

CHAPTER VIII.

JOHN, 8TH LORD FORBES.

Born, 1542. Succeeded, 1594. Died, 1606.

FOR a study of John, 8th Lord Forbes, abundant material exists, both in the papers at Castle Forbes and in the public records. He only held the title and lands for twelve years, viz., early 1594 to June, 1606, but his life covered the whole of the reign of Queen Mary and the reign of her son, James, in Scotland as well as three years after the latter ascended the throne of Great Britain. The greater part of this period was a most troublous one for the realm of Scotland, which was torn by the dissensions of rival parties.

John was born on July 3rd, 1542 (it is curious that the dates of births have been more carefully kept in this family than the dates of deaths), and was thus five months older than his future queen.

His elder brother, Alexander, had died before the birth of John, so the latter came into the world as the prospective Master of Forbes, a title which must have seemed of sinister omen, for the two uncles older than his father (the 7th Lord), who had held that title in turn, had died young—one on the field of battle, in 1513, and the other on the scaffold, in 1537, while his father, the third Master of Forbes in that generation, was himself imprisoned for some time in Edinburgh Castle on a rather vague charge. This was four years after John's birth, and shortly before the death of his grandfather, John, the 6th Lord Forbes. John had one sister older than himself and six younger, as well as six surviving brothers.

Of his childhood and very early youth not much record remains, but before he was six years old, a contract was made in his name by his father (who had then succeeded to the title) for a marriage with one of the daughters of the hereditary enemy, George, 4th Earl of Huntly, "the Cock o' the North." The said contract provides that the Master of Forbes shall marry "ane of my Lord Huntly's daughters now oncontractit," viz., Margaret or Jane, who were then respectively three and two years old, the date of the contract being February, 1547-48. It is still at Castle Forbes, and is here given in full. The object of the proposed alliance was to endeavour to compose the age-long feud existing between the two families which had long striven for mastery in the county of Aberdeen and had almost invariably

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(as they were to do in the future) embraced opposite sides in politics, and when the division between Catholic and reformed religion arose, opposite sides on that point also. As a result of the marriage and its consequences, the feud became ten times more bitter and a good deal of actual bloodshed occurred.

A similar attempt to compose a family feud by uniting the then head of the house of Huntly, Margaret's great-nephew, with Argyll's daughter in 1607 was equally unsuccessful.

CONTRACT.

" *Registrum de Forbes* [43]. At Huntly ye 21st day of Februar ye yere of God 1547. It is finally appoyntit accordit and agreit betwix ane nobill and mighty Lady Elizabeth Countess of Huntlie and Alexander Lord Gordone her sone,¹ with the awys and consent of William Erle Marshall, William Bishop of Abirdene,² Robert, Bishop of Orkney, Alexander Ogilvy of yat ilk and of Findlater, George Gordon of Schevas, Alex. Gordon of Strathdon and James Gordon of Tolquholdstane namit and ordinit be my Lord Huntlie, (beand in England), yat ye said countes and lord gordon his sone suld use counsell of in all grite materes, on yat ane part, and ane nobill and mighty lord William, Lord forbes for himself and Jhone Maister of forbes his son on yat other part. In manner forme and effect as efter follows. That is to say for ye renewing of ye auld amitie Luf and kindness yt hes aye bene betwyx ye houses of huntlie and forbes at Dryminer, in tymes bigane and perfite amitie and kindness to continew in all tymes cuming, God willing, ye said Jhone Maister forbes sall marrye and haif to wif ane of my lord of Huntlie's dochteris now oncontractit, viz. Margaret or Jane and sall contract ye said marage and solemnizat ye same in face of holy kirk, howsone ye said Jhone and my lord's Dochter becum of perfite age to marye. To quhom ye said William Lord forbes will gif . . . superior be resignation or charter of confirmation as plesis best ye said erle of Huntlye or ye sd countes and Lord gordon, ane hundred and three scoir marks landes for ye sd mariage and contract fee. Ye said erle Huntlie, countes and lord Gordon sall obtane ane dispensation of ferdis of consanguintie and upon as many other impediments as sall beis fundin betwixt ye said Jhone and erlis dochter and als oft as necessare salbe sware yat yr salbe na impediment neither of consanguinitie nor affinitie betwin ye said Jhone maister forbes and ye said erlis dochter, not that they may lesunlye marye at their perfyte age. And also sall content and pay to ye said William Lord Forbes his airs executors and assignais ye sowme of twa thousand merkis usuall money of Scottis viz. at ye completing of ye said mariage, five hunder merkis and at ye next terme of Witsunday or Martimas after ye sd mariage thre hundred merkis and swa, yeirlie and termlye ye soune of thre hundred merkis till ye complete payment of ye said soume of twa thousand merkis. And ye sd countess sall send ye kontrak to Ingland wt diligince to get ye same apprewit subscribit and selit be my Lord Huntlye. And thereafter within twa moneths, sall find four landit

¹ The eldest son of Huntly, who died in his father's lifetime.

² Huntly's brother.

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men in ye official buikes of Moray or Aberdeen for ye payment of ye said soume of twa thousand merkis at ye tymes foresaid for ye tocher of ye said Jhone maister forbes—And if yis contrak be obscure in any poynt be either of ye said parties ye same salbe declarit and renewit at ye requisition of ye sd partie or ye uther The quhillk to obsairve and keep ye said parties are bund and oblest ilkane be ye fayth and truth in their bodies but (*without*) fraud or gyle and efter it sall be approvit, to be insert in ye official buikis of Murray and Abirdene and subscribit ilke for yr ane pairt under ye pane of cursing.

“ In witness yrof bayth ye said parteis hes subscribite yis . . . yeir and place befour this witesse

“ Reverend fader in God Robert bishop of Orkney—honorabil men Alex. Ogilvie of that ilk and findlater, James Gordon of Tolquholdstone, Maister George Gordon, constable of Badzenocht, Alexander Gordone of boddame, Maisteres James Stewin and James Skene notaris publict wt utheris Divers ”

follows the signature of

“ George erl off Huntly.”¹

Extract showing the actual time of marriage, eleven years later, November, 1558 (also from the Forbes Charter Chest)—

[45]. “ Extract (under the Seal of the official) from the Consistory books of Abdn. of a Contract of Marriage between Johane Maister of forbes son of William Lord Forbes, and Maistres Margaret Gordoun daughter of George Earl of Huntly.—The Lord Forbes to infest her in her virginity in 200 merk lands held of the Earl within the bounds of Touch Cluny Tolmadds and Fodderbirss.—The Earl to give 3000 merks of Tochir, and to bring home a dispensation if any Impediment be found before marriage, and efter ye completing of ye same gif ony Impediment beis fundiss quhaistthrow ye saidis personsis may not lauchfullye remaine togidder, In that cace ye pertye fynders yairof sall obtene and bring hayme ane lauchfull dispensatione on yair expenss quhairthrow ye saidis personis may lauchfullye remain togidder.

“ *Witnesses* Johane Erle of Sutherland, George lord Gordone, George Gordone of Scheives kny. Alexander Forbes of Petslego, William Leslye of kirhill, George Barclay at yat ilks, Johane Calder of Aslowne.

“ *Cautioners* for the payment of the Tochir, George Gordon of Scheives kny. Johane Gordone in Cairnburrow, Maister George Gordone of Beldorne, and James Gordone of Tullyangus.

“ *Witnesses* to the Notarial attestation of same date, Arthuro forbes de Balfour Magistris Roberto Lumisden de Clova et Jacobo Stewin Notario Publico.”

Extract Made on 1559, October 17th, *At Grantule* (Gartly). (The seal is attached.)

At the date when the first contract was drawn up (actually February, 1548) the 4th Earl of Huntly (who later died so tragically at Corrichie, October 28th, 1562, a so-called rebel against his queen) was in captivity

¹ His seal, though an attempt has been made to preserve it with strips of parchment, has almost perished. The whole document is very frail.

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in England. He had been taken prisoner September 10th, 1547, at the terrible defeat of Pinkie, where he was fighting gallantly in defence of his little queen, "being on foot and clad in gilt and enamelled armour." After several months' captivity he made his escape—probably with the connivance of his jailers, and returned to Scotland.

The 4th Earl had three daughters—Elizabeth, who was contracted to John Stewart, 4th Earl of Atholl, this same year and was probably already 12 years of age; Margaret, who did eventually marry the Master of Forbes; and Jane, the best known of the family, successively the wife eighteen years later of James, Earl of Bothwell, 26 years later of Alexander, 3rd Earl of Sutherland, and 52 years later of Alexander Ogilvie of Boyne. This venerable lady died May 14th, 1629, in her 84th year, so at the date of the above contract was about two years old and Margaret *probably* a year older, as the marriage with John, Master of Forbes, took place in November 1558, when she was presumably at least 12 years of age. Both sisters had tragic lives, and it is curious to conjecture what might have been the difference to Scottish History had Jane been married to the Master of Forbes instead of to Bothwell. If Margaret had died before reaching marriageable age, this would doubtless have taken place.¹ The fact that a papal dispensation was necessary for the marriage contract of a member of the House of Huntly with that of Forbes, emphasises the fact of the frequent intermarriage of all the Scots nobility. In this case, owing to the marriage of the 3rd Lord Forbes with Christian Gordon, daughter of the 1st Earl of Huntly, the contracting parties were third cousins once removed. In the case of Jane Gordon and Bothwell, though the connection was much more remote, it will be remembered that a dispensation was also considered necessary, and failure to produce this, later on, facilitated the divorce from Bothwell—the dispensation, however, still exists at Dunrobin, and Lady Jane could doubtless have produced it at any time had she wished. Far from helping to heal the ancient feud between Gordon and Forbes, the marriage of John Forbes and Margaret Gordon produced further troubles. The marriage, as has been said, took place in November, 1558. The eldest son, William, was born in 1563, the second, John, not till 1570, and there were three daughters born between these dates, all of whom the mother endeavoured to bring up in the Catholic faith in which she herself had been educated. According to a MS. life of her second son, to which reference will be made later, John, Master of Forbes, though a Protestant, had agreed

¹ But Jane was reserved for a more unhappy fate as the wife of Bothwell, though the two subsequent marriages were quite successful. Her fourth son by the second marriage, who became Sir Robert Gordon, 1st Baronet of Gordonstoun, left on record this tribute to his mother, who died May 14th, 1629: "A vertuous and comlie lady, judicious, of excellent memorie and of great understanding above the capacite of her sex."

