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Part-VII

SKETCHES
OF THE
EARLY HISTORY, LEGENDS, AND TRADITIONS
OF
STRATHARDLE AND ITS GLENS.

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SKETCHES OF THE EARLY HISTORY, LEGENDS, AND
TRADITIONS OF STRATHARDLE AND ITS GLENS.

No. VII.

1689.—We have now come to the time of the Revolution, when Protestant William of Orange came over and took possession of the throne of Catholic James VII., and so caused all the great Highland rising of '89, '15, and '45, in which the gallant clansmen fought so bravely, and suffered so much, in the cause of the "Auld Stewarts," their own native race of Kings; and of all the leal and true clansmen in the Highlands, the Athollmen were always the most enthusiastic Jacobites—always the first to draw the claymore and the last to sheath it, always in the van, under Montrose, Dundee, Mar, and Bonnie Prince Charlie—aye, and even to this very day it is the most thoroughly Jacobite district in the Highlands. In all the straths and glens within the wide bounds of the district of Atholl, almost every man was a staunch Jacobite, but in Strathardle it was different; there the chief leader of the district, the Baron Ruadh of Straloch, was a very keen Whig, coming, as we have already so often seen, of a very rigid Covenanting family; so his influence not only kept his own clansmen, the Robertsons of Straloch, but also some others of the Strathardle clans from going out for the Stewarts along with the rest of the Athollmen at this time. We will even see, from a letter which I will quote, from Dundee to Cluny Macpherson, that the Baron's influence at this time was strong enough to keep even that Ishmael of Highland chiefs, Spalding of Ashintully, from joining Dundee, though the Fergussons, Ratrays, and other Jacobites in Strathardle all joined Dundee and fought at Killiecrankie.

The following is the account given in the "Family of Straloch" of the Baron's doings at this time:—"In June, 1689, the Viscount of Dundee was raising the Highland clans against King William, and to restore the late King James. He ordered Halliburton of Pitmar, Stewart of Ballechin, Fullarton of that ilk, and some others of his friends, to take possession of the strong castle of Blair-Atholl, and keep garrison in it, to open a path for him and his army to descend to the country. They having done so accordingly, King William commanded the late Duke of Atholl, then Lord Murray, to raise his father's men to dislodge that people. The said Lord Murray accordingly raised

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all the fencible men in Atholl and Strathardle, and laid siege to the castle. He had no great guns to batter it, nor any other way to force it but by a blockade. His Lordship had his headquarters in the park above Blair, and commanded one full company after another to guard the castle gate, that none might go out or in. About that time John Farquharson of Inverey was giving disturbance to the Government in the Braes of the shire of Aberdeen, and having entreated Dundee to reinforce him, he sent two or three hundred Highlanders, under the command of one M'Donald of Gallichoill, to assist him, with orders to march the way of Blair-Atholl, and to endeavour to throw fifty or sixty men into that castle for the relief of the gentlemen that were in it. The Atholl people were generally so much inclined to the Jacobite interest that Gallichoill and his people got close to the castle walls before the Lord Murray heard anything of them. It happened Baron Reid of Straloch with his men to be that night on the guard of the castle, and was relieved but a few minutes before Gallichoill and his Highlanders appeared to approach the castle. But as the Baron was, with his men, marching up the green towards the camp, he observed the Highlanders marching close to the castle gate, and Balmaguard and his company like to give way to them, so he returned in all haste, and planting himself and his men at the castle gate, with their backs to the wall and their faces to the enemy, and with remarkable courage and resolution disputed the entry against triple their number without, and all that were within the house—his successor, Balmaguard, giving him no assistance. Thus he defended the gate in the utmost danger until Lord Murray and his troops came from the upper park for his relief, and chased away the Highlanders. This, so eminent a piece of service, the late Duke could never forget, and the truth is, it was a remarkable service done to him. The Marquis had King William's favour, and his son, Lord Murray, was now in his good behaviour, and was to be preferred or disgraced according to his conduct in this affair. And it is evident that had Gallichoill got into the castle at this time, as certainly he had if the Baron had not made this noble stand, he had irrevocably lost the King's favour, and his honour and reputation had suffered extremely."

The Baron here, as usual, showed himself to be a brave, courageous leader, whose heart was in his work, as he was staunch for King William, whilst Balmaguard, who left the Baron to do all the fighting, was, like most of the Atholl gentlemen, just as staunch for King James; and, besides, was it not his nearest

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neighbour and greatest friend, Ballechin, whom they were besieging, which accounts for his conduct.

Lord Murray and his Atholl men, assisted by the Baron Ruadh and Spalding of Ashintully, with their Strathardle men, kept up the siege of Blair Castle for a time, till Dundee sent a party of his men, under Alexander M'Lean, to relieve it.

At this time General M'Kay had returned to Edinburgh to try and get the Government to agree to his pet scheme of over-awing the Highlands by building a fort at Inverlochry, to which the Convention at length agreed, and M'Kay was ordered to take four thousand men to carry it into execution, and he was to march through Atholl on his way to Inverlochry, to reduce that rebellious district. It was also arranged that Lord Murray should return to Atholl before M'Kay, to try the effect of feudal influence upon the Atholl clansmen, and in particular to rescue Blair Castle, if possible, from Ballechin. Lord Murray went to Atholl early in July, and at once sent the fiery cross round, and gathered all his father's vassals. To Lord Murray's great surprise, these Atholl clansmen, though the humble and faithful ministers of his will on other occasions, fairly rebelled against fighting for King William and his usurping Government. At first they believed that they were called out to fight for King James, and in a very short time fifteen hundred of the men of Atholl gathered in front of Blair Castle, but they soon found out their mistake; for on seeing Lord Murray refuse to receive a message which Dundee had sent him, they took alarm, and with one voice demanded to know his intentions, avowing that if he would join Dundee they would willingly go along with him, but that if he did not, they would immediately quit his service. He first cajoled and then threatened them, but all to no purpose. As General Stewart of Garth tells us, vol. I. p. 65:—"These men believed that they were destined to support King James, but were, in reality, assembled to serve the Government of William. When in front of Blair Castle, their real destination was disclosed to them by Lord Murray. Instantly they rushed from their ranks, ran to the adjoining stream of Banovy, and filling their blue bonnets with water, drank to the health of King James;" and then, with colours flying, and pipes playing, "fifteen hundred of the men of Atholl, as reputable for arms as any in the kingdom" (as their opponent, General M'Kay, calls them in his Memoirs), put themselves under the command of Ballechin, and marched off to join Lord Dundee (then on his march from Badenoch to Blair), whose chivalrous bravery and heroic and

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daring exploits had excited their admiration more than those of any other warrior since the days of Montrose. They knew him, not as the "Bloody Clavers" of the southern and western districts; on the contrary, to the Highlanders he was always kind and condescending. To them he was "Iain Dubh nan Cath," Black John of the Battles.

