

## CHAPTER II.

### JAMES, 2ND LORD FORBES.

Born? Succeeded 1448, died 1462. (Reign of James II.)

"JAMES, designed the second Lord Forbes was a gentleman nothing degenerating from his noble ancestors and who by his own worth and great services done to the King in the extremity of danger, encreased mightily the lustre of his house."

Thus the MS. History, which goes on to describe how the 2nd Lord Forbes remained for long friendly with the banished Douglas,<sup>1</sup>

"whom he scorned to desert at this low ebb of his fortunes, and Douglas entirely loved him, not only as his near relation in blood, but also for those many excellent vertues and attractive qualities decerned in him."

But Earl Douglas having returned from England and apparently on good terms with the king so that "all good Scots were right blythe of that accordance," began early in 1451 to intrigue with other Lords against the king, and sent to Lord Forbes asking for his subscription to the bond he had already made with Earls Crawford, Ross and others,

"Hoping he would make no difficulty to concur in it. The Lord Forbes, extremely surprised with this dangerous overture, is put to a great demur, till at last, wisely considering that the most honest and loyal engagements are commonly the safest at the Long run, and that it would be but coarse politiques to abandon the fortune of his family, which was so well and peaceably settled, to ramble after vain and delusive hopes—And therefore endeavours, though in vain, to dissuade the Earle from so temerous and destructive a course he was taking, thanked him for the trust he reposed in him and assured him of a mighty forwardness on his side for the advancing his interest and families by all fair and legall ways. Byt begs to be excused that he could not embark in the present enterpryse."

Some such reasoning doubtless kept the Lord Forbes of 1715 on the side of King George and against *King James VIII.*, though in this case [in 1451] it was no doubt also the truer patriotism to side with the King

<sup>1</sup> William, the 8th Earl, son of James the Gross, and Lt.-General of the Kingdom, 1446-49; he had previously been banished for his father's crimes; killed 1452.

[James II.]. The anonymous historian goes on to say that it was the more remarkable that James, Lord Forbes, should have severed his connection with this Earl Douglas

“ notwithstanding of their nearness and proximity of blood and that he had been with the Earl to Rome ”—

a detail of personal history mentioned nowhere else.<sup>1</sup>

But James Forbes was even nearer in blood to the king, since his grandmother, the Princess Mary, who had married Angus, was the King's aunt, so he was first cousin once removed to King James and third cousin once removed to Earl Douglas.

After the death of Earl Douglas at the king's hand in Stirling, February 7th, 1452, Lord Forbes was more than ever in the king's good graces, and he, as well as his son William, took part in the battle of Brechin.

“ At that bloody encounter at Brechin (18th May, 1452) with the Earl of Crawford, the principal Confidant of the Douglasses, tho' the Earle of Huntley carried the applause and thanks for that eminent and well-tymed piece of good service, yet the honour of the Action cannot but be acknowledged to be due to the high courage and bravery of the forbesses and their friends and associates the Ogilvies, Leslies, Grants and Irvines.”

Lord Forbes did not long survive this honourable exploit.

Of his private affairs there are several notices in the public records.

On September 30th, 1444, while still merely James of Forbes, son and heir of Alexander Forbes, knight (not yet Lord Forbes), he obtained a charter of the lands of Corsindae from Alexander Seton of Gordon (already a Lord of Parliament), and in the following month he subscribed a bond of manrent to Seton of Gordon.

“ *Bond of Manrent* of James of Forbes, sone and ayer apperande of Schir Alexander of Forbes knycht A.D. 1444.

“ Be it made kende till all men be this present lettre, me James of Forbes, sone and ayer apperande of my derrest fader, Schir Alexander of Forbes knycht, to becummyne mane and be this present writ, becummys mane til ane honorable and nichtie lorde Alexander of Setoune of Gordon, my redoutit Lord for all the dayis of my lyfe in tyme of war and of peace, agayn all dedlyk (i.e. mortal) myn allegiance til our Souerane Lord the Kyng alanerlie outtaine ” (only excepted). *Gordon Castle Charters*.

(John Skene has defined a bond of manrent as a “ Promise by one persone to serve ane uther in sic sort that he sall be friend to all his friends, and foe to all his foes.” These bonds were abolished by Act of Parliament in 1457 but continued in use for 100 years longer.)

<sup>1</sup> In 1450 the young Earl Douglas with 100 knights went to Rome to celebrate the Jubilee. He did it with so much state and ceremony that he was held to be aping royalty, and this annoyed the king.

