

THE County of Ross and Cromarty stretches on the mainland from East to West about 78 miles from sea to sea, and from North to South, from Breabag Tarsuinn in the North to Loch Loine in the South, about 71 miles. The beauty and diversity of the scenery is unrivalled, and it contains within its boundaries abundant materials for archæological, geological, and botanical study. Its place-names—Pictish, Gaelic, Norse and English—are of great interest to philologists, showing the changes produced by the various languages on one another. At least one third of the mainland population is bilingual, while in the Island of Lewis, which is included in the County, 90 per cent. are speaking Gaelic and English. Taking the County as a whole, slightly over 50 per cent. of the population at the 1921 census were Gaelic speaking. The earliest historical reference to the area now comprising the County of Ross was made by Ptolemy of Alexandria, the famous Greek geographer, writing about 130 A.D. He gave the names of three tribes occupying this area—the Smerti, in the basins of the Oykel and Carron rivers, and Dornoch Firth; the Dekantai, on the East Coast, from the Beauly river northwards; and the Karnonaki, on the West Coast.

Lewis, or rather the Long Island, is mentioned considerably earlier, being, without much doubt, the Dumna of Pliny the elder, A.D. 23-79, who gives as

the source of his information Pytheas of Massilia, whose famous voyage round Britain took place about 320 B.C. The name Dumna is also given by Ptolemy, and is without doubt a Celtic word. The mainland tribal names are also Celtic.

The County of Ross, Gaelic *Ros*, is either from Gaelic *ros*, a promontory, or possibly from a Pictish word similar to Welsh *rhos*, a moor, as the Picts who occupied Ross in historic times spoke a Celtic language more akin to Welsh than Gaelic. They are the earliest inhabitants of whom we have any contemporary written record apart from the tribal names of Ptolemy.

By the Romans they were called Picti; by the Norse, Pettr; by the Gaelic-speaking Scots, Cruithne; and by the Welsh-speaking people, Pryden. They were probably a mixed race, combining a considerable Celtic strain with non-Aryan blood. They spoke a Celtic language much more akin to British, that is Welsh, than to Gaelic, and their names, Cruthen and Pryden, simply mean a Briton in Gaelic and Welsh respectively, but they must have been known by the name Pect as well, judging from the evidence of their name in old English and old Lowland Scots.

At what date Gaelic, the language of the Gael or Scots, came to be spoken first in Ross is impossible to say, but, from the evidence of the Norsemen, the Scots Gael were in possession of at least the West Coast of Ross by the end of the eighth century (793). Fifty years later (842) Kenneth MacAlpin, ruler or king of the Scots of Dalriada, Argyll, succeeded to the throne of Pictland, and Scotland, both north and south of the Forth, gradually became one kingdom. This event would hasten the spread of the Gaelic language, and possibly the end of the tenth century would have seen Gaelic spoken throughout Ross, as the end of the eleventh century saw Gaelic spoken throughout Scotland and even in the North of England.

Norse Settlements were formed in various parts of the Western Seaboard of Ross, and particularly in the Island of Lewis, during the ninth century.

The Lews remained under Norse influence for about 450 years, with the result that about 80 per cent. of its place-names are Norse.

English, no doubt, was introduced into Ross during the twelfth century by the sons and great-grandsons of the Saxon Princess, Margaret, wife of Malcolm III. (*Ceann Mor*). To-day the English language is rapidly supplanting Gaelic. It has made greater strides during the past sixty years than it made during the previous six centuries.

The Eastern Seaboard of the County is very fertile, well wooded, and comparatively level, but the remaining portion, consisting of at least three-fourths of the whole, is heather-clad moorland and hill, denuded crags, lofty mountains and majestic bens, interspersed with sheltered corries and narrow straths and glens, containing good pasturage. Its lochs are abundant and varied, and its rivers and burns of every mood from placid to torrential, while amongst its many Falls are those of Glomach in Kintail, which are believed to be the highest in Britain. This waterfall has an unbroken descent of about 350 feet.

The traveller from the South, coming by road or rail, enters Ross-shire about one mile to the north of Beaully Station, traverses it for some 330 yards, then continues in Inverness-shire till the bridge over the railway at Muir of Ord Station is passed.

In the fields to the right of the train as it clears the gradient at Windhill, about a mile and a half north of Beaully, are two Standing Stones, "Na clachan seasaidh." They are situated some 200 yards apart, one on each side of the main road, and are unhewn monoliths, without carving or inscription, which are probably the remains of a stone circle. Coinneach Odhar, the Brahan Seer, prophesied concerning them, "And the raven will drink his three fills of the blood of the Gael from the Stone of Finn."

MUIR OF ORD TO DINGWALL.

Immediately after passing the standing stones and emerging from underneath a roadway bridge, the train enters a flat stretch, and on the right is seen a level field where the Muir of Ord Markets were formerly held. Established in 1820, it was, till some 35 years ago, after Falkirk, the principal live stock market in Scotland, but it has fallen completely into abeyance, through the competition of the Auction Marts, and not a hoof is stood there now. On the left at this point is seen a gently sloping hillside dotted with crofters' houses. This is a thoroughly typical illustration of a crofting community of the better class. The wooded height above is called Dunmore, "The Big Fort," and the remains of a considerable number of ancient forts and old field works are to be seen here and also in Farley, as the continuation of the ridge to the west is called. Some of these field works were erected by the Marquis of Montrose a few days after the Battle of Auldearn in 1645.

About 500 yards to the south of Muir of Ord Station the railway line passes within 30 yards of an ancient fort called Castlehill, represented by a mound in the form of a flat eclipse measuring 84 feet long and 64 feet wide, surrounded by a 20 feet wide ditch. Immediately adjoining Muir of Ord Station is the village of Tarradale, from *Tarfrdalr*, Norse, "Bulldale," called in Gaelic *Càrn-a'-Chlàrsair*, "the Harper's Cairn." There are two banks, a post office, and two hotels. Golf is played on the old Market Stance, which is laid out as an eighteen-hole course.

Muir of Ord is the Junction for the Black Isle Railway, with terminus at Fortrose. On a knoll near the railway station a cairn has been erected as a War Memorial for the Parish of Urray.

About half a mile to the east of the village of Tarradale, adjoining the road leading to Kessock Ferry, is the Chapel of Cille Chrìosd, Gilchrist, which, according to tradition, was burnt by the Macdonalds of Glengarry while full of their enemies, the Mackenzies, and not a soul escaped, man, woman, or child. This account, put on record repeatedly with full details of the atrocity, has no foundation in fact. The church was not burnt, but twenty-one houses

were, four men were killed, and nine horses and some sixty head of cattle "lifted" in 1603. In the sentence of forfeiture of his estates passed by the Privy Council on Allan Macdonald of Lundy, leader of the Macdonalds on that occasion, the above is the extent of damage specified. The building is now the mausoleum of the Mackenzies of Ord.

Proceeding northwards by road or rail, in the immediate vicinity rich cultivated lands are passed, beautifully wooded, while in the background, almost due north, appears Ben Wyvis, towering to a height of 3429 feet. Westwards, in the distance, appear the Scatwell and Strathconon Hills, nearer hand the Fairbairn Hills, and at their base, silhouetted against a dark wooded background, the grey mass of the Old Tower of Fairbairn stands out conspicuously. A former stronghold of the Clan Mackenzie, commanding a wide view of hill and dale, it is a good specimen of the sixteenth century square keep, and is in a very fair state of preservation.

About midway between Muir of Ord and Conon villages, looking towards the left, a magnificent view is obtained of the Conon and Orrin Valleys, which here debouche into one another.

From a point here I have seen on a mid-summer's evening a view hard to equal and impossible adequately to describe. In the immediate foreground were the rich contrasting greens of wood and field, while stretching far up the valleys and hugging the hillside slopes were the same greens softened and blended in the quivering haze. Glimpses were obtained of the meandering rivers gleaming through the trees, with the purple hills for background. In the centre of the picture, almost resting on the hill tops, was the blood-red setting sun.

To the west of the main road, and a mile or so south of Conon village, stands Conan House, the seat of Sir Hector Mackenzie of Gairloch, Bart. About 260 yards to the north-west of the house is an old burying-ground, still in use, consecrated to St Bride or Brigit of Kildare and Abernethy, 450-525 A.D. In the centre there is a mound, and there seems little reason to doubt that it was also sacred to the still earlier Brigit or Bridhge, a sun goddess, or at least a fire goddess of the Gael. It lies on the bank of the River Conon, and formerly contained a Pre-Reformation Chapel, dedicated to St Bride. Apart from local evidence, this is proved from its being called Logibride (from the Gaelic *Lagaidh-Bride*) in a letter sent by the Pope to the Bishop of Ross in 1256. The name now is Logie-side.

There is no trace of the site of the building now, but I have found some portions of the window tracery among the debris of the fallen enclosure wall of the burying-ground.

When Hugh Miller worked as a mason at Conon Side, about one hundred years ago, the Chapel existed as a ruin, and in "My Schools and Schoolmasters" he relates a traditional story concerning it, which differs considerably from the following version told locally. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries belief in witchcraft was very prevalent, and it was commonly sup-

posed that evilly disposed persons frequently sold themselves, body and soul, to the Devil, in order that he might further their interests on earth. The following story is told of such a person who thus sold his soul. One Autumn day some three hundred years ago, while the harvesters of Lag a' Bhile, a hamlet which stood on the site of Conan House, were busy reaping in the field still known as *Pairc na h-eaglaise* (Church-field), they saw a man in hot haste making for the Ford, which is about one hundred yards further down stream than the burying-ground. From his agitated appearance they concluded that he evidently intended to drown himself. They immediately seized hold of him, and after a strenuous struggle overcame him. In the struggle, however, he somehow revealed the fact that he had sold himself to the Evil One many years previously, and had now to deliver up his soul by drowning. At twelve mid-day that day, in fulfilment of his bond, he had to deliver up his soul to his master at the ford. Determined to save him, and despite his struggles, they bound and carried him to the Chapel. There they shut him in, leaving him, as they hoped, safe under the protection of St Bride. Shortly after, when it was noon, an unearthly voice was heard from the ford crying, "The hour has come but not the man! The hour has come but not the man!" Late in the evening, when they considered the fatal hour sufficiently long passed, they went to relieve him, and found him dead, with his face buried in the water of the font. The wretched man had kept his vow.

At this same ford, in 1481, Angus Og Macdonald of Islay, natural son of the Earl of Ross, at the head of Clan Donald and the Islesmen, defeated with considerable slaughter, the army of James III. under the Earl of Athole. From the particulars given by Hugh Miller, I think this was the ford where he was in danger of being drowned while crossing in a spate, and would have been carried away by the force of the current were it not for the weight of an iron bar he carried on his shoulder.

Like the other Ayrrian nations, the Celts worshipped their rivers and streams, and there is little doubt but that they received human sacrifices. Deprived through the influence of Christianity of their due offerings, the River Spirits were believed to lie in wait, especially at fords, for the unwary, and thus obtain the human lives for which they craved. By degrees the river goddess degenerated into a *baobh*, a female evil spirit, and this survival of paganism is illustrated by the following legend, which is localised at the Urray Ford on the Orrin River. The ford is situated about half-a-mile above the junction of the Orrin with the Conon, and about two miles upstream from the burying-ground. The following is a free translation of the legend as I wrote it in Gaelic a number of years ago:—One evening as night was falling, Big Mackay, the Urray smith, left Arcan for home mounted on a small Highland stallion. When he came to the Urray ford on the Orrin river, he saw what to all appearances was a woman sitting by the roadside at the river bank. As he passed she requested him to carry her over the ford. "Cùileag agam ort thar an sruth," arsa ise. ("You owe me a lift behind you over the stream," she

said.) He agreed, and lifted her up behind him. As they reached mid-stream she clutched his throat and attempted to strangle him. With horror he recollected tales of many individuals who disappeared in the neighbourhood of that ford, leaving no trace. With a supreme effort he unloosed her hold and bound her securely in his plaid. The horse meantime galloped furiously for home, and did not stop till the smithy was reached. There the smith tied her to the anvil, and left her for the night. Next morning the smithy roof was bare to the rafters, not one turf remaining thereon. He inquired how this happened, and she informed him it was the work of her friends, but that they were unable to release her from the anvil. She besought him to set her at liberty, otherwise his smithy roof would be kept uncovered. He replied that he would set her free if she promised that no person of the name of Mackay would ever be drowned in Meig or Orrin. She granted his request, but only if they wore clothes not dyed with *crotal* (lichens gathered from stones). He then released her, and when departing she retorted, "Although you have taken Meig and Orrin from me, you have not taken the Blackwater and Conon from me." The Meig, Orrin, and Blackwater rivers are tributaries of the Conon.

In connection with the above legend, it may be worth while pointing out that a stallion or a dog was believed to assist a human being in an encounter with evil spirits, while a mare or bitch acted quite contrary, turned on her master unless he had sufficient presence of mind to remove his left garter and fasten it on the left foreleg of the animal. This transfer enabled the female animal to assist a human being similar to the male.

There is a story told of a man who, while travelling with an entire horse, met an evil spirit, and fled to the nearest house, leaving the horse to fight the spirit alone. There they struggled till cockcrow, when the spirit fled. The horse then sought his master, and on finding him immediately killed him for having forsaken him in his distress.

The ancient belief in the virtue of iron against the powers of evil is disclosed by the inability of the friends of the *baobh* to release her from the anvil. The custom of nailing, for luck, a cast horse shoe above the doorway no doubt arose as much from the virtue iron had to ward off evil influences as to any phallic symbolism the shoe may possess. It is also noticeable that the *baobh* would not promise that persons wearing *crotal* dyed clothes would not be drowned. There was a belief that persons so clothed sank like a stone. The lichen, being gathered off stones, evidently imparted the properties of a stone to the dye, cloth, and person clad.

Near the hamlet of Arcan is a small cairn or mound called "Carn Arcaidh," perhaps connected with Finn's adversary, "Arcan Dubh." It is situated on the north side of the Orrin river, about a mile to the west of Orrin Bridge.

After this long digression, let us return to our itinerary. About 300 yards from the entrance lodge to Conan House, in the wood on the east of the rail-

way, is an ancient fort, David's Fort. In the form of a trapezium, it measures about 170 feet along the major diagonal and about 140 along the minor. It is surrounded by a well-defined moat and outworks. This fort was very possibly established to guard the ford, already described, near Conon House. There is also on the farm of Riverford the remains of an ancient fort, some 80 feet in diameter, on the west side of the main road at the south end of Conon village, which no doubt at one time guarded the lower fords of the Conon river.

CONON-BRIDGE.

Conon-Bridge village, known in Gaelic as *Drochaid Sguideil*, prettily situated on the banks of the River Conon, is next reached. It is a village of some 300 inhabitants. There is one bank and a good hotel, which is in the hands of the Government, being one of the hotels of the Cromarty Firth State Management District. In the centre of the village stands a granite Celtic cross, erected to the memory of the men of the Parish of Urquhart who fell in the Great War. From Conon village David's Fort and the burying-ground already mentioned are distant slightly over a mile. Kinkell Castle, built in 1614, is also about the same distance. A little over two miles from the village, and about 200 yards from the Free Church Manse of Ferintosh, is "Glascham Maolchaich" (the grey cairn of Maolchaich), consisting of a mound some 160 feet in diameter, surmounted by a stone cairn 64 feet in diameter. Some stones with cupmarks have been found here.

Some two miles further on, between Dunvornie and Culbokie, there are three forts within a radius of three-quarters of a mile. The largest of these, "An Glas Carn Mhor," or "Caistel Guilbhaicdh" (Culbokie Castle), where human remains were found in 1859, is circular, measuring about 140 feet in diameter, and is surrounded by the remains of a ditch.

About a mile due west from "Culbokie Castle" cairn is the farm-house of Coulnagour, near which is seen a small triangular clump of trees, said to mark the site of the murder of St Maelruba, A.D. 640-722, Abbot of Bangor, Ulster, by the Norsemen, but this tradition is doubtful, as the Irish Annalists state that he died at his Monastery of Applecross, aged 80 years 3 months and 9 days. One of the greatest missionaries of the Irish Celtic Church, he founded the Monastery of Applecross A.D. 673. About three-quarters of a mile distant from this wood is the Manse of Urquhart, where Dr John MacDonald, "The Apostle of the North," lived and ministered to the Parish of Urquhart for thirty-six years. He was a great evangelist and a most eloquent preacher. He went on a mission to Ireland in 1827, preaching to the Gaelic-speaking Irish in Gaelic, thus reversing the practice of twelve centuries earlier.

