the west.

Ditch and cutting apparently were in former times flooded with water run in from Teviot, for even as late as the end of the eighteenth century remains of a weir or dam could still be seen stretching across the river. No trace of it now remains. Those who razed the castle took care that the dam should be broken beyond repair, and countless winter floods have long since swept away the little that may have been left. Close to the castle probably stood the once important town of Roxburgh, with its streets and churches, its convent and schools, and its Mint, where many of our Scottish coins were struck. Where are those streets and churches now? Not a trace of them is to be found. The houses were of wood, no doubt, and easily demolished, but the churches, the convent, and the Mint, one would expect to have been of build substantial enough to leave some indication of where they had stood. Roxburgh, more than any other Border town, experienced the horrors of war. Her castle was one of four great Scottish strongholds – Edinburgh, Stirling, Berwick, Roxburgh – and it mattered little whether it were temporarily held by England or by Scotland, on the inhabitants of the town fell the brunt of those horrors. Castle and town were continually being besieged, continually changing hands, sometimes by stratagem – as when on Shrove Tuesday, 1314, the Good Sir James Douglas, with sixty men, surprised the garrison and took the castle from the English; – sometimes by siege and assault, as when James II was killed by the bursting of "the Lion," one of his own clumsy pieces of ordnance, a gun similar to that ancient weapon, "Mons Meg," which is still to be seen in Edinburgh Castle. To the Queen of James II was due the complete destruction of Roxburgh as a stronghold. The castle had been for something like a hundred years continuously in England's hands, – a rankling sore in Scotland's body. The knife must be used unflinchingly. Under her orders, therefore, when the castle was captured after James's death, the place was thrown down and made entirely untenable; and probably at this time also the dam across Teviot was cut, thus permanently emptying fosse and ditch. Roxburgh ceased then almost entirely to be a place of strength, and time and decay have wiped her out; no man may say where stood any portion of a town which, in point of population, was once the fourth most important burgh in Scotland. Of the last siege, and the death of James, the historian Pitscottie writes: "The King commanded the souldouris and men of weir to assault the castell, but the Inglischemen défendit so waleiantlie within, the seige appeirlt so to indure langer nor was beleiffit, quhairthrow the King déterminât to compell them that was within the house be lang tairrie to rander and gif it ower." Reinforcements at this time arrived, "which maid the King so blyth that he commanded to chairge all the gunnis to gif the castell ane new wollie. But quhill this prince, mair curieous nor becam him or the majestie of ane King, did stand neir hand by the gunneris quhan the artaillierie was dischargeand, his thie bane was doung in twa with ane piece of ane misframit gun that brak in the schutting, be the quhilk he was strickin to the grund and dieit haistilie thereof, quhilk grettrumlie discouragit all his nobill gentlemen and freindis that war stand aboot him." Near at hand on the farther bank of Tweed stands, or until lately stood, an old thorn tree which is said to mark the spot where the King fell.

The ancient Roxburgh has utterly disappeared;

"Fallen are thy lowers, and where the palace stood
In gloomy grandeur waves yon hanging wood;
Crushed are thy halls, save where the peasant sees
One moss-clad ruin rise between the trees."

But there lingers yet one relic of the days when her Markets and Trysts were famed throughout the country. St. James's Fair, which w-as held at Roxburgh as long ago as the days of King David I, is still kept each August in the pleasant haugh by the ruins of the castle, between Teviot and Tweed. There, on a little eminence, the Town Clerk of Jedburgh each year reads this Proclamation: "OYEZ, OYEZ, OYEZ." Whereas the Fair of St. James is to be held this – th day of August 19 – , and is to continue for the space of eight days from and after this proclamation. Therefore, in name and

authority of Our Sovereign King George V, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, King, Defender of the Faith, and in name and authority of the Honourable the Provost and Bailies of the Royal Borough of Jedburgh, and in name and authority of a High and Potent Prince the Duke of Roxburgh, and his Bailie of Kelso, I make due and lawful proclamation that no person or persons shall presume to trouble or molest the present Fair, or offer any injury one to another, or break the King's peace, – Prohibiting all old Feuds and new Feuds, or the doing of anything to disquiet the said Fair, under the highest pains of law. As also – that no person or persons make any private bargains prejudicial to the customs and Proprietors of said Fair, – Certifying those who contravene any part of said customs that they will be prosecuted and fined according to law. "GOD SAVE THE KING."