THE HOUSE OF FORBES

On July 1st, 1445, James Forbes protested in Parliament that any sentence passed against James, Earl of Angus, his cousin, should not affect his rights under the entail made by William, Earl of Angus, his mother's brother. (*Acts of Parliament of Scot. II., 59, 60.*)

He had a retour of Whitefield on August 2nd, 1452, to be held from the Earl of Angus for £5 yearly.<sup>1</sup>

On May 18th, 1453, an Instrument of Sasine from Walter Stewart, baillie of Kinedward for the Earl of Ross and the Isles, on the lands of Fintray (in Buchan), was signed at Druminnor.<sup>2</sup>

On June 3rd, 1454, he had a precept of Sasine from the Bishop of Ross of the lands of Delny in Morayshire, and on October 10th, in the same year, a Sasine on Kinstair and Edinbanchory from William Garioch of Kinstair.<sup>3</sup>

Of date May 4th, 1456, there is a long document from the King granting him licence to repair the walls and towers and fortify with gates and ditches the family mansion of Druminnor (commonly called Forbes)<sup>4</sup> the chief seat of the family on the Duchus lands<sup>5</sup> which had been so long in their possession. The house had been built in 1440. The subsequent history of this Castle is to be found in the Appendix (to Alex., 1st L.), it is unfortunately no longer in the hands of a Forbes.

The last charter in his favour among the Castle Forbes papers is dated September 20th, 1460, from Alexander, Earl of Huntly, of the lands of Tullyreoch in the Barony of Cluny.<sup>6</sup>

The public activities of James, 2nd Lord Forbes, include his appointment by the Parliament of 1457 in which he sat, as one of the Lords of Session for the court of Justice at Aberdeen.

He also served on a committee to enquire into the state of the hospitals in the diocese of Aberdeen, which has a strangely modern ring.

He died before July 30th, 1462.

James, 2nd Lord Forbes, married Gilles or Egidia, second daughter of William Keith, 1st Earl Marischal, who survived him until 1473, and had—

1. William, 3rd Lord.
2. Duncan, married Christian Mercer of Balliel, widow of Gilbert Skene of Skene. He was ancestor of Corsindae and Monymusk. (See page 300.)
3. Patrick of Corse, ancestor of Craigievar and Earls of Granard. (See page 329.)
4. Alexander, living August 14th, 1473.
5. Egidia, married Malcolm Forbes of Tolquhon.

<sup>1</sup> Appendix, page 41.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> Page 42.

<sup>5</sup> See page 12.

<sup>6</sup> Page 42.

APPENDIX FOR JAMES, 2ND LORD FORBES.

The original documents at Castle Forbes referring to James, 2nd Lord Forbes, which have been noted in the *Registrum* are seven in number. (Of his father, Alexander, there were over twenty, and not all worth printing.)

[20] "The first charter from Alexander Seton of Gordon, lord of the barony of Cluny, to James, son of Sir Alexander Forbes. Apud Aberdene 30 Sept. 1444. Carta per Alexandrum de Setone de Gordon dominum baroniæ de Cluny concessa dilecto consanguineo suo Jacobo de Forbes filio et heredi apparenti dn̄i Alesandri de Forbes de eodem, militis, de terris de Corsindawe Kebydy Ordyquhork, Athkebidy Ruvynachlach et Tulycarn jacentibus in Baronia de Cluny infra vicecomitatum de Aberdene, Tenendis de dicto Alexandro.—Faciendo tres sectas curiæ annuatim apud Manerium de Cluny. Testibus Patricio Lyon de Kyngorn Waltero Ogilvy de Deskfurde militibus Alexandro Gram Gilberto Meignes, burgēn de Aberdene Alexandro Couplande—Magistro Gilberto Forstar, archidiacono Brechinen. et dn̄o Laurencio Rectore de Tulch cum multis aliis."

By a writ of October 4th, James Forbes bound himself to resign the above lands into the hands of his superior, on being granted others in Tough and Cluny (*Gordon Castle*). These he received in 1460. (See page 42.)

[21] "2nd Aug. 1452. Copia Retornatus, Jacobi Domini de Forbess sicut heredis patris sui Alexandri domini de Forbess militis in terris de Qwytfelde. Nunc valentibus per annum £5 et tempore pacis tantum ————— tentis in capite de Comite Angusie in alba firma.—Coram Roberto Graham ballivo dn̄i Comitis Angusie. In papyro."