On Findon Burn is a small gorge, which was once believed to be the abode of a *bean shith* (a female fairy). She was on very familiar terms with

a man who lived in the vicinity, and who frequently remained with her for months without being seen or heard of.

The *bean shith* differed from the *baobh* in usually being a kindly spirit, more inclined to fascinate men and lay them under spells than destroy them.

Castle Craig and Kinbeachie Castle are some three miles further on, but we shall describe these in connection with Cromarty.

In the Parish of Urquhart is the estate of Ferintosh, belonging to Mr Forbes of Culloden, which, during the years 1690 to 1785 was exempt from duties of excise on spirits distilled from grain of their own growth. In 1790 the right was purchased by the Government for £21,580. This privilege was granted to Duncan Forbes of Culloden for services rendered to King William and outlays on behalf of the Government during the period of the 1688 Revolution, and also to recompense him for the entire destruction of the property on his estates by the soldiers of Colonel Cannon, who commanded for King James after the death of Graham of Claverhouse, Viscount Dundee. Traces of the foundations of the old distillery and of the village where the workmen lived can still be seen on the uncultivated ground slightly to the east of the Mulchaich cairn.

The word Ferintosh means "Fearann an Tòis'eachd" (the land of the Chief or Thane). It became in 1430 part of the Thanage of Cawdor in Nairnshire, and was until 1889 part of the County of Nairn. In Gaelic Ferintosh is called "An Tòisgheachd," the Thanedom.

The railway crosses the Conon river on a substantial stone bridge, practically a copy of the adjoining bridge carrying the roadway, built in 1807, at a cost of £6000 sterling, by Thomas Telford, the engineer of the Caledonian Canal.

Shortly after crossing the river the railway line skirts, and the main road passes through the village of Maryburgh. The Seaforth Sanatorium, built and munificently endowed by Lord and Lady Seaforth at a cost of some £110,000 can be seen on the left-hand side nestling below the pine wood.

About three-quarters of a mile distant from the village, along the Maryburgh-Ussie Valley road, and 350 yards due south of Ussie farm-house, are several standing stones, known as the "Druids' Stones," but which appear to be the remains of a chambered cairn. At the foot of the larger stone the proverbial pot of gold lies buried.

In Brahan wood at the foot of Brahan rock, and about 60 yards from the main road, at a point some 500 yards east of Brahan North Lodge, and $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Maryburgh, are three large conglomerate boulders called "Garaidh Tholl," which were, and possibly still are, consulted for responses. Two of the boulders lean against one another, forming a natural triangular opening about 7 feet high by 7 feet wide at the base, and averaging 10 feet deep, through which the sick, such as consumptives and epileptics, were passed to be cured. Changlings also were left there. Bannocks of bread were placed as votive offerings at the stones, and if taken overnight the augury was good;

if untouched, the reverse. When fairies stole an unbaptized babe, which evidently they were extremely ready to do unless the child was carefully watched, they substituted an old, withered, peevish, discontented fairy who took the form of a child. This substituted child was called a changling, *Leanabh-sith*. This changeling could be got rid of by various expedients, such as placing it in a large pot over a blazing fire and repeating certain charms. It usually disappeared through the chimney, and the rightful child was found restored.

About two miles distant from the village is Brahan Castle, built by Colin, first Earl of Seaforth, about 1615. It was the seat of the Earls of Seaforth, chiefs of the Clan Mackenzie, but the direct line is now extinct. It was originally battlemented, having a flat roof, but the battlements were removed and a slated Italian type of low pitched roof substituted, and the appearance of the castle completely spoiled.

Continuing our journey northward, slightly over a mile beyond Maryburgh, the Royal Burgh of Dingwall is reached. It is the County Town of Ross and Cromarty. A busy little town of some 2500 inhabitants, but before giving an account of Dingwall we shall give a short description of the Black Isle.



Black Isle from South Kessock Pier

Valentine

Dundee

BLACK ISLE.

As already mentioned, Muir of Ord is the junction of the main line with the Black Isle line. The name Black Isle is comparatively modern. The name by which it was known in the old records was "Ardmeanach," or

"Ardmannach" (the height between), and more rarely "Eddirdail" (between two dales). These old names are very descriptive of its appearance and situation, forming as it does a peninsula about twenty miles long, east to west, and eight miles wide, north to south, consisting of moderately high ground, rising gently from the Beaully, Cromarty, and Moray Firths, by which it is surrounded, except at the west side, some five miles in width, where it joins the mainland. It is rich in prehistoric remains and ancient castles, while the part remaining of Fortrose Cathedral is an excellent example of early Decorated Gothic. In the Cathedral was buried the famous Sir Andrew Moray, who, along with Sir William Wallace, was Commander of the armies of Scotland, 1297, and who, jointly with Wallace, sent, thirty days after the Battle of Stirling Bridge, a letter to the cities of Lubeck and Hamburg that the English having been defeated, their merchants could safely come to Scotland to trade. The Moray or de Moravia family were long connected with the Castle of Ormond, which is situated about a mile and a quarter from the village of Avoch.

The Black Isle is the birthplace of Sir Thomas Urquhart of Cromarty, 1613-60, translator of Rabelais, who is buried in Cullicudden burying-ground, and Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh, 1636-91, founder of the Advocates' Library, now the Scottish National Library, Edinburgh. From his holding the position of Lord Advocate during the killing times of the Covenanters, he earned his epithet, "The Bluidy Mackenzie." He was one of the most cultured men of his age. It is also the birthplace of General Sir Hector Macdonald, 1852-1903, of Omdurman fame.

The district is of particular interest to the geologist in being the birthplace of Hugh Miller, 1802-1856, and Sir Roderick Impey Murchison, 1792-1871, while in the lower old red sandstone formation, which underlies practically the entire peninsula, the fish beds of the Eathie Burn and the huge boulder clay deposits in Rosemarkie Glen are ample materials for exploration and enquiry.

MUIR OF ORD TO FORTROSE.

REDCASTLE.

On leaving Muir of Ord by rail, the first station arrived at is Redcastle, near which are the ancient castles of Redcastle and Kilcoy. Kilcoy Castle, built between 1600-1650, is under half a mile from the station, and is an excellent example of the 16th and 17th century keep, in the Scottish baronial style. It is a simple quadrangular structure with the usual round towers and overhanging angle turrets. After a considerable period of neglect, it was restored about 1890, and is now occupied.

Redcastle is about a mile distant, almost due south, and is said to be one of the oldest inhabited houses in Scotland.

In 1179 William the Lyon, King of Scotland, came to Ross with an army to quell a rebellion in Ardmeanach, and built and fortified the Castles of "Etherdover" and "Dunscath." Etherdover is the ancient name for Redcastle and Dunscath, now Dunskaith, is opposite Cromarty, on the north side of the Sutors. Redcastle has been extended and rebuilt during the ages, and is a plain massive structure, ornamented with the usual Scottish baronial towers and turrets. It is now the property of Mr J. E. B. Baillie of Dochfour. Close at hand is the hamlet of Chapelton, whose inhabitants obtain their water from St Andrew's Well. There possibly was a chapel there dedicated to St Andrew. Here was born in 1694 Eneas Sage, who was minister of Lochcarron from 1726-1774, a man of great physical strength, which he frequently had to use to get some of his parishioners to church when moral suasion failed, and at the Manse of Killcarnan, or Redcastle, was born the Rev. John Kennedy, D.D., 1819-1884, "the prince of Highland preachers," equally eloquent in Gaelic or English, and who was Free Church minister of Dingwall from 1844 till his death in 1884.

About half a mile due north of Kilcoy Castle are two small cairns and a large tumulous in close proximity to one another.

About a mile further along to the north-west, on the summit of the Mull-Buie, is the stone circle, or rather circles, of Cairn Iurnain, as it consists of three concentric circles, 66 ft., 38 ft., and 14 ft. in diameter respectively, possibly named after St Iturnan or Itharnan, who, according to the Chronicle of the Scots, died among the Picts in A.D. 665, and may be buried there. The Parish of Killearnan (Gaelic *Cill-Iurnain*, meaning Iurnain's cell or chapel) takes its name from the *cill* having been founded by or dedicated to him.

ALLANGRANGE.

The next station is Allangrange, and close by are the hut circles at Croftcrunie or Drumnamarg ("the ridge of the merklands"). Due south about a mile and a half are the remains of Pictish huts on Arpaeelie Moor, while about half a mile further to the south is a large cairn, said to mark the site of the Battle of Blarna Coi (Gaelic *Blar na Cuinge*, battle or field of the yoke). Like the battle of Luncarty, there is a tradition that it was decided by the effective use of a plough-yoke as a weapon of offence. The surnames Loban and Logan are said to owe their origin to this battle. A fugitive from the combat saved his life by concealing himself under an overturned *carn-loban* (a light cart, having the sides formed of rods or spars). Thereafter the name Loban or Logan continued to be applied to himself and his descendants.

South-east of Blar na Coi rises the dark mass of Ord Hill (633 feet high), crowned with the remains of a large fort, enclosing nearly three acres, and having extensive vitrification. Near the seashore, a short distance to the north-east of the hill, lies Kilmuir burying-ground, containing stones of considerable age with late Celtic carving.

Near to Allangrange House is St John's Chapel, an old church of the Knights Templars, of which the east end and a small portion of the side walls remain. In the east end is a triplet lancet window.

MUNLOCHY.

We next come to Munloch village, which takes its name from Munloch Bay, at the head of which it stands, ideally situated, fronting the lovely bay. Immediately behind the village is the supposed site of the Palace or Castle of the Bishops of Ross, with St Boniface's Well near by. Due south of Munloch, in the distance is seen the Hill of Craighow (Creag a Chobha, rock of the cave), where Finn, one of the legendary heroes of the Gael, is, with his warrior band, resting on their elbows half asleep, waiting for one more blast, the third and last, to be blown on the magic trumpet in the cave by some individual from the outer world. Twice already has the trumpet been blown, but the terrible aspect of the awakening heroes terrified the intruder, and he hastened away, followed by their despairing cry, "Is miosa dh' fhad na fhuair, is miosa dh' fhad na fhuair" ("Worse left than found, worse left than found"). There, resting on their elbows, they expectantly await another blast, when they will arise and, as is foretold, "will turn the world upside down." This cave was supposed to extend to Loch Lundy, nearly a mile and a half distant.

The water dripping from a well in the roof, at the entrance to the cave, was considered a cure for deafness. The patient lay down and let the drops fall, first into one ear, then into the other. If the formalities were properly performed the patient was believed to be cured.

There is a holy well, called *Tobar Creagag*, near Bennetsfield, above Munloch Bay, which is still visited on the first Sabbath in May, and offerings placed therein for luck, just as the Culloden Well, near Inverness, is still visited, and on the same date.

About two and a half miles beyond Munloch an excellent view can be obtained of Rosehaugh House, beautifully situated on the gentle slope of Rosehaugh Valley. It was almost entirely rebuilt about thirty years ago by the late Mr James Douglas Fletcher. Its architecture is a mixture of Elizabethan and French chateau, and seems rather out of place in the Highlands of Scotland. The former house of Rosehaugh was erected by Sir George Mackenzie, Lord Advocate, already mentioned.

It is said Sir George Mackenzie styled his property Rosehaugh, "The Vale of Roses," from the profusion of roses which grew there, but it is more than likely that the name Rosehaugh (*Ros Abhoch*, the promontory of Avoch) was applied at least to that part of the property jutting out between Munloch Bay and Avoch. The ancient name for Rosehaugh was Pettonochy (*Pit Dhonnachaidh*, Duncan's stead).



Valentine

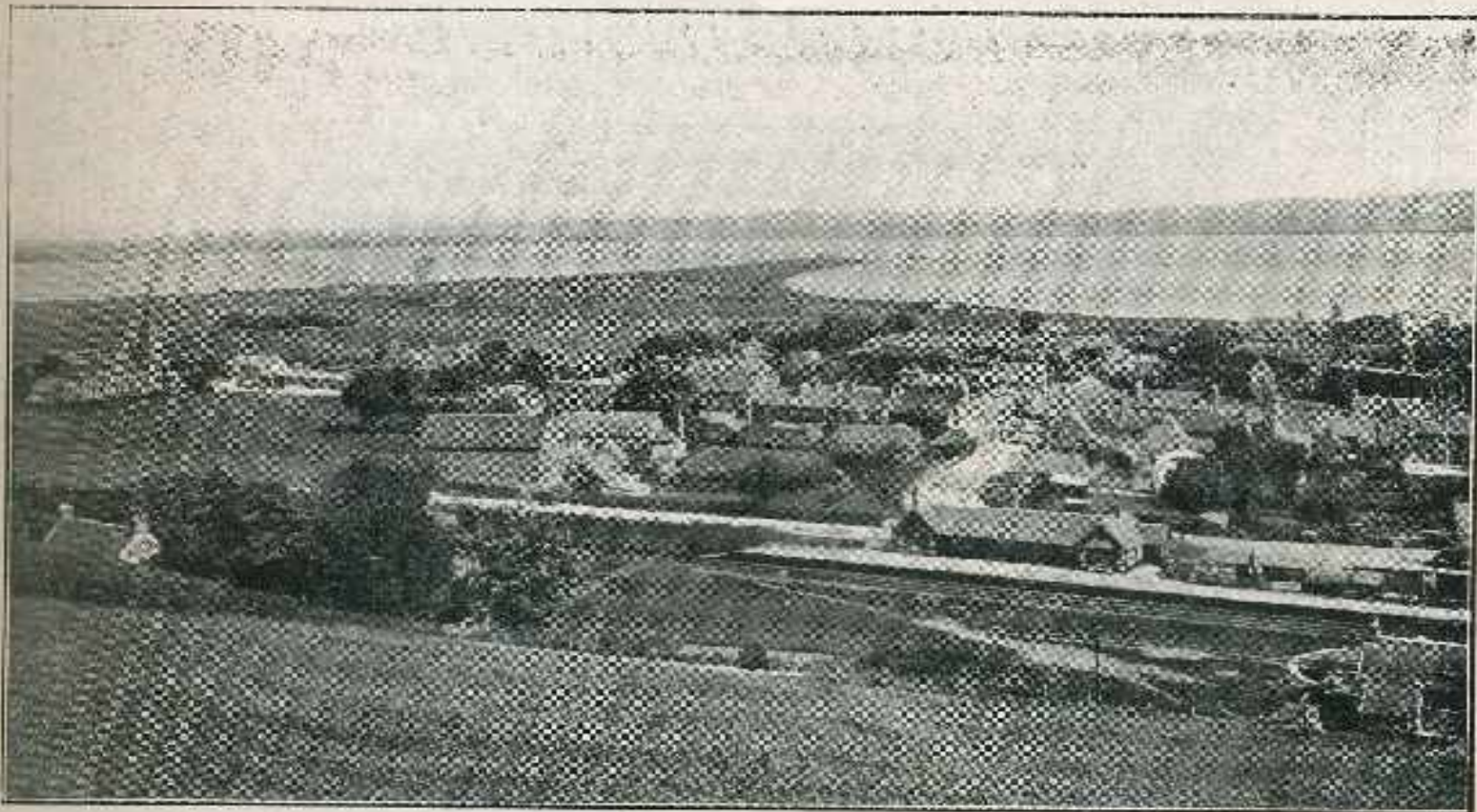
Avoch, Ross and Cromarty

Dundee

AVOCH.

Soon after, we arrive at Avoch, a busy fishing village of 1300 inhabitants. About a mile from the village, on the farm of Arcandeith, is the ruins of the fortalice of Arcandeith, and close by on the same farm is an old quarry where the stones for building Fortrose Cathedral were obtained. About half-way between Avoch and Munlochy, on the north side of Munlochy Bay, on the top of Ormond Hill, near Castletown Point, are the foundations of the Castle of Ormond, occupying a space of 350 feet by 160. This Castle gave the title of Marquis to the Royal House of Stewart. The last to bear the name was Charles I., who was created Duke of Albany, Marquis of Ormond, and Earl of Ross. It was earlier known as the Castle of Avoch, and belonged to the Moray or De Moravia family during the thirteenth and part of the fourteenth centuries. In 1297, during the Scottish Wars of Independence, while Dingwall, Cromarty, Inverness, Urquhart (Glen-Urquhart), and Nairn castles were held by the English, Avoch and Balconie castles were held for the patriotic Scots and Sir William Wallace by Sir Andrew Moray. Sir Andrew Moray or Murray, who was Guardian of Scotland with William Wallace, and Regent of Scotland, 1332, during part of the minority of David II., son of Robert the Bruce—"a Lord of great bounty, of sober and chaste life, wise and upright in council, liberal and generous, devout and charitable, stout, hardy, and of great courage"—ended his days "at his Castle of Avoch, in Ross," where he died about the year 1338, and was buried in the "Cathedral Kirk of Rosemarkyn."