Lord Murray had no better success in his attempts to get possession of Blair Castle, though that house was his father's property; for Balcarras tells us that on his summoning it to surrender, Ballechin told him over the walls "that he kept the castle by Dundee's orders for the King's service."

Immediately after the main body of the Atholl men, including the Fergussons, Rattrays, and other Jacobites from Strathardle, had declared for King James, and marched off for Drumachdar to meet Dundee, Lord Murray was again joined by the Baron of Straloch and Spalding of Ashintully, and their men, with whom he again invested Blair Castle; but only for one night, as Dundee approached Blair next day, upon which Lord Murray retired down the country with a few of his personal attendants, and the Baron and Spalding returned to Strathardle, as their men refused to join M'Kay, and were only with the utmost difficulty prevented from following the rest of their countrymen to join Dundee.

As it was well known to the Government that the Strathardle men were mostly all for King James, except the Baron of Straloch and his kinsman, Leonard Robertson of Wester Straloch, it was arranged that the feudal influence of the House of Atholl (Lord Superior of the Earldom of Strathardle) should be brought to bear on the clansmen to try and keep them quiet. So, in accordance with orders received from Lord Murray, Stewart of Ballechin, Bailie of Atholl, called a meeting of the Marquis of Atholl's vassals, when the following proceedings were agreed:—

"Logierait, 28th May, 1689.—The same day Patrick Stewart of Ballechin, and the most of the gentlemen of Strathardle and Glenshee being convened. They find it necessary for the safety and security of the country to use the following method:—It is thought fit there be a man raised out of every two merk land, which men are to be in readiness to ansyr of the several captains; and ilk two merk land get 2 pecks meal. Besyd yr. severall soldiers with your arms to be always ready. John Robertson of Easter Straloch, and Leonard Robertson of Wester Straloch, Captains of my Lord Marquis' interest in Strathardle and Glenshee, who are to divide same in two equal companies."

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with tidings that the Viscount Dundee had raised a mighty army among the Highland clans to dethrone King William and restore King James, and was on his march through Badenoch to invade Atholl, and by that way to make a descent on the low country, and was to burn and destroy all before him that would not join his army and take part with him. But the terror was increased when the Baron had a letter from the said Viscount delivered to him, commanding him to be ready with all his fencible men, in their best clothes and arms, to join King James' forces at Blair Castle, against the 26 July curt., under the pains of military execution. The Baron and his friends and neighbours were in consternation, not knowing how to behave. He resolved not to join Dundee, be the event what it may, but was in great perplexity, minding that his father's whole bigging [building] was burned by another Graham in 1644, and knew not but he might happen to undergo the same fate. He knew not where or how to dispose of his family and plenshing in a place of safety," etc.

Now, no doubt the Baron was in great perplexity, as his rev. son hero tells us; but he was a brave man, and a shrewd, wise man—a much wiser man than his kinsman of Wester Straloch; so instead of rushing off and writing letters at "11 o'clock at night," he went quietly off to bed at "11 o'clock at night," and instead of asking help and protection from my Lord Murray, like Captain Leonard, he, decent man, applied to his wife. And he was not mistaken, for she, a worthy daughter of the gallant house of Invercauld, rose to the occasion, and dreamed a dream, and saw a great fiery dragon coming flying from the west, spitting balls of fire, and seemingly to swallow them all up. But as her dazzled eyes saw better, she noticed a great chain tied to the dragon's leg, which chain only let it come as near as Killiecrankie. So in the morning "she understood it to signify Dundee with his barbarous army, and had no more fear about him; but told us in the morning that he would be suffered to do but little harm, and none to her, as there was a chain to his foot." Such is the story as her son, the Rev. James Robertson, minister of Glengairn, tells it. And indeed it was well for the whole race of Straloch that the chain did not allow Dundee to get beyond Killiecrankie. Had he lived to reach Strathardle, I am afraid the Baron might truly have got his famous Skye piper, Angus M'Crummen, to play the old warning piobroch—"Mnathain a Ghlinne seo, 's mithiche dhuibh airgh."

"O matrons of this glen, of this glen, of this glen,
O matrons of this glen, 'tis time you were waking;
Your cattle all lifted, your men wounded and torn."

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As both the Baron and Wester Straloch were very zealous supporters of King William's Government, they at once agreed to become captains, and soon raised the men, and were very successful in keeping the country quiet for a time, and all went well with them till the ever keen and watchful Dundee, hearing tell of their doings whilst still in far Lochaber, wrote a very sharp letter, both to the Baron and to Wester Straloch, ordering them instantly to raise every man they had, with their best arms, and to go at once and wait him at Blair Castle. This urgent summons very much alarmed them both, as well it might, for they well knew their man, "Iain Dhu nan Cath" (Black John of the Battles). They knew his determined, fierce, energetic character, and that if they did not at once obey him they need expect no mercy, and here he was coming like a fierce hurricane on them from the North, at the head of a strong army of the Northern clans, burning for blood and plunder; and though both these Robertsons were very brave, bold men, they well knew that if Dundee got to their country their lands would be plundered, all their cattle taken, and their houses burnt, just as had been done to them by Montrose. So alarmed was Captain Leonard when Dundee's letter reached him that he at once, yea, even at "11 o'clock at night," wrote to Lord Murray, enclosing Dundee's letter, and beseeching his Lordship to come at once to Strathardle as the only means of protecting them:—

"Straloch, 14 July, 1689.

"11 o'clock at Night.

"My Lord,—Letters of the tenor of the enclosed, directed to me and everie particular gentleman in both countries of Strathardle and Glenshie. There is lykewise 300 Kintyre men and hilanders come yeist neight to Blair Atholl, and joined Pitcurr, who lyet here with his associates.

"Its said they are all to lie in our countrie. Its concluded yr. Lordship's countrie's inevitable ruin is hard at hand, except protected by yr. Lordship's personal presence, which with all convenient heast is appealed by

"Yr. Lordship's most humble servant,

"MR LEO. ROBERTSON."

The bold Baron of Straloch was quite as much alarmed as his kinsman, as his son tells us in his history of the "Barons Ruadh":—"In July, 1689, the country—but more especially such persons as had a sincere love to religion and liberty, and feared the abominations of Popery and slavery—were mightily frightened

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But Dundee fell on the field of Rintory, and so Strathardle escaped "that time."