In these degenerate days, the Fair lasts but one day in place of eight, and Feuds, new or old, are unknown. But not so very long ago the rivalry at this Fair of the neighbouring towns of Kelso and Jedburgh was very bitter. Roxburgh had ceased to be, indeed, but the Fair survived, and it chanced that the Provost and Bailies of Jedburgh – like Roxburgh, a Royal burgh, – having under some old charter acquired a right to "proclaim" the Fair and collect the market dues, duly came in state each August in order to exercise this privilege at the ancient stance. Now, Kelso in the course of time became a larger and more important town than Jedburgh; it is, moreover, in close proximity to the ground on which the Fair is held, whereas Jedburgh was no better than a foreign land, miles removed – ten, at least, – from Roxburgh. Hence Kelso resented what it considered to be an outrage on the part of her officious neighbour. What was Jedburgh that she should oust them from those market tolls and dues! A beggarly interloper, no less! The outcome of such a frame of mind was generally what might be expected amongst men whose forebears for many hundreds of years had been fierce fighters. As the procession of Jedburgh magistrates, all in their robes and escorted by a compact body of townsmen, advanced towards the place of proclamation, taunts of "Pride and Poverty!" – "Pride and Poverty!" were hurled at their ears by the irritated men of Kelso. "Doo Tairts an' Herrin' Pies!" fiercely retorted Jedburgh's inhabitants. It is difficult now-a-days to see where came in the sting of the original taunt, or the appositeness of the "Countercheck Quarrelsome." But in those old days they were amply sufficient. Some man, more hasty, or less sober, than his neighbour would follow up the taunt by a push or a blow, and St. James's Fair was speedily as lively a spot as now could be any Fair even in Ireland. Kelso and Jedburgh were "busy at each other"; and sometimes one prevailed, sometimes the other. An attempt that Kelso once made to hold the Fair on its own side of the river was utterly defeated; Jedburgh marched across the bridge and made things so warm that the experiment of shifting the venue of St. James's Fair has never been repeated.

No doubt, when Roxburgh ceased to be a Royal Burgh, its rights naturally devolved on Jedburgh, the only other Royal Burgh in the country. But Jedburgh tradition tells of a time when the English, taking advantage of heavy floods which prevented Kelso men from crossing the river, raided the Fair and carried off rich plunder. Then Jedburgh, coming to the rescue, smote the English and recaptured the booty, and for their gallant conduct were awarded those privileges which they still exercise.

The Kelso taunt of "Pride and Poverty" may possibly have originated from a custom to which the economical burgesses of Jedburgh seem to have been addicted. In a letter written in 1790, Sir Walter Scott mentions that when he himself visited the Fair in that year, he found that, there not being in possession of the men of Jedburgh enough riding boots to accommodate all the riders in the procession, the magistrates had ruled that only the outside men of each rank should wear boots, or, rather each a boot on his *outer* leg. Thus, as the men rode in threes, one pair of boots would be sufficient to maintain the dignity of each rank, – a device worthy of Caleb Balderstone himself. It is easy enough to assign an origin to "Pride and Poverty," but the local custom which gave occasion for the bitter taunt of "Doo tairts and Herrin' Pies" is baffling. There are many such taunts in the Border,

hurled by town at rival town. "Selkirk craws," is the reproach flung at that burgh by its neighbour, Galashiels; and

"Galashiels Herons, lockit in a box,
Daurna show their faces, for Selkirk gamecocks,"

is, or was, the jibe that stung Gala lads to fury.