In the fifteenth century the castle was in the possession of the Earls of Ross. On the forfeiture of the Earldom, in 1476, it reverted to the Crown. On the 29th January, 1487, James III. created his second son "Duke of Ross, Marquis of Ormond, and Earl of Edirdal, otherwise called Ardmanache."



Valentine

Fortrose from North

Dundee

FORTROSE.

About a mile beyond Avoch is Fortrose, the terminus of the Black Isle Railway. Along with Rosemarkie, to which it was annexed in 1455 by King James II., it forms the Burgh of Fortrose. In 1590 James VI. created Fortrose a Royal Burgh. In 1592 he ratified the charter granted by James II., and in 1612 he confirmed the charters of both burghs and united them anew under the Provost, Bailies, and Council of Fortrose. The town is situated on a sandy peninsula jutting out into the Moray Firth, fronting a lovely bay. The advent of the railway, with its facilities of access, has increased its importance and trade. There are several good hotels, Bank of Scotland, and Post Office. There is a well-laid-out golf course, sea bathing facilities, well-kept roads, and charming walks. There are Church of Scotland and Episcopal churches. It was formerly called the "Chanonric"—*A' Chananaich* (Gaelic), "Canonry," on account of its being the seat of the Bishop of Ross. The See of Ross was founded by King David I. between the years 1124-28, the first Bishop being Macbeth, "Rosemarkensis Episcopus." The Bishop's seat was originally at Rosemarkie, but about the middle of the thirteenth century the See came to be styled of Ross.

The Cathedral Church of Fortrose stands in the centre of the burgh, in a large open square surrounded by houses. It was dedicated to St Peter and St Boniface. The Diocesan Seal, now used as that of the Burgh, bears the figures of St Peter and St Boniface, with the inscription—"S Capitvli Scm Petri et Bonifacii de Rosmarkin" (The Seal of the Seat of Saints Peter and Boniface of Rosemarkie).

St Boniface, known to the Celtic Church as Curitan, is said to have been sent to Scotland by Pope Gregory II., A.D. 716, during the reign of Nechtan, King of the Picts, to induce the Picts to adopt the usages of the Church of Rome. It is said that he settled at Rosemarkie, where he built a church in which he was afterwards buried. But it is probable that there was an earlier foundation by Mo-Luag between A.D. 562 and A.D. 592.

The date of the Cathedral is supposed to be about A.D. 1330, and the early style of the decorated Gothic architecture conforms thereto. The tomb of the foundress, a Countess of Ross, bears the above date, and it is without doubt part of the original structure. The Cathedral originally consisted of nave, choir, chancel, north-western tower, south aisles or bishops' chapels, and sacristy or chapterhouse. Of these only the aisles and chapterhouse remain. The total length of the original building was about 200 feet, and width of nave about 27 feet. The side aisles at present remaining form a complete small church in themselves, having chancel, with piscina and font, and measuring about 100 feet long. The mouldings are intricate and delicate in detail, and in many parts are as sharp and perfect as when first chiselled, especially those of the piscina, which is an admirable piece of design and workmanship. The aisle roof is of ribbed and grained vaulting similar to that of Melrose Abbey and St Giles's Cathedral.

The Chapterhouse or Sacristy, a rectangular building 45 feet by 12 feet internally, consists of two storeys. The upper part is now used as Council Chambers. The cript is very low in roof and groined.

The Cathedral, on the contemporary evidence of the Minister of Wardlaw (Kirkhill), is said to have been demolished by the Parliamentary troops in 1652 during the rule of Oliver Cromwell, and the material used in building Cromwell's Fort at Inverness, but its dilapidation began soon after the Reformation. In 1572 James VI. granted to his Treasurer, Lord Ruthven, "the hail leid quarwith the Cathedral Kirk of Ross is thickit."

The old bell in the Cathedral spire bears the name of Thomas Tulloch, Bishop of Ross, the date 1460, and a dedication to the Virgin Mary and St Boniface. The Town old hand-bell has the following inscription:—"Preisimus non Amisimus, 1630.—Chanrie de Ros."

ROSEMARKIE.

The distance between the Cathedral at Fortrose and the Parish Church of Rosemarkie is about a mile. As already mentioned, the Church at Rose-



Valentine

Rosemarkie from West

Dundee

markie was either founded by St Mo-Luag or St Boniface. According to the Aberdeen Breviary, Mo-Luag, Bishop and Ab of Lismore, in Lorn, was buried here in 592.

Beside the Church stands an excellent example of early Christian Celtic sculptured stone. The Pictish symbols of the spectacles and mirror are represented, and considerable prominence is given to the cross, the remaining parts being covered with Celtic interlacing and zigzag ornaments of intricate and unusual pattern. The stone was found under the floor of the Parish Church, which stands on the site of the original church which was dedicated to St Boniface, and it may very possibly have rested on his grave. A well in the village is also called after him. It is known as St Boniface's Well.

In 1564 Queen Mary of Scots created the Town of Rosemarkie a Burgh of Barony, in favour of the Bailies, Council, and Community, and in 1612, as already stated, it was re-united with the Burgh of Fortrose, while in 1661 King Charles II. ordained that it should be attached to Fortrose, and the united towns "callit Foretrose."

There is an excellent hotel, Hawkhill Marine Hotel, with facilities for sea bathing.

From Fortrose to Cromarty the distance is about $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and the journey can be accomplished by the motor 'bus which runs between North Kessock Ferry and Cromarty. The road from Fortrose to Cromarty passes through rich and varied scenery. Immediately on passing Rosemarkie, Rosemarkie Glen, with its boulder clay deposits, is entered.

About two miles beyond the road branching to Balblair, Invergordon Ferry, and half a mile to the left of the Cromarty road, is the Grey Cairn of Blackstan, the reputed site of a battle between the Scots and the Norsemen.

Eathie Burn, so minutely and picturesquely described by Hugh Miller in "Old Red Sandstone" and "My Schools and Schoolmasters," is passed about six miles beyond Rosemarkie. About a mile further along, and to the east of the road, are St Bennet's Well and the ruins of the Chapel, while there are numerous cairns and tumuli between Eathie and Cromarty House, which stands on the site of Urquhart Castle, several being on the moor of Navity, which is passed on the right about a mile and a half from the town of Cromarty.



Valentine

Cromarty from the Hill

Dundee

CROMARTY.

The picturesque old town of Cromarty sits on a spit of sandy beach thrust lance-like into the Cromarty Firth, and nestles peacefully under the shadow of the South Sutor and Gallows Hill. Surrounded almost entirely by water, its situation is ideal from a health-giving point of view; the sub-soil is sand and gravel; and the refreshing breezes, laden with tonic salt, bring with them fresh life and new hope to the jaded holiday seeker. The water and drainage systems are in accordance with modern ideas of hygiene.

There are three ways of getting to Cromarty—by the Royal Mail route to Invergordon by train, and thence by a comfortable mail steamer across the Firth to Cromarty, a distance of five miles, and a delightful sail on a summer day; by motor 'bus from Kessock Ferry, Inverness, as described above, or by

motor bus from Dingwall. There are several up-to-date hotels and a number of capital boarding-houses.

The Gaelic name for Cromarty is *Cromba*, which may possibly be taken to mean "Bent Bay." In 1263 the name was written "Crumbathyn."

Being an ancient burgh, about which the national records refer as far back as the thirteenth century, Cromarty has many attractions for those who interest themselves in antiquities. It was a Royal Burgh from 1593 to 1672, when it was struck off the roll. The parish is rich in antiquarian remains, historical legends, and folk-lore. It has its "kitchen middens" unexplored, sites of old forts and battlefields reminiscent of the days of the Norsemen and the age of Wallace. On the hill behind the town, South Sutor, are pointed out the traditional remains of Sir William Wallace's encampment when he visited the North in 1297. For the geologist and the botanist it has its own peculiar charms. Of interest to the student of ecclesiastical history are the traditional sites of the old pre-Reformation chapels and holy wells, namely, St Bennet's Chapel and Well, St Duthus' Chapel and Well, and St Regulus' Chapel. Most Cromarty people are aware of the old belief that the final judgment of the human race is to take place on the moor of Navity, Gaelic *Neamhandigh*, derived from the Old Gaelic *nemed*, a sanctuary or holy place, and the moor is almost certain to have been a pagan sacred enclosure taken over, as was customary, by the early Christian Church and becoming Church lands. The Gaelic word *nèamh*, heaven, is similarly derived.

Cromarty, however, is more popularly known as the birthplace of Hugh Miller, 1802-1856, the distinguished geologist and writer, who, beginning life as the son of a sailor, then working as a stone-mason and bank accountant, became in 1840 a newspaper editor in Edinburgh and one of the most powerful influences in Scotland during his time. He wrote many books on folk-lore, geology, and theological subjects, and will live in English literature as the author of "My Schools and Schoolmasters," and the master of a rare prose style. In his memory a grateful country raised a monument, which stands on a hillock overlooking the town and the place of his birth—a lowly, thatched cottage, which is open to visitors and contains an interesting collection of Miller's manuscripts and fossils arranged as a museum. A Hugh Miller Institute, with free library and reading-rooms, has also been erected to his memory. Between the Institute and the thatched cottage is the Old Town Hall, with the sixteenth century Town Cross, and farther eastwards sits huddled behind a wall the old Parish Church, a quaint building the records of which date back to 1671. A lighthouse, built on the site where witches of old were burnt, is open to visitors within specified hours daily.

An earlier interesting historical and literary figure was the eccentric Sir Thomas Urquhart of Cromarty, already mentioned, who was born here in 1613 A.D. He was present at the Battle of Worcester in 1651, where he was taken prisoner, losing over one hundred valuable MSS., and afterwards confined in the Tower of London. There he produced considerable literary work, including the

translation of the first three books of Rabelais. To convince Cromwell of his own importance, and that such an ancient family as his should not be prematurely brought to an end, he wrote his "True Pedigree of the Urquhart Family," and traced them back to Adam, he himself being the 153rd in descent. Cromwell is supposed to have remarked that it was about time that a family who had such a long descent, and who had evidently enjoyed the good things of this world for such a long time, was extinguished. Finally he made his escape to France, where he died in 1660 of an immoderate fit of laughter on hearing of the restoration of Charles II. He lies buried in Cullucudden burying-ground. His Castle of Urquhart, built 1470, stood on the site of the present Cromarty House. All that remained was finally pulled down in 1772.

Another spot of interest in the vicinity of Cromarty is the site of Dunskaith Castle, built in 1179 by King William the Lyon, on a precipitous rock on the north side of the Sutors, across the Firth in Nigg. A first-class eighteen-hole golf course lies on the same side of the Firth, where there is a good pier and easy access by motor-boat. The ferry between Cromarty and Nigg is about a mile across. There are abundant opportunities in Cromarty for other recreations, as there are splendid tennis and bowling greens, and bathing, boating, and sea fishing facilities are easily procurable.

Those who are content with rambles may indulge in them to their heart's content. On the Sutors there are paths to the top, from which excellent views can be obtained; on a very clear day eight counties can be seen. Favourite spots for picnic parties are Macfarquhar's Bed, one and a half miles from the town, and Eathie Burn, a beautiful ravine with three waterfalls, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles distant, in the Fortrose direction.

The motorist has excellent roads, to Fortrose on the one side over moorland and through forest, and to Conon-Bridge and Dingwall, along the edge of the Firth, on the other side of the Black Isle peninsula.

CROMARTY TO CONON-BRIDGE.

On the road from Cromarty to Conon-Bridge along the southern shore of the Cromarty Firth are passed the villages of Jemimaville and Balblair, and the churchyard and ruined church of Kirkmichael, which is of historical interest. About ten miles from Cromarty the Farm of St Martins is passed on the left-hand side of the road. It takes its name from there being formerly an ancient chapel and burying ground there, dedicated to St Martin of Tours, the Master and Teacher of St Ninian. St Ninian founded the first monastery in Scotland at Whithorn, in Wigtonshire, about 398, and he laboured among the Britons and the Picts from about 400 to 432 A.D., establishing mission-churches from Galloway to Caithness.

About a mile beyond St Martins farm-house, and on the same side of the main road, the Urquharts of Cromarty had another seat at Kinbeachie Castle,

now in ruins, where there was an elaborately carved panel with Sir Thomas Urquhart's initials (S.T.V.C.), his coat-of-arms with motto, "Meane Weil, Speak Weil, and Doe Weil." and the dates A.M. 5612 A.C. 1651. This panel is now in the National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh.

The Parish is known as Resolis, and was formed in 1662 out of the united parishes of Cullicudden and Kirkmichael. They are known in Gaelic as *Sgìre Mhàrtuinn* and *Sgìre Mhìcheil* (the Parish of St Martin and the Parish of St Michael).

Within a radius of $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles of Kinbeachie, due east, are several large cairns and tumuli.

Perched on a rock by the seashore, about a mile distant from Kinbeachie, are the ruins of Castle Craig, one of the residences of the ancient Bishops of Ross. The portion of the castle still standing proves it to have been a place of considerable strength. The original flagged roof remains, and there is a very interesting balcony, which for its purpose was very effective, running the entire width of the northern gable. The balcony is formed partly by thinning the gable and partly by corbelling out. From its character the probable date of the erection of the castle was the earlier half of the sixteenth century, but from the absence of a fireplace in each room, and the antiquated arrangement of the one remaining, the date may possibly be earlier.

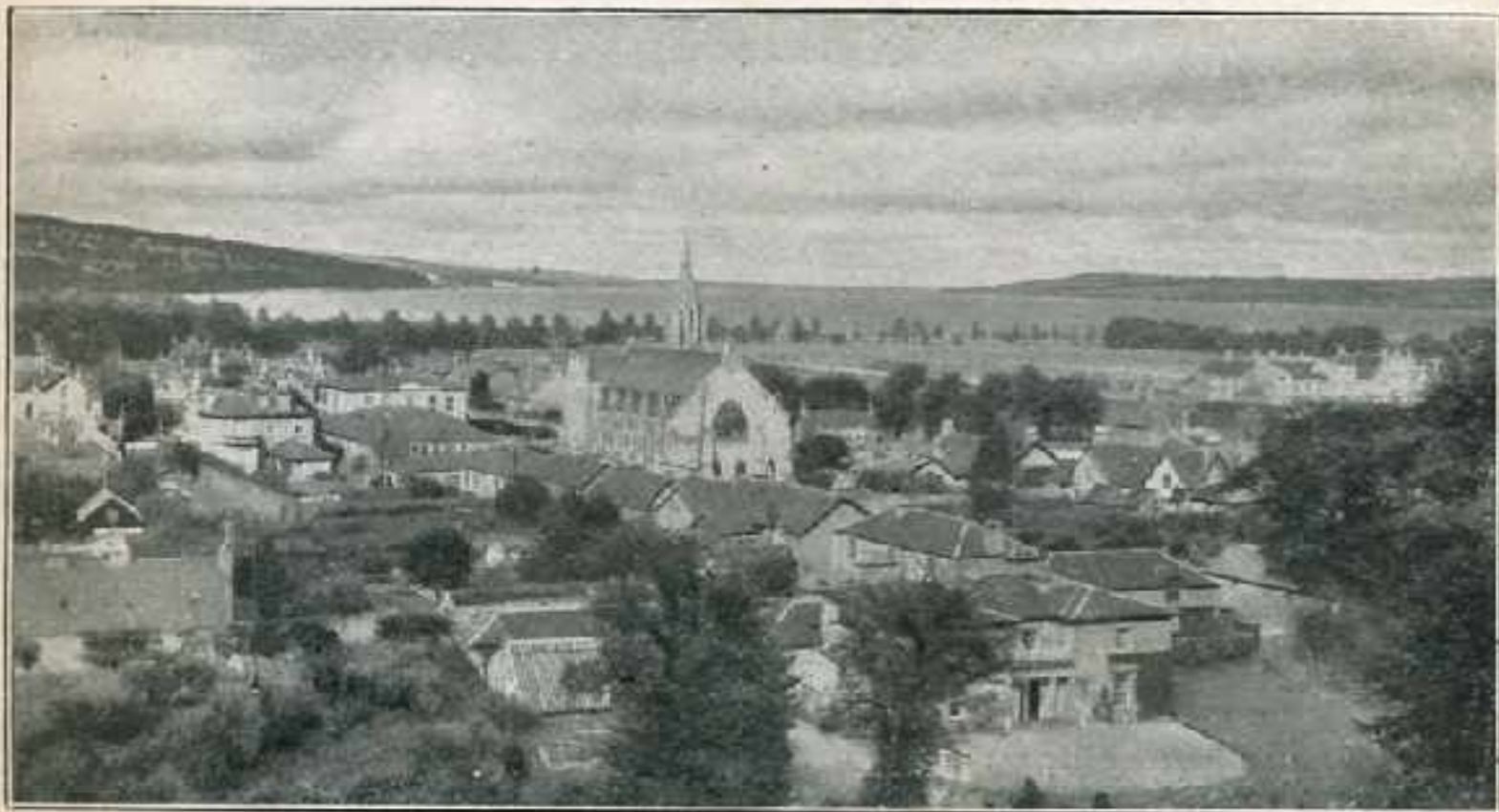
A journey of some three miles beyond Kinbeachie, to the west, brings us to the village of Culbokie, near which is the old fort of Culbokie, already described.