As Lord Murray had enough to do at his own "bigging," trying to get possession of Blair Castle, he paid no heed to Straloch's urgent "11 o'clock at night" appeal to come to Strathardle to protect them; so, following the example of Mahomet, who went to the mountain when the mountain would not come to him, both the Baron and Straloch went to Blair and joined Lord Murray.

In volume XX. of the "Transactions of the Gaelic Society," Provost Macpherson of Kingussie, in his most interesting and valuable paper, "Gleanings from Cluny Charter Chest," gives a fac-simile of Dundee's autograph letter to Cluny, dated from Blair Castle, 26th July, 1689—the evening before the Battle of Killiecrankie—in which he mentions the Baron and Spalding being with Lord Murray:—

"For the Laird of Clunie in Baddnoch,

Blair Castle, July 26th.

"Sir,—My Lord Murray is retyred down the counrey. All the Atholl men have left them saive Strathardle, Achintully, and Baron Reid Straloch, and they will not byd my down coming to morou. The rest of the heritors will be here to morou. They will join us, and I sopusse to morou you will have an answer, so if you have a mynd to preserve yourself and to serve the King be in arms to morou that when the letter comes you may be here in a day. All the world will be with us, blessed be God.—I am, Sir, your most humble Servant,

"DUNDEE.

"My service to all the loyall gentry of baddnoch."

On the next day, the 27th July, was fought the ever-famous Battle of Killiecrankie, the story of which is so well known that I need not enter into its details here, except to give a few of the anecdotes and traditions which even to this day linger amongst the old people of Atholl of the gallant deeds done "Air Latha Raon Ruairidh" ("On the Day of Rintorie"), as they always call it, and of the fearful and wonderful blows dealt there by the Highland claymores, of which the author of the Memoirs of Dundee says that "there was scarce ever such strokes given in Europe." The first blood was drawn by a famous Atholl marksman and hunter, called "Iain Ban Beg Macra" ("Little fair John Macrae"), who, during M'Kay's marcu up the Vale of Atholl, kept along opposite, on the south side of the river, till they came to the narrow pass, where he was within easy shot of the enemy. As he had only one bullet, he wished to make sure that that

bullet would find its billet, so he took aim at a cavalry officer who was leading on his men on the opposite side of the river, and shot him dead. The place where he fell is indicated by a well, still called "Fuaran-an-trupair" ("The Trooper's Well").

After M'Kay got through the Pass, he at once drew up his army in battle array on the level ground, whilst the Highlanders were drawn up on the face of the hill above the house of Urrard. Sir Ewan Cameron of Lochiel, with his Cameron Clan, was stationed in the centre front rank; and it so happened that his second son was on the opposite side, being a captain in M'Kay's own regiment, the 21st Scotch Fusiliers. When observing the Highland army, M'Kay noticed the standard of the Clan Cameron, flying proudly, as usual, in the van, and, turning round to Lochiel's son, who stood next to him, he said: "There is your father with his wild savages; how would you like to be with him?" "It signifies little," answered young Cameron, "what I would like; but I would recommend you to be prepared, or perhaps my father and his wild savages may be nearer to you before night than you would like." And so it happened.

The two armies lay watching each other that summer afternoon till about eight o'clock, when Dundee gave the order to the clans to charge, when they dashed down the brae with all the impetuosity proper to a Highland onset. M'Kay began the battle by a discharge of his artillery, which consisted of a few leather cannon, carried betwixt two horses, and which he had placed at the extremities of his line. But these primitive cannon did very little damage, as the story is still told in Atholl of how Grant of Sheuglie, in Glen-Urquhart, was knocked down, but not injured, by a ball from one of these leather cannon striking his target, upon which he at once rose again, with the light remark: "Och, Och, 's einnteach gu' m' beil na bodaich a cheart da' r'eadh nis'" ("Och, Och, surely the bodachs are in real earnest now"), and continued his advance with the rest.

The Highlanders had stripped, for the sake of lightness, almost to their shirts, stooping as low as possible, and, holding their targets before them, they rushed impetuously down the hill. The first to reach the enemy were the Macdonells of Glengarry, under their gallant chief, Allister Dhu, and his brave son, Donald Gorm. Before the fight began, an old experienced officer in M'Kay's army, with that respect for the Clan Donald so general amongst the other clans, counselled his General to place a double file of men in that part of the line opposite the M'Donalds, which M'Kay accordingly did. Even that, however, was not enough to

withstand the fury of the Glengarry men, though they are said by tradition and history to have found more difficulty in routing the troops opposed to them, and to have lost more men in the charge than any other clan, owing to the double file of men opposed to them being six men deep. Sixteen gentlemen of the clan fell that day, and, amongst them, Glengarry's gallant son, Donald Gorm—Blue-eyed Donald—who, before he fell, killed no fewer than 17 of the enemy with his own hand, and all within such a space, according to the Atholl tradition, "as it would have required a lippy of lint seed to sow." There was another M'Donell who killed 18 of his enemies; and as for Allister Dhu himself, his victims were too numerous to be counted, as he bore a prodigious two-handed sword, with which at every step he took he killed two men, one on each side. It is told that a soldier in the sixth, or rear-most, rank of M'Kay's line observed the career of this terrible warrior while there were yet three men between them. He had only time to throw himself upon his guard, when Allister, having hewed down the three intervening men with two strokes of his weapon, came up to him, and seemed ready to serve him the same. The soldier charged the chief with his bayonet, but one sweeping stroke of that terrible claymore cut his musket in two, and left him with only the butt in his hand, which, in desperation, he threw at Glengarry's head, and fled as hard as he could downward, and plunged into the Garry and was carried down by the stream. Allister Dhu followed him hard, and when he saw the man going down the stream he cried to a friend on the opposite bank: "Glac am fear tha' n' sin dhomhsa, tha latha foghair aige ri thoirt dhomh!"

"Catch that fellow for me; he owes me a day in harvest." The person so called upon did not observe the soldier, who was going down the stream; but, seeing another rise out of the water and ascend the bank, made up to him, and with one stroke cleaved him down to the breast. He then called out to Glengarry: "Will that please you?" and Glengarry being equally ignorant of the identity of the man replied: "Yes, that will do very well at present;" after which he coolly returned and joined his clan. This fact was ever after told by the real fugitive, who, having glided under a bush overhanging the water, saw himself killed by proxy, and heard the consequent badinage of the Highlanders with feelings of no ordinary character.

Gilbert Stewart of Fincastle, in Atholl, also slew twenty of the enemy. He was very lame, which hindered him on his march across the hills from Fincastle to Killiecrankie, so that when he arrived on the south bank of the pass, and was descend-

ing to cross the river at the ford of Dalmuch, as M'Kay's fugitive troops poured down the opposite bank, he at once stationed himself on the south bank, and cut down every man who successively rose out of the stream.