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that the daughters at least should follow their mother, while the sons were to be brought up Protestants, but the contrary took place, the daughters no doubt remaining at home, while the sons took their own line. The Catholic biographies state that the marriage of John Forbes and Margaret Gordon was dissolved solely on religious grounds,¹ but the process of divorce which still exists, drawn up by Mr. Robert Maitland, Dean of Aberdeen, unfortunately proves that her husband had other grounds of complaint in the irregularity of her conduct in her youth (she was only 26), however saintly her life may have become afterwards.

[53] " 1573, 24 June—Edinburgh.

" Maister Robert Maitland, Dene of Aberdeen ane of the Commissars of Edinburgh, to my Lovites Patrick burges etc. executoris heirof conjunctlie and severalie speciallie constitut greting, for samekill as it is humlie merit and schawin to me and my collegis be the rycht worschippfull Jhone Mr. of Forbes that he was lauchfullie jointit in maraig with Margaret Gordone dochter lawfull off umquhill George erll of Huntlie, Lord Gordon and Badzenocht and the band thair off solemnizat betwixt yem in face of the kirk in the monethe of November the yeir off God Jm V^e LVIII yeiris (1558), efter the quelk thai contenuit together at bed burd and usit uther mutual secretie as become marcit folkes be the space of dyvers yeris thereafter and continualie to the munethe of December the yeir off God Jm V^e LXXI yeiris that the said complenar was taken captive and led prisoner to the castell off Spynie within the sheriffdome off Elgin and Fores qher he was detenit be the space off ane yeir and three munethe nixt thereafter. During the quhilk tyme at the lest fra the said monethe of December to the monethe of May the yeir off God Jm V^e LXXII (1572) yeiris the said Margaret dyvers and mony tymes and munethlie and every monethe during the space foresaid in the absence of hir said spouse keipit famelie and companie with umquhill Patrick Hepburn persoun off Kynnor suspect and slanderit off audulterie with dyvers personis of before—And that not onelie in suspect places in secret maner and upon day lycht bot be contenuall resorting and hanting with him during the tyme forsaid be the space of Auchteen, fyfteen and XX days togethair boithe nyt and day In the placis of Druminnor and Rannalloch within the Sheriffdom off Aberdein and sumtymes being sa convoyit that no persoun knew of him but the said Margrat and her serving womane familiar unto her in thair unlauchfull doings as they supposit. Within the quhilkis placis the said Margrat during the space forsaid and in the absence of her said spouse resavit and harborit the said Patrick mony and dyvers nytis with quhom she committed

¹ They also state that Margaret's own desire was to have entered a convent and " become a nun in some foreign country, but that when she announced her wish to her mother, was met by a blow in the face. That thereafter she cherished a hope that she might be allowed to follow her vocation at a later period, but the King and other of her relations placed still greater obstacles in her way by arranging her marriage with a Protestant." This marriage had, however, been arranged when Margaret was an infant. Margaret's mother was a sister of the Earl Marischal, and of strong Protestant stock. It is likely that she would have discouraged any desire on her daughter's part to enter a nunnery.

adulterie—Lykas for the better accomplishment thair of the said Margrat having lytill or na regard to her schame and at all tymis and nytis quhar the said umquhill Patrick was reparit lyid and harberit in Drumminour, he lay in the uter chalmer within the hall nixt to the said Margratis chalmer quherin he myt hav enterit at his plesir he beand soletar within the said uter chalmer and the hall dour steikit upone hime within and the said Margrat havand na persoun with her bot her servand womane pertesepant and beand upon the cunsall off the said filthie crym, for accomplisment quherof sche left her awin chalmer quherin sche was accostomit to remain befoir.

“Lyk as the said Patrick quhen he was in Ranalachie quhilk was upon the fford, fyft and saxt dayis off mai the said yeir of God, being resavit and harborit in the said place of Ranalachie lay nytlie in ane chalmer with the said Margrat to whom he have had access at his pleasor, for perpetrating of the said crym quhereof he was most vehementlie suspect be public fame and common voice during the tyme foresaid, and was maist quietlie keepit in the said place of Ranalachie that very few knew of him the tyme of his remaining.

“And thairfoir the said Jhone Master of Forbes sald be simple divorcit fra the said Margrat and that he suld be decernit to be frie man in ye Lord quhen he pleis and the said Margrat aucht to be declarit to tyne¹ and to have tynt hir tocher and all the gudis and landis given unto hir in conjunct fee and lyffrent in respect and for the caus off ye said mareag as is allegit Theirfoir I charge you that ye lauffullie summond warn and charg the said Margrat to compeir befoir me, etc.” (the document concludes in the common form of a Summons of divorce and has on the back the execution of the messenger, “29 of June 1573”).

It has also been said by many historians that troubles with the Gordons arose *because* Forbes had divorced his wife, but the troubles began in December, 1571, and the sentence of divorce was pronounced in March, 1574.

The cause of dispute was the constant jealousy between these two powerful families. The Gordons were, as they always had been (in spite of the brief rebellion into which the 4th Earl had been forced in 1562), of the party of the imprisoned Queen Mary, while the Forbeses adhered to the Government of the *de facto* young King James, and the Master obtained, in November, 1571, the post of King's Lieutenant and authority to uplift for his expenses the rents of the two-thirds of the Bishopric of Aberdeen fallen into the king's hands.

[52] “9th Nov. 1571. Precept under the Signet in favour of John, Master of Forbes, the King's Lieutenant within certain bounds of the North Country for uplifting the two thirds of the Rents of the Bishoprick of Aberdeen (fallen in the King's hands by reason of forfeiture of William sometime Bishop) for supporting his expense in that office of the King's Lieutenant.” (Seal has gone.)

This was, of course, particularly galling to the Gordon family, the head of which had traditionally held the post of King's Lieutenant in the North,

¹ Lose.

and, moreover, the deprived Bishop of Aberdeen was a brother of the 4th Earl, and uncle of the 5th (at that time also under forfeiture).¹

From jealousy as to this and for other causes connected with Church lands, the turbulent Edom o' Gordon, 6th son of the 4th Earl, attacked his brother-in-law the Master, as already seen, took him prisoner at the fight at the Crabstane² and sent him to Spynie Castle, the seat of the notorious Bishop Hepburn, uncle of the Earl of Bothwell and a man of much the same character. During her husband's imprisonment, which lasted 15 months, Margaret Gordon, Mistress of Forbes, had, both at her husband's house of Druminnor and at Ranallachie, criminal intercourse with Mr. Patrick Hepburn, parson of Kinoir and natural son of the Bishop; this was the actual ground and only cause of the subsequent divorce, though other irregularities were also alleged against her. The Master was not released until May, 1573, having promised a ransom of £705 Scots to the Gordons; in the following month he instituted the process of divorce against his wife.

After the decree setting him free was pronounced in 1574, John, Master of Forbes, remained unmarried for six years. During that period, according to Macfarlane, he had two natural sons, James of Tolmads and Arthur, and in 1580 married, secondly, Janet, daughter of Walter Seton of Touch and widow of Sir John Bellenden. She had two sons—

Arthur, born April 25th, 1581, who became the 10th Lord Forbes; David of Putachie,³ born May 3rd, 1591, died unmarried, aged 24; and one daughter, Katharine, born in 1583, who married in 1603 William Gordon of Rothiemay, and had a very tragic life, her husband being murdered before her eyes. Her letter to her brother will be given later.

At the time of her divorce Margaret Gordon's youngest child was only 4 years old, but she must have been compelled to leave him, though where she lived is not known. The details of her later life may be gathered from the many lives of this son, the 9th Lord. (See page 141.)

In great poverty, with one female attendant, she eventually made her way to Flanders, where she had the felicity of seeing her younger son in the convent at Lisle (Lille) where he then was, and for some time she followed him to the various places to which he was sent, living herself frugally upon the proceeds of the few jewels she had brought with her. There is no doubt that, whatever her former life may have been, she was in her latter days a devout and sincere penitent. At length her son advised her, for the good of both their souls, that they should forego the pleasure of any longer seeing

¹ And an additionally annoying circumstance must have been that nine years before, James Forbes, the younger brother of the Master, then aged 11, had been granted sasine "in rectoria prebenda seu canonicate de Forbes," by William, Bishop of Aberdeen.

² The full details of the battles of Tillieangus and Crabstane are to be found in the previous chapter.

³ For the charter in favour of David of Putachie, see the Appendix to chapter on his brother Arthur, the 10th Lord.

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each other and directed her to settle at Antwerp, where an English priest had now gone to reside. This she did and, having procured the admission into the Catholic faith of the young woman who had accompanied her from Scotland, she lost her services, for the girl joined a convent of Brigittine nuns at Teneramund. In her declining years Margaret's poverty was relieved by a small pension from the "Catholic princes." It is not stated which of them. Having refused in her last illness to disturb her saintly son by sending for him from his charge at Brussels, she made a most edifying end, predeceasing him by only a few months. She was buried "by the care of the Capuchins, among their brethren in the Abbey of St. Bavan at Ghent, near to the body of the first brother Archangel, her eldest son William," the following inscription being placed upon her grave :—

D.O.M.
Margarita Gordon
filia Marchionis Huntlie
Cujus Regiam nobilitatem
Mariæ Jacobi Vto Scotorum Regis filiæ
post Reginæ et Martyris
Tutele Illustravit
Comitis Forbesii infelix Conjux
Thori ac principatus ob pietatem exul
ac felix duorum filiorum mater
Quos in numerum Capucinatorum
nomine Archangelos Seraphicus Patriarchus adoptavit
Perpetuis vitæ hujus miseris liberata
Kal Jan. ann MDCVI
Quam in anima æternam felicitatem
Coelo laeta obtinuit
Eundem in Corpore cum duobus Archangelis
uno xx Mart. MDXCII alterum 11 Aug. MDCVI
Hic segura Expectans

Of her five children, William, as already mentioned, was born in 1563. He fell early under the influence of his Catholic uncles, William and James Gordon, and being out of sympathy with his father, the Master, and his grandfather, the 7th Lord Forbes, he obtained leave while still quite young to go and push his fortune in the battle fields of Flanders, where he took service under Alexander Farnese, Duke of Parma, with whom he became a great favourite, and for some years he received a pension from Philip II., King of Spain ; but his religious fervour induced him to abandon his military career and to enter, on February 13th, 1588-89, a convent of Capuchin monks, which Order had just been established in the Low Countries by the Catholic Duke of Parma. William Forbes wrote to his father making a formal renunciation of all his rights and expectations as heir to Lord Forbes in favour of his brother John, at that time a boy of 18, still, as he

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thought, at home. "William was henceforth known as Brother Archangelus in religion and led a most holy life, being particularly remarkable for his severe abstinence and his fervour in prayer. But he lived not many years in the Order for, as he had hastened to answer the call of Heaven, so he was soon called away, one evening during Compline, from the Psalmody of men to take his place among the choirs of angels and blessed spirits. His death occurred in the convent of Ghent." March 22nd, 1591-92.