[22] "18th May, 1453. In orto de Drumyn Instrumentum notarium super requisitionem per nobilem et potentem dominum Jacobum de Forbes de eodem militem sasine in terris de Fyntra super preceptum Regium a Waltero Stewart Ballivo legitimo baroniæ de Kinedwart sub magnifico et potente domino Comite de Ros ac domino Insularum et super negationem per dictum Ballivum dare possessione 'quia dicebat se non talem habere potestatem.' Attornato Domini de Forbes protestante ne verteret ad aliquod prejudicium domino suo penes firmas dictarum terrarum levandas."

This deed, as seen above, was signed at Druminnor, the castle of which had been built thirteen years earlier.

[23] "10 Octobre 1454. Apud. Kynstare.

"Carta per Willelmum de Garviach de Kynstare facta nobili domino Jacobo domino de Forbes, Militi domino suo singularissimo pro suis auxiliis favoribus supportationibus gratitudinibus et manutenentia,—de uno annuo reddito quatuor librarum de terris de Kynstare et de Edyndovy jacentibus in baronia de forbes, solvendo post decessum patris sui Jacobi di Garviach liberetenentis earundem terrarum.

"Testibus Jacobo de Skene domino ejusdem, Duncano de Forbes, Magistro Andrea Symson vicario de Gameri, Thoma de Skene, David Brogane, Thoma Davidson et Dn̄o Jacobo de Crag Capellano. Quia Sigillum proprium ad presens

THE HOUSE OF FORBES

non habuit Sigillum patris sui Jacobi de de Garviach appenditur." (In charter chest. Seal in perfect preservation.)

[24] "3rd June 1454. Preceptum Sasinæ nobilis viri Jacobi Domini de Forbes, militis in vitali reddito terrarum de Delny in comitatu Moravie factum per Thomam Episcopum Rossensem."

LICENCE TO BUILD THE TOWER OF DRUMINOUR.

[25] "4 May 1456. Jacobus dei gracia Rex Scotorum omnibus probis hominibus suis ad quos presentes lettres pervenerint salutem. Sciatis quod concessimus dilecto consanguineo nostro Jacobo domino Forbes plenam et liberam facultatem et nostram licenciam specialem turrim sive fortalicium dictum Drumynour vulgariter nuncupatum Forbes in dominio de Forbes infra vice comitatum de Aberden construendi et edificandi ac ipsam turrim sive fortalicium muris et fossis fortificandi circumigendi portisque ferreis firmandi et muniendi et in altum erigendi et in summitate cuisdem ornamentum defensivis preparandi et ornandi, ceteraque ad consumptionem dicte turris et fortalicii necessaria faciendi et profiendi. Quare unius et singulis ligiis et subditis nostris quorum interest vel interesse poterit stricte precipiendo mandamus ne quis dictum Jacobum aut suos servitores vel factores in edificacione dicte turris molestent vexent aut inquietent in futurum aut eis vel eorum alicui impedimentum aliquid edificacione ejusdem prestant sub omni pena que competere poterit in hac parte.

"Datum sub magno sigillo nostro apud Brechin  
quarto die mensis mai Anno domini millesimo quadringentesimo quin-  
quagesimo sexto. Et Regni nostri vicesimo.

"James R."

[26] *September 20th, 1460.* Charter of the Lands of Tullyreoch, etc., from the Earl of Huntly to James, Lord Forbes, on whom he had conferred the order of knighthood.

"Alexander Comes de Huntlie et dñō de Badzenoch domino Patricio Matelande de Scheves militi ballivo nostro in hac parte irrevocabili Saltūm in dñō. Quia dedimus et concessimus nobili dñō Jacobo dñō de Forbes militi quod eo pro ordine milicie de manibus nostris suscepit, omnes et singulas terras de Tulyreoch cum pertinem et terras de litill Tolmade Tornavechyne Drumlassy et Barglassy cum suis pertinen. jacentes in baronia nostra de Cluny et in Comitatu nostro de Huntlie infra vicecomitatum de Aberdene quod ut in carta nostra sibi desuper confecta latius continetur. Quare vobis percipimus et mandamus quantus prefato dñō Jacobo aut suo certo attornato procuratori seu deputato latori pñciū saisina et possessione hereditarias omni et singularum terrarum predicatarum cum suis pertinentes visis pñtibus deliberetis et tradatis, sedm vim forñā et continētiā carte nostre sibe desuper confecti salvo iure cuiquelibet ad quod faciendum vobis tenore pñciū nostra plenaria potestate committimus per pñtes. Et in signū saisine et possessionis per vos traditarum Sigillum vestrum in Cauda juxta nostrum Sigillum appendatis Datū sub Sigillo nostro apud Huntlie vicesimo die mēsis Sept. Anno dni millesimo quadringētesimē sexagesimo."

(Seal of Lord Huntly attached.)