

## The Rose-a-Lyndsaye.

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The Lord of Buchan in armour bright  
On the other hand he shall be.

—*Percy's Reliques.*

**T**HE charming little ballad here presented refers to the “light and gay Lindsays”—a family ancient beyond remembrance, and born of princesses—who took part with the Earls of Moray and Douglas when the latter raided the north of England in 1383. It was written by William Forsyth—born at Turriff in 1818, died at Aberdeen in 1879—a man of fourfold repute as a student, journalist, surgeon, and poet.

Lord Lindsay has inserted it in the family history-book, and it must therefore have been composed before the year 1858. The “seven fair flowers” of the ballads are the famous “children of Lindsay,” a patriarchal title, under which were included the Sire de Lindsay or Sir James, Lord of Crawford and Buchan, and the other contemporary knights of that noble family, whom Froissart, the historian, celebrates and describes as the Sire’s *six frères, tous chevaliers*—six brethren, cavaliers each one of them. These brethren were Sir David of Glenesk, afterwards first Earl of Crawford, the accomplished soldier and amiable knight who, in 1390, overcame Lord Welles, an English warrior of great renown, in a celebrated passage-at-arms on London Bridge; his younger brother, Sir Alexander the Lindsaye, who, with his cousin, Sir Thomas Erskine, and “a joly company,” defeated the English near Inverkeithing; the valiant Sir William of the Byres; Sir

Alexander of Wauchopdale ; Sir John of Dunrod, whom Holinshead designates "a near friend" of the heroic Douglas of Otterburn ; and Sir William of Rossie in Fife, consort of Matilda who, from the fact of her receiving an annuity in 1434-1452, *ex concessione regis*—out of the sovereign's allowance, is supposed to have been a daughter, legitimate or illegitimate, of the Royal House of Stuart.

The ballad does not tell us the name of the Rose-a-Lyndsaye. She cannot have been the Lord of Crawford's mother, Egidia Stuart, sister of Robert II., for she was married in 1365 to Sir Hugh Eglinton ; nor Elizabeth, daughter of that king, who, after the events which the song commemorates, espoused the brave and courteous hero of London Bridge. She may have been, however, either Sir James's *dilecta soror*, *Domina Elisabethe*—his much-loved sister, the Lady Elizabeth or Isabelle, or "the beautiful Euphemia de Lindsay," sister of Sir William of Rossie and the forsaken bride-elect of the Duke of Rothesay.

There are seven fair flowers in yon green wood  
 On a bush in the woods o' Lyndsaye ;  
 There are seven braw flowers and a'e bonnie bud,  
 Oh ! the bonniest flower in Lyndsaye.  
 An' weel I luv the bonnie, bonnie rose—  
 The bonnie, bonnie Rose-a-Lyndsaye ;  
 An' I'll big my bower o' the forest boughs,  
 An' I'll dee in the green woods o' Lyndsaye.

There are jewels upon her snawy briest,  
 An' her hair is wreathed wi' garlan's,  
 An' a cord o' gowd hangs round her waist,  
 An' her shoon are sewed wi' pearlyns.  
 An', oh, but she is the bonnie, bonnie rose—  
 She's the gentle Rose-a-Lyndsaye ;  
 An' I'll big my bower where my blossom grows,  
 An' I'll dee in the green woods o' Lyndsaye.

Her face is like the evenin' lake  
 That the birch or the willow fringes,  
 Whase peace the wild winds canna break,  
 Or but its beauty changes.

An' she is aye my bonnie, bonnie rose,  
 She's the bonnie young Rose-a-Lyndsaye ;  
 An' a'e blink o' her e'e wad be dearer to me  
 Than the wale o' the lands o' Lyndsaye.

Her voice is like the gentle lute  
 When minstrel tales are tellin',  
 An' ever saftly steps her fute  
 Like autumn leaves a-fallin'.  
 An, oh, she's the rose, the bonnie, bonnie rose,  
 She's the snaw-white Rose-a-Lyndsaye ;  
 An' I'll kiss her steps at the gloamin' close  
 Through the flowery woods o' Lyndsaye.

Oh, seven brave sons has the gude Lord James,  
 Their worth I downa gainsay ;  
 For Scotsmen ken they are gallant men,  
 The children o' the Lyndsaye ;  
 An' proud are they o' their bonnie, bonnie rose,  
 O' the fair young Rose-a-Lyndsaye ;  
 But pride for love makes friends like foes  
 An' woe in the green woods o' Lyndsaye.

But should I weep when I daurna woo,  
 An' the land in sic disorder ?  
 My arm is strong, my heart is true,  
 An' the Percy's over the border ;  
 Then, fare ye weel, my bonnie, bonnie rose,  
 An' blest be the woods o' Lyndsaye ;  
 I'll gild my spurs i' the bluid o' her foes,  
 And come back to the Rose-a-Lyndsaye.