One of the principal men who fell on M'Kay's side was Colonel Balfour, who, when his men fled, got his back against a tree, and defended himself for a long time against two Atholl men, one of whom was Allister Ban Stewart, brother of the Laird of Ballechin. At length Allister Ban's son, the Rev. Robert Stewart, a young clergyman, who had come out to fight with the Athollmen, came up, and being shocked to see his father engaged in such an unfair combat, cried out in Gaelic: "Shame! shame! The like was never heard of before! Give the brave man his life." He at the same time addressed some friendly words to Colonel Balfour, who, however, replied by an expression of contempt and defiance. The exact words of that reply are not fit to be repeated, but their effect was instantaneous and powerful upon the feelings of the young Highlander: "Earth to my body, one fair stroke at you!" after which, substituting himself in place of the two former combatants, and flourishing his claymore over his head several times, he brought it down with such a heavy blow upon the shoulder of the unfortunate officer that he cut a complete seam athwart his body from the collar to the thigh, and laid him at once lifeless upon the ground.

The renowned hero who performed this deed afterwards joined with great vigour in the running fight which took place on the way to the Pass. He is described by Atholl tradition as having cut from right to left and from left to right among the ranks of the enemy, just as if he had been mowing down thistles. In consequence of his great exertions his hand swelled in the basket-hilt of his claymore, and could only be released by having the network of that receptacle cut away from around it. He experienced great compunction afterwards for having spilled so much blood, and, being a Catholic, thought proper to fast and pray three days, by way of expiating his supposed guilt. He also made a vow never to draw a claymore or spill blood again, which afterwards kept him from going out in the rising of '15; but though he discarded the claymore, yet the fighting spirit was so strong in him that he afterwards was engaged in many a scrimmage, and numerous stories are still told in Atholl of his great strength and determined courage. Being once present at a marriage in Atholl, the country of the bride, who was getting

married to a Breadalbane man, who, as usual, was accompanied by a strong force of his countrymen, when, after a time, austere jealousies began to crop up, angry words followed, and from that they soon came to blows, dirks were drawn, and blood was spilt on both sides. Father Robert, restricted by his vow after Killiecrankie, dare use no weapons, but he seized two of the Breadalbane men, and thrusting their heads under his arms, sat down and forcibly held them in that awkward situation; then, taking hold of other two with his hands, he cried to his friends: "Come, come, men of Atholl, exert yourselves; I cannot fight for you, but I will at least keep some of your enemies from engaging."

The noise of the battle at Killiecrankie was so terrible around Urrard House that a boy, a son of the proprietor, died of fright. A maid and a man-servant were sent away with some of the smaller children to seek a place of safety. When they had got some distance from the battlefield, the man expressed a wish to return, that he might share in the work of death, and the girl, he said, might now make her way alone. "How can you go?" said she; "you have no weapons to fight with." "No matter for that," says he; "if I can but throw a stone at some rascal, it may be the means of saving one of my friends; and fear not, I will soon get some better weapon." He then left the girl, who proceeded alone for some space, till, as she was crossing a field of whins, three dragoons appeared in sight, and rode furiously up to her. She screamed with terror, but at that moment a prospector appeared most unexpectedly, in the shape of a wild Highland youth from Strathardle, making his way to the battlefield with a good claymore in his hand. He sprang to her side and told her to be silent, "as God and he should be her defenders." On account of the narrowness and difficulty of the path through the bushes, the dragoons were advancing in single file at some distance from each other. The youth struck down the first dragoon with one stroke of his broadsword. The second he met in deadly and better matched strife, but him he also succeeded in cutting down, when the third turned round and fled. The girl, amazed at his prowess, began to thank the youth, but he scarcely waited a moment to listen to her, but hurried on to the battlefield, eager to be in the fray.

The stories of mad heroism and hairbreadth escapes which the people of Atholl tell regarding this singular fight are almost innumerable. A Highlander on the left of Dundee's line, after killing a great number in the field, followed one particular soldier who took flight, and whom he discerned to be also a Highlander.

The fugitive made clear away down to the river side, which he reached at a particular spot where there is a precipitous rock on both sides, with a chasm between of at least eighteen feet. Just as he jumped from the latter bank the pursuer aimed a stroke at him, exclaiming at the same time: "Could you not have as well let me kill you as the river drown you!" for he never supposed that his fate would be anything else than to perish in the turbid waters of the Garry. To his great amazement, however, and no less to his mortification, the terrified Highlander jumped right across the chasm and alighted safe on the other side; an astonishing feat, when it is considered that the sword of his pursuer inflicted a wound of several inches long upon his back at the very moment he made the leap. Immediately after alighting, he turned about and cried with a sneer: "Feuch an dean thusa sin!"

"Try if you can do so, too!"—to which the other only replied that it was a pity he did not assume his bold look a little sooner. He survived this adventure many years, being employed upon the formation of the Highland roads by General Wade. Till the very last he used to relate the story here commemorated, which he always illustrated by showing the scar of his wound. The place where he jumped across the Garry is still called "The Soldier's Leap," and is one of the principal sights of the battlefield of Killiecrankie.

Another of our district lairds who fought bravely at Killiecrankie was Rattray of Corb Castle, as Dr Marshall tells us in his "Historic Scenes in Perthshire." In 1689, Rattray of Corb was a Jacobite. Late in the evening before the battle of Killiecrankie, Corb ordered his servant to have his horse, as well as his own, ready immediately. When Corb came out to mount he had his cloak on; but his man knew by his weight as he dropped into the saddle that he was in armour. He started at a slow canter, followed by his servant, up Strathardle and Glenbriaracha and by the Bruchmore to the back of the hill behind Killiecrankie. Turning round, he said to his servant: "Stop here until the sun goes down; and if I don't return, go home." Corb rode on and joined Dundee's forces, and fought at Killiecrankie. He returned to his servant as arranged, and rode home by the same route. In the battle the basket-hilt of his sword was crushed in on his hand, which could not be withdrawn. He had to ride home in this state, and went to bed, laying his hand on a table at his bedside, while some of his family bathed it with hot water to reduce the swelling. This sword was afterwards in the possession of the Rattrays of Browlands, and as lately as 1867 it was shown to your

correspondent by the late Patrick Small, the representative of the family.

It became known to the Government that Corb had been at Killiecrankie with Dundee, and he had therefore to go into hiding. One very stormy, snowy night, Corb skulked into his own house to take the luxury of a bed. Being a stern, severe man, he was not well liked in the neighbourhood, and information was given to the authorities that he was sleeping in his own house. Hessian troops were at that time encamped on the Muir of Blairgowrie. A detachment of them came up Gleniericht, and about the break of day surrounded the house. The alarm was given, but too late for Corb to escape. He disguised himself in the grieve's clothes, hoping thus to escape detection. When examining him they said, "The clothes may be the clothes of the grieve, but the hands are the hands of a gentleman."