DINGWALL.

And now, having made a circuit of the Black Isle, we will return and give a short account of the history of, and objects of interest in, the Royal Burgh of Dingwall.

The name of the Town is of Norse origin, and is derived from "Thingvöllr" (meeting field or hill). The Thing was the district council and general court of justice. The meeting place can still be traced at the back of Mill Street, with the gallow hill conveniently adjoining for the summary justice of those days. In 1827 the Town Council disposed of the moot-hill by public auction.

For about eighty years, from 980 till 1057, Norse influence was strong in Dingwall, during the rule of Sigurd, the Norse Jarl or Earl of Orkney, and his more famous son, Thorfinn, Earl of Caithness. Sigurd was killed at the battle of Clontarf, near Dublin, 1014, when Thorfinn was five years old. Thorfinn, whose mother was a daughter of King Malcolm II. of Scots, was created Earl of Caithness by his grandfather, and he was Jarl of Orkney in his own right under the Norwegian kings. He held the North of Scotland, as least as far as Beaully firth and river, after the murder of his first cousin, King Duncan, by Macbeth, in 1040, and for about twenty-five years, from the death of his grandfather in 1034 to his own death in 1057, Dingwall was one of



Valentine

Dingwall and the Cromarty Firth

Dunder

his chief seats and the centre of his government in Ross; but, after Thorfinn's death, Norse influence was almost immediately restricted to Caithness, on Malcolm Ceanmór, son of Duncan, recovering his father's throne in 1057. Malcolm married as his first wife Ingiobiorg, the young widow of Thorfinn. On her death, shortly afterwards, he married Margaret Atheling (St Margaret), a Saxon Princess and refugee from William the Conqueror.

Dingwall was created a Royal Burgh in 1226, under charter granted by King Alexander II. In 1497 King James IV. granted a charter of confirmation, as well as two additional charters of the same date, while King James VI. ratified them in 1587. The last record of the existence of these charters was in 1752, when they were in the possession of Mackenzie of Kilcoy, who was then Provost. The property of the burgh was at one time of considerable extent, measuring some $4\frac{1}{2}$ miles from east to west and three miles from north to south at the widest parts. It included one-half of Loch Ussie, and extended for about half a mile beyond westwards. To the south it extended to the junction of the north main and Brahan roads at the north end of Maryburgh village. It also included the Stavek or estuary of the Conon and fishings thereof. Northwards it extended along Craig Road about one mile to All-an-Lait. But about 1787, when Andrew Robertson, grandfather of the late W. E. Gladstone, was Provost and Town Clerk, practically all these lands were feued to Francis H. Mackenzie of Seaforth and Davidson of Tulloch, as well as to Robertson himself, at rates varying from 1/- to 1/6 per acre. The fishings were also disposed of somewhat later.

The Gaelic name of Dingwall is *Inbhir-Pheofharain*, pronounced Inverfeoran, by which name it was known to the recorder of the Papal Chancery in 1256. It means the mouth of the Peffery, the burn which flows through Strathpeffer Valley and now discharges into the Canal at Peter's Bridge, at the foot of Tulloch Street. For a Royal Burgh of over 700 years' standing there is a remarkable scarcity of objects of historical interest. Perhaps the object of greatest historical interest in the burgh is the very fragmentary remains of the Royal Castle of Dingwall in the grounds of the present Castle, which is erected on the site of the former. It was a Royal stronghold from very early times, and was surrounded by water, except along the line of the present Castle Street. In a map in the Bodleian Library, made either late in the twelfth or early in the thirteenth century, Dingwall and Dumbarton Castles are the only two Royal strongholds marked thereon as in existence then. First held for the Crown by the Mormaors of Ross, it was at the beginning of the Scottish War of Independence, in 1291, held direct for the Crown by William de Braytoft. He was ordered by Edward I. of England to deliver it up to John Baliol as rightful heir to the Scottish Throne. Baliol evidently got possession, for according to the Book of Clanranald—"Do gabh sliochd Dubhgoill mic Somhuile don táoibh na mbáilleolach" 'ionus go rabh a nuile garasdon o Inbher Feothfaramh an ros go maol cinn tire ag mac Dubhgoill fedh na haimsir sin." ("The race of Dugall, son of Somerled, took the side of the Baliols, so that all the garrisons from Dingwall, in Ross, to the Mull of Kintyre were held by MacDugall during that time.") The MacDougall of that day was married to the third daughter of the Red Comyn, hence their enmity to the Bruce.

The Castle was, after the reconciliation of King Robert the Bruce with William IV., Earl of Ross, granted to the Earl of Ross, having been first promised him by Baliol and refused him by King Edward I. of England. It thus became the seat of the Earls of Ross, and remained in their possession until the forfeiture of the Earldom in 1476, when it reverted to the Crown. Sir Walter Ross, son of the fourth Earl of Ross, was a great friend of Edward Bruce. Walter, who fell at Bannockburn, was educated at Oxford.

James IV., on his pilgrimages of penance to the Chapel of St Duthus, Tain, visited and resided in the Castle in 1493, 1503, and 1504. Andrew Stewart, Bishop of Caithness and Commendator of the Monasteries of Kelso and Fearn, was in 1506 appointed "chawmerlane and capitane of the landis and lordschippis of Ross and Ardmannach, and also capitane of the castellis of Dyngwell in Ross and Redcastell in Ardmannach—To endure for IX. zeris." He was also given a tack of the fishings of the Conon and all others belonging to the King in the lordships of Ross and Ardmannach.

The Crown appointed keepers to the Castle till 1584, when it was granted to Sir Andrew Keith, who was created Lord Dingwall.

Kinnairdie was attached to the Castle as demesne lands. Finally, the Rev. Colin Mackenzie, minister of Fodderty, into whose hands it had somehow fallen, left in 1801 the ruinous Castle and grounds in trust to Henry Davidson

of Tulloch on behalf of the working people of Dingwall, but the trust was never implemented. The present Castle was erected before 1820 by Captain Donald Maclellan, who commanded a privateer in the Napoleonic wars, and is now occupied by W. R. T. Middleton, Esq., solicitor.

The oldest object of interest is an old Pictish stone, the Gneiss Monolith, seen immediately on entering the Churchyard surrounding the Parish Church (now St Clement's Church of Scotland). It has the Pictish symbols of the spectacle ornament clearly defined. It was discovered built into the walls of the present church while some alterations were being carried out. In the Churchyard, to the north of the church, there is an enclosure called St Clement's Aisle, which, in part, is the remains of the old church dedicated to St Clement. The former Parish Church (now St Clement's) was burnt down in 1733. In pre-Reformation days it was attached to the Priory of Pluscardine. The present church was erected in 1801, and is a very unpretentious structure.

Immediately opposite St Clement's Church is seen a circular mound. It was formerly surmounted by an obelisk some 56 feet high. This obelisk had a very conspicuous "lean," caused, it is said, in 1820, by an earthquake. It was erected by the first Earl of Cromarty, who died in 1714, and who lies buried at its base, along with his father and grandfather, the famous "Taoitear t'Sàileach" (The Tutor of Kintail). The earth forming the mound is traditionally said to have been brought in creels on women's backs from his various estates in Ross, which were formed into the County of Cromarty. The leaning obelisk was taken down in 1916, and a smaller truncated copy erected. The "Taoitear" was the first of the Cromarty family, and was unquestionably a man of his hands. What his Highland contemporaries thought of him has come down in the following couplet:—

"Na trinithean as miosa an Albainn—
An ceò luchair, an reodhadh Cèitein, 's an
Taoitear t-Sàileach."

("The three worst things in Scotland—
Mist in the Dog-days, frost in May, and the
Tutor of Kintail.")

According to Gaelic tradition, the obelisk was built by direction of the Tutor immediately after his death to prevent a dairymaid who had formerly been in his employment, and whom he had pursued with his enmity and banished from Ross, carrying out her threat to micturate on his grave. But even the Taoitear was no match for a woman; they usually have the last innings, and so had she. Hence arose the saying, "Boinne dubh an Taoitear ort, a bhradein," imprecated when you wished ill to your opponent. The "boinne dubh" (black drop) was believed to drip continuously from the very apex of the structure.

Facing the Churchyard gate is Church Street, and at its south end are the Municipal Buildings, including Carnegie Library and Town Hall. The

buildings are quite modern, with the exception of the square massive central stone tower, which is the tower of the old Tolbooth, built in 1730. It is surmounted by an octagonal clock tower, also modern, but the upper storey is practically a replica of the old, and is terminated by the original weather-cock. The Burgh Arms as registered are sculptured on the front of the balcony over the entrance door, being the sun with five stars and the motto, "Salve Corona," and modelled over the proscenium arch of Town Hall. The arms were formerly depicted as a five-rayed starfish, having between the rays stars and lozenge-shaped figures, as can be still seen on the old panel with the old coat-of-arms, now placed in the Church Street gable, and dated 1730, and on the old Burgh Seal still in use, which was presented to the town in 1722 by Munro of Culcairn.

In the angle at the west end of the building stands the Old Mercat Cross, while beside it hangs the grating which formerly guarded the window of the murderer's cell at the base of the tower.

There are a few objects of interest in the Municipal Buildings. In the entrance hall, entered off High Street, stands a handsome oak cabinet with carved folding panels, inscribed with the Battle Honours of the 4th Battalion Seaforth Highlanders (Territorials), and having a glazed case in front containing the Muster Roll of those who served in France during 1914-1918. Set on the top of the cabinet is a small plaster model of a Highland soldier, a reduced replica, including top member of base, of the monument erected at Beaumont Hamel to the memory of the famous 51st Division. There is also a small glass case containing the original small scale model of the figure surmounting the Dingwall War Memorial. In the Council Chamber there is the sword of honour presented in 1899 to General Sir Hector Macdonald by his clansmen, also a reputed Titian picture presented by the late Sir John Pender, M.P. In the Carnegie Library entrance hall and wing are the old war-worn colours of the Seaforth Highlanders (Regulars), also some Dervish flags, coats of mail, and a gun captured at Omdurman and sent home by General Sir Hector Macdonald, whose Memorial Tower dominates the town from the Mitchell Hill. Erected in 1906, it rises to a height of 100 ft., and a very extensive and pleasing view can be obtained from its summit. On entering Dingwall from the south, the first important building to meet one's view is the Free Church, a very handsome structure in decorated Gothic, erected through the exertions of Dr Kennedy, who lies buried under the granite monument adjoining. The opening sermon was preached by the Rev. Charles H. Spurgeon in May, 1870.

Other places of worship are St Clement's Church (already mentioned), Castle Street Church of Scotland, the Episcopal and Roman Catholic Churches, which are in Castle Street, and the Free Presbyterian Church, in Greenhill Street.

Almost facing the Free Church is a granite Celtic Cross erected in memory of those Seaforth Highlanders who fell in the South African War, and further

along the street stands the Dingwall Memorial erected in memory of those who fell in the Great War. The Post Office is adjoining the Free Church, on the opposite side of Park Street.

There are exceptional banking facilities. The Commercial Bank is beside the Post Office; the National Bank of Scotland is on the opposite side of the street. There are two branches of the Bank of Scotland, one in Tulloch Street, the other in High Street, the Town and County in High Street, and Royal Bank in Park Street. The Academy and Technical School are in Tulloch Street, immediately facing the Cromartie obelisk, and pupils are prepared for direct entrance to the University. The average attendance is 700. The County and Police Buildings are on Ferry Road, which joins High Street at the Seaforth Memorial, and leads over the railway bridge. Dingwall did not become the County Town till 1843, when its precedence over Tain was finally settled. Besides the Police Buildings, which are the Headquarters of the Ross-shire Constabulary, are the County Buildings with the Sheriff Court and County Council Convening-Rooms, and the offices for the various county officials. Further along the Ferry Road is the Ross Memorial Hospital, erected in memory of Dr William Ross, who was a well-known local practitioner. Supported by voluntary contributions, it is a very useful institution which does good work. Further along is the Drill Hall, belonging to the 4th Battalion Seaforth Highlanders.

This Territorial Battalion was among the first selected for service in France. Ordered there on 4th November, 1914, right gallantly on many a hard fought field during those four eventful years they upheld the ancient record of the Gael for valour.

At the back of the town is the Old Canal, formed in 1815-17 at a cost of £4365, but, becoming disused through the advent of the railway, it has been for many years in a state of decay, and is by no means an asset to the amenities of the town. At the seaward end of the Canal is the Harbour with a wood pier, but as there is practically no shipping, it has fallen into a sad condition of disrepair.

In the footpath leading from Ferry Road to Alcaig Ferry jetty is a small circle of stone, in which it is said the gallows were formerly set.

Adjoining the Canal and behind the County Buildings are the Victoria (Football) Park, the Jubilee Park, and Bowling Green. There is also a good Tennis Green opposite the Castle, and the Curling Club have a pond at the west end of the town. On the slope of Kinnairdie an excellent eight-hole Golf Course has been laid out.

STRATHPEFFER.

About five miles distant from Dingwall, Strathpeffer Spa, celebrated for its medicinal springs, can be most conveniently visited, as there are frequent train and motor bus services. For the first two miles or so the Strathpeffer



Valentine

The Square, Strathpeffer

Dundee

train runs on the Skye line, the point of departure being at Fodderty Junction; the Skye line branching off to the right.

At the base of the wood which the line skirts here, the train traverses the reputed site of a battle between the Norse and the Scots about 1040, the Norse being the victors, and the respective leaders being King Duncan and Thorfinn, Earl of Caithness. About the same time, on looking to the right, can be seen near Brae House the ivy-clad ruins of Doch-Maluag Tower, which takes its name from Saint Mo-Luag, already mentioned in connection with Rosemarkie. One finds in this tower a link with the great Lord Protector, a garrison of Cromwellian troops being stationed there during the Commonwealth, and a sore thorn they were in the sides of the local loyalists. Shortly afterwards, on the left side, is passed the burying-ground of Fodderty, part of which has been used from very ancient times. Near by, on the opposite side of the public road, stood the Chapel of the Virgin Mary of Inchory, with "Croit an Teampuill," or "Temple Croft," undoubtedly a pagan dedication immediately adjoining, where stone coffins, urns, and relics of the Bronze Age were found in A.D. 1830.

There next comes to view, on the left-hand side, the steep slope of Knockfarrel Hill, which rises to 693 feet above sea-level. It is known locally as Knockferlie, which is the more accurate form of the Gaelic name, "Cnoc Farralaidh," which means "the Hill of the High Stone Place or House." It is crowned with a most interesting example of a vitrified fort, whence it gets its name. Easily accessible from the south-west by a good road leading from

Strathpeffer, it should be visited, and will amply repay inspection. Built before the use of lime as a matrix was known, the walls were fused into a compact mass by the agency of fire, and so perfect was the fusion that when in the year A.D. 1774 a cross section was cut through the earth and debris by John Williams, the ruins of the fallen walls were no less than twelve feet in height. The area enclosed by the walls is about 410 feet long, with a width varying from about 100 feet at the south-west end to about 80 feet at the north-east end. Besides the enclosing walls there were extensive outworks guarding the more accessible parts of the hill, extending at each end some 200 feet almost in the line of the longitudinal axes of the fort. On a section being cut through the earth and debris covering one of these outworks, the vitrified ruins were found to be not less than 23 feet perpendicular in height from the top of the heap of ruins down to the foundations. In the area of the fort there are two depressions which are the remains of wells, and which, although on the bare hill top, have been found to contain water. According to a local prophecy, some day in the future one of the wells in the fort is to burst forth and flood the valley, and ships will yet be moored to the Eagle Stone at Strathpeffer.

