

## THE LORDS OF GALLOWAY.

GALLOWAY is an extensive district, forming the south-west corner of Scotland. Originally and for a considerable period, it included parts of Ayrshire and Dumfries-shire; but, during many ages past, it has been identified simply and strictly with the shire of Wigton and the stewartry of Kirkcudbright. The name, though thoroughly interwoven with history, and incurably familiar to literary and oral usage, designates no political jurisdiction, and is unsanctioned by the strict or civil nomenclature of the country. The present geographical distribution of the district comprises three parts,—Upper Galloway, which includes the northern or mountainous sections of Wigtonshire and Kirkcudbrightshire,—Lower Galloway, which includes the southern or more champaign sections of both civil divisions, east of Lucebay,—and the Rinnis of Galloway, consisting of the peninsula south-west of Lucebay and Loch Ryan.

During the 5th century, the tract of country which afterwards got the name of Galloway was inhabited by the immediate posterity of the British tribes, the Selgovæ, the Novantes, and the Damnii, a feeble and a divided people. The Anglo-Saxons rather overran than colonized the territory; yet, during the 6th and 7th centuries, they sufficiently mixed

with the British tribes to maintain a rude ascendancy. When the Northumbrian dynasty became extinct at the close of the 8th century, the Saxon settlers, while they retained their possessions, were denuded of their power. Colonists from the Irish coast could, in such circumstances, make an easy descent upon the country, and effectually overawe its inhabitants. Whatever may have been the defeats of earlier adventurers, the Irish Cruithne, at the end of the 8th century, made a successful settlement within the Rinns. Fresh swarms followed from the Irish hive, during the 9th and 10th centuries; and were strengthened by settlements of the kindred Scots of Kintire, who passed the frith of Clyde in their curraghs to the Rinns and Carrick and Kyle; while the Scandinavian Sea-kings domineered over the seas and shores of the neighbouring regions. These Gaelic settlers, in their progress of colonization and promptitude of contest, acquired, in the low Latinity of the times, the appellation of Galli, which was thought to be a fair representative of their proper name Gael. Hence, as we may learn from Malmesbury, “*Galli veteribus Gallwaliæ, non Franci dicti.*” As Scotland and England took their names respectively from the Scots and the Angles, so the territory of the Gael or Galli, came speedily to be called, by chroniclers, Gallwalia, Gallawidia, Gallawgaia, Gallwadia, Gallwegia, Gallway, Galloway. In the effluxion of three centuries, the name came to be applied loosely to the entire peninsula between the Solway and the Clyde, including Annandale in the south-east, and most of Ayrshire in the north-west. The Gael, or Galli, or Irish settlers, in the meanwhile, completely occupied the ample extent of the country; mingling everywhere with the enfeebled Britons, whose speech they understood, and amalgamating with the still fewer and feebler Saxons, whose language, as it was unknown to them, they constantly rejected; and they hence imposed upon the district a topographical nomenclature which corresponds much more closely with

that of Ireland, than with that of other districts of Scotland. Notwithstanding the naval enterprises of the northmen, the incursions of the Northumbrian Danes, and not a few internal distractions among conflicting tribes, the settlers retained, in their new possessions, the various rights of a distinct people, and preserved the agreeable independence of their own customs and laws.

During the earlier parts of the obscure history of the district, we hear seldom, and in uncertain terms, of the rulers or "lords of Galloway," who claimed and exercised power within the invidious limits of a contested jurisdiction. But, in 973, Jacob, lord of Galloway, was one of the eight reguli who met Edgar at Chester. Fergus, another lord of Galloway, and the most potent feudatory subject of the Scottish crown in the 12th century, was a frequent witness to the charters of David I., and, supposing Malcolm IV. to be a pusillanimous character, denied his authority and appropriated his revenues. Malcolm, enraged by Fergus' infidelity and daring, marched into his territory, and, though twice repulsed and discomfited by him, eventually, in 1160, overpowered him, obliging him to resign his lordship and possessions to his sons, and to retire to the abbey of Holyrood, far gone in the disease of corroding humiliation and a broken heart. Fergus was son-in-law to Henry I., and, dying next year, left behind him a family who afterwards ranked high among the nobles of Scotland and of England.