(*MS. Life of the second Brother Archangel.*)

Jean, the eldest daughter, married William Comyn. Isobel d. unm.

Margaret married, first, George Sinclair of Dunbeath, secondly, in 1626, Claud Hamilton.

The younger son, John, held by English Peerage Law to have been for five weeks the 9th Lord Forbes, is treated in the next chapter.

Of the eleven brothers and sisters of Margaret, children of the 4th Earl of Huntly, many had almost equally tragic lives.

Elizabeth, the eldest sister, married in 1542 while very young, John, 4th Earl Atholl—her arms are still to be seen at Balvenie Castle, but she died young and he married again.

Lady Jane's career has already been described.

Alexander, first Lord Gordon, died in 1553, soon after his marriage.

George, 2nd Lord Gordon and afterwards 5th Earl of Huntly, narrowly escaped execution by the orders of the Earl of Moray, but was saved by the personal intervention of Queen Mary, and having been restored to his title and lands, lived to become a good friend to her in her own troubles.

John of Findlater was beheaded in Aberdeen after being taken in rebellion at Corrichie, October 30th, 1562; Queen Mary being compelled to witness the execution.

William, a Jesuit, and James, a Jesuit *and* a priest, both died in Paris, it is said by violence, though the account given in the *Life of Father Archangel* of how the latter had his eyelids, nose, and ears cut off may be discounted.¹

The four younger brothers, Adam, Patrick, Robert and Thomas, were all forfeited for their participation in their father's rebellion, and Adam, like his elder brother, was condemned to execution but reprieved. After a very stormy career he died in his early thirties.

Patrick was killed fighting against Argyll and the Forbeses at Glenlivet.

The other two also died unmarried.

After the second defeat of the Forbeses at the Craibstone, the Master was, as already seen, taken prisoner and imprisoned and his house of Druminnor sacked and burnt. Well might he talk, in his memorandum of 1589 (see page 134), of the "gryt trubles and skaith sustenit" from the Gordon

¹ He celebrated Mass at Elgin for the last time when he met his nephew Huntly, just after the defeat of the king's forces at Glenlivet. Huntly then left Scotland, and it is probable his uncle went with him.

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family. Cuthbert Reid, confusing the two fights, writes on December 16th to the Bishop of Ross, then an envoy in England, "Please yr Lordship understand that there has been in the north part of Scotland some slaughter betwixt the Gordons and the Forbeses. The Gordons being within the town of Aberdeen and the Forbeses coming to the town, the Gordons marched without. There are slain Black Arthur Forbes, brother to my Lord Forbes, young Watterton, two brothers of Pestligowis, one meikle Duncan Forbes of Aberdeen with 3 skoir moir on both sides. The Master of Forbes is taken and put in Strathbogié." (That, of course, is an error—it was the Castle of Spynie.) "The Lesleys your Lordship's friends, were with neither of the parties." (*Cal. of Scots Papers*, Vol. IV., 15, p. 67.)

Nearly a year after the release from Spynie it is chronicled in a *State Paper* that when at Perth, February 23rd, 1573, before the Lords Justiciary, Huntly and Hamilton gave in their submission and received the King's pardon, it was announced that "the Master of Forbes and all other prisoners had been set at liberty."

A curious announcement next appears.

"The Master of Forbes, now at liberty, has paid his soldiers, in mind to have sent them to the Prince of Orange." (*Ibid.*)¹

No other allusion to this project has been found. It would have been at least curious if Forbes' retainers had fought on the Protestant side in the Low Countries when the son of that Master of Forbes, who contemplated sending them, was later to be a soldier as seen above, under Parma, and to end his life as a monk in that country. It was apparently suggested ten years later that the Master of Forbes himself should be sent to the Netherlands (page 87).

The only occasion on which John, Master of Forbes, appears in history before 1571 is when he was 18. It is recorded in the accounts of the Lord High Treasurer that in 1560 the Master of Forbes signs the band against the Regent Marie of Guise "To expel the French maintained be the Queen Dowager and to take plaine part with the Queen of England's army sent by her for that purpose to Edinburgh 27 April 1560. Signed John Maister of Forbes. Arthur Phorbes, his brother."

The *witness* was then 10 years old, which perhaps accounts for his inability to spell his own name correctly.

In August, 1600, John, Lord Forbes, wrote a long memorial in defence of his conduct in having wadsett or mortgaged so much of the family estates. Apparently his father had also left considerable debts which dated from the year 1571.

Renewed quarrels between Forbeses and Gordons began in the year 1571 when the Master of Forbes, at the age of 29, had been appointed King's

¹It is known that at the battle of Gemblours in 1578, numbers of Scots were with the defeated Dutch, and many prisoners were thrown over a bridge and drowned.

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Lieutenant in the North, with the right to uplift some of the king's money (see page 113). One result of this appointment was the fight at Tillieangus, already described (page 88), and the death of the Master's uncle, Black Arthur, "the Master barely escaping with his life."

He had already acknowledged King James¹ and he fled to Stirling, where he implored help from the Regent Mar, newly appointed on the death of Lennox, September 6th, 1571.

This help, the Regent was the more willing to give as he wished to secure the attachment of the Forbes family to his own party in the State.

The Government of James had previously been urged in this direction by Lord Saltoun, who had written in August, 1570, to Regent Lennox "I pray your Lordship to give them (the Forbeses) help. They are in a manner the key of the country." (It is believed that this letter was written by Saltoun, though the name is carefully erased.) (*State Papers.*)

Another letter of October 29th, 1571, says, "The Regent and that side now daily look that some resolution from the Queen's Majesty (that is Elizabeth) to support them should come. The Maister of Forbes is with the Regent, soliciting to have horsemen and footmen sent into the north against the Gordons." Help was sent, as already shown in the last chapter, but Forbes was unfortunate and appealed again from his captivity. Further assistance was promised, as seen from this extract of a letter from the Regent Morton to the Laird of Powrie (Fotheringham).

" 3 Feb. 1572.

" Recht Traist friend,

" After our hairtie commendations, having deliberate with the nobilitie lately convenit at the parliament anent the troublit stait of ye north cuntrie quhair sa many honest men has resaved sa gret outrage and appression as they are not able to endure it, and amongis all otheris, the Maister of Forbes, a young Gentleman is sa straitlie detenit captive and upon na band can be gotten relievit—it is concludit that in proper persone we sall pass north and convene at Brechin the first of March next with a substantious force of the Kingis Majestis Guid Subjectis for redeeming of that discordant countrie to his hienes dutifull obedience and thairfore we desire and pray you effectualie that ye accompanie with your kin ffreindis Servandis tenantis and hail force that ye may mak in warlyk maner. Ye will address you to meet us at Brechin the said first of March providet to remane during the space of fourty days according to the proclamation

" Yr assured friend

" James, Regent." ²

¹ The Bond acknowledging the infant King James as their "Sole Sovereign Lord was signed by the nobles at Edinburgh, St Andrews, Aberdeen and Inverness, on the 25 and 26 April 1569. The name of John, Master of Forbes appears among those who signed at Aberdeen, also that of 'Master Duncan Forbes' (1st Laird of Monymusk)." (*Privy Council Records*, III., 116.)

² *Family Papers.*

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Before, however, this force reached the north the Master of Forbes had ransomed himself out of Spynie.

And one of the earliest acts of Morton after he became Regent was to confirm the decision of the Privy Council that "the Maister of Forbes, presentlie with all possible diligence efter the publicatione of the present pacification, be set at libertie." The date of this session of the Council was February 23rd, 1572-73. The date of the above letter should, of course, read February, 1573, new style. "James" Morton, Regent, took office in November, 1572 (the date was given in the *last* published history of James I. as December 24th, but he is found presiding at a Council on November 24th), "John," Earl of Mar, the previous Regent, having died October 28th, 1572.

A year after his release, March 17th, 1574, John, Master of Forbes, explained to the Privy Council that he "was taken be Adam Gordoun of Auchindoun and detenit in captivitie as presoner within the Castell of Spynie quhill by the pacificatione he was set at libertie. Yet, nevertheless before he was relievit he was compellit to cause some of his friendes to become suretie for payment to George erle of Huntlie and Adam Gordoun of Auchindoun of the sum of £705 punds and now the said erle is claiming this sum from the sureties." John, Master of Forbes, states the said obligation to be null and void, which claim was sustained by decision of the Council and confirmed by the Regent on the date given, at Holyrood.

That these feuds were considered of importance in England is shown in the many letters written to correspondents in the south, often to Burghley himself. (See page 89.)

After the Master of Forbes was released from his imprisonment at Spynie he was occupied for some time with his divorce from Margaret Gordon.

[55.] On June 10th, 1578, the Master of Forbes was summoned by an autograph letter of King James VI. beginning, "Traist cousin," to attend the Council which preceded the meeting of Parliament.

"That be yr presence and gud advyse materis may be advisedlie considerit and deliberat upon according to the gravitie thereof and furtherance of our service. As ye wish the welfare thairof and will do us gude pleasure we commit you to God.

"At our Castell of Striveling 29 May 1578.

"James R."

(See illustration.)

The king at this date was not quite 12 years old, and the Regent was still the Earl of Morton from thralldom to whom James was just emancipating himself, and trying to collect around him the younger Lords of Parliament.

In 1584 Lord Forbes with a number of other nobles in the north seems to have incurred the king's serious displeasure, for there was an order in Council, dated Holyrood House, May 10th, 1584:

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"The King with advice of his Council for certain reasonable causis and consultations, commands the persons after mentioned to surrender the following castles and places to the King's officer within 24 hours after being charged, under pain of treason. (Amongst them) William Lord Forbes and John Master of Forbes to surrender the houses and fortalices of Drummynour . . ."