Before quitting the subject of Roxburgh, it may be of interest to mention that in the churchyard of the present village of that name there is a gravestone to the memory of the original of Edie Ochiltree, the bluegown of Sir Walter's *Antiquary*. Andrew Gemmels was his name. He died in 1793 at Roxburgh Newtown, a farm on the banks of Tweed a few miles from Roxburgh, at the great age of one hundred and six.

The first tributary received by Teviot on the right bank is the Kale Water, running through the parish of Linton, which was in King David's time an appanage of Kelso Abbey. The church has been restored, but the walls are, like those of Kelso, Norman work, and in the porch is an enigmatic piece of sculptors' work; apparently somebody is fighting a dragon – Sir Herbert Maxwell suggests St. George, but St. Michael was the more orthodox dragon slayer. About the object grew an aetiological myth; a Somerville of old times

"Slew the Worm of Wornes glen
And wan all Lintoun parochine."

The dragon-slaying story is found in most parts of the world, from Troy to Dairy in the Glenkens. Here the Worm twisted himself round the Mote, or tumulus (apparently the basis of an old fort), and was killed by the local blacksmith. In 1522-1533, Linton tower was among the scores of such Border Keeps which the English destroyed. They could hold their own against a Border raid; not in face of a regular English army. Roxburghshire was not so deeply tainted by Covenanting principles as Galloway, Lanarkshire, and the south-west, Ayrshire and Renfrewshire. Covenanters needed wild hills and wild wastes. They are said to have held coil venticles in a deep glen of Kale; but, as a rule, they knew enough to preach in places of wide outlook, where they could detect the approach of parties of dragoons. In the bed of a burn they would be at great disadvantage.

A tower more interesting than that of Linton, namely Ormistoun, fell when Linton fell; but it must have been rebuilt, for here, in Mary Stuart's day, dwelt the Black Laird of Ormistoun, James, with Hob, his brother, two of Bothwell's most cruel and desperate "Lambs." The Black Laird was with Bothwell, Hay of Talla (on upper Tweed), and one of Bothwell's own clan, Hepburn of Bowton, when they placed the powder under Darnley's chamber in Kirk o'-Field (February 9-10, 1567), and so, in the feeling words of Bothwell, "sent him fleeing through the air." After doing another deed as treacherous as this murder, the Black Laird was taken, tried, and hanged in 1573. Bothwell was Warden of the Border, which he ruled from Hermitage Castle on the Liddel water, and all these loose Border lairds rode and slew at his bidding. They had probably, in that twilight of faith, no religion in particular; Catholicism lingered in the shape of oaths, Calvinism was not yet well settled in these regions. But, probably in prison, the Black Laird "got religion." He professed to be of the Elect, and confident of his salvation, while he drew a dark enough picture of life among lairds of his quality. On the day of his hanging he said, "With God I hope this night to sup... Of all men on the earth I have been one of the proudest and most high-minded, and most filthy of my body. But specially, I have shed innocent blood of one Michael Hunter with my own hands. Alas, therefore, because the said Michael, having me lying on my back, having a pitchfork in his hand, might have slain me if he pleased, but did it not, which of all things grieves me most in conscience. Within these seven years I never saw two good men, nor one good deed, but all kinds of wickedness."

This wretch, once on his feet, must have butchered some poor hind who had spared him. In reading Pitcairn's *Criminal Trials*, and the Register of Privy Council for the period of the Reformation, we find private war, murder, and rapine to have been almost weekly occurrences, from the Upper Tweed to the Esk. The new Gospel Light made the darkness visible, and we see robberies and vendettas among the dwellers in the peel towers, of which the empty shells stand beside every burn in the pleasant lands then clouded with smoke from blazing barn and tower and cottage. The later Ormistouns had "particularly deadly feud" with the Kers of Cessford; the Kers annexed their lands, and the last Ormistoun was a public hangman; the ancestral Orm was a flourishing and pious gentleman of the twelfth century, a benefactor of the early monks of Melrose. Meanwhile, the castle of Cessford, the ancestral hold of that line, is not far from a place called Morbattle in the Black Laird's day, and now, more pleasantly, Morebattle. The name has no connection either with festivity or feud, and "More" is not the Celtic *mor*, "great." "More" is "mere," a lake, and "botl" is Anglo-Saxon, "a dwelling." Cessford Castle had the name to be only second to Bothwell's castle of Dunbar, and Logan of Restalrig's eyrie on a jutting rock above the sea, Fastcastle. In the great English raid of 1523, "Dand Ker," Sir Andrew, the head of the clan, rather feebly surrendered the place, which was secure in walls fourteen feet thick.