His two sons, Uchtred and Gilbert, who, like the lords of other Gaelic districts, owed obedience to the Scottish kings, followed William the Lion, in 1174, into England; but they no sooner saw him taken captive, than, at the head of their naked, nimble, impatient, and rapacious clans, they returned to their native wilds, broke out into insurrection, attacked and demolished the royal castles, and murdered the Anglo-Normans who had settled among their mountains. No sooner had they established their independence of the Scotish go-

vernment, than they began to dispute about pre-eminence and possessions. Gilbert, on the 22d of September, 1174, attacked Uchtred, while residing in his father's house in Loch-Fergus; and, having overpowered him, ordered the infliction upon him of a barbarous death. William the Lion, having, in 1175, made submission to the English king, and regained his liberty, invaded Galloway, subdued Gilbert, and purchased his subsequent peacefulness of conduct by giving him full possession of Carrick in Ayrshire. From this Gilbert sprang, in the third generation, Marjory, Countess of Carrick, in her own right, the wife, in 1271, of Robert de Bruce, and the mother, in 1274, of the royal Bruce, the restorer of the Scottish monarchy. Gilbert dying the 1st of January, 1184-5, Roland, the son of the murdered Uchtred, seized the favourable moment of his uncle's death, to attack and disperse his faction, and to claim possession of all Galloway as his own inheritance; and he, at the same time, overcame Gilcolm, a potent freebooter who had settled in the district, and carried his depredations into Lothian. Making successful resistance to Henry II. of England, who claimed to be superior of Scotland, he was at last, on the condition of surrendering Carrick to his nephew Duncan, the son of Gilbert, confirmed in the lordship of all Galloway. On the restoration of the national independence, Roland obtained the office of constable of Scotland, and was witness of many royal charters. In December, 1200, Alan, his eldest son, succeeded him in his lordship, and afterwards excelled him in power and fame; but, in 1234, he died without a legitimate male heir, and left his prerogatives and possessions to become objects of division and feud.

Alexander II. wishing to invest Elena, the eldest daughter of Alan, with the lordship, the Gallowegians tumultuously demanded it to be conferred on Thomas, his illegitimate son; but, though they writhed under the chains imposed on them, and twice became insurgent, they were

compelled to receive as their superior, Roger de Quincey, the husband of Elena. Alexander II.'s enforcing the rights of Alan's daughters, and, at the head of an army, breaking down the spirit of insurrection, was the introduction to the epoch of granting charters for the holding of lands, and of landholders giving leases to tenants, and of the security of property and the cultivation of the arts of husbandry. In 1254, Alexander Comyn, Earl of Buchan, in right of his wife, succeeded De Quincey, and laid the foundation of his family's extensive connexion with Galloway, till they were overthrown and expatriated by Bruce, and of their introducing to the district the important office of justiciary, which in some measure changed the very nature of its jurisprudence.

The Gallowegians, during the wars of the succession, naturally sided with the Comyns and the Baliols, and speedily shared in their disasters. When John Baliol was obliged to resign his dependent crown, Edward I. considered Galloway as his own; and he immediately appointed over it a governor and a justiciary, disposed of its ecclesiastical benefices, and obliged the sheriffs and bailiffs to account for the rents and profits of their bailiwicks in his exchequer at Berwick. In 1298, Wallace is said to have marched into the west "to chastise the men of Galloway, who had espoused the party of the Comyns, and supported the pretensions of the English;" and a field in the farm of Borland, above the village of Minigaff, still bears the name of Wallace's camp. During his campaign of 1300, Edward I. marched from Carlisle through Dumfries-shire into Galloway; and though opposed first by the remonstrances, and next by the warlike demonstrations of the people, he overran the whole of the low country from the Nith to the Cree, pushed forward a detachment to Wigton, and compelled the inhabitants to submit to his yoke. In 1306, Sir Christopher Seton, the brother-in-law of Bruce, being captured in the castle of

