

The number of the slain, however, was very great; and multitudes of the fugitives—it is said nearly fifteen hundred—were drowned in a vain attempt to ford the Tweed. Amongst those who fell, besides Swinton and Gordon, were Sir John Levingston of Calendar, Sir Alexander Ramsay of Dalhousie, Sir Roger Gordon, Sir Walter Scott, and Sir Walter Sinclair, with many other knights and esquires, whose followers mostly perished with their masters. Besides the leaders, Douglas and Lord Murdoch, eighty knights were taken prisoners, and a crowd of esquires and pages, whose names and numbers are not ascertained. Among the first were three French knights, Sir Piers de Essars, Sir James de Helsey, and Sir John Darni;¹ Sir Robert Erskine of Alva, Lord Montgomery, Sir James Douglas Master of Dalkeith, Sir William Abernethy of Salton, Sir John Stewart of Lorn, Sir John Seton, Sir George Lesly of Rothes, Sir Adam Forrester of Corstorfin, Sir Walter Bickerton of Luffness, Sir Robert Stewart of Durisdeer, Sir William Sinclair of Hermanston, Sir Alexander Home of Dunglas, Sir Patrick Dunbar of Bele, Sir Robert Logan of Restalrig, Sir Lawrence Ramsay, Sir Helias Kinmont, Sir John Ker, and Fergus Macdowall of Galloway, with many others whose names have not been ascertained.²

The fatal result of this day completely proved the dreadful power of the English bowmen; for there is not a doubt that the battle was entirely gained by

¹ Parliamentary History of England, vol. ii. p. 71.

² Fordun a Goodal, vol. ii. pp. 434, 435.

the archers. Walsingham even goes so far as to say, that neither earl, knight, nor squire, ever handled their weapons, or came into action, but remained idle spectators of the total destruction of the Scottish host; nor does there seem any good reason to question the correctness of this fact, although, after the Scots were broken, the English knights and horsemen would, of course, join in the pursuit. It was in every way a most decisive and bloody defeat, occasioned by the military incapacity of Douglas, whose pride was probably too great to take advice, and his judgment and experience in war too confined to render it unnecessary. Hotspur might now rejoice that the shame of Otterburn was effectually defaced; and March, if he could be so base as to enjoy the triumph, must have been amply satiated with revenge; for his rival, Douglas, was defeated, cruelly wounded, and a captive.¹

The battle was fought on the day of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, being the 14th September, in the year 1402; and the moment that the news of the defeat was carried to Westminster, the King of England directed his letters to the Earl of Northumberland, with his son Henry Percy, and also to the Earl of March, commanding them, for certain urgent causes, not to admit to ransom any of their Scottish prisoners, of whatever rank or station, or to suffer them to be at liberty under any parole or pre-

¹ Fordun a Goodal, vol. ii. pp. 434, 435. Rymer, *Fœdera*, vol. ix. p. 26. Walsingham, p. 366. *Extracta ex Chronicis Scotiæ*, MS. p. 250.

text, until they should receive further instructions upon the subject. To this order, which was highly displeasing to the pride of the Percies, as it went to deprive them of an acknowledged feudal right which belonged to the simplest esquire, the monarch subjoined his pious thanks to God for so signal a victory, and to his faithful barons for their bravery and success; but he commanded them to notify his orders regarding the prisoners to all who had fought at Homildon, concluding with an assurance, that he had no intention of ultimately depriving any of his liege subjects of their undoubted rights in the persons and property of their prisoners; a declaration which would not be readily believed.¹ If Henry thus defeated the objects, which the victory might have secured to him, by his precipitancy and imprudence, Hotspur stained it by an act of cruelty and injustice. Teviotdale, it may perhaps be remembered, after having remained in the partial possession of the English for a long period, under Edward the Third, had at last been entirely wrested from them by the bravery of the Douglasses; and as the Percies had obtained very large grants of land in this district, upon which many fierce contests had taken place, their final expulsion from the country they called their own, was peculiarly irritating. It happened, that amongst the prisoners was Sir William Stewart of Forrest, a knight of Teviotdale, who was a boy at the time the district "was Anglicised," and, like many others, had been compelled to embrace a virtual allegiance to England, by a

¹ Rymer, *Fœdera*, vol. viii. p. 278.