In the same year the Master was denounced a rebel, 9th June, along with "Mr. Arthur Forbes, his servant"—probably his son. (*Privy Council Records.*)

The Master of Forbes' second marriage (with Janet Seton) took place in 1588. The biographies of brother Archangel definitely state that he married and lived with Janet Seton even before the birth of his youngest son by Margaret Gordon, but that is certainly a libel, inspired by virulent religious prejudice, as the marriage contract is extant. The family of Lord Forbes is described in a Memorandum among the unpublished State papers "relating to Scotland" of the year 1589, entitled "State of the Nobilitie of Scotland," which enumerates

"Lord Forbes of that Ilk,¹ aged 65—his wife a Keith, one of the heiresses of Endengie (Inverugie).

"The Master of Forbes his heir, aged 50, married, first, a Gordon, aunt to Huntly,² and after her divorcement he took for his second wife a Seton, wife to the Justice Clerk, this Justice clerk's stepdame. The younger Master, this man's son, aged 26, servitor to the Duke of Parma."

Burghley's unknown correspondent was not quite right in computing ages. William, the 7th Lord, married in 1538, so was presumably born about 1513 and was about 75. John, the son, was 47, as the date of his birth is known. His eldest son, William, who will be dealt with presently, was actually 26; he had gone to the wars in the Low Countries and only later became a monk there and died in 1592. (See page 116.)

The marriage of John, Master of Forbes, and Margaret Gordon took place, as has been seen, in 1558-59 when they were 17 and 14, and it is recorded that their eldest son was not born for 3 or 4 years.

Three years later another correspondent writes to Burghley a further account of "the nobilitie of Scotland," in which he gives "Forbes, Forbesse, Protestant aged 78, his mother Lundy, his wife Keith," which shows that the conjectured date of his birth as 1513 was probably right.

Another note on the Master of Forbes in 1589 states that he is "well affected to England." (*Burghley's correspondence.*)

And later it is said that "he seeks to match his son with Gourie's daughter, whereat Huntly is much grieved." Bowes to Burghley.—(*Ibid.*) This very probably refers to the excellent match that was found for the second son, John, which he spurned. (See page 142.)

¹ William, 7th Lord. He had succeeded in 1576.

² George, 6th Earl and 1st Marquis of Huntly, succeeded in 1576.

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A report in the *Privy Council Records*, June 26th, 1590, shows John, Master of Forbes, in a less amiable light. It is a "complaint by William, Lord Forbes, against John, Master of Forbes, touching the taking and detaining of the said William his fader, in ane chalmer within the place of Drummynnour, stryking and hurting of him upoun the heid with the plummet of ane swerd; Lord Forbes appeared by Robert, Commendator of Monymusk, and James Forbes of Fechil his sones and the Master appeared personally. William Forbes of Tolquhon meanwhile to be in charge of the place of Druminnor. Lord Forbes is to be brought to Edinburgh against the appointed day of Aug. giff it be his own pleasure to travell—otherways to send a report to his Hieness and the Council. The sons only to have access to him as William Forbes of Tolquhon, George Johnston of Caskieben (his son-in-law) and William Forbes of Corsindae shall think meitt and convenient."

A year later, May, 1591, the Master of Forbes, voices his own complaint:

"It is nocht unknoune that he has been unnaturally used by his brothers James of Lethindie, Robert Commendator of Monymusk and Abraham of Blacktoun who heiring that William Forbes their father had contractit sum diseases and was lyand bedfast in Dundee in hazard of his life, entered and spoiled the house of Drumminnoir." Which John looked upon as his property and wished to enter in possession of himself. The Lords decreed that the house belonged to Lord Forbes and that both parties must resign claim to it. William Forbes indeed did not die till nearly three years later.

In 1593 it is noted that "Forbes and others are ready to attaint the rebel earls, Angus, Huntly and Erroll, and that Huntly is in a great rage," as two years earlier Robert Bowes had written to Burghley—"Marischal, Erroll, Forbes and others have banded themselves together for mutual defence against Huntly," and that the Master of Forbes and Angus had been the only men who were "assisting the King's cause" in the North.

By 1593 the Catholic Lords—Angus, Huntly and Erroll (Erroll having only recently changed his religion)—were in revolt against King James.

They were eventually defeated and the beautiful castles of the two latter, Strathbogie and Slains, were burnt. Lord Forbes and the Master were, as usual, ranged on the side opposed to Huntly, and gladly joined with Bothwell and others, who had a commission to execute justice on Huntly for the barbarous murder of the "bonny Earl of Moray," at Donibristle, February 7th, 1592.

Huntly's own plea for exoneration from this crime was afterwards presented to the 10th Lord Forbes (see page 153). Moray, who was son-in-law to the famous Earl, half-brother of Queen Mary, had been accused of treason against the king, and Huntly had been commissioned to bring him to justice.

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After the murder, the romantic details of which are commemorated in the well-known ballad¹—another commission was issued, as above, to execute justice on Huntly. In this the names of Lords Bothwell and Forbes appear, but before very long others were appointed to enquire into the conduct of these two. The Government of King James was, at that time, largely in the hands of rival parties, who accused one another of treason.

The next note to be found in the *State Papers* about the Master is under date August 31st, 1593.

"The Master and Lord Forbes were present among the mediators at the conclusion of Bothwell's trial, therefore they subscribed with the rest. Forbes (a Gordon by his mother)² doth party Atholl against Huntly and is very well affected to religion the amity and all good causes." It has already been seen that he was favourable to the English policy initiated by Bothwell, and on October 8th of this year he definitely subscribed to it, and Atholl testified to his willingness to do so.

Francis Stewart, Lord Bothwell, was nephew of Queen Mary's husband, being son of his sister and of Robert Stewart, one of Mary's half-brothers. He was a man of unbalanced mind and turbulent character, who at one period terrified the nervous King James by a violent raid on Holyrood, penetrating even to the Royal bedroom, and was in consequence banished, and died abroad, being also accused of witchcraft. On April 1st, 1594, "The Master of Forbes was summoned before the King's council for his part in Bothwell's raid." (*State Papers.*)

In the *Memoirs of David Moysie* the raid is thus described (page 102).

"Upon the 24 day of Juli 1593 the Erle of Bothwell and Mr. John Colvill quho had been three yeirs banisht come in, accompanied with the Erle of Atholl, the Lord Forbes, the Lord Ochiltree (who joynit with them for revenge and upon promeis to assist the revenge of the Erle of Murray's slauchter,) to the number of twa or three hundrett men to the Abbey of Halyroud house; quhaire it was reported that the said erle and Mr. John was brocht in be the Lady Atholl at the back yett of the said Abbey betwixt aucht and nine houris in the evening, and at the King's rising entered in his chalmer quhare his Majestie being putting on his clothes the said erle and Mr. John fell down on thair knees and gave their swords upon the ground craving mercie and pardone maist humblie quhilk his majestie yieldit to. There was upon this practice the duke of Lennox the erle of Atholl the Lords Ochiltree, Forbes and Spynie, with sundrie utheris bandit to the same purpose with the erle Bothwell. There was ane great tumult in Edinburgh for this. They come all down in armis and cryed to understand the King's mynd—quho cryed out and sayd that he was not captieve, bot well, in caice that quhilk was promisit be thame should be keiped, and commanded thame all to the Abbey Kirk yeard, to stay there till he should call for them,

¹ "The Bonny Earl of Moray."

² This was an error—it was his grandmother, wife of the 3rd Lord Forbes, who was Christian Gordon, daughter of the 1st Earl of Huntly.

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and immediately thairafter sent for the provest and baillies and commandit thame to dissolve and goe homeward—he houpit all sould be weill.”

“ The Earl of Atholl and Lord Forbes were charged to compeir before the King and Counsell for trafficking with Bothwell bot they compearit nocht, and so were denuncit to the horn for not compearance.”

(John succeeded his father in January, 1594.)

This explains the otherwise obscure reference in Lord Forbes' own paper about to be given, to his disgrace with the Government and subsequent banishment, which however did not follow immediately—as he seems to have patched up some kind of peace with authority and only later did he suffer for his association with Bothwell.

On January 8th, 1594, he was appointed Privy Councillor as Lord Forbes.

“ Acta Parl Jac VI. apud Haliruid hous decimo octavo die mensis Januarij 1593-4.

Certane noblemen
and utheris
nominat to be of
the privie counsale
qll the Parliament.

The quhilk day the Kingis Ma'ie with avise of his nobilitie counsale and esteatis presentlie has nominat and appointit and be this presents nominatis and appointis the personis undirwritten to be of his hienes ordinair prevey Counsale quhill the nixt parliament or conventioun generall of his esteatis. They ar to say Ludovick duke of Lennox, Johnne lord hammiltoun George Erll Mairshaal, Johnne Erll of Mar, William Erle of Mortoun, Johnne Erll of Montrois, Alexander lord lavingstoun, Robert lord Seytoun, James lord lindsay of the byris *Johnne, lord forbes* alexander commendatair of Culrois, Adam commendatair of Cambuskynneth Maister George lauder, etc.”

In 1594 John, Lord Forbes, was also one of five noblemen appointed by Commission from the king as lieutenants in the north for the suppression of the Rebellion of Huntly and Erroll.

Forbes, Leslie of Balquhain (on this occasion in opposition to his fellow Roman Catholics) and Irvine of Drum assembled all their followers with a view of supporting the Royal Army under the 6th Earl of Argyll (who had married the widow of the Regent Moray). This army was defeated by the Catholic Lords at Glenlivet—Forbes being second in command. The Forbeses tried another campaign of vengeance, but accomplished nothing.

To this period belongs the probably apocryphal story of the fifteen Gordons murdered at a banquet at Druminnor. It is said that Lord Forbes had announced that the former enemies should be peaceably entertained, but that, if he suspected treachery, he would stroke his beard. He inadvertently did so, whereupon each unsuspecting Gordon received a dirk in his back. It is only fair to state that much the same story is told of a murder of Forbeses by Gordons, the place being different.

On April 21st, 1594, Robert Bruce writes again to Lord Burghley, “ Charges are directed to Atholl and Forbes, commanding Forbes to appear

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before the King and Council on the 19—Which he has not performed and Atholl on the 26, to answer for their treasonable dealing and practising with Bothwell in his last attemptate."

On June 9th same year "Lord Forbes has compounded with Sir George Hume for the slaughter of Sir George's wife's ancestor and thereby Forbes is received to the king's grace and yesterday before the end of this Parliament, he presented himself there and voted to the Bills." (Probably his support was needed by the king at the moment.)