Corb was sent prisoner to London, and tried for high treason. To of his tenants, named McIntosh and Barrie, went to London to give evidence in his favour. They swore that Corb was "pressed," and gave other false testimony. He was acquitted, and got home. It was supposed he had other friends in London helping him to save his head. The two witnesses, on their way home by sea, encountered a storm. They thought the ship would be wrecked, and were bewailing their fate, when a sailor passing them on deck said: "Get out of the road, you old fellows; what are you crying at?" We are in five fathoms of water." McIntosh said: "If five be fathoms in the water, we are sure to be a' in it, too. Oh! if I had a grip of a rash bush in the Howe o' Badmoris, I would never go to sea again." Corb, when afterwards speaking of these men, though they saved his head, called them "missworn dogs."

We are told that Corb was a stern, severe man, and not well liked. This is amply proved by the following anecdote, given by Dean Ramsay in his "Reminiscences of Scottish Life":—"In the neighbourhood of Bamf House, Perthshire, lived a proprietor who bore the appellation of Corb, from the name of his estate. This laird was intensely disliked in the neighbourhood. Sir George Ramsay was, on the other hand, universally popular and respected. On one occasion Sir George, on passing a morass in his own neighbourhood, had missed the road and fallen into the bog to an alarming depth. To his great relief he saw a passenger coming along the path, which was at no great distance. He called loudly for his help, but the man took no notice. Poor Sir George felt himself sinking, and redoubled his cries for help. All at once

the passenger rushed forward, carefully extracted him from his perilous situation, and politely apologised for his first neglect of his appeal, adding, as his reason, "Indeed, Sir George, I thought it was Corb!" evidently meaning that had it been Corb he must have taken his chance for him.

We have already seen that Baron Reid fought for King William at the siege of Blair Castle, and that he went home to Strathardle before the battle of Killiecrankie, and we now find him defending his own country of Glenfermate against a raid of King James's men, as we are told in the "Robertsons of Straloch." In August, 1689, after the battle of Killiecrankie, the Highland army marched northward to the Duke of Gordon's country to recruit. But for the safety of their friends in Atholl, and to keep open that pass, they left a strong garrison in Blair Castle. The governor sent frequent threatening orders to Strathardle for necessities for the garrison, threatening military execution in case of refusal or delay. Yet all the time nothing was sent. The garrison being at length provoked by the refusal, ordered 400 of the Stewarts of Appin, who were marching to join the Highland army, to march the way of Strathardle and chastise these Cameronians, as they were pleased to call them. They came accordingly, and fell a-pillaging and plundering the brae of the country. The cry went to the Baron Reid to come to their relief, who, upon sight, sent fiery crosses through the parish to call all the fencible men together for the defence of the country, appointing them within two hours to meet him, with their best clothes and arms, at Tom-an-Turc, at the west base of Tulloch hill. The Baron's third son, James (afterwards minister of Glengairn), happened to be then at home from school in Dundee, where, along with his other education, he had learned to beat the big drum. So, getting a drum, he beat a gathering at Tom-an-Turc, the place of rendezvous, and then marched up Glenfermate. As soon as the Stewarts heard the drum beat regularly, and the bagpipes played by a Highland piper, Angus McCrummen, one of the famous family of Skye pipers, they left off pillaging and got to arms; and they marched on the south side of the water of Fernate, and the Baron's men on the north side. The Appin men encamped that night at Stron Erniey, and the Strathardle men in Leina-Vorain (on the banks of Auld-Corrybark, near Crisg-losgete), watching one another all night. At length, finding they could gain nothing at our hands, they sent a deputation to deal with us, and agreed to depart upon getting a little viaticum to carry them to the next country. And thus, by the Baron's

courage and conduct, the country was at this time defended from military execution, as they termed it. And the action was the more bold that General Cannon, with his victorious army, was then come as far as Glenisla in his march to Dunkeld."

1690.—Amongst those of our district clans who did not go out with Dundee were the Shaws, though they were the most intensely Jacobite of the lot. Their chieftain at this time was Duncan Shaw of Craithard, whose father, James, had fought gallantly under Montrose, and five of Duncan's sons were out with Prince Charlie in the '45. The reason for Duncan's not joining Dundee was that he had married a niece of the Earl of Mar, and had been appointed chamberlain to that nobleman, who, at this date, and for some time afterwards, was on the side of the Revolution Government. But when the Earl changed sides, and headed the rising of 1715, Duncan and all his clan were only too pleased to join him. On June 26th we find General McKay granting a Protection to Shaw and his clan, in which he says:—

"That he had hitherto behaved himself loyally and dutifully to the present Government, and had hindered all his tenants and servants from joining those in rebellion against their Majesties King William and Queen Mary; and these are prohibiting and discharging all officers and soldiers of their Majesties armies to trouble or molest the said Duncan Shaw, his family, tenants, or servants, or to take away spoils or meddle with any of his or their goods, gear, corns, cattle, or others whatsoever belonging to them, as they shall be answerable upon their peril. Given at the camp at Auchintoul, at the head of Gairn, 26th June, 1690.
(Signed) "HUGH M'KAY."

That such a "Protection" was more than needed on the Braes of Ardie and the Braes of Mar, after Killiecrankie, is terribly evidenced by what McKay wrote to Lord Melville on 29th August, 1690:—"I burnt 12 miles of a very fertile country (Strathdee), at least 1400 houses, but had no time to go the length of Braemar." When reading here how the "pious McKay" regrets that he had not time to burn all the way to Braemar, one feels inclined to cry out, like the old Highland chief at Sheriffmuir, when he saw Mar show such incapacity, "Oh! for one hour of Dundee." Had Bonnie Dundee and his Killiecrankie men one hour of McKay when he was burning those 1400 houses on the Braes of Mar, I am afraid he would not have "crawled sae crouse."

Duncan Shaw also raised, and was captain in command of, a company of twenty men for protection against "the Catterans,"

one of the companies which were the precursors of the Black Watch, which was not regularly embodied into one regiment till 1739. These companies were very much required at this time, and nowhere more so than in Strathardle and its glens; for after Killiecrankie many broken and outlawed men had taken shelter in the wild mountain ranges that lay between the Braes of Atholl and the Braes of Angus, and where it was quite impossible for regular soldiers to follow them, and from which they descended and plundered and carried off the cattle of the people in these quiet glens, for which the Government neither could nor would do anything.