This fort, being an object of wonder to the local inhabitants, they naturally wove legends around it; they believed it to be the stronghold of the Feans, but one day, while the men were away hunting, their women folk insulted Garry, the only man left at home on guard. Finding him asleep, they wove his long hair into two pleats and pinned them to the ground with pegs. Then they shouted the battle cry. Garry, suddenly awakening, hurriedly endeavoured to rise, and severely lacerated his scalp in the attempt. Mad with indignation, he hastened to the wood nearby for brushwood. Returning, he drove all the women into the Fort, barred the entrance, set the structure on fire, and destroyed them all.

On looking to the right can be seen the former Parish Church of Fodderty, now altered into a dwelling-house. Near it are two Monoliths, the further west one having a large cup mark. According to tradition, they were thrown from Knockfarrel by Finn, Chief of the Feans, at his enemies.

Slightly to the west of the Old Church was fought the Battle of Blairninich in A.D. 1411, between Donald, Lord of the Isles, on the march to Aberdeenshire, which was checked at "The sair Harlaw," and the Royal Forces under Angus Dubh Mackay of Farr.

Mackay was captured and his army defeated. Macdonald's objective was the Castle of Dingwall, the seat of the Earls of Ross, to which title he laid claim on behalf of his wife as rightful heiress. She obtained the Earldom from her nephew James I., in 1424, thirteen years later.

According to most Scottish historians, this Donald was an utter barbarian, and his defeat at Harlaw the saving of Teutonic Scotland. Neither statement is correct: Donald was a grandson of Robert II. and a cousin of James I. Both his father and he were familiar with the English Court, and he was educated

at Oxford. His "Teutonic" opponent at Harlaw was his first cousin, and was as Celtic in blood as himself, and the "lowland" army, the men of Moray, Angus, Buchan and the Mearns, were more so. The Teutonic element in Scotland is overrated, as the only portion colonised was the Lothians, which the Angles held during the sixth and seventh centuries. The Anglican power of Northumbria was first checked by the Picts in 685, and after the defeat of the Northumbrians by the Scots at Carham in 1018, the Lothians were finally annexed to Scotland by Malcolm II., since when there has been no settlement in Scotland of Angles or Saxons.

Soon after Strathpeffer, the terminus, is reached, cosily sheltered at the foot of Ben Wyvis, "the high and noble mountain" which protects it on the north and north-west. It stands about 200 feet above sea level, and has a good southern exposure. Its rainfall averages are low, while its sunshine records are comparatively high. The air is pure and dry and bracing, laden with the fragrant odours of the everlasting hills.

Since early last century the Strathpeffer waters have been in increasing repute for the treatment of many forms of skin diseases, gout, rheumatic troubles, and affections of the liver and kidneys. There are chalybeate and sulphur wells, and medical advice should be obtained as to which is most suitable for each particular case. The mineralised state of the water is due to the percolation through shale beds teeming with the petrified remains of ganoid fishes.

The Pumproom and Baths are on the right-hand side of the road, with the Pavilion and Gardens opposite. There are exceptional facilities for all kinds of bath treatment and massage.

In the Gardens there are well laid out Bowling, Croquet, and Tennis greens, and high-class Concerts are held daily. The Cricket grounds are at Castle Leod Park, where the famous Strathpeffer Highland Games are held annually.

There is an exceptionally fine 18-hole Golf Course laid out on the rising ground behind the village, and whence some magnificent views can be obtained. It is considered to be one of the best inland courses in the kingdom, and has been highly spoken of by Herd, Massey, and others. The course is less than half-a-mile from the Station.

In the variety of up-to-date Hotels, Board and Lodging accommodation there is ample provision to meet the requirements of all visitors, whether they come for health or merely for change and recreation.

There are many places of interest within easy access of the Spa, and many delightful walks and motor runs can be had visiting them.

One of the best is to Rogie Falls (4½ miles), past Loch Kinellan, and across the moor. In Loch Kinellan there is an artificial island, formerly the hunting seat of the Earls of Ross, and afterwards of the Mackenzies of Kintail. After William IV., Earl of Ross, had made his peace with King Robert the Bruce, he invited the King to Kinellan to a hunting expedition. On the forfeiture of the Earldom it came into the possession of the Mackenzies, and the chiefs

resided there for a short time, both before and after the battle of Park, fought 1490. An account of this battle will be given later.

During 1914-16 excavations were carried out on the island under the auspices of the British Association. It was found to be a "crannog" formed on piles, logs, and large numbers of worked timbers, probably remains of the structure of the buildings intercolated with brushwood, peat, clay, and habitation refuse. Scarcely any material of archæological value was obtained, the most interesting find being a dug-out canoe, 24 ft. 9 ins. in length. I prepared a plan of the island, drawings of the worked timbers, and sections of the pits excavated. They appeared in the Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries for Scotland, Session 1916-17.

At Rogie it is interesting to watch for the salmon leaping the Falls, which are among the finest in Scotland. The Falls can also be reached by a drive by Contin, where the Parish Church, dedicated to St Maelruba, can be visited. The church is situated on an island in the Blackwater River, and was almost entirely reconstructed in the 18th century, but several of the arched tomb recesses and the ambrie remain. In the churchyard there are at least two stones with Gothic sculpture dating back to about A.D. 1200. On the return journey, after proceeding up Contin Brae about two hundred yards, on the left is seen a grove of trees called Press Maree, "Press Ma Ruibh," "Maelruba's Grove," named after St Maelruba, died 722. From him also Loch Maree takes its name, being previously known as Loch Ewe, and well worthy was he of such an enduring record of his name. Press Maree is now the burial-place of the family of Coul. The Coul policies lie on the left of the road, and glimpses of the mansion-house can be seen through the trees.

Further on the village of Jamestown is passed. On the rising ground behind the Free Church there, a battle, known as *Blar na Pairc*, "the Battle of Park," was fought between the Mackenzies and the Macdonalds in 1490. According to tradition the following incident was the cause which led to this battle, but is more likely to have been one of the causes which led to the battle of Logi-bridge at Conon-side, fought by her brother, Angus Og, in 1481. Lady Margaret Macdonald, a great-grand-daughter of Donald of Harlaw, was married to Kenneth Mackenzie, heir to the chieftainship of the Clan Mackenzie but at that date he repudiated her, and sent her home under studied insult. As the lady had the misfortune to be blind in one eye, he mounted her on a one-eyed horse, led by a one-eyed servant, and accompanied by a one-eyed dog. In revenge, her cousin, Sir Alexander Macdonald of Lochalsh, collected a strong force of clansmen and allies and invaded the Mackenzie country, no doubt also with the intention of conquering the lands which had been formerly owned by his uncle as Earl of Ross. Lady Margaret's father and grandfather held the Earldom, but her father forfeited it, and it reverted to the Crown. The Macdonalds, though the superior force, were beaten through the able generalship of the Mackenzies. In 1497 Sir Alexander of Lochalsh again invaded Ross, but was again defeated at Druim a' Chait (the Cat's Back).

hill about a mile from the site of the previous fight. About a century later a less well-known fight took place between the same clans, and with the same result, on the rising ground to the north-east of Loch Kinellan. Close to the entrance to the Spa Hotel grounds is a well, known as *Tobar nan Ceann*, "the Well of the Heads," where the heads of the slain are said to have been washed.

Another interesting motor run would be to Loch Achilty and the Falls of Conon (9 miles), proceeding by Jamestown and Contin, and passing Contin Bridge, built 1808. Loch Achilty is a beautiful sheet of water surrounded with trees, chiefly birches. In the Loch at the south end, about 80 yards from the further shore, is an Artificial Island, a beautiful example of its class, built with stones very regularly coursed, laid with an even batter in about 7 feet of water. It is oval-shaped, and about 54 feet long and 34 feet wide, and rises about 2 feet above normal water level. The extreme dimensions of the foundations are 79 feet long and 59 feet wide.

The loch contains a larger and natural island, situated close to the northern shore, adjoining the public road. It is called *Eilean 'Ic Ill' éigh* (Macleay's Island), and, according to tradition, contains treasure hidden by Big Macleay "behind the tree that is opposite the moon."

Near the east end of the loch, by the roadside, in the field next Craighdarroch Lodge, is the remains of a hut circle. About four miles further on are the falls of Conon, and on the journey there some magnificent scenery is seen.

Near the Falls of Conon is the Power Station of the Ross-shire Electric Supply Coy., Ltd.

Another pleasant day could be spent visiting Knockfarrel vitrified fort, already described (2 miles), and Loch Ussie, while, if driving, the return journey could be made by Brahan and Contin, or Maryburgh and Dingwall, both beautifully wooded drives, especially by Brahan. The Cat's Back is reached by the same road as to Knockfarrel, and very fine views can be obtained from there.

A few years after the death, in 1491, of Kenneth Mackenzie of Kintail, mentioned above, and while his son was a minor, bad feeling arose between Hector Roy Mackenzie, the uncle of the chief, and Sir William Munro of Foulis, with the result that Munro with his followers marched to Kinellan, the home of the Mackenzies, and, after doing much mischief, the Munros returned home in the evening by the south of Knockfarrel. The Mackenzies lay in ambush by the road they must take, and attacking the Munros in the gloaming, defeated and pursued them with great slaughter. Nineteen heads of the Munros lay around a well which lies at the foot of the east shoulder of the hill known as John the Baptist's Well. This is another of those Holy Wells so common in the Highlands. It was formerly visited by the sick and insane, who tied portions of coloured cloth, or thread, to the trees or bushes adjoining. As an instance of the persistence of these beliefs, I was taken within the last forty years to a well near Highfield, Urray, by an old woman who lived in the

neighbourhood, and for the cure of some juvenile complaint put through a certain prescribed form in the manner of drinking the water. I had to swallow three distinct mouthfuls with a considerable interval between each. During each interval a prayer was repeated. In the first interval to the Father, in the second to the Son, and in the third to the Holy Spirit. Having had my three gulps, I was then permitted to drink as much as I desired.

At a distance of about a mile from the Station, along the Dingwall road, is Castle Leod, one of the seats of the Countess of Cromartie, built in the Scottish baronial style. The oldest portion of the building was erected in 1616 by Sir Rorie Mackenzie of Coigach, the first of the Cromartie family, and a noted character in his day. This is the famous "Tutor of Kintail" referred to in connection with the Dingwall obelisk. The grounds are not always open to the public, and the correct time for visiting should be ascertained previously.

Shortly after leaving the Station there can be seen on a small knoll by the roadside, in the grounds of Nutwood, the well-known "Eagle Stone," locally known as *Clach an Tiompain*. The stone on the lower portion has an eagle very clearly defined, while around the upper part there is a torque ornament of horse-shoe pattern, with small circle underneath on each side. There being so little ornament, it is difficult to say whether the sculpture is Pictish or Scottish. It was of this stone Coinneach Odhar said "that the day will come when ships will ride with their cables attached to Clach an Tiompain."

Along the same road, about a mile beyond Castle Leod, are the Standing Stones already mentioned at the former Church of Fodderty.

On the Moor of the Heights of Brae are five Standing Stones, all that remain of a Sepulchral Chambered Cairn which measured in 1838 some 260 feet by 20 feet, while about 200 yards distant to the south-west is the site of a Hut Circle.

Another pleasant walk is to the Raven's Rock (2 miles), passing through the village of Auchterneed. The Auchterneed road branches to the left off the main road about half-a-mile beyond Castle Leod.

Situated by the roadside about half-way up the brae to Auchterneed is a Cup-Marked Stone, *A Chlach Phollach*, having on its surface about a dozen cup-marks, two inches or so in diameter. It is very uncertain what purpose these cup-marks served, but most likely for some method of divination.

The mountaineer should not miss climbing Ben Wyvis (3429 feet), a distance of about ten miles. The journey usually takes from three to four hours. The ascent is fairly easy, and the views obtained on the journey and from the summit are simply superb.

A very enjoyable motor run (12 miles) is to the Black Rock of Novar, to the north of Dingwall, where the river Glass rushes through a very deep gorge, and is there called the *Allt-grannda*, "Ugly Burn." A description of the chasm is given below under Novar.

DINGWALL TO CULRAIN.

On resuming our journey northwards from Dingwall by rail, almost immediately on leaving the station an exceptionally fine view is obtained of the Cromarty Firth.

The Old Canal is crossed, and Dingwall Castle passed on the left. On the right the Black Isle appears across the Firth, while Tulloch Hill and the Craig in their sylvan beauty are seen on the left. Tulloch Castle, for generations the seat of the Baynes of Tulloch, and since 1762 of the Davidsons, can be seen through the trees. In a few minutes the train enters a deep cutting, where formerly was the site of the Chapel of Kilchoan, an early Celtic Church dedication. On clearing the cutting a glimpse is obtained on the left of Mountgerald Gardens, while on the right just as the train passes the trees fringing the line by the seashore, can be seen a level green plot, formerly the site of a chapel and burying-ground dedicated to St Brigh, and called *Cladh Mo-Bhrigh*. Here, it is said, the Presbyterian doctrines during the Reformation were first taught in the north.

A short distance further on a glimpse can be obtained of the Tower of Lemlair House, peeping over the brae-face. We now enter the district known as Ferindonald (*Fearann Domhnaill*, Donald's Land), the home of the Clan Munro, and where they have been located for about nine centuries. The Donald in question is the supposed founder of the Foulis family, who received this land in grant from Malcolm II., 1005-1034, for assistance rendered against the Norse invaders. According to tradition, the ancestors of the Munros came from Ireland, from the foot of the river Roe in Derry. A Munro is always called *Rothach* in Gaelic, meaning a (man) belonging to Ro.

FOWLIS.

The train stops at Fowlis Station, which takes its name from Foulis Castle, the seat of the Chief of the Clan, Colonel Sir Hector Munro, Bart., A.D.C., Lord Lieutenant of the County, who is the XXIX. Baron and XI. Baronet of uninterrupted male line. The Castle cannot be seen from the train.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the Munros of Foulis were zealous supporters of the Presbyterian cause. Robert, XVIII. Baron, with many of his clan, joined Gustavus Adolphus, King of Sweden, in the Thirty Years War, 1618-48, in Germany, in defence of the Protestant religion. Munro died of wounds at Ulm in 1633. Gustavus fell at Lützen the previous year. Owing to their Presbyterian leanings the Munros in the eighteenth century naturally supported the Hanoverian succession, and Sir Robert Munro, the XXIV. Baron and VI. Baronet, fell at the Battle of Falkirk, 1746, fighting against Prince Charlie. Captain H. C. S. Munro, Younger of Foulis, only son of the present chief, was killed in France, October, 1918.

The Munros, since their first appearance in history, have invariably been King's men, and with few exceptions were to be found on the side of law and

order. Of course throughout the centuries there were occasional lapses, as when they visited Dingwall in 1721 and "fired sharp shot east and west the street," killing the wife of Alexander Mackenzie (afterwards Provost).

After leaving Fowlis Station a lovely view can be obtained of Glen Skiach and a glimpse of Ben Wyvis, while Castle Craig in the Black Isle can be easily seen across the Firth by the seashore. Here, looking well ahead between the line and the Firth, a glimpse of Balconie Castle, a former seat of the ancient Earls of Ross, can be obtained through the trees. A weird legend concerning a former Lady of Balconie is told in connection with the Black Rock of Novar.

The main North Road runs practically parallel with the railway line from Dingwall to Novar, passing through Evanton village.

NOVAR.

Evanton village passed, Novar Station is immediately arrived at. The stream crossed to the south of the station is the River Glass, which passes through the Black Rock Gorge above the village of Evanton. This chasm, called the *Allt-grannda*, "Ugly Burn," should be visited if at all possible. The length of the gorge is one mile and a quarter. The stream there has eroded the pebbly sandstones and conglomerates of the old red sandstone to a depth of from 110 feet in the deepest portion near the Lady of Balconie's Boulder (or *Clach a' Cholumain*) to about 70 feet at the upper end. I found the depth at the footbridge to be 97 feet from the bridge floor to the surface of the water, while the width of the chasm at the surface varies from 17 to 40 feet. The gorge is entirely post-glacial in origin. The remains of the pot-holes, caused by the swirling pebbles, under the action of the rapid current, can be seen very well on the precipitous sides of the chasm near the Balconie Boulder, where the gorge is at its very deepest and almost at its narrowest.

On the Balconie Boulder the imaginative can perhaps still trace the impression caused on its being struck by the keys, flung towards her maid by the Lady of Balconie, as the devil was leading the lady over the precipice. I suppose the inference is that the keys were so hot that they melted and sunk into the granite boulder as if it were wax.