On February 5th, 1595, another communication to Burghley says "Lord Forbes has ridden this day to his Majesty, with another complaint that the Gordons have spoiled his lands, which makes every one judge that they are animated afresh to some new mischief, and it is no marvel, for there is never one of them punished for the last".

On February 22nd George Nicolson writes to Robert Bowes—"Some of the Duke's (Lennox) Company think that Lord Forbes has not well assisted against Huntly and Erroll, but had been so indifferent therein that he reserves himself for the best opportunity to be taken by *either* of the parties for his best advantage."¹

At this date, and after the destruction of their castles, Huntly and Erroll retired to France, and it seems most probable that Forbes did so at the same time, perhaps with some such view as that outlined above, as he appears to have had dealings with Huntly and his brother while in France. (See next page.)

Two years from this date would bring it nearly to July, 1596,² when part of the paper which now follows would appear to have been written, though the date of its completion is given as February 5th, 1600.

This paper shows some of the expedients by which money was raised; it is endorsed—

"The causis quy umquhyll Lord Forbes and Jhone now lord forbes wadsett ye land and living of Forbes and quhow meekle is on ye liveing in wadsett presently 1600. William, Lord forbes dettis on wadset at his decees, fourtie thousand merks. The siller and soumes of money on the liveing off forbes within Mar and Buchan, taken on be William Lord Forbes and Johne now Lord Forbes sens ye trubilles in the three scoir and eleven yeir of god. (1571)

Item, first given to the laird of Caskieben for redemptionne of ane part of ye landis of fintray wadset for the Lady Ardes, Christian Forbes, tocher four thousand markis.

Item, for lady Barnes, Anna Forbes,³ tocher, to Sir John Settone of Barnes Knight sax thousand markis.

¹ Burghley's correspondence. Unpublished *State Papers*.

² On February 26th, 1597, Robert Bowes, in writing to Burghley, chronicled "submission of Lord Forbes to the King."

³ Anna, wife of John Seton of Barns, his eighth sister.

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Item, on the toune of Wester Talmad ane thousand pounds wadset to tomas forbes of Cloak (*now Glenmillan*) and Robert Burnet in Drumiacke.

Item, five hundred merkis to Duncan Forbes in Balfour in wadset on ye landis of Forbes.

Item, the toun and landis of Ordeforke wadset to Maister James Skein of Remoise for ane thousand merkis.

Item, Tornowein wadset to me Thomas Burnet for the soume of ane thousand.

Johne Lord Forbes deburserment of siller and dettes on wadset Land and uther securities being both Maister and Lord at Witsunday 1596.

Item, for the landis of Putachie and half of Auchterkeig XVII hundreth markis to ye Lady Edzell.¹

Item, giften to ye Lard of Essilmonntt for ye heritable richt of the toune and landis of Clat, nyne thousand markis.

Item, to Sir George Hume according to his Ma. and ye erle of Huntlie's decreit sax thousand markis. (See page 124.)

Item, for my expensis and dettes in France and uther realmes ye tyme of my banishment and trubillis. My owin Liveing, intromittit with ye erle of Huntlie his brother and thair servandes ane thousand pound.

Item, gifin to Hendrie Nisbit and uther creditouris to mak my sone Williame his expenses in France and lykwayes to by him clothes at his returning hame to Edinburghe ane thousand markis.

Item, Lykways gifen efterward to Maister Andrew Clark burges of Aberdine quha past to brisills (*Brussels*) to him and to satisfie his creditouris them quhom to he had gifin dyvers obligatiouns of mair nor the soume of five hundredtt markis.

Item, for my wyfis dettes at my being in France and sche wanttand hir living by ye space of twa yeires the soume of five hundredth pound.

The soumes following spendit and debursit in passing to Edr dyattes dyvers tymes keepit, in craving justice for the skythes done be the erle of Huntlie and his freindis in tyme of abstinence ² efter the evill trubblis of ye reallme as freindis knawis and thocht necessar at yat tyme by all expensis yat me Lord my father or I nicht spair of our Liveings at that tyme.

Item, takin fra ane servand of the Laird of Tolquhon's callit—V hundrethe marks with annual yeirly payit.

Item, borrowit fra John Forbes in Finzeauch for ane jurney south III hundreth markis.

Item, for ane jurnay southe borrowit fra Mr. James Fodderinggame V hundreth markis.

Item, five hundreth markis at two tymes fra Gilbert Johnstone for ane jurney south.

Item, at dyveris tymes in jurnayis south taine on obligatiounes fra Duncan Forbes in balfour VII hundrett markes.

¹ Black Arthur's daughter. It was at this period that the lands of Putachie became first the possession of the Lord Forbes.

² This may refer to a treaty or truce called "The Abstinence," "Regretfully signed by the Regent Lennox in 1570 while Elizabeth conducted negotiations at Chatsworth for Mary's release." (Sanford Terry.) (See also p. 104.)

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- Item*, Alexr. Cullen burgis of Aberdine for the lyk cause ane hundreth pound.
- Item*, fra the laird of Tolquhon, quha is with God, for ye lyk caus two hundreth markis.
- Item*, fra Thomas Burnet for ye lyk cause ane hundreth pound.
- Item*, fra ye young Laird of Tolquhon quhilk he leint me in france XII crownes of ye sum extending to III scoir XII markis.
- Item*, for two hors frome eckiey Douglas ane gray iii hundreth markis and ane black iiij hundreth markis.
- Item*, redeemit Renallauch at Witsunday wes ane yeir, be payment of V hundreth markis.
- Item*, after me Lord my fatheris deceas for his L's buriall expenses quhairoff duill clothes to myself, wyf, bairnes and servandis my brief and service to my landis in Aberdine with my expensis at that Parliament twa thousand markis.
- Item*, for my new infetment tailzie and unione holden of his Maj. and my expensis at that journey and at the parliament yairoff ane thousand pound.
- Item*, within this three or foure yeires at sundrie veagis to the south quhilk my brother compellit me to mak before his M's counsall and sessione before My lord my father's deceis and thereafter seising my writtes and richtes fra Lethentie yat I onelie obtenit be decreits of Law qulk veages and expensis cost me the soume of twa thousand markis as both freindis and sick as was in companie with me knaus.
- Item*, For me haill byggings mesouns fies lyme ironwork timber work glass stoness and uther plenishing the soume of ane thousand pounds for the bigging of Putachie.
- Item*, to sindrie servandis and at dyvers tymes for passing to Edinr. as agents at waiting on my men of law—and actiones persuit against me be the Mr. of Elphinstone and utheris with sum gold to my men of law at everie tyme yis twa yeiris past, ane hundrethe pound.
- Item*, To George Forbes of Kinmukis brother and bairns four hundred markis quhilk I was awand to him for ane journey south and two hundrethe markis for twa dozzen of wanescot ane gryt girnall with burdis fermes and uther plenishing of my ludging in Aberdene.¹
- Item*, five hundrethe markis quhilk my wyf gaif be sicht of ye baillzies and discret men of Aberdine quhy pryssit ye same for sick plenishing to my Ludgeing as culd not be wanted sic as beding, naprie, wessels, slopis, panis, potts and sic uther thinges as ye particular compt will schaw.
- Item*, Gifin to ye Bischopp off Aberdine for ane affirmatioun of ye Landis of Towie of clat fiftie markis.
- Item*, Gifin to Tomas Davidstone for the last yeiris maill of his house in Aberdene, fourtie libs.
- Item*, gifin to ye principalls of ye colledge in auld Aberdine for four yeiris teynd of ye land of Glengardyne—III scoir sax pounds.
- Item*, sin Martimas last yat I was compellit to pas to Edinr. be the Maister of Elphinstone persuit in law my lady Sinclairs and Lethentie's charges in passing their, remaining and returning with defence and persuit in law and satisfaction of my men of law and uthers, two thousand markis and 1^e markis.

¹ See Appendix, page 137.

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- Item*, the reformationne and biging of my Ludging in Aberdine, with all expenses maid thereon of lyme friestones rockstones timber iron yet and windows out of Leithe Messounes and wrichtis fies sene Sept. last till the Julie thair-after with ye glassing and kaissing of windows and uther plinishing extendis to twa thousand merkis.
- Item*, To the Maister of Elphinstone for his decreit ane thousand markis.
Soume of ye haill above written fyftie thrie thousand thertie ane mk.
- Item*, further ye last yeir fourscoir and saxtine yeiris passand to Edinr. anent my affairis in law and being trublit and wardit be the tumult qulk was betwixt his Majestie and ye kirk, spendit in ye Castill of Edinr. and uther necessaris advis ye soume of ane thousand lib in three monthes Dec. 1595 Januar and februar. 1595/6.
- Item*, In ye monthe of August 1596 yairafter for mareage of my docter Jean with ye young Laird of Earinsyd, contrakit for ye soume of 4 thousand markis off quhilk soume thair was payit at mertimas yeir thairefter twa thousand markis and uther twa thousand at ye witsunday yairafter 1598 yeiris.
- Item*, for clothes to my two eldest docteris and my sone Arthure and myself again ye brydill, ane thousand markis.
- Item*, that same yeir for ane gray horse, to myself V^e merkis ane uther horse and thrie hundrethe markis for ane horse to my sone Arthure.
- Item*, gifen for confirmation of my new Infeftment new compositione and passing of all ye seills to ye Pryor of Blantyr ane thousand lib wt my awin expenses be resoune I maid ane special tailzie to my airs maill lauchfullie gotten, quilkis failzand to my foure brotheris aires maill lawefullie gottin.
- Item*, For my sone Arthouris ryding south wt ye merques of huntlie 1599 three hundreth markis.
- Item*, anent my South passing at mertimas (1599) for reductione of ye laird of Esilmouth's perambulation quhilk he obtenit against ye landis of Allathen quhairon I have obtainit decreit of reduction—my expensis and men of law as also my actione against Lethentie cost me ane thousand merkis.
- Item*, at Mertimas in fourscoir XIX yeiris passand to Edinr. and my sone Arthure withe me to contract mariage with ye maister Elphinstone daughter be advyse of freinds bothe of ye sowthe and northe yat veage V^e markis.
- Item*, y^r efter in februar last ye fyft day yairof (1600) passand south accompanit with freinds to Edinr. quhair my sone's mareage was completit and to ye merchant for my sone's clothis and awin, four thousand markis with ane thousand markis for my awin sonnes and servands expensis at yat jurney.
Suma off ye Liveing wadsett presently for fyftei ane thousand mark III scoir and ten markis in anno 1600 ye 22 September. Suma of ye Last soume XVI thousand VI marks in februar—so bothe ye soumes extends to III scoir VIII thousand VI^e thertie ane mark quof mair nor LI thousand markes and III scoir and ten was on obligations and payit."