1692.—Shortly after the massacre of Glencoe, Breadalbane proposed to King William to raise a body of 4000 Highlanders, under 40 officers, to aid in case of insurrection at home or invasion from abroad. Amongst them, Spalding of Ashintully was to furnish 30 men. However, this was not carried out.

1696.—We have already seen that the Earl of Atholl in 1669 got a charter for holding the yearly fairs and weekly markets of Kirkmichael at Dalnagairn, above Kirkmichael, instead of at the Siller Burn, between Kirkmichael and Balnald, where they were anciently held; and we now find the Marquis of Atholl getting a confirmation Act of Parliament for the same:—

“Our Sovereign Lord considering that it is expedient for the advancement and encouragement of trade within this kingdom that there be yearly fairs and weekly markets appointed in several places that are most convenient situate for that purpose, and that the Blair of Atholl in Perthshire, and the Toun of Dalgairn in Strathardle, both belonging to John Marquis of Atholl, for having ye weekly mercats underwritten kept thereat, not only to the advantage of the place and advancement of trade therein, but also to the ease of His Majesty's subjects inhabiting the places adjacent thairto. Therefore our said Sovereign Lord, with the advice and consent of the Estates of Parliament, gives and grants to the said Marquis of Atholl, his heirs and successors for ever, the privilege of holding and keeping two weekly mercats, one at the said Blair of Atholl, and the other at the said toun of Dalgairn, upon each Fryday, for horse, milt, and uther merchandise, with the hail tolls, customs, and casualties of the said mercats, with power to the said Marquis and his forsaids to hold both the said weekly mercats upon ye day forsaid, and to make such orders for the right regulation thereof as they shall think fit, and to take, uplift, use, and ispose upon the causalties thereof abovespeit, and to do all other things competent to be done in the

lyke cases by any having the privilege of weekly mercats within the kingdom.”

1698.—At this time Simon Fraser (afterwards the notorious Lord Lovat of the '45) was trying to get possession of the title and estates of Lovat; but his right was, however, disputed by Lady Amelia Fraser, eldest daughter of the late Lord Lovat, who, under her father's marriage contract, claimed both the estates and the succession to the title. Her mother was Lady Amelia Murray, daughter of John, Marquis of Atholl, and sister of the first Duke of Atholl. Simon thought that the quickest and surest way of getting possession of the estates from the daughter was to marry the mother, and as he knew he could not do so by fair means, he did not scruple to do so by foul, so he accordingly seized Castle Doune, where she resided, took her prisoner, and married her by force. When the Marquis of Atholl heard of this he at once dispatched two of his sons, Lords James and Mungo Murray, with a large body of men, to the north to her assistance. Two strong companies of Strathardle men accompanied this expedition, the one of the Robertsons of Straloch, under Leonard Robertson of Wester Straloch, and the other consisting of 80 men of the Spaldings, under the command of David Spalding, yr. of Ashintully, as Lachlan Rattray in his M.S. tells us:—“At this time the Marquis of Atholl got a warrant from Parliament to raise all the shires in arms to go to Lovat country, and young Spalding of Ashintully was ordered by his father to go there with fourscore men, of which William Farquharson, Sanders Rattray, and I were appointed to be the officers, till we were disbanded after Candlemas that year.”

But so strongly did the Clan Fraser support Simon that this strong party of Athollmen, though backed by all the powers of the Government, could not then rescue the Dowager; but Straloch had an interview with her at Castle Doune, and he, along with Forbes of Culloden, saw her again at the Isle of Aigas, as told in the “History of the Frasers,” p. 240:—“Leonard Robertson of Wester Straloch said that he had negotiated articles of stipulation for the Dowager Lady of Lovat and Lord Mungo Murray; that she signed them, but that instead of being released in terms of them, the sentinels were doubled, and Robertson himself was imprisoned. Having complained to Captain Simon, he was allowed to see her ladyship, whom he saw in a very disconsolate position, and she softly spake in his ear, ‘For Christ's sake, take me out of this place either dead or alive.’ He observed that her face was swollen, and she fell into a swoon while he was present.

The next time he saw my Lady was that when the Laird of Culloden and deponent came to the water side near the Isle of Aigas, in Strathglass; and Captain Simon having come over to them by boat, the deponent desired to see my Lady, which he shunned, telling him that my Lady did not desire to see him; and the deponent replied that it was not done like a comrade, seeing that it was reported in Inverness that my Lady was dead, or near expiring. Captain Simon replied that she should soon be cleared of the contrary, and, returning into his boat, he caused bring out my Lady in their sight, but so weak that she was supported by two men, and then carried her back again to a little house upon the island.”

In spite of all the power of the Government, and the law, and of the very powerful influence of the Marquis of Atholl and his son, Lord Tullybardin, who was then Secretary of State for Scotland, Captain Simon would not give up the Dowager Lady Lovat, and even though several powerful military expeditions were sent against him, yet so wild and inaccessible were his countries of Stratherrick, Strathglass, etc., and so faithful and powerful the Clan Fraser, that the Dowager could neither be relieved nor Simon captured; so all that could be done was to try him in absence before the High Court of Justiciary in Edinburgh. So, on the 27th June, an action was commenced against Captain Simon, his father, and other nineteen gentlemen of the Clan Fraser “for high treason, in forming unlawful associations, collecting an armed force, occupying and fortifying houses and garrisons, imprisoning and ravishing persons of distinguished ranks, and continuing in arms after being charged by a herald to lay them down.”

After a long trial, all the parties were found guilty as libelled, and the Court adjudged them to be executed as traitors, “their bodies to be dismembered, their goods to be forfeited, their name, fame, memory, and honours to be extinct,” etc. Terrible as this sentence seems, delivered by the highest Court in Scotland, it had no effect whatever on the bold Simon, who, secure in his mountain fastnesses, bid defiance to all his foes; and as his father Thomas, 12th Lord Lovat, died next year, he succeeded to the title and estates. He continued many years afterwards under sentence of death and an outlaw, till, by cunningly representing to the Duke of Argyll that if Atholl was allowed to crush him and get the Fraser estates, then Atholl would be much more powerful than Argyll; and believing this, Argyll set about

getting a pardon for Lord Simon, which his great influence with the Government afterwards got.