An interesting find was made at Cessford in 1858. Whilst excavating, a few yards from the north wall of the castle, a workman unearthed a very fine old sword, and a dagger, both in fair preservation. The dagger measured about twenty-six inches, and bore on its blade the Scottish Thistle, surmounted by a crown. The sword was basket hilted, richly carved and embossed in silver. It measured forty inches in length; on one side of the blade was the Scottish Crown; on the other, the date 1511.

It was a Ker of Cessford, tradition tells, who in 1622 tried to carry off the goods and gear of Hobbie Hall of Haughhead, father of the famous Covenanter, Henry Hall. Hobbie, apparently, was quite able to take care of himself, as is testified by a large stone which stands on a knoll amid trees, near Kale water, on which is carved:

Here Hoby Hall boldly maintained his right
'Gainst reef plain force armed w. lawless might
For twenty pleughs harnessed in all their gear
Could not this valiant noble heart make fear
But w. his sword he cut the formost soam
In two: hence drove both pleughs and pleughmen home."

1622.

The stone was repaired and restored in 1854 by Lady John Scott.

Higher up than Kale comes Oxnam (locally, Ousenam) Water, which joins Teviot hard by Crailing. Once a nice trout stream, there is not left at this day much to tempt the angler whose dreams are of giant fish, though doubtless many a "basket" can be caught of fingerlings. In none of the Border streams, unhappily, is any restriction made as regards the size of the fish that may be taken. Everything goes into the creel of the fisher with worm in "drummly" waters, and of the holiday sportsman; moved by no compunctions, trammelled by no absurd qualms, – to them a fish is a fish; and as the latter, at least, probably never even sees a big trout, he attaches vast importance to the capture of a "Triton of the minnows." The writer, who had one day fished a Border river with all the little skill at his command, and had succeeded neither with dry fly nor with wet in capturing anything worthy to be kept, once came upon a sportsman of this holiday breed, rigged out with all the latest appliances which should inevitably lure the wiliest of trout from his native element. He "had had a splendid day," he said, in reply to enquiries. "What had he got them with? Oh-h, Fly." but what fly, he would not say. It was just "fly."

"Might he see the basket?" the baffled enquirer asked Proudly the lid was thrown back, and the contents displayed – a basket half filled with parr, and with trout, not one of which could have been six inches in length. Thus are the streams depleted.

It is a pleasant valley, that of the Oxnam. Across it runs the old Roman Road, – in days not very remote a favourite camping place of gipsies, – and up the valley to the south lies that noble sweep of blue hills, the Cheviots, smiling and friendly enough in summer, but dour and forbidding when the north east blast of winter strikes their blurred and gloomy faces.