This is a remarkably interesting paper, as it shows, what is nowhere else chronicled, that John, 8th Lord Forbes, when Master of Forbes, was very careful of his eldest son by his Catholic wife, William, the first Brother Archangel, in Brussels. This was while he was a soldier in Parma's army of

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Spain and before entering the convent at Ghent ; and two separate guardians or attendants were provided by his father for him, and debts paid.

Further, the poor Master of Forbes after his struggles with the Earl of Huntly, his imprisonment by him and his subsequent troubles in divorcing his first wife, seems to have had a great many other legal worries, which took him frequently to Edinburgh, and to have, moreover, been for some considerable time banished from Scotland (" to France and uther countries "). This sojourn would appear to have lasted for over two years and to have been followed by various other journeys " south," at the instance of his brother, James of Lethentie, who will be found giving trouble in the next generation.

The thousand pounds spent on building the old house of Putachie is an interesting item, likewise the amount spent in building and furnishing his lodging in Aberdeen. Trouble with the Master of Elphinstone seems to have been solved by marrying Lord Forbes' third son, Arthur, afterwards 10th Lord, to Elphinstone's second daughter, Jean, February 5th, 1600, at which date this somewhat pathetic chronicle of debts, etc., ceases.

A very interesting reference to John, Lord Forbes' second son by Margaret Gordon also occurs in the unpublished *State Papers*.

Robert Bowes, writing to Burghley on November 30th, 1593, says—

" The King as I hear, acknowledges that Mr. James Gordon, the Jesuit (*this was the Uncle of Brother Archangel, to whom he says he owed his conversion to the Catholic Faith*) William Gordon, Huntly's brother (*a brother of the last named*) with some others have passed away into Flanders,—But it is confidently asserted that all the young gentlemen are sent to the schools. I am informed that one of Gordon of Abergeldy's sons, and one Harvey (towards Erroll) [*sic*] are amongst them, and that Lord Forbes eldest son, whom Huntly long before this time hath enticed and privily conveyed from his father, is in their company. I have advertised Lord Forbes thereof, but he thinks that before this they had put his son into some monastery. Therefore he purposes to provide that his inheritance come to his younger son."

From the same source comes the following cryptic information :

" Instructions by William Crichton to John Myreton," 1593.

(This John Myreton or Mortoun, a priest and a Jesuit, was imprisoned in the Tolbooth. He came from Rotterdam, and was directed to Mr. James Gordon, to obey instructions in " comforting Catholics in the north.")

" The Maister of Forbes, that the King's Majestie and his father and the Erle of Huntlie writ to the Archduk to have him, for the weill and peace of the country, that they twa nobil howsis enter nocht in wair, with the trubles of the haill country and perditione and ruine of his mother."

This probably refers to the occasion, mentioned in the life of John, second Brother Archangel, when some agents of his father came out of

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Scotland and endeavoured to induce him to return with them; his only answer being that he would retire to some other convent more secluded; they then laid plans to kidnap him, which were frustrated by the action of the abbot in sending him to another Capuchin convent.

There is certainly no doubt that John, 8th Lord Forbes, did not *intend* that his Catholic son should succeed him and executed a deed which he believed ensured that the next Lord Forbes should be Arthur, his eldest son by his second wife. Until recently this arrangement was always considered to have taken place, Arthur was known as the 9th Lord and the last holder but one as the 19th, but the compilers of the *New Scots Peerage* took a different view and John was inserted as 9th Lord. (See p. 138.)

In writing direct to Queen Elizabeth, Robert Bowes alludes to Arthur as "Master of Forbes," he having been so constituted by his father's act. This was on *January 2nd, 1592-93*, after the death of William, the eldest son, showing that John, who had recently, as seen above, gone to Flanders and been received "into religion" was definitely disinherited. Queen Elizabeth's accredited agents did not lie to her with impunity.

It should be repeated that all these quotations are made from *unpublished* state papers now in the Record Office.

After the death of his father, John, 8th Lord, seems to have had some difficulty in establishing his title.

When the house of Druminnor was burnt and sacked after Tillicangus in 1571, numbers of the old family charters and other papers were destroyed by the Gordons. This fact was always recognized, and eleven years later the king granted a comprehensive charter covering many of the lost ones,

"To William Lord Forbes and to John, Master.

"Charter with seal from King James the VI in the 15 year, 1582.

"James, be the Grace of God King of Scottis to our trusty and Well beloved cousin of the barony and lands which have been in continued possession of his family in times past the memory of man."

It was also John, 8th Lord, who at the time of his succession, produced the first charter of the lands of Forbes to Duncan de Forbes, of 1271-72, previously quoted, and this was seen and verified by Sir John Skene, the Clerk Register, in 1593-94. "John Lord Forbes for verification of the ancientie of his house," etc. (see Preliminary Chapter, p. 14), and the other from Thomas, Earl of Mar previous to 1300.

The two documents are in a late 16th century hand, i.e. of 1593. The John, "Lord" Forbes, to whom the second charter was granted, was the son of Duncan; he defended Urquhart Castle and was not himself a Lord, but a Laird and an ancestor of the 1st Lord.

John, 8th Lord, had a great deal of trouble over his estate, and as early as 1565 he got the new charter from his brother-in-law, the 5th Huntly, confirming the lands held from him, as it was felt that the forfeiture of the

THE HOUSE OF FORBES

4th Earl might have invalidated all claims held through him. It will be remembered that the 7th Lord had a charter from Queen Mary stating that the lands in 1563 were to be held direct from the Crown, Huntly's overlordship being void through his forfeiture. (Appendix to last chapter.)

The few remaining years of Lord Forbes' life seem to have been more peaceful and his credit with the Government to have been quite restored.

[63] On March 18th, 1604, he received a Commission under the Royal Signet and sign manual "to our trusty cousing John Lord Forbes for apprehending all suspect of theft within the sheriffdom of Aberdeen and for punishing them if found guilty. On the narrative that thair ar divers personis culpabill, suspect and committers of thift, resettters of thift, Imputteris and outputteris of Thift daylie hantand and repairand within the boundis of our scherifdom of Aberdene qlkis are fugitive fra our lawes or utherwayes be the negligence and oursyght of our Sheriff and utheris ordiner Judges of our said sherifdom, remain unpunishit."

In 1605 John Forbes and his wife gave a lease of the Mill of Forbes.

He died June 29th, 1606, at Putachie and was buried at Kearn. He was survived by his second wife, one son of the first marriage and two of the second. He was in his 60th year and several of his younger brothers and sisters were still alive. Arthur, Master of Forbes, at once assumed the title.

To recapitulate the details given on pp. III-III6 :—

The family of the 8th Lord Forbes¹ was :

by his first wife, Margaret Gordon,

William, born 1563 died 1592. A Capuchin monk.

Jean, married William Comyn.

Isobel, died unmarried.

Margaret, married first George Sinclair of Dunbeath, and secondly Claud Hamilton.

John, born 1570 died 1606. A Capuchin monk, and for five weeks the 9th Lord Forbes.

by his second wife, Janet Seton :

Arthur, 10th Lord Forbes, born 1581 died 1641.

David of Putachie, died unmarried.

Katherine, married William Gordon of Rothiemay.²

¹ In "an account of the Scottish nobilitie" of date 1602 his family is thus described, "John, Lord Forbes, married George Erle of Huntly's dafter, and by her had sons, now Jesuits and Capusians in Flanders. After, married Seton's dafter, Lord of Touch, widow of Sir John Balendin, and by her hath soons and dafters." (*Grampian Club*, pub. 1873.)

² Katharine Gordon's husband was killed in 1630 (see page 173), but her son appears to have embraced the Royalist cause and to have been of some distinction, for in Cromwell's curiously-named "Act of Grace" of 1658, whereby he "desires that the people of Scotland be made equal sharers with those of England in the present settlement of peace and liberty," and then proceeds to impose enormous fines on all the nobility of the North, "the Laird of Rothiemay, Gordon" appears in the distinguished company as mulcted in the sum of £500 sterling.

JOHN, 8TH LORD FORBES—APPENDIX

APPENDIX FOR JOHN, 8TH LORD FORBES.

CHARTER OF SMYTHSTON.

[49] " *To John, 8th Lord, at the age of 26, when Master of Forbes. 1 Martii 1568.* Carta per Georgium Comitem ab Huntlye, facta dilecto suo Joanni Magistro de forbes filio et heredi apparenti Willelmi domino de Forbes, de Terris de Smythtounne, Nocht, New Mardrum, fynglenny, Twa forrestis, mytes, Coldrane, Kirkny jacentibus in dominio de Huntlye olim Strabogy infra vicecomitatum de Abirdene In alba firma In vitali reddito pro vita dicti magistri et heredibus masculis post obitum ejus durante termino 21 annorum.

Testibus Magistro Duncano Forbes de Monymusk, Joanne Forbes de Cluny, Joanne Carnegy de Kynard, milite. Roberto Lesley de Ardirsheit et Magistro Joanne Kennedy, notario publico. Jacobo forbes de fichuchill, ballivo."

(Signed by Huntly—seal gone.)

P. 113. COMMISSION IN THE NAME OF THE FIVE-YEAR-OLD KING JAMES TO THE MASTER OF FORBES. 1571.

" We and our richt trestie cusigne Johnee erle of Mar, Lord Erskin, etc. Regent to us, our realme and leiges, Understanding that we have laitlie maid and constitut Johne Maister of forbes our lieutenant within certain boundis of our north countrie as the commission thereupon at length beris. Quhilk can nocht be putt to dew executioun without sumpteous charges and expens And we being of mynd thatt he be supportit to that effect Be yis presents with awise and consent of our said derrest regent, makes constitutes and ordanes ye said Jhone, Master of forbes and his substitutis our werie lauchfull undoutitt and irrevocable commissioneris, chalmerlanes, factores and procurators to ye effect underwretin Gevand, grantand and committand to thame our full frie plane power generall and special command, express bidding and charge To ask, crave, resave, intromit and uptak all and sundrie ye twa pairt teinds, fructes, renttis, emolimenttis, casualteis and dewities quhatsoever pertenet or yt may pertene to ye bischoprick of Aberdene Of all yeiris and termes bygane restand awand unpayit and sicklyke yeirlie and termlic in tyme cumming during the space following Commanding therefor the tennents fewaris and occupearis of ye Kirkis and landis of ye said bischoprick and uthers addittit in payment of ye twa partis of ye teindis and fructis yrof.