During the time that the Lords James and Mungo Murray, with their Atholl and Strathardle men, were in the Lovat country trying to relieve their sister, the Lady Lovat, some dispute arose between the Chisholms of Strathglass and the Strathardle gentlemen, very likely caused by that firebrand, young Spalding of Ashintully, whose tongue and claymore were equally ready on all occasions to take or give offence. The Chisholms, being Lovat's nearest neighbours, very likely assisted Captain Simon in some way. However, the matter ended in the Atholl men making a two days' raid on Strathglass, and carrying off a large creach. In the “History of the Frasers,” p. 232, we read:—“I am indebted to Mr. William Mackay for a copy of a paper entitled ‘An Account of the Chisholms' Losses by the Marquis of Atholl's Children, the eighth and ninth days of Feb. 1698.’ The total amount of the loss sustained, according to this account, was £260 8s 4d Scots, the places spolized in Strathglass being Kerrow, £94 9s; Meikle Comar, £12; Comar Kirkton, £10; Carrie in Glencaunnich, £134 9s 0d (one of the sufferers being William Mac Allaster, from whom was taken, among other things, six quarters of tartan at a merk the ell, and a dirk worth 16s); and Breckach, £40.”

1700.—During the expedition to Lovat's country, Thomas, the fifth son of the Baron of Straloch, then a young officer of 22, and Lord Mungo Murray, son of the Marquis of Atholl, became such very great friends that, when the latter now joined the unfortunate Darien Expedition, young Thomas and a band of gallant young Strathardle men went with him; but none of them ever returned, as they perished there.

In this year the heritors of Perthshire presented the following petition to Parliament:—

“Unto His Grace His Majesty's High Commissioner and the Right Honble. the Estates of Parliament, the Representation of the Heritors of Perthshire, Humbly Sheweth—

“That we having these years past suffered extremely by the calamities of War, and lykewise by very bad Crops, which has reduced many of our people to the last degree of poverty; and besides these which we have had in common with other parts in the Kingdom, we have been, and still are, exposed to inconveniences which are peculiar to those who dwell on the borders of the

Highlands, continued, murders, robberies, and deprodatons which have brought many who might have wrestled with their other difficulties to such a condition that our countries are now become deserts, and lie absolutely waste.

"All these calamities we suffered without complaining during the war, and contributed our shares both of men and money for the support and maintenance of it, hoping that peace would put an end to these our miseries. And being sensible that nothing could conduce more to the flourishing of our nation and to relieve us under these hard circumstances to which we are reduced than the advancement of trade, we no sooner had the encouragement of His Majesty's gracious promises, Acts of Parliament, and Letters Patent for enabling the nation to carry it on, but to demonstrate our zeal for the weal of our native country, we closed with these proposals which were made for opening trade to Africa and the Indies, and contributed to the utmost of our powers for carrying on so good and great a work. What has been the hinderances and obstructions to that trade we think it unnecessary to trouble your Grace and the Hon. Estates of Parl. with, these being so well known to His Majesty and the Hon. Estates of Parl. by the several Addresses, Petitions, and Representations made by the Council of the Company trading to Africa and the Indies.

"And seeing we have His Majesty's expected promises for encouragement of trade, as also his Letters Patent, and Acts of Parl. establishing the African and Indian Company; and lykwise the address of the last Session of this Parl. to His Majesty in favour of the said Companies, and also His Majesty's gracious acceptance of our late Petition for the meeting of Parl. wherein His Majesty expects that the sentiments of the Nation as to the African and Indian Company will be known, for all which we are encouraged to intreat.

"That it may please your Grace and the Right Hon. Estates of Parl. to take the premises to your serious consideration, and to find out effectual methods for asserting the honour and independence of this Kingdom, which our predecessors have hitherto maintained for so many ages, and which seems now to be so much encroached upon by the repeated and great discouragements to our rightful and lawful Colony of Caledonia, as also to take proper measures for employing the poor and freeing the country of stealing and oppression, and that now in the time of peace we be eased of these great and heavy burdens we lie under."

The Strathardle lairds who signed the Petition were—

Andrew Spalding of Essentillie.
— Robertson of Dalharnay (Glenfermate).
Leonard Robertson of (Wester) Straloch.
Patrick Small of Dirnanear.
William Farquharson of Tonie.
John Robertson of Craig.
John Robertson of Bleaton.
— Spalding of Whitehouse.
Alex. M'Intosh of Cornes.
John Bruce of Dalnabroik.
Alex. Robertson of Inverchroskie.
W. Robertson of Dounie.
Patrick Rattray of Persie.
James Murray of Kindrogan.
Alex. Murray of Soylerie.
Alex. Aysane of Beluntume.
John Robertson of Ennoch.
Alex. Aysone of Ballmill.
John Donlich of Merkland.
Duncan Robertson of Stroneymuk.
Do. Robertson of Coltalomie.
Paul Farquharson of Rochallie.
David Rattray of Rannaguillion.
Alex. Herring of Callie.

1705.—The Duke of Atholl, in his recently published magnificent work, "The Chronicles of the Atholl Family," gives a full muster roll of the Fencible men of the Earldom of Atholl, giving the names of the men of each township who were bound to follow the Atholl family in war, or to the great deer hunts so often held in the Atholl forest. Every laird had to supply so many men according to the value of his lands, and, of course, it was only the best picked men who were chosen. After each man's name is a note of whatever arms, if any, he possesses. For example, in Dirnanear we have—

Patrick Small of Dirnanear—Armed.
John M'Intosh—Has a gun and sword.
Donald Battar—Has a gun.
Walter Leslie—Has a sword.
James M'Pherson—Wants arms.

Of course, so far as the list of arms goes, I don't expect it is very correct, for in those troublous times, when good reliable arms

formed part of the necessities of life, it is not likely that either laird or vassal would care to let all the world know all the arms they possessed. Old Straloch (Baron John VIII.) was a bit of a wag, so in his list of 54 men he carefully describes all their arms till he comes to "Donal M'Pherson, with his fiddle." We have already seen that the Baron always went to war with his famous piper, Angus M'Crummy, in front of him, and that his grandfather was so fond of the pipes that even on Sunday he made his piper play before him to church; but this is the only instance I know of in which a fiddle was used in warfare, either as a weapon of offence or defence. They were very musical all these Barons, down to the very last of the race, General John, the 15th Baron, who composed "The Garb of Old Gaul," and founded the Chair of Music in Edinburgh University.

1707.—The Duke of Atholl was a very keen sportsman, more especially for hunting the deer, so he did all he could to improve the Atholl Forest. In this year we find him appointing Paul Beg Robertson to be his head forester in Glenfermate and Glenshee. The following are his terms and instructions:—

"Paul Beg Robertson's Commission to be Forester in Glenfermate.

"Blair Castle, June 28th, 1707.