Some three centuries ago the lady in question lived at Balconie. Tradition informs us that she was of a retiring nature, shunning society, and spent more of her time at the Allt-Grannda gorge than she did at home. She set out one evening for the gorge and induced a maid-servant to accompany her. They got there about sunset, and on arriving at the widest part of the chasm the lady desired the maid to accompany her down the rock-face. On the maid demurring, the lady said that there was quite a good path leading down to the water, that she had taken it hundreds of times, and that of necessity she must attend her there as it was absolutely necessary for her to be there that night. On the girl decidedly refusing, the lady seized her and attempted to drag her towards the chasm, but while they were struggling a tall dark man suddenly appeared beside them. She immediately released the girl, whereupon the

dark stranger took the lady's arm and, leading her towards the chasm, said, "You may remember that your surety had to be a willing one." At the edge of the precipice the lady turned and looked behind her, having on her face a mingled expression of horror and despair. She untied her household keys and threw them up the bank towards the girl. The keys in falling struck the large granite boulder already mentioned, and sank into it as if it were a mass of putty.

The girl, almost frantic with fear and horror, rushed home and told her strange tale to the lady's husband. He, along with his retainers, hastened to the gorge and minutely searched it, but no trace of the ill-fated lady could they find.

About a dozen years after, when the memory of the mystery began to fade, the man-servant of a lady who lived in the neighbourhood one day fished the Black Rock pool at the foot of the gorge, and obtaining a good catch, selected and left the best fish for his own use and carried the remainder home to his mistress, who was of a rather stingy disposition. On viewing the catch strung on the withes, the lady remarked, "Surely there were more." The fisher replied, "No, deil tak' them." On the first opportunity he went to recover the fish, but they had disappeared. There remained, however, a faint indication of their being dragged away by some animal towards the gorge. Following up the track, he proceeded along a path of which he had no previous recollection, leading along the brink of the stream. Having gone a considerable distance, and having reached the deepest and darkest part of the chasm, he suddenly found himself in a cavern, face to face with the lost Lady of Balconie. She was seated on an iron chair, at an iron table, and on the table lay his fish, along with a mass of dough prepared for baking.

On recovering from their mutual surprise, the lady exclaimed, "What brought you here?" while he replied, "What keeps you here?" She pointed to the chair, and then he noticed that the chair and table were fixed to the rock, and that she was fastened with an iron chain by the ankle to the chair. "Besides, these dogs at the entrance would prevent me escaping," she said. "The fish which you gifted to my master when, with an imprecation, you denied their existence to your mistress, you cannot now obtain, but you yourself must escape." The two dogs, which he barely noticed on entering the cavern, were now guarding the only exit, glaring fiercely at him. "Be prepared and I will assist you," said the lady, and taking two large portions of dough she flung a piece to each. The man at the moment rushed past and escaped, since when the Lady of Balconie was never again seen.

There are beautifully wooded walks all alongside the gorge, which alone are well worth a visit.

To get there from Novar Station follow the road from the "North side" platform turning to the left (south). About 550 yards along the main road, take the road to the right. When this road forks, keep to the left and follow the road till a wicket gate leading to a footpath is reached. Follow this foot-

path, which after a rapid descent to the river bank continues practically on the level for about 500 yards, where, and at about a mile from the Station, there is a side path leading to a point where a good view can be obtained of the gorge. The main path continues alongside the gorge all the way, about a mile and a quarter, but a branch path at about one-third of the way up crosses the gorge by a bridge, from which a road leads to Evanton, about one and a quarter miles distant.

Further up the valley, about a mile and a half beyond the head of the gorge on the south side of the river, is a singular conical hill, called *Cnoc a' Mhargadaidh*, "Market Hill," 1020 feet high. From its summit can be seen the vitrified hill forts of Knockfarrel, Craig-Phadrig, and the Ord of Kessock.

The summit, which measures 180 feet by 60, is perfectly green, the soil consisting of black earth with charcoal fragments, and although there are no traces of a fort, it may well have been a Beacon Hill.

As its name indicates, and as tradition has it, markets were held there. At the base of the hill on the south side are remains of stone and turf walls enclosing an area of over thirty acres, sub-divided into small stances by internal walls. Within the main enclosure are five hut circles, and to the north of these numerous tumuli. On the eastern slope are traces of a roadway leading to the summit.

About four miles from Novar and half-a-mile beyond *Cnoc a' Mhargadaidh* are the exceptionally fine twin Falls of Coneas (Gaelic *con*, together; *eas*, a fall). There are a series of Falls, as well as the remarkable double waterfall. All are sunk in a deep gorge which the river Glass has worn out of the conglomerate rock as it here winds its headlong way, providing excellent viewpoints; but as the Falls are in private ground they are seldom visited.

To the north of the Black Rock and behind the farm-house of Assynt is *Cladh Churadain*, "St Curitan's Graveyard." Curitan was also known as Boniface. He, as already described, founded the church at Rosemarkie.

On the left, on the Fyrish Hills above Novar, can be seen monuments erected by General Sir Hector Munro of Novar late in the eighteenth century, it is said, to give employment to the people during a period of scarcity of labour. They are said to be an imitation of the Gates of Negapatam. The present Laird of Novar, R. C. Munro Ferguson, Viscount Novar, was Governor-General of Australia, 1914-1918, and Secretary for Scotland, 1922. The traveller now enters *Machair Rois*, the flat lands of Easter Ross, containing some of the best agricultural land in Scotland. The Church and Manse of Alness are seen on the left shortly before Alness village is reached.

ALNESS.

On entering the village from the south the first large house on the left is the former U.F. Manse, the birthplace of the Rt. Hon. Robert Munro, Lord Alness, Secretary for Scotland, 1916; Lord Advocate 1913-16, and Lord Justice Clerk since 1922. This is one of the most thriving villages in Easter Ross.

There are two large hotels, conducted by the Cromarty Firth State Management Committee, and post and banking facilities. There is a well laid out nine-hole Golf Course, with hazards plentiful and natural, and a capital Bowling Green. There are Masonic and Town Halls, and the Ardross-Alness Club House is fitted with a Reading-room and Billiard-room. The War Memorial Cross stands near the north end of the village at a fork in the main North Road.

The Avern River flows through the village, but permission to fish must be obtained.

The local derivation of the name Avern is that a widow with only two sons lost them both. The first died suddenly, and the other shortly after was drowned in the river. On being told of the death of the second she exclaimed, "M' ath bhron" ("my next sorrow"). Before the Reformation the portion of Alness on the north side of the river was known as Obsdale, and was included in the then Parish of Nonikiln.

Near Alness is the Obsdale Monument. It is situated near the public road to Dalmore at the top of the ascent, north-east of the farm offices of Dalmore, and marks the spot where Communion was dispensed to the Covenanters in 1675, during the time of the persecution. This is the only instance in Ross-shire of its being dispensed at this period. The soldiers who were sent to disperse the gathering and apprehend the minister, Mr John McKillegan, did not arrive until the service was over.

In the upper part of Alness Parish is situated Loch Morie, Mary's Loch. Near to the head of the Loch, on its north-west shore, is the site of a pre-Reformation chapel and burying-ground, dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Adjoining the chapel is a spring, *Tobar Mhoire*, "Mary's Well," which formerly possessed the customary healing virtues, and received the usual offerings of coloured cloth or thread. Near the lower end of the Loch is an artificial island, measuring 30 ft. by 21 ft. It is roughly formed of stone, and is quite devoid of vegetation.

The road to Loch Morie passes through the Boath district, which is rich in cairns, hut-circles and tumuli. On Knocklea Moor are two great chambered cairns. One is very much damaged, but the other, the chamber unroofed, still exists. There are hut-circles and tumuli on *Cnoc Alasdair* and on *Cnoc na Sroine*, where there also are the ruins of a hill fort.

About a mile due north of Alness village is the burying-ground of Nonikiln, in Gaelic *Neo' na Cille*, for *Neimhead na Cille*, "the nemed of the church. The meaning of *nemed* is already given in connection with Navity, Cromarty. In the burying-ground are the ruins of the old church, which fell in 1714. It is believed to be dedicated to St Ninian, who died 432, and it would appear that a considerable amount of land was formerly attached to the chapel in pre-Reformation days. In the vicinity are Dalnavie, Inchnavie, and Cnoc Navie—Dale, Haugh, and Hill of the Church land. To the east is the estate of Newmore, in Gaelic *Neo' mhor*, the big or large *nemed*. The whole of the ridge from Avern River to Newmore would appear to have been

at one time a sacred pagan enclosure or sanctuary, similar to Navity. To the west of Cnoc Navie there was formerly a small chapel near Dalneich. On Cnoc Navie is *Carn na croiche*, "the cairn of the gallows," and about a mile and a quarter almost due north is a very large cairn near Achnacloich. A mile further along there is another cairn at the south end of Stittenham Wood, while within a quarter of a mile of Nonikiln is a cairn at Millcraig. In the September of 1715 there was a skirmish at Alness between the Mackenzies, Macdonalds, and other Jacobite clans, under the Earl of Seaforth, and the Earl of Sutherland at the head of the Munros, Rosses, Mackays, and other Whig clans. The Earl of Sutherland's forces were driven over Struie to Bonar. This skirmish is the subject of a stirring contemporary Gaelic song, "*Moladh chabair Feidh*," "In praise of the deer's antlers," the crest of the Clan Mackenzie.

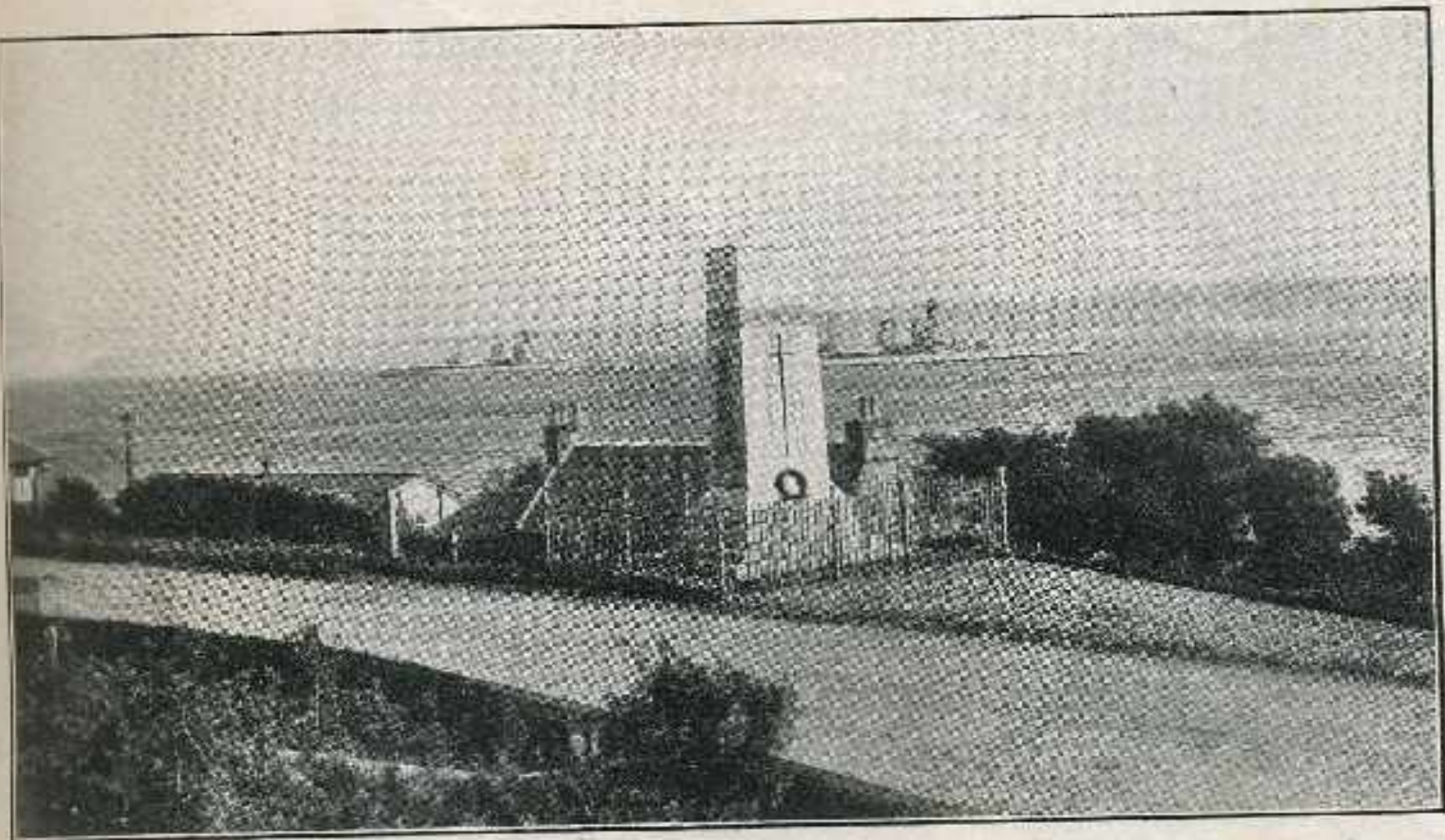
Ardross Castle is about 4 miles distant, and is a good modern specimen of the Scottish baronial style of architecture. Extensive alterations have been made by Mr Perrins. The castle is entered through a stone groined port cochere. A feature of the castle is the great hall, which is 65 ft. long by 25 ft. wide. It has an oak floor and pannellings, and a richly decorated and emblazoned roof. The gardens are extensive and terraced.

Two miles beyond Alness, Rosskeen Church and Manse can be seen on the left. In a field nearby is a large stone called *Clach a' Mheirlich*, "the thief's stone."

Dalmore Distillery is passed on the right. It was during the Great War converted into a mine filling and finishing factory for the United States Navy.

INVERGORDON.

This town celebrated its jubilee as a Police Burgh in 1914, but for much longer than fifty years it has been an important shipping centre for Easter Ross, and had regular sailing to Inverness, Aberdeen, Leith, and London. The founder of the town under its present name was Sir Walter Gordon, the first Baronet of Invergordon, who was a well-known politician in his day. He bought the estate of Inverbreakie from the MacLeod family early in the eighteenth century, and rechristened the place Invergordon. Formerly it was known as *An Rudha*, "The Point," also "*Rudha Aonach Breacaidh*. The town itself consists of one long broad street, with many side streets, built at right angles. During the War it increased rapidly, especially in the direction of Saltburn village, which it now practically joins. Having been made a dockyard for repairs to the Grand Fleet, where some three to four thousand workmen were employed, accommodation for these had to be provided, consequently there was much activity during the war years in the erection of all kinds of buildings, club houses, workmen's houses, oil tanks, &c.; but the Dockyard is now dismantled, and the workmen have departed. The Atlantic Fleet still visit the Firth twice yearly, usually in the months of May and



War Memorial and Fleet, Invergordon

Dundee

Valentine

September, and in those months can be seen riding at anchor types of the varied ships comprising the British Navy, from the latest Dreadnought to the mine sweeper. While stationed in the Firth, stores for the Fleet are shipped from the port; and the oil fuel consuming vessels obtain their supplies from the oil tanks.

The Town Hall is a handsome commodious building in the Italian style of architecture, and built in 1870. The Church of Scotland is a handsome Gothic building with a spire 160 feet high. The Rosskeen Church is situated more than a mile to the west of the town. In a conspicuous position in High Street stand a handsome Lamp and Fountain to commemorate a visit paid to the town by King Edward and Queen Alexandra. The War Memorial Cross stands at the east end of High Street.

There are several good modern hotels conducted by the Cromarty Firth State Management Committee, and there are the usual banking and post office facilities. A comfortable Mail Boat plies across the Firth to Cromarty, a distance of five miles twice daily, and a very pleasant sail in fair weather.

There is also an hourly service across the Ferry ($\frac{1}{2}$ mile) to Balblair in the Black Isle, whence Cromarty and the surrounding district can be visited. In the former gardens of Invergordon Castle, which was recently demolished, stood the well-known "Hilton Stone" with its Pictish-Celtic carvings still on one side, while from the other a vandal in 1676 erased the carving, used it as a gravestone, and inscribed thereon:—

HE . THAT . LEIVES VEIL DOOES VEIL SAYETH
SOLOMON THE WISE.

HEIR LYES ALEXANDER DYF AND HIS THREE
WYVES.

Also the date given above and his own and his wives' initials:—

A	DVF
K	S
C	V
H	V

From the similarity of the carving on the unmutilated face to the Elgin, St Vigean, and Aberlemno stones, all in Pictland, it, as they do, would no doubt have borne a cross and perhaps an inscription like the St Vigean stone.