" To answer and obey of ye samen to ye sd Mr. of forbes and his substitutes And to compose transact and aggrie wt. yame thereanent Acquittances and dischairgis upoun ye ressait yrof to give qwlk sall be als sufficient as we or our said Derrest regent haid given ye samen our selffis And gif neid beis to call and persue yairfoir And to yt effect procurators and substitutes to make and substitute And generally all uther thingis to do exerce and use concerning ye office of chalmerlain Ordanis alsua the lordis of our counsale to give and direct our lettres in ye four formes to caus ye said maister and his substitutes to anseritt and obeyit of ye teinds and fructes above wretin this presents sua lang as ye said maister of forbes usis or sal happen to use ye office of our lieutenandrie

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" At ye leist induring our will, Butt (without) revocatioun to stand in effect and indure. Gevin under our signet and subscrivit be our said derrist regent At Leyth ye nynt day of november the yeir of god Jm V^e LXXI yeiris
" And of our regne ye fyft yeir."

(Regent's signature torn off.)

KING'S LETTER, 1578 (REPRODUCED).

[65] " Traist Cousing, We greit you weill, The time of our appointit parliament approaching at the tenth day of July next, it is thocht expedient that the order of our said Parliament and matters that necessarily are to be intreated thairin, sall be considered of aforehand. To the effect that when the parliament cumis, Things may proceed with the greater expedition and quietness and with uniform comfort of myndis amongs our estates. For which purpose we have not only requiritt our Counsel to be present here the tenth day of June next to come, but alsua would have some others of our estates, for the better information and resolution in the weightie causes that are to be proposit concerning us and the publick weill and quietness of our realm and every estate therof in particular. And thairfore We effectuauly require you, That ye fail not to be their but the said tenth day of June, that be the presence and good advyse This matters may be advisedly considered and deliberat upon according to the gravitie thereof and furtherance of our service. As ye wyssh the welfare thairof and will do us good pleasure. Thus We committ yow to God. At our Castle of Striveling ye 29 day of May 1578. James R."

endorsed " To our Traist Cousing the Master of Forbes."

The following decree of the young king ensued very rapidly upon the one given in the last chapter (page 105)—

On 6th July 1582, various personal feuds between the Gordons and the Forbes were nominally settled by the *Privy Council* " James be the Grace of God King of Scottis Odman and ourman commonlie chosin be our rycht traist cousing George Erle of Huntlie ¹ with assent of John Gordoune of Lochinvar and Patrick Gordoune of Auchindoune (*Huntly's uncle*) of the ane part, and our traist cousing William Lord Forbes and Johne Maister of Forbes his sone and appearant heir for the other part. The said parties havand submitted all quarrellis, deadlie feuds and causes debatable als well criminal as civil that has fallen out and happenit betwixt them, sence the first day of September the yeir of God jm V^e LXXI yeirs " (*that is just before the granting of the power to John, Master of Forbes, to uplift a portion of the rents of the Bishopric of Aberdeen, which grant led to the battles of Tillieangus and Craibstone etc.*).

" We therefoir, efter consideration of the said report and different decretes and with advys of certain of our counsals, we haf callit to us, pronounce that the same Jhone, Maister of Forbes and his complices being with him at the tyme of the slauchter of umquhil George Gordon of Geich sall within the space of fourtie days do sic honouris, suffrage and homage for the said slauchter as we sall prescryve and appoint unto the said Erle of Huntlie as chief to the said umquhile

¹ The 6th Earl, grandson of the Earl killed at Corrichie.

The first thing that I have to say
 is that I am very glad to hear of
 your health and that you are
 well and happy. I have been
 thinking of you very much and
 wondering how you are getting on.
 I hope you are still in the
 same good health and that you
 are still enjoying your life.
 I have been very busy lately
 with my work and with my
 family, but I have managed to
 find some time to write to you.
 I hope you will excuse my
 long silence and that you will
 still be well and happy.
 I have been thinking of you
 very much and wondering how
 you are getting on. I hope you
 are still in the same good
 health and that you are still
 enjoying your life. I have been
 very busy lately with my work
 and with my family, but I have
 managed to find some time to
 write to you. I hope you will
 excuse my long silence and that
 you will still be well and happy.
 I have been thinking of you
 very much and wondering how
 you are getting on. I hope you
 are still in the same good
 health and that you are still
 enjoying your life. I have been
 very busy lately with my work
 and with my family, but I have
 managed to find some time to
 write to you. I hope you will
 excuse my long silence and that
 you will still be well and happy.

James R.

LETTER FROM KING JAMES VI TO JOHN, MASTER OF FORBES, 1578.
 (See page 132.)

JOHN, 8TH LORD FORBES—APPENDIX

Laird of Geich and to his fader-brother and successour and sic of his barnes as sall happen to be present for the tyme and also sall pay to the wyf, dochter, kyn and friendes of the said umquhyll Laird of Geich and umquhyll Patrick Gordoun his servaund the sum of four thousand pundis money of the realm within ane yeir and a day to be distribuit amangis them at the sicht of the Erle of Huntlie quha sall procure ane sufficient letter of slanis thairfoir subscrivet be him self and the wiff, dochter and friendes of the said umquhyll Laird of Geich.

“ And alsu we decerne that the said Lord and Maister of Forbes, thair freindis and defenderis, sa mony as hes infeftmentis and uther richtis proceeding from the Erle of Huntlie’s predecessoris or his fader-brother of ony part or portion of the landis and baronys of Keig and Monymusk sall peaceablie bruik and possess the same according to their infeftments and rychtis And for the hail remanent of the saidis landis of Keig and Monymusk occupit be the saidis Lord and Maister of Forbes, be thair selfis their freinds, men, tennentes and servandis, We decern them to flit and remoif thairfrom with the mylnis and pertinentes thairof, as being lauchfullie warnit befor the Fest of Witsunday last bypast, And to suffer the said Erle of Huntlie and his saidis fader-brother and uther freynds having richt to enter thairto and peaceably to bruik and joiss the same as thair heritage at thair plesour in tyme cuming—And assolveis the said Lord and Maister of Forbes for the violent occupacioun thairoff in the yeir of God j^mVc. threscoir and saxtein yeirs (1576) to the space of sax yeiris bigane or thereby And mair attour we decern the said Erle of Huntlie, umquhyle Adam Gordoun of Auchindoun and all utheris of the sirname of Gordoun, kyn, freindis, allies and servandes and partakariss with his said umquhill fader and the said umquhill Adam etc. to be assolyit of all actions, caussis, slauchteris mutilationes spulyeis and utheres offences done be the Gordounes againis the said Forbeses—And as to the moveable gear and uther wrangis and injuris specificit in the claimes gevin and persewit be the said Erle and his freindis etc. contrair the said Lord and Maister of Forbes and their kyn—we assolve the said Lord and Maister and their frynds simpliciter thairfra and decern them quite thairof in all tyme cuming We ordane the said Erle of Huntlie to accept the said Lord and Maister of Forbes and thair kin etc. to live in freindschip, kyndnes and gud nychtbourheid thairefter as gif the saidis trublis deidlie feuds and controversies had never occurrit.

“ In witness of the quhilk thing we togidder with sic of our privy consale as underscrivitt being callit to us for thair avis in the premisses, has subscribit the same with our handis at Perth ”

James Rex
Arrane

James, Lord of Doune
Gourie

Montros

(The above decision of the king and Council did at least settle the vexed question of the disputed church lands and prevent further recriminations over the slaughter of Gight, or the Master of Forbes’ imprisonment, even if the “friendship, kindness and good neighbourhood” so much desired, did not prove very permanent.)

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SUMMONS OF TREASON WHICH INCLUDED THE MASTER OF FORBES, 20 AUG. 1584.

"Acta Parl Jacobi VI

"XX DIE AUGUSTI, A.D. M.D. LXXXIV.

"THE QUHILK DAY MR. DAVID MARGILL OF NESBET ADVOCAT TO O^R SOUERANE LORD PRODUCIT ANE SUMMONDIS OF TRESSOUN DEWLIE EXECUT AND INDORSIT AGANIS ARCHIBALD erle of ANGUS JOHNE erle of MAR dame Agnes DRUMMOND countess of Mar his spous/dame Annabill Murray countess of Mar his mother Mr. thomas Iyoune of . . . DEUKEY Mr. of GLAMES dame Agnes Gray ladie home his spous, dame Margaret Iyoune countess of Cassil . . . and uthers.

"JAMES AND GEORGE DOWGLASSES THAIR SONIS JAMES DOWGLAS OF TODHOILLIS JOHNE DOWGLAS OF GLASPENN WILLIAM DOWGLAS OF BONCLE. DOWGLAS HIS SONE AND APPERAND AIR, ROBERT DOWGLAS YOUNGER OF LOCHLEVIN LAURENCE Mr. of OLIEPHANT *Johne Mr. of Forbes* PATRICK DRUMMOND APPERAND OF CARNOCK JOHNE LEVINGSTOUN YOUNGER OF DUNNYPACE and many others ANENT THE POYNTIS CONTENIT IN THE SUMMONDIS OF TRESSOUN, QUHOME THE ESTATIS OF PARLIAMENT ORDANIT TO RETEIR TO THAIR LUGEINGIS . . . TO REMANE q^{ll} THE MORNE AT AUCHT HOURIS AND THAY THAN TO COMPEIR BEFOIR THE KINGIS MAIESTIE . . . AND LORDIS OF ARTICLES TO ANSWER TO THE SAID SUMMUNDIS."

Obviously after *this* date, the Master of Forbes went abroad.

The next document given notes one attempt made in the year 1589 to live peaceably with the family of Lord Huntly, but Lord Forbes' own paper of 1600 (page 125) shows that the attempt was not very successful.