"These are nomenating and appointing you, Paul Robertson in Glenfermate, to be our Forrester of the Braes of Glenshee and haill Glenmore, in the Forest of Freecombie, within which bounds you are to take particular care to preserve our deer, and for that end you are carefully and exactly to observe, keep, and perform all and every one of the succeeding instructions relative thereto, and to assist the rest of our Forresters when there is occasion; for doing of all which we hereby give you full power, authority, warrant, and commission, and for your encouragement and pains herein we allow you to pasture and graze 40 head of cattle belonging to yourself and sons in any part least prejudiced to the Forest, and your care and inspection, and these present we appoint to continue during our pleasure only. "ATHOLL."

The instructions alluded to included:—

"Dispossessing all persons of what sheals they possessed in the Forest, without His Grace's written order.

"To shoot all dogs found in the Forest, and exact 20 pounds Scots from the master of each dog.

"As likewise we order you to kill, or bring alive, any eagles, old or young, you can take alive or shoot in the Forest, and for

your encouragement we shall give you a warrant for killing a deer for your own use for each eagle, old or young, brought in by you, upon producing to us William Murray in Mayns of Blair his receipt for same.

As every man in these good old fighting days always went fully armed, and knew how to use his arms, and generally was ready enough on every occasion to do so, it was necessary wherever there were large gatherings of men from different districts for those in authority to appoint keepers of the peace. As an example of this custom, I may here give a commission from the Duke of Atholl to two young Strathardle lairds to keep the peace at the Kirkmichael market of this year:—

"Blair Castle, Sept. 29th, 1707.

"Commission from His Grace the Duke of Atholl to Alex. Robertson, yr. of Balnacraig, and James Robertson, yr. of Dounie, to be Captains of the Guard for Kirkmichael Mercat, holding the 30th of this month.

"You are to see that good order is preserved, and to secure persons guilty of Drunkenness and Swearing until they pay their fynes according to the Laws, and to secure such as be guilty of Ryots, or other crimes, until they find caution to appear, or till we be acquainted, or one of our Bailies to give orders about them, for which this shall be your warrant. "ATHOLL."

The Strathardle men, like all the rest of the Atholl Highlanders, were very much opposed to the Union with England, and one of the greatest gatherings ever seen of the men of the strath took place at this time, when all the different septs rose to a man under their various chieftains, and marched over the hills to Blair-Atholl to join the Duke of Atholl, who mustered his full strength to oppose the Union. All the different clans of Atholl, of course, acknowledged the Duke as their general leader, but each clan and sept had its own chief and chieftains, who had entire direction of their followers, yielding obedience to the superior only in general movements. Very often these clans took different sides in those troublous times, or even different septs of the same clan, as at Killiecrankie, when the Robertsons of Atholl all went out with Dundee, whilst the Robertsons of Strathardle, held back by their chieftain, the Baron of Straloch, took the other side, and stayed at home. But on this occasion of the Union, "Whig and Tory all agreed," and every clansman within the bounds of Atholl, fit to bear arms, turned out, so that the Duke

was able to march to Perth at the head of 7000 of his clansmen, as General Stewart of Garth tells us (Vol. I., p. 70):—"The Atholl Brigade, which was sometimes so numerous as to form two, three, or more regiments, was always commanded by the head of the family of Atholl, in person, or by a son or friend in his stead. At the beginning of last century, as we learn from the Lockhart Papers, 'the Duke of Atholl was of great importance to the party of the Cavaliers, being able to raise 6000 of the best men in the kingdom, well armed, and ready to sacrifice their all for the King's service.' In 1707, his Grace took the field with 7000 men of his own followers, and others whom he could influence, to oppose the Union with England. With this force he marched to Perth, in the expectation of being joined by the Duke of Hamilton and other noblemen and gentlemen of the south; but as they did not move, he proceeded no further, and, disbanding his men, he returned to the Highlands." General Stewart adds a note to this:—"A friend of mine, the late Mr Stewart of Crossmount, carried arms on that occasion, of which he used to speak with great animation. He died in January, 1791, at the age of 104."

1710.—In August of this year the Duke of Atholl held one of those great "Tinchels," or deer hunts, for which the Atholl Forest was so famous. The following orders were issued on August 1st:—

"Orders to John and Alexander Robertson, Foresters in Glen Fernate (sons of Paul Beg).

"These are ordering you to advertise all the fencible men, belonging to us, either in property or superiority, in Glen Fernate and Glen Brierachan, to attend His Grace at the foot of Ben Vurich, the following night, with a day's provision, for a deer hunting the day after."

On August 12th similar orders were sent to the united parish of Blair and Struan, Kirkmichael, Moulin, Cluny, Glenalmond, Logierait, Weem, Dull, and Fortingall, directed to the several officers.

Invitations were also sent to Farquharson of Inverey and Mackenzie of Dalmore, as follows:—

"I designe to have a deer hunting this year, which is to begin on Wednesday, the 23rd inst., in Beanniglo. If you please to come there that day with some pretty men, and as many dogs as you can provide, you shall be very welcome.

"Blair, August 14th."

In obedience to the above orders, the vassals and tenants convened, and were drawn up on the Green of Blair on the day appointed.

August 23rd.—All the men were drawn up on Druim na h-Eachdra, at the head of Glengirnaig, where the following orders were read out to all the officers before the Tinchell was sent out:—

"I. That none shall offer to fire a gun or pistol in the time of the deer hunting.

"II. That none shall offer to break up a deer, or take out a grealoch, except in His Grace's presence, where they are to be disposed on.

"III. That none be drunk, or swear an oath.

"Whoever shall transgress any of these rules shall be fyned and taken into custody, as His Grace shall approve."

1711.—Another great deer hunt took place this year, when orders were issued on August 17th to the parishes of Blair and Strouan, Moulin, Kirkmichael, Taywood and Forest of Cluny, Glenalmond, Guy, Kilmorich, Logierait, Fortingall, Weem, Strathtummel, Dull, and Balquhider, desiring the vassals and fencible men out of every merkland to parade at Blair Castle on August 21st, in the evening. The hunting began in Benagloe, on Wednesday, 22nd, when no deer were killed; on Thursday, in Carn Righ, where there were 25 deer killed; and on Friday, in Beinn Vurich, where 32 were killed.

Spalding of Ashintully being in bad health, and not able to attend, wrote as follows to excuse himself:—

"Ashintullie, Aug. 21st, 1711.

"May it please yr. Grace.—In obedience to yr. Grace's desyre I have sent about ane hundereth men to yr. Grace's hunting. Quich is all possible for me to get appointed in cloathes and armes, considering the very short advertisement, for I only received yr. Grace's letter on Sabbath. Quich if I had got sooner I would have endeavoured to have sent als monie more, and would have waited on yr. Grace myself according to my deutie wer it not that I have been tender of a long tyme, so that I cannot traivell without my hurt and prejudice. And this from, may it please yr. Grace, your Grace's most obt. and most humble svt.,

"D. SPALDING."