



STIRLING, FROM ABBEY CRAIG.

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BY EX-PROVOST YELLOWLEES.

THIS view presents us with the aspect of Stirling towards the north, and sloping towards the east. In the foreground and to the extreme right we get two glimpses of the river Forth, meandering through its grassy haughs—Westhaugh, Winchelhaugh, Bridgehaugh, Queenshaugh—and affording excellent facilities for salmon fishing.

From the present point of view we may see in three directions how well Stirling is situated as a railway centre. The line that runs parallel to the nearest bend of the river takes passengers direct to Alloa, Dunfermline, and the coast towns of Fife; between the two visible banks of the river we see part of the main Caledonian Railway to Callander, Oban, Perth, and the north; while beyond the further link we can trace part of a line running direct to Loch Lomond, and connecting the Forth and the Clyde *via* Balloch.

The large vacant space shown to the north of the Castle, and within the precincts of the burgh, is occupied by the Gowan Hills, and is unenclosed Crown property. These hills may be truly described as classic ground. The eminence nearest us is the ancient Motehill—the place of assembly, of judgment, and of execution in days of yore. Here the Beheading Stone is set, and it was here that the Duke of Argyle, in 1715, previous to the battle of Sheriffmuir, placed a battery to command and guard the bridge.

On another eminence nearer the Castle there may still be seen, inscribed on a rock, initials construed to bear that the Second Roman Legion kept watch at that spot. The ridge nearest the Castle, and separated from it only by the Pass of Ballangeich, formed a suitable platform for the warlike engines, hurling stones javelins and leaden balls, with which Edward I. bombarded the Castle in 1304. On the same ridge, in January, 1746, the Highlanders under Prince Charlie planted one of the batteries with which they unsuccessfully attempted to capture the Castle after they had secured the surrender of the town.

The built-on portion of the town shown in this view is for the most part that occupied by the industrial and middle classes, but near the sky-line some of the more important buildings may

be discerned, such as the High School, the Military Prison, Greyfriars' Church, and, dominating all, the Castle Buildings, which form the crowning glory of the ancient and royal Burgh.

The background visible beyond the town presents the uplands of Touch, Touchadam, and Sauchie—these abound in scenes of commanding extent and rare beauty.

The following excellent description of the scenery is taken from the late Rev. Dr. Rogers' "A Week at Bridge of Allan" (second edition):—"Here we feel elevated, as if by enchantment, in the midst of a fairy scene, a panorama of the most ennobling character. Around is a level plain, watered by the silvery courses of the river's Forth, Teith, and Allan, and guarded at almost every point by stupendous mountains. For miles on every side, every thing is picturesque, beautiful, or sublime, there being not one single feature to mar the loveliness of the landscape or detract from the poetry of the scene. Westward, in the plain, rise the insulated crags of Stirling Rock and Craigforth; the former surmounted by its venerable castle and ancient town, the latter clad by a profusion of foliage, adorning its modern mansion; while beyond are the lovely park of Blair-Drummond, and the dark heathy fronts of the hills of Touch and Kippen. North-westward, the mighty crests of the mist-capped Grampians ascend in the distance, while in front, at the western termination of the Ochils, is snugly ensconced Bridge of Allan village; the princely mansion of Keir and house of Westerton resting on the shelving ground rising from the plain. On the north, in an elevated district, is Sheriffmuir's dark battlefield, and immediately beneath it, the sloping park of Airthrey, with its castle, lake, and summer-house. In the distant east rise the Saline Hills; onwards from the left stretches the rugged range of the Ochils, with the villages of Blair-Logie, Menstry, Alva, and Tillicoultry at its base, and Alva Park on its sloping front; while embosomed in trees, in the midst of the plain, are the snug mansions of Powis and Gogar, and the venerable house of Manor. On the south, seemingly in a peninsula formed by the winding of the Forth, are the ruins of Cambuskenneth Abbey, and a little farther distant several structures, each of which is worthy of the examination of the tourist."