The carved face has a linked border of free ornament at both sides, while the top panel contains the Pictish symbols of the spectacle ornament, the second panel contains a crescent ornamented with a Celtic fret, with two discs underneath elaborately filled in with Celtic interlacing. The third panel contains a hunting scene, with female on horseback, two horsemen with spears, swords and shields, two men blowing horns, three dogs and a deer, while in the left-hand corner of the panel appear a mirror and double comb.

From the similarity of the free ornamentation of the border to that on the early Northumbrian sculptured stones, it is extremely likely that the Hilton Stone was erected under the influence of St Colman, who was Bishop of Lindisfarne, 660-664, but who left Northumbria for Iona after the great council of Whitby had decided to adopt the usages of the Church of Rome, and who is known to have laboured in Easter Ross. He is the patron saint of Tarbat and from him Portmahomack (*Port mo Cholmaig*, St Colman's Port) gets its name. This stone, on the demolition of the Castle, was sent to the British Museum, but, on account of the protests raised, was returned to the National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh.

DELNY AND KILDARY.

From Invergordon, Delny is three miles distant, and a short journey of one and a half miles further brings us to Kildary.

Both Delny and Kildary are in the Parish of Kilmuir-Easter (Gaelic *Cill Mhoire*, Mary's Church). Attached to the east end of Kilmuir Church is an older structure, no doubt part of the former church, and now used as the vault of the Cromarty family; and attached to this building is a round tower bearing the inscription, "Bigit 1616," but possibly the lower portion of the tower is at least six centuries earlier. At the south corner of the churchyard in which the church stands, and facing the main road, is the War Memorial Cross.

This parish is small, being only about ten miles long by half-a-mile to four miles broad. It is nearly all in a high state of cultivation, and especially rich is the portion lying along the Cromarty Firth. Numerous plantations hel

to adorn the countryside. It contains the villages of Kildary (Parkhill Post Office), Miltown, and Barbaraville. At Miltown the old village cross still stands on the village green.

The chief sights are Balnagown Castle and Tarbat House, with their beautiful grounds.

Balnagown Castle, the property of Sir Charles Ross, Bart., is a venerable pile, situated near Balnagown river, in extensive wooded ground with wide, deep ravines on two sides, on which are beautiful Italian gardens. It is of the Scottish Baronial style, with many turrets and battlemented parapets, and was the seat of the Rosses of Balnagown for upwards of three hundred years, until the beginning of the 18th century, when it was sold by the last of the old line. The present Sir Charles Ross has no connection with the old family.

Near the Castle is a steep old bridge over the river, known as the "King's Bridge." It is supposed to have been named after King James IV.

Further down the stream, near the seashore, is New Tarbat House, associated with the Cromartie family, and built near the site of the former Castle of New Tarbat, which belonged to the Earls of Cromartie.

Near Delny was the Castle of Delny, a seat of the Earls of Ross.

Slightly to the west of Kinrive are two cairns. Underneath one of them, according to tradition, the head of a king is buried, hence the name, from *Ceann Rìgh*, "King's head." It is said that a great battle was fought there, a king being killed, his head struck off and buried there. It is quite possible a battle was fought in the vicinity owing to the proximity of the great hill fort, about a mile distant, at Cnoc an Dùin, but the name Kenrive actually means the head of the slope in Gaelic, *Ceanruighe*.

PARISH OF LOGIE-EASTER.

Nigg Railway Station, although in the Parish of Logie-Easter, takes its name from the neighbouring Parish of Nigg, which it serves.

The Parish of Logie-Easter is small, as Highland parishes go. It measures only seven miles by three, and is called Logie-Easter to distinguish it from Logie-Wester, on the banks of the Conon, and already described as Logie-side. Near Marybank farm-house, on the Balnagown river, is an old graveyard, and an interesting ruined pre-Reformation church called in Gaelic *Lagaidh*, hence Logie, the name of the parish. About the middle of the parish there are a number of cairns, formerly known as *Cùirn nam marbh*, "the cairns of the dead," which are said to mark the site of a battle fought there between the Norse and the Scots, from which the adjoining burn got its name, Scotsburn. About two miles further up the strath, at the east end of Strathrory, on the top of Cnoc an Dùin, slightly over 900 feet high, facing Kinrive, and already mentioned, is the Dun—*An Dùn* (Gaelic), "The Fort," the second largest hill fort in Scotland, covering over two acres. It was in its day a particularly strong place, and its fortifications, of which there are still very considerable

remains, will amply repay a visit of investigation. It commands a most extensive view of the Moray Firth, as well as of the Dornoch, Cromarty, and Beaully Firths and surrounding country. Standing on the summit, the fort particularly impresses one with its excellent position for observing an invasion by sea.

The former name of Balnagown river was the Rory, hence the name Strath Rory.

Near the U.F. Manse is still to be seen the well-marked site of the "pit and gallows" of olden days, with *Poll a' Bhàthaidh*, "the drowning pool," for the women, and *Cnoc na Croich*, "the hanging hill," for the men, also *Cnoc a' Mhòid*, "the Moot-hill," all formerly connected with the barony of Nigg.

PARISH OF NIGG.

The Parish of Nigg lies south-east of Nigg Station, from which its nearest point is distant about three-quarters of a mile. It is a compact little parish, measuring about five miles by three, forming a peninsula; it is surrounded by water except on the north and north-west. About one-third of the parish is comprised in the Hill of Nigg, which rises to over 600 feet, and was formerly called the Bishop's Forest. With the exception of the Royal Castle of Dunskaith and the demesne land attached thereto, the parish was a perquisite of the Bishop of Ross. The Hill of Nigg is one of the most conspicuous objects in Easter Ross, and throughout the centuries has been used as an outpost-guard against invasion and internal disturbance. There is a Celtic hill fort on a detached hillock near Easter Rarichie at its northern end, with a sacred well adjoining, while at the south end, on Castle Craig hill, is the site of the Castle of Dunskaith, built in 1179 by William the Lyon, and so named from the Gaelic, *Dun Sgàth*, "the fort of fear or dread." On the North Sutor, a continuation of Nigg Hill, the Admiralty erected fortifications, and the military during the Great War had a large encampment. The parish is extremely rich in wells, and traditional tales are attached to several, but the principal objects of interest are the famous Early Christian Pictish Sculptured Stone at Nigg Parish Church, and a somewhat similar stone near Shandwick. Of the former there are replicas in British and Continental museums, for it is one of the best examples of its kind known. The Chalice and Host are shown between kneeling figures at the top of the stone, while the remainder of the face is occupied by a cross, filled in with intricate carving. The spaces surrounding the stem and arms of the cross contain elaborately carved bosses.

The back of the stone has a border divided into panels, each panel containing a different pattern of Celtic interlacing ornament, while the centre panel contains a hunting scene and various grotesque figures and animals.

The Shandwick Stone, *Clach Charaidh*, measures about 8 ft. 9 ins. high by 3 ft. 2 ins. wide by 9 ins. thick over the ornament which is raised on the seaward face and sunk on the back. It stands in a field close to the road leading to

Shandwick village, and has a cross on its seaward face ornamented with double rows of bosses, fifty-six in all, while in the spaces at the sides of the shafts are two animals, one of them resembling an elephant. The panel underneath the cross is filled with interlacing ornament. The back of the stone is divided into five panels, four being filled with sunk carving, while the fifth contains sculpture representing hunting scenes, processions and combats, but the carving is getting rather weather worn.

From Nigg Hill a wide general view of land and sea may be obtained, and from it the railway trains may be traced from Elgin right round to Helmsdale. Boating and sea fishing are obtainable; there are sandy beaches for bathing, and an excellent 18-hole Golf Course with Club-house, already mentioned in connection with Cromarty.

A large variety of land and marine shells may be collected, and the district is rich in bird life.

There are three Churches of Scotland in the parish.

PARISH OF FEARN.

Fearn Station is situated in the western angle of the parish of that name. The railway only traverses the parish for about a mile when it crosses into the adjoining Parish of Tain.

This Parish was part of the neighbouring Parish of Tarbat till 1628, and got its name when the monastery was transferred to it from Fearn, Edderton, about 1246. The Monastery on its new site was styled Nova Farina, New Fearn. It was dedicated to St Ninian, and the first Abbot at Fearn, Edderton, was a Canon from St Ninian's Monastery of Whithorn, Wigtownshire. The Parish in Gaelic is called *Sgìr na Manachainn*, "the Parish of the Monastery." The story is that the churchmen did not think their lands at Edderton so fertile as they would wish, and got transferred to this place, which is as fertile in soil and well tilled as any part of Scotland. Farquhar, II. Earl of Ross, who founded the Monastery at Edderton about 1227, was buried here in 1251, and there is a stone effigy which is said to mark the spot. On the suggestion of William, VI. Earl of Ross, the Abbey was rebuilt during the years 1338-1372. The Abbey Church seems originally to have consisted of a nave, choir, and at least three chapels. The chapels are in ruins, but the nave and choir are still in use as the Church of Scotland (Parish Church). The martyr, Patrick Hamilton (1503-28), was an Abbot of Fearn, but there is no evidence to show that he ever resided there. The institution, after existing for nearly four hundred years, became extinct in 1617, when it was united to the See of Ross. On a Sunday in 1742, while the congregation were worshipping there, the roof fell in, killed thirty-six and injured many worshippers. There are now three churches in the parish.

Loch Eye, a beautiful sheet of water, is about a mile and a half distant from the Abbey, and there some excellent trout fishing may be had.

About half a mile to the east of Loch Eye are the ruins of Loch Slin Castle, once a stronghold of the Mackenzies. It was a formidable place in its day, built on the L plan; it consisted of two nearly square keeps, attached at their corners where a staircase was placed. The larger tower was about 34 ft. by 24 ft., and the smaller about 19 ft. square. Of the building, only the north-east corner of the larger keep now remains. This corner is practically entire, including the angle turret at top. From the site a fine view of mile upon mile of farm land may be had.

Another interesting sight is Cadboll Mount, a quadrangular structure formed in steps like a pyramid, 60 feet high, built by a Macleod, the Laird of Cadboll, "to look down" on his cousin's land, the Laird of Geanies, but the view was shut out by a screen of trees planted by the rival laird.

The village of Hill of Fearn, slightly to the north of the Abbey, is about a mile from the railway station, and has well-built houses and shops and a public hall.

The old fishing village of Balintore, on the Moray Firth, has a fairly good harbour, where considerable business is done.

Less than half a mile further north along the shore is the village of Hilton of Cadboll, near which is the site of a chapel once dedicated to the Virgin, and where the Hilton Sculptured Stone, formerly erected in the grounds of Invergordon Castle, but now in the National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh, already described, was found.

To the north of Hilton is the site of the ancient Castle of Cadboll, to which there was a curious tradition attached, that, although inhabited for ages, no person had ever died within its walls. This supernatural influence did not, however, prevent its occupants from the effects of disease, and the debility and wearisomeness attached to old age. Tired of life, the denizens of the Castle had to be carried out of the building, when they immediately expired.

PARISH OF TARBAT.

North-east of the Parish of Fearn is situated the Parish of Tarbat, a peninsula jutting out into the Moray Firth. It has no direct access by rail, but can be reached either from Fearn Station or Tain by motor 'bus.

This Parish includes the quaint fishing village of Portmahomack, which is one of the largest in Easter Ross. It was, before the days of the railway and the steam drifter, a very important fishing port, and there is yet considerable shipping done here. There is a Golf Course and a well-equipped Carnegie Library. The Parish Church is dedicated to St Colman, after whom the village (in Gaelic) is called *Port mo Cholmaig*, as already described in connection with the Hilton Sculptured Stone, formerly at Invergordon Castle.

Tarbatness Lighthouse, one of the highest in Scotland, is three miles from the Port, and from its summit a very extensive view of the Moray Firth coast is to be had. At night it shows a brilliant succession of six flashes every

alternate fifteen seconds. On the edge of the cliffs, facing the Moray Firth, are the striking and well-preserved ruins of Ballone Castle, once a stronghold of the Earls of Ross, and afterwards of the Mackenzies. Built on what is known as the Z plan, with a central keep having a tower or keep at each alternate corner. In this case a round tower at the north-west and a square tower at the south-east corner, with a circular stair placed at the junction of each tower with the central keep. It was a very formidable place in its day, but the date of its erection cannot be placed much earlier than the latter end of the sixteenth century. There are the remains of several other castles, such as Castle Corbet, in Gaelic called *Caisteal Dearg*, "Red Castle," also under a mile from the Port, but on the Dornoch Firth. There are fragmentary remains of a Celtic sculptured stone or stones at Tarbat.

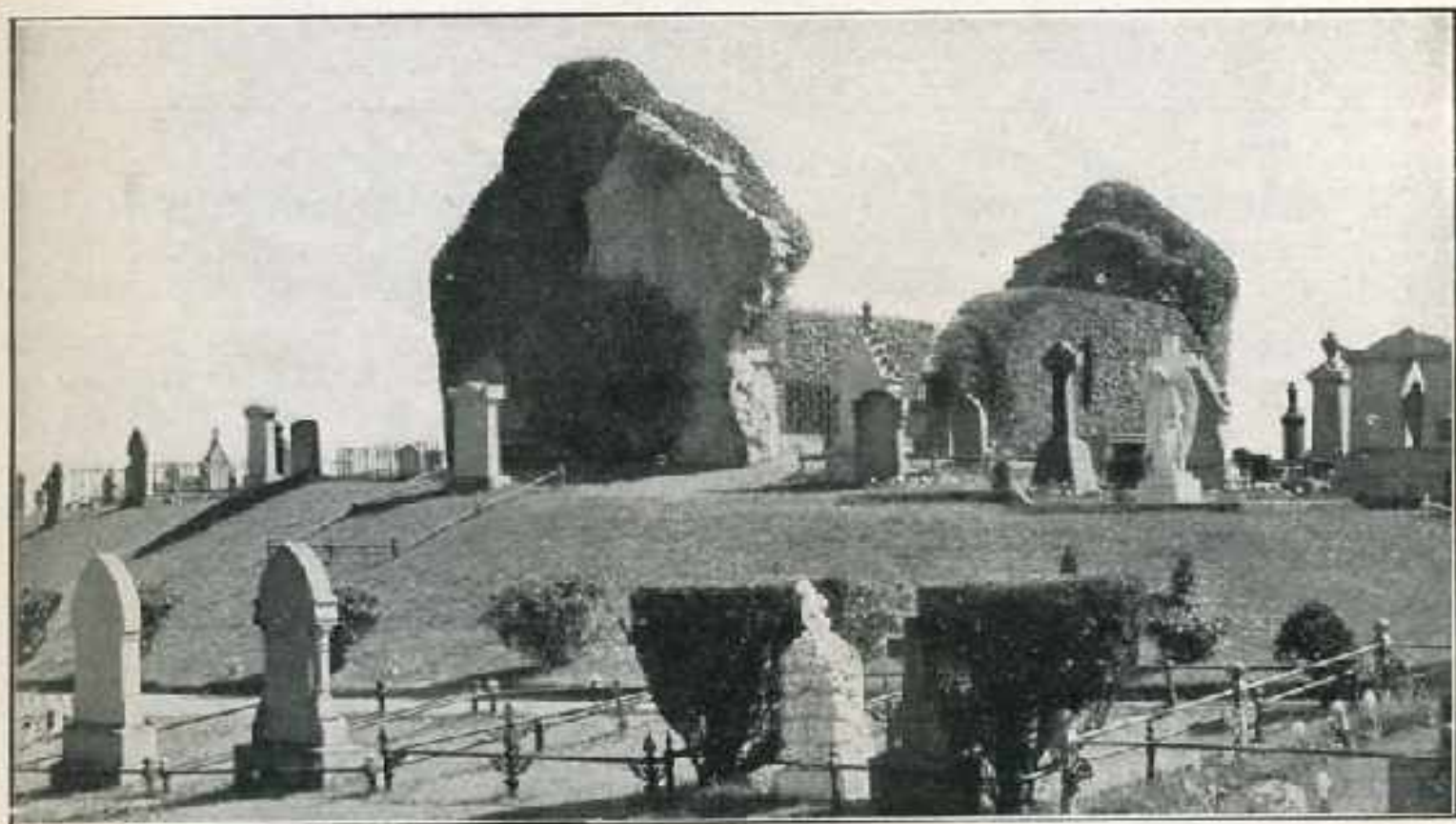
Along the seashore there are many caves, with which are associated some wonderful tales. Into one of these, *Toll Raoiridh*, some cattle entered long ago and came out in Caithness.