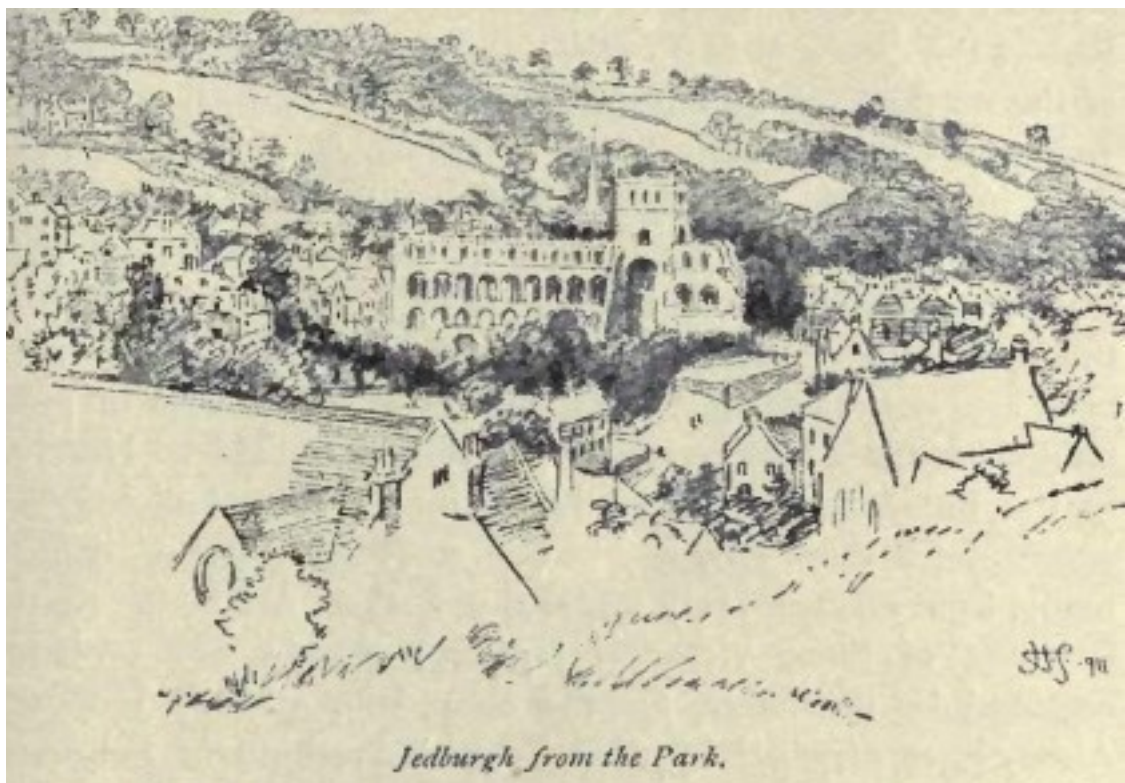
Did those "muggers" and "tinklers," who of old frequented the Roman Road that runs south over Teviot and Jed and Oxnam, and away over the Cheviots down into Rede valley past Bremenium (High Rochester), did they ever come upon buried treasure or hoarded coins, one wonders. It is not many years since a well-known Professor, as he sat resting one day by the side of the old Road a little farther south than Oxnam valley, idly pushed his walking stick into a rabbit hole close to where he was seated. A few scrapes with the point of the stick, and something chinked and fell; then another, and another. But this buried treasure consisted only of copper coins, a vast number, none very rare; and no farther search revealed anything of value. Yet there must be plenty along that route, if one could but chance upon the proper spots. And surely, wherever there befell one of those countless fights or skirmishes that were for ever taking place in these Border hills, both in the days of the Romans and since, there must lie buried weapons. At Bloodylaws, up Oxnam, for instance. The name is suggestive; but what occurred there, one cannot say – though there is the vague tradition of a mighty battle that left Oxnam for three days running red with blood. The country people, if you enquire from them the name of that hill, pronounce it with bated breath; – "Bluidylaws," they say in lowered voice. But I doubt that their tone is less the effect of old unhappy tradition telling how some great slaughter took place here, than the fact that "bluidy" is a word banned by the polite. This "three days red with blood," too, is an expression curiously common in the account given by country folk of any battle of which they may have local tradition. You will find it used in connection with at least half a dozen other places in the Border-land besides Bloodylaws; and in the ballad of "The Lads of Wamphray" there occurs the line: "When the Biddes-burn ran three days blood." Wamphray is in Annandale, and the fight alluded to was between the Johnstons and the Crichtons in 1593. But the affair was a mere skirmish; "three days blood" is but a figure of speech in this and probably in most other instances. Still, on a spur of Bloodylaws there exists a well-defined circular camp, and there may be foundation for the local tradition of some grim slaughter.