Loch Urr, was carried to Dumfries, and put to death on the gallows-hill of the town. In 1307, Robert I. marched into Galloway, and wasted the country, the people having refused to repair to his standard; but he was obliged speedily to retire. In the following year, Edward Bruce, the King's brother, invaded the district, defeated the chiefs in a pitched battle near the Dee, overpowered the English commander, reduced the several fortlets, and at length subdued the entire territory. Galloway was immediately conferred on him by the King, as a reward of his gallantry; and when he was slain in the battle of Dundalk, in 1318, it reverted to the Crown.

When Edward Baliol entered Scotland to renew the pretensions of his father, Galloway became again the wretched theatre of domestic war. In 1334, assisted and accompanied by Edward III., he made his way through this district into the territories north of it, and laid them waste as far as to Glasgow. In 1346, in consequence of the defeat and capture of David II. at the battle of Durham, he regained possession of his patrimonial estates, and resided in Buittle castle, the ancient seat of his family. In 1347, heading a levy of Gallowegians, and aided by an English force, he invaded Lanarkshire and Lothian, and made Scotland feel that the power which had become enthroned in Galloway was a scourge and a curse, rather than an instrument of protection. In 1353, Sir William Douglas overran Baliol's territories, and compelled M'Dowal, the hereditary enemy of the Bruces, to change sides in politics.

After the restoration of David II. and the expulsion of Baliol, Archibald Douglas, the Grim, obtained, in 1369, Eastern and Middle Galloway, or Kirkcudbrightshire, in a grant from the Crown, and, less than two years after, Western Galloway, or Wigtonshire, by negotiation from Thomas Fleming, Earl of Wigton. This illegitimate but most ambitious son of the celebrated Sir James Douglas obtained, at

the death of his father, in 1388, on the field of Otterburn, the high honours and the original estates of the house of Douglas; and now, while holding in addition the superiority of all Galloway, became the most powerful as well as the most oppressive subject of Scotland. On an islet in the Dee, surmounting the site of an ancient fortlet, the residence of former lords of Galloway, rose at his bidding a castle called the Thrieve, whence the radiations of his own and his successors' tyranny shot, with a blighting and a withering influence, athwart the surface of the whole country. His usurpation seems to have struck with indignation all who contemplated its magnitude and effects.

The power of the Douglases was so enormous, and so exorbitantly plied, as to grind into powder the resistance and the influence of the subordinate chiefs. About the middle of the 15th century, William, one of the line of Earls, upon some occasion of pique with Sir Patrick M'Lellan of Bombie, the sheriff of Galloway, besieged and captured him in his stronghold of Raeberry, carried him off to Thrieve castle, and there ignominiously hanged him as though he had been a common felon. The Douglases experienced some reverses, and were more than once sharply chastised in their own persons, yet seemed unable to learn, no matter how thoroughly inculcated, a single lesson of moderation; and they continued to oppress the Gallowegians, to disturb the whole country, and even to overawe and defy the Crown, till their turbulence and treasons ended in their forfeiture. James the ninth and last Earl, and all his numerous relations, ran, in 1453, into rebellion; and, two years afterwards, were adjudged by parliament, and stripped of their immense possessions.

Galloway now awoke from the haggard dreams of a nightmare which had been thrown from its breast, and found itself in a state of annexation to the Crown. James II. immediately marched into the district, and was everywhere received with acclamations of welcome; and he garrisoned

the castle of Thriewe with his own troops, and, from a seat of insufferable oppression, converted it into a source of energizing influence upon the law.