"1589. The artikles and desiris of the maister of forbes and his family, with the Erle of Huntly. [57]

"*First*, notwithstanding of ye gryt trubles and skaythe sustenit be ye Maister of forbes and his frindis yis lang tyme past yat yei remit ye samen frelie for ye honest and sure favour of my lord his frinds and dependaris in tyme cuming, be reasone yair forbearis strwit [*sic*] my lords house in all tymes past lyk as themselves are willing to do.

"*Item* for ye Maister of Forbes awin repossessing to sic roums as himself was in possession, if he will onlie crave present repossessing wt ane suretie of my lord huntlie's yat upon his guid occatioun making, he sall haf ferder rycht with halfe ane yeir be sycht of ye erll of eroll and ye laird of bolquhain and gif only hes securitie can be craifit lat yr lop and ony discreit friends juge.

"*Item* As for Joⁿ forbes of fynzeauch he onlie craives present repossessing according to his rycht gifin be my lord already with fyve yeires tak, after ye redemption for ye auld dewtie, as his forbearis payit befor.

"*Item*. Robert forbes desyris present repossessing withe sic ryt as my lord of erroll and ye Lard of bolquhain sall think guid.

"*Item* the gudman of corsinday desyris present repossessing of his roumes be ane heritabill feu and he yairfoir to bind himself and his airis for heritabill service to my lord and his airis exceptand ye autoritie of his chief and ye guid deid yairfoir to be modereit be discreit frindis presentlie heir.

"*Item* the guidman of Towie and house of Bruxis desyris my lordis promeis to agrie frindlie ye actionis and differences betwixt ye maister of Elphinstoun and

JOHN, 8TH LORD FORBES—APPENDIX

yame—lykewayis yat my lord ye lard of Auchindoir nor nain or yair friendis assist ye Mr. of Elphinstoun and yat my lord and ye lard of Auchindoun gif yair hand wrytes yairon as lykewayis nane of my lordis frindis nor dependants tak nor mell wt. ony possession of the said houses."

Moysie's Memoirs (Bannatyne Club) gives the first notice of John Lord Forbes (except the appointment to the Privy Council, of John as Lord Forbes).

"The nynt of Januar, (1593/4), the King come out of Sterling to the convention "Upone the morne come to Edinburgh, being the X day.

"Theare come werie few of the Nobilletie or estaites to that convention. The names of thame that war present folowis, to wit, the duck of Lennox,¹ my lord Hammiltoun, the erle of Mar, the lord Lyndsay, Leivingftoun, Settoun and *Forbes*, with a few number of barronis, and sum of the burrows.

"It was concludit at this convention, that in respect the papist lordis had refusit to embrace the act of abolitioun, and keipit not the dye is appoynted for satisfaction of the kirk, and depairting of the country, that the said act of abolitioun suld be null and declaired ineffectuall, and that ane parliament sould be proclamit to the XXij day of Apryle next, and they summoned to abyde tryell of theare conspiracies, and gif they failyeid in compearance, to be forfeald."

This convention appointed a meeting of parliament for the following April, 1594, and meantime "his Majestie electit ane counsell of the nobilitie present to quhais judgement and deliberatioun he promittit to stand in all his actionis." Huntly, Angus and Erroll being for the present kept in ward, in the respective castles of St. Andrews, Edinburgh and Glasgow. In the year 1596 Lord Forbes appeared again, according to the gossiping David Moysie, as going upon a special embassy to the king from Mr. Robert Bruce and the other ministers of Edinburgh "with sum artickelis to his Majestie to be answerit." Mr. Robert Bruce was afterwards conspicuous as the *one* minister who stood out firmly in refusing to give public thanks from the pulpit for the saving of the king's life in the mysterious affair at Perth, in 1600, known as "the Gowrie mystery." Mr. Bruce put awkward questions to the king concerning the deaths of the Ruthven brothers.

On this occasion Lord Forbes therefore appears *against* the King. Some of those who went with him on the mission to the king were persuaded by Stewart of Ochiltree,² to withdraw and "Upone the morn the noblemen and barronis in this quarrel separat thameselves and pase hameward," and Lord Forbes seems not to have suffered for his action. (Page 127.)

The references to Lord Forbes in Moysie's diary make it increasingly difficult to decide when he could have been "two years banishit."

But the date of the last event given, being subsequent, according to Moysie, to the baptism of Princess Elizabeth, November 28th, 1596, and to the preaching of a seditious sermon by Mr. Walter Balkanquholle [*sic*] in

¹ Ludovick, son of Esmé Stuart, Sieur d'Aubigny.

² King James' favourite of the moment, afterwards created Earl of Arran—he was brother-in-law to John Knox.

THE HOUSE OF FORBES

St. Giles in December, 1596, was probably early in 1597, leaving, as already surmised, two years after the battle of Glenlivet, during which the time of banishment may be placed.

In the Warrender papers there is a memorial of certain heads and articles "to be advysit and satisfiet anent the 'three afflicted Earles,'¹ speciallie the Erle of Huntlie"—May 22nd, 1597.

"Ministers are to be appointit for reconciling the Erle of Huntlie with my Lord Forbes, the laird of Drum and young Findrat, betwix the Erle of Errol and Ludquharne, betwix Gicht and Benholme, Clunie and Corsindae, Balquhane and William Stewart etc." (*Scot. Hist. Soc.*, Vol. II., 323.)

WRITS PRODUCED BY JOHN, 8TH LORD FORBES, IN 1593-94, TO SHOW THE ANTIQUITY OF HIS FAMILY, AS WELL AS THE TWO EARLY DOCUMENTS. (See page 14.)

"Compeirit Lord Forbes and productit ane Chertour of David 2. Kyng of Scotland Anno Regni sui 35, vero Christi 1364 confirmand ane Chertour maid be Thomas Earll of Mar, Jhoanni Forbes Domins ejusdem, of the Lands of Meikle Fintery 28. Martij Anno 1412.

"Item Ane lettre in Inglich maid be William Chalmer Dane, Nobilman, Sir Alexander Forbes of that Ilk quherby he desponit the Ward of the aire of Adam Balcormo 15. Feb. Anno. 1419.

"Item Ane Inventar in Inglich maid be ane Nobil Lord Sir Alexander Forbes of that Ilk, on the ane pairt and Thome Luthais on the uther pairt Anno. 1423.

"Item Ane Chertour maid be Alexander Stewart Earle of Mar and Garioch confirmand ane Chertour made be Gulielmus de Lindisay, Dominus de Rossie, Domino Alexandro de Forbes, Domino de ejusdem of the lands of Auffurd 1423.

"Item Ane letter written in Inglich be Andrew of Futhais to ane nobill Lord, Sir Alexander Forbes, Knight, Lord of that Ilk quherby the said Andrew upgave freelie to the said Nobil Lord the Free Tenement of the Land of Futhais 12. December Anno Christi 1436 Anno vero ultimo Jacobi Primi Scotorum Regis.

"Item Ane Chertour maid be him Jhoanni de Forbes Domino ejusdem of the Lands of Edinbranchie and Craigbe 15. Nove^m Anno 1474 Jacobi. 3."

On February 22nd, 1594, he had a charter from King James of the lands and barony of Forbes and Aufurd.

"This proceeds upon his own resignation and contains a Novo-Damus and erection of the Burgh of Barony of Aufurd. The charter also mentions that 'the Wrytes of the family were dispersed and destroyed in the time of the Intestine wars and particularly by the deadly enmity betwixt the Earl of Huntly and William Lord Forbes and his friends.'"

Re, Lord Forbes "ludging" or residence in the town of Aberdeen. There is no family tradition as to where this was situated, but an otherwise unexplained "Charter of sale" among the Forbes papers of date September 24th, 1397, headed "Anent ye lugeing of Aberdeen," points to a

¹ Huntly, Erroll and Angus.

house in the Shiprow having been at that date bought from James Melville of Gilcomston.

Appendix [11] "Anent ye lugeing of Abirden."

"Carta venditionis per Jacobum de Maravilla dominum de Gylcomiston et Elizabetham sponsam suam facta Roberto filio David Burgensi de Aberdeen de per-ticata terræ edificata jacente infra dictum burgum in vico navium una cum annuo reddito duorum solidorum de Terra, Fergusii Ade. Reddendo Regi servitia debita et consueta, et Thomæ Kymbti sex solidos et octo denarios annuatim. Testibus Roberto de Rane Priori predicatorum domus de Aberden Willielmo filio Andræ Ade de Bonyne, Johanne filio Andræ, Willelmo Blinceil, Ricardo de Lobnane. Willelmo filio Glenny, Ricardo fychet. Waltero, filio Johannis, Ade filio Thomæ, Andræ filio Petri, Stephane Wode, et Willelmo de Innerowry Burgensibus de Aberden."

This charter shows how surnames were just beginning to be used. Blinsell, Lobban, Glenny and Wood have a familiar sound, while Fychet defies identification with any later family.

A further light is thrown on this matter by an Instrument found among the Tolquhon charters whereby Arthur, Lord Forbes, resigns in favour of his eldest son, Alexander, Master of Forbes, a tenement in the Shiprow of Aberdeen, formerly belonging to David of Putachie, the said Lord's brother, December 23rd, 1618. The 8th Lord, therefore, left it to his fourth son, at whose death it returned to the family estate.

(The 8th Lord Forbes seems to have been on friendly terms with the town of Aberdeen, for an order of the Town Council directs that wood to the value of 100 merks be furnished to him for his "lodging.")

An account of Aberdeen as it was last century, says, "The New Market was then called *Putachie Side*, and at that date led back to the West end of Shiprow. Several examples of the old-fashioned houses which fringed the base of St. Katharine's Hill may still be seen towards the lower end of the Shiprow, and in the closes entering from the north side of that street. The town residence of Lord Forbes stood at the west foot of the hill, probably on the north side of the ground now forming the site of the New Market. The old name of Castle Forbes was Putachie, and it was probably for this circumstance that the road at the west of St. Katharine's Hill got the name of Putachie Side." See also *Aberdeen in Bygone Days*, R. Anderson, 1910.

¹ At Putachie 29 Ma. 1605. [64]
p. 130. "John Ld Forbes and Dame Janet Setoun Lady Forbes sets to Thomas Sherriff and John Lane the mill of Forbes and to Janet Walker during the time of her widowhood for 24 bolls of meal suff stuffs to be paid bet. Martimas and Lammas yearly.
wit Arthur Master of Forbes ¹ John L. Forbes.
Janet Setoun."

¹The son of his second marriage, who he intended should succeed him, and who received a Reversion in 1602 as "Master of Forbes," [52]