CHAPTER IV JEDBURGH, AND THE JED

Two or three miles up Teviot from the junction of Oxnam Water, we come to Jed, a beautiful stream, on whose banks dreams the pleasant county town where, close on ninety years ago, they cried that cry of which they do not now like to think – "Burke Sir Walter!"

In all the Border there stands no place more picturesquely situated than Jedburgh, nor in historical interest can any surpass it. And though its ancient castle, and the six strong towers that once defended the town, have long since vanished, there remain still the noble ruins of its magnificent abbey, and other relics of the past, less noticeable but hardly less interesting; whilst the surrounding countryside brims over with the beauty of river, wood, and hill.

History gives no very definite information as to the date at which first took place the building of a castle at Jedburgh, but it appears certain that as early as the year 950 a.d. there existed in these parts some great stronghold, if, at least, "Judan-byrig" – where, when he had suppressed an insurrection in Northumbria, King Edred of England confined the rebel Archbishop of York – may be identified with "Jedburgh." Probably, however, there was in this neighbourhood a castle of sorts long prior to the date above mentioned, for both "Gedde-wrdes," or "Jedworths," the old and the new, were known settlements before the expiry of the earlier half of the ninth century, and in those turbulent days no community was rash enough to plant itself in hamlet or town except under the protecting shield of castle or strong place of arms.



In any case, before the end of the eleventh century, there certainly existed at Jedburgh a castle of formidable strength, which at frequent intervals continued to be used by the Scottish kings as a royal residence. Here, in 1165, died Malcolm the Maiden. From Jedvorth was issued many a Charter by Malcolm's predecessor, David I, by William the Lion, by Alexander II. Here, too, the queen of Alexander III bore him a son in the year 1264; and here at a masque held after Alexander's second marriage in 1285, appeared and vanished the grizzly skeleton that danced a moment before the king,

threading its ghastly way through the ranks of dismayed guests; frightened women shrank screaming from its path, men brave to face known dangers yet fell back from this horror, hurriedly crossing themselves. An evil omen, they said, a presage of misfortune or of death to the highest in the land. And surely the portent was borne out, for less than six months saw Scotland mourning the violent death of her King.

Like its not distant neighbour, the more famed castle of Roxburgh, Jedburgh castle as time went on became a stronghold continually changing hands; to-day garrisoned by Scots, to-morrow held by English, taken and retaken again and again, too strong and of importance too great to be anything but a continuous bone of contention between the two nations, yet more often, and for longer periods, in English than in Scottish keeping. When in the summer of the year 1316, King Robert the Bruce went to Ireland, Sir James Douglas was one of the wardens left by him in charge of the Scottish Kingdom. Jedburgh Castle, probably with a garrison far from strong, was then in English keeping. Douglas established himself at Lintalee, little more than a mile up the river from Jedburgh, where, by throwing across the neck of a promontory between the river and a precipitous glen, fortifications which even now are not quite destroyed, he converted a post of great natural strength into a position almost unassailable. Here, or in the immediate neighbourhood, in 1317 he inflicted two severe defeats on separate bodies of English troops, detachments from a larger army under the Earl of Arundel. As the outcome of these victories, Jedburgh Castle was probably regained by the Scots, for the English monks in Jedburgh Abbey were expelled by their Scottish brethren in February, 1318, a step they would scarcely have dared to attempt had an English garrison still been in the castle. In 1320 town and castle were bestowed by the Bruce on Sir James Douglas, and five years later the grant was confirmed, with further additions of land. But in 1334 Edward Baliol, who two years earlier had assumed the Crown of Scotland, handed over to King Edward III, to remain for ever in the possession of England, amongst other places, the town, castle, and forest of Jedburgh. These Edward now bestowed on Henry Percy, thus providing ground for a very pretty quarrel between the Douglasses and Percies. From now onward, practically for seventy-five years, Jedburgh Castle remained in English hands.

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