There is in the parish a nine-hole (seaside) Golf Course, and boating, sea fishing and bathing may be enjoyed.

TAIN.

Returning from Portmahomack by the road skirting the southern shore of the Dornoch Firth, the ancient and Royal Burgh of Tain is soon reached. The burgh is regarded as the capital of Easter Ross, and its situation gives it many advantages. Until 1843 it disputed with Dingwall the right of being the County Town, when Dingwall obtained it by Act of Parliament. It is built on terraces which rise up from the sea level, and is sheltered by a semi-circle of hills on the west, from which it obtains an abundant water supply, although Tain itself has the low average rainfall of 24 inches. It is in the centre of a rich farming district. From any eminence in the neighbourhood wide views of land and sea may be obtained—Easter Ross and the Dornoch Firth in the foreground, with on one side, in the background, the Black Isle and the Morayshire hills, and on the other side the town of Dornoch, Dunrobin Castle, and the Sutherlandshire hills. The Gaelic name for Tain is *Baile Dhubhthaich*, "Duthac or Duthus town," after a saint of this name. There was a Dubhthach a contemporary of St Patrick (432), another was Abbot of Iona (850-870), but the patron saint of Tain is believed to be the one who lived in the eleventh century, and is said to have died at Armagh in 1065.

The burgh was incorporated by charter of James II., 1457, but the oldest existing charter is the one granted by James VI. in 1587, who also granted an additional charter in 1612, while, according to an inquest held at Thayne (Tain) in 1439 under the Seal of Alexander, Earl of Ross and Lord of the Isles, it was found as proved that Tain had been enfranchised by Malcolm Ceann Mòr, and confirmed in its rights by several of his successors.



Valentine

Old St. Duthus Chapel, Tain

Dundas

Near the railway station, on the links below the town, stands a little ruined ivy-covered Chapel, measuring 46 ft. by 16 ft. 6 ins. internally, where Duthus, the patron saint of the town, is said to have been born. Built possibly about 1250, it was burnt about the year 1427 by Thomas McNeil of Creich in one of the fierce forays of the fifteenth century, and never rebuilt. To this place Robert the Bruce sent his wife, daughter, and ladies of the Court in his dark days in 1306, as Tain was known far and wide as a place of sanctuary, but on that occasion it was violated by William, IV. Earl of Ross, who delivered them to Edward I. of England. This was the Earl who invited The Bruce to his hunting seat in Kinellan island.

There are two other ancient buildings in Tain dedicated to St Duthus situated in the town, off the High Street. One is a small ruinous chapel, 32 ft. by 13 ft. inside measurements, with walls now standing some 6 ft. high only. It had lancet windows similar to Early English, but the date of erection is uncertain. Near the chapel stands a building of which the town is justly proud, St Duthus Church, erected before 1371 by William VI. Earl of Ross, and which for over four hundred years prior to 1815 was used for public worship. It fell into disrepair, but was restored in 1877, and the windows filled with stained glass. The style is somewhat similar to English Mid-Gothic, but must be fully fifty years later than work of that period in England. The building measures about 70 ft. long by 20 ft. 6 ins. wide internally, and consists of a nave and choir, without transepts or aisles. It contains a replica of the Regent Moray's pulpit.

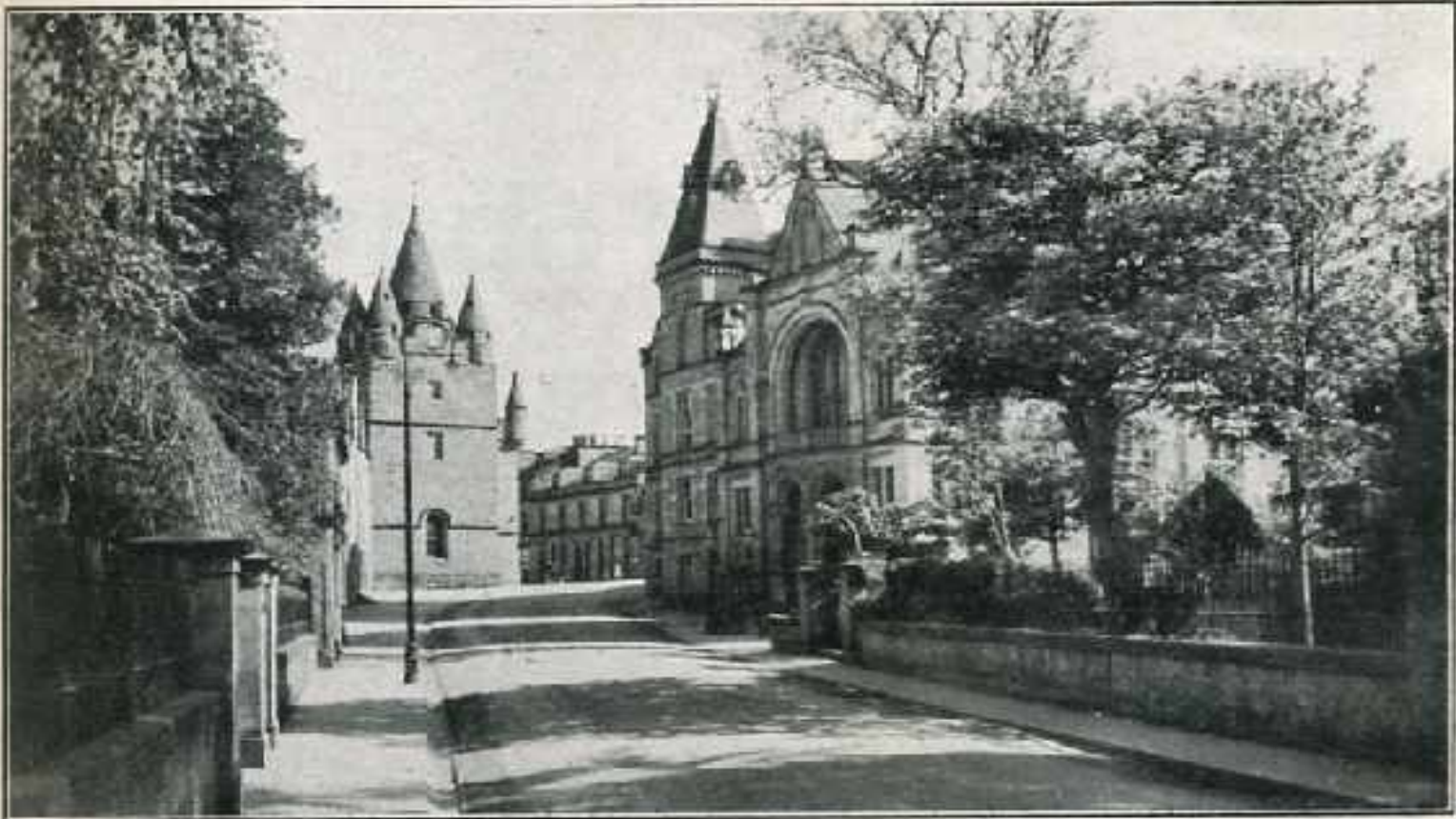
To the shrine of St Duthus James IV. made seven pilgrimages. He was in Tain in 1496, 1497, 1503, 1504, 1507, and 1513, within a month of his death at Flodden. It was also visited by James V. in 1528, who made the pilgrimage barefoot.

As in all old towns, there is much variety in the arrangement of the streets; some of them are rather narrow, but most of the buildings are well built. High Street is the chief business centre. In an open space on one side of this street stands, near the Commercial Bank, the beautifully decorated Gothic monument to the memory of Kenneth Murray of Geanies. At the end of this street are the Council Chambers and the old tower; near the tower stands the old market cross. Further along is the handsome Town Hall, beautifully decorated internally at the expense of the late Mr Carnegie, who also gave Tain a free library. One of the best known buildings is the Royal Academy, established by charter in 1813. There are many handsome shops, from which the surrounding districts get all kinds of commodities.

There is a splendid eighteen-hole Golf Course, laid out by old Tom Morris in 1890, with a modern commodious club-house, and there are Bowling, Lawn Tennis, and other Clubs. The Lawn Tennis Club has three hard courts and a grass court. There is an extensive sandy beach suitable for bathing. To help its commerce there are branches of four Scottish Banks, with an ample postal, telegraph, and telephone service.

About half a mile north of Tain, by the sea-shore, and well under high water mark, is a spring dedicated to the Virgin and named after her. Its





Valentine

Tower Street, Tain

Dundee

waters were a sovereign remedy for consumption, but they had to be drunk on the spot, and as early in the morning as the state of the tide allowed.

To the east of Tain is the Morrish More, in Gaelic *A' Mhormhoic! Mòhr*, meaning "the large sea plain," and the term is applied to land liable to sea flooding. It is a large, low-lying, sandy flat, by the sea-shore, more or less barren.

Off the Morrish More, at the entrance to the Dornoch Firth, and obstructing the access, are the Gizzen Briggs, *Drochaid an obh*, a dangerous sandy bar, usually covered with foam, and the tidal roar of which may be heard for miles. According to tradition, the Gizzen Briggs are the remains of a large land bridge which once extended almost from Ross to Sutherland. Built by the fairies, who escaped from a box while being sent from Dornoch by a wise woman to a chief of the Clan Mackay, who wished to build a bridge over the Kyle of Tongue. The messenger, a servant of Mackay's, strictly forbidden to open the box, like Pandora, could not resist the temptation to pry, peeped in, and in an instant was surrounded by myriads of elfin creatures shouting *Obair, obair, obair*, "Work, work, work." Being a quick-witted man, he set them to strip the hillside of heather; but no sooner said than done, and back they were almost immediately, shouting more eager than ever, *Obair, obair, obair*. In desperation, he then ordered them to build a bridge across the Dornoch Firth. Away they instantly sped and began collecting the sand into those banks which yet remain; for while still busy at work some person passing about cockcrow, attracted by the noise and uproar, exclaimed, "Dhia beannaich

mise, ciod e an obair tha 'n so?'' ("God bless me, what work is this?"), and work ceased instantly on account of God's name having been uttered. In another version of the tale, the messenger sent the fairies to make ropes of sand, which they found, and still find, impossible to do, and there they are, ever toiling, at their hopeless task, and will toil till time ends, and that is why fairies now are on more to be seen in their old haunts and their favourite knolls.

PARISH OF EDDERTON.

Some five miles further along the southern shore of the Dornoch Firth we come to Edderton village and station, in the parish of the same name. The Parish measures about nine miles long by five wide. There is a considerable expanse of arable land along the sea-shore, but the ground inland is high, culminating in Cnoc Leathad na Siorramachd, 1845 feet high. The best known hill, however, is Struic (1218 feet), from the summit of which one of the finest views in Ross-shire can be obtained. At Fearn—"Farne beside Kincardin in Stracharrin"—near the west end of the Parish, about the year 1227, Farquhar II. Earl of Ross, founded an Abbey of Premonstratensian Monks from Whithorn, in Galloway, but, as already mentioned, it was transferred to "Nova Farina," New Fearn, about 1246.

About four and a half miles beyond Tain is Edderton Churchyard, where there is an erect cross-slab, of very early date, near the entrance gate, with a large cross of the usual Celtic type occupying one side, and a smaller cross, more of the Latin type, on the other. The smaller cross stands on a semi-circular panel containing a mounted figure, the horse being particularly well executed.

About a mile further along, at Carri Blair (Gaelic *Blar a charaidh*, moor or field of the grave plot), on the left-hand side of the road leading from Edderton village to the Railway Station, is a Pictish Standing Stone of rough unhewn freestone, about 10 ft. high by 3 ft. wide, having the outlines of a fish incised on the east side, also the double disc and sceptre.

There were once many dunes or "Brochs" in the Parish, but the stones of which they were built were taken to build dykes. The site of one can still be seen near the public road, about a mile east of Easter Fearn. There was a second at Dounie, and a third at Lechanich. About a mile to the south of Lechanich there are hut circles near Bailecharn, and another to the east of Struic Hill, about 400 yards south of Craggan.

Below Bailecharn is *Eas an Tairbh*, "Bull's Fall," on the Edderton burn, the reputed haunt of a *tarbh-uisge*, a water bull.

PARISH OF KINCARDINE.

The Parish of Kincardine is very extensive, and measures about thirty miles in length by twelve in breadth. It marches with Sutherlandshire, and at one part makes a peculiar curve into that county at a place called Altna-

cealgach. The story is that when the boundary line between the counties was in dispute, an old Ross-shire man put Balnagown (Ross-shire) earth in his shoes walked round this part, and kept declaring as he went that he still trod on Ross-shire earth.

Ardgay is the chief village, and here the old-established winter market of Feill Eiteachan is still held. This market is said to derive its name from a certain quartz stone—Gaelic *Clach èiteag*—and the custom was that the market was to be held wherever this stone happened to be at the time. It was often shifted, west by the Assynt men and east by the men of Ross, but it is now built into the wall of the present Balnagown Arms Hotel at Ardgay. Near Ardgay are the remains of a broch, while on a hill about half a mile away are traces of fortifications and numerous tumuli.

Bonar-Bridge and Culrain stations are both in the Parish. The former, although close to Ardgay village, is called after the village of Bonar, on the Sutherlandshire side of the Kyle.

The Oykeil River, which divides the Parish from the County of Sutherland, has been identified with the Ripa Alta, "High Bank," of Ptolemy, and the Norse Ekkjals-bakki, "Oykeil-bank." From Culrain Station to Invershin Station, in Sutherland, the distance is about half a mile, the head of the firth, called the Kyle of Sutherland, being crossed by an unusually fine viaduct of lattice work with iron girders.

In the Parish Church there is a bell still used, below which there is an inscription on a tablet, "This bell, captured in a French ship of war of 74 guns, was gifted by Admiral Sir John Ross of Balnagoun, Bart., in the year 1778, to the Parish of Kincardine."

In Kincardine Churchyard is a Pictish sculptured stone, about five feet in length and two in breadth and thickness, hollow, and divided into two unequal cells. The ends and both sides are covered with figures and ornament. It is, however, very much weather worn.

In the Parish there are the remains of several brochs at the lower end of Strath Oykeil, near Kilmachalmag and Birchfield, on the Oykeil. Kilmachalmag means St Colman's Church, and on the flat to the east of the burn is the site of an old chapel, with a completely neglected burial-ground.

A noticeable feature is Carbisdale Castle, Culrain, the residence of the Countess Bubna. It is quite a modern building, being completed about twenty years ago. Its site, on a high rocky spur of the Hill of Lamentation and overlooking the Kyle of Sutherland, gives it an imposing appearance. Hill of Lamentation is popularly supposed to take its name from the battle fought in the field adjoining, where the Marquis of Montrose was defeated on the 27th April, 1650, by Lieut.-Colonel Strachan, but the name is really a mistranslation of *Creag a' Chòinneachan*, "Rock of the Mossy Place." Montrose was captured a few days later by MacLeod of Assynt's men, taken to Edinburgh, and there put to death on 21st May following.

DINGWALL TO KYLE, &c.

For the first two miles or so the main road from Dingwall to the West Coast of Ross lies parallel with the railway, and for the same distance the Skye and Strathpeffer trains run on the same line, the point of departure being at Fodderty Junction. This portion of the journey has been already described in connection with Strathpeffer. At the point of departure the Skye line branches sharply off to the right, passing quite close to the ivy-clad ruins of Davoch-Maluag Tower. Soon there comes the stiff ascent to Achterneed Station, while on the right are the heights of Brae and Fodderty, where there are the remains of several cairns. A magnificent view is here obtained of the Strathpeffer Valley, Knockfarrel, and a considerable portion of the Black Isle.

ACHTERNEED.

Shortly after leaving Achterneed Station the train enters the Raven's Rock cutting, where the ragged edges of the blasted rocks tower high above the line, threatening to crush the passing train. The Raven's Rock passed, the scene entirely changes, and instead of fertile valleys and wooded heights there is bleak moorland, denuded rocks and piled up mountain crags.

GARVE.

From the Raven's Rock the train steadily descends to Loch Garve and crosses the Blackwater River at the east end of the loch. A very fine view is obtained of the loch, as the line skirts the south side for its entire length. In Gaelic the loch is called *Loch Maol Fhinn* ("Loch of the shaveling or servant of St Fionn"). At the west end of the loch is the farm of Killin, Gaelic *Cill-Fhinn*, "the Church of St Fionn," where once, no doubt, stood a church dedicated to the saint. There is a Gaelic saying to the effect that this church was one of the three oldest in Scotland—"Cill-Fhinn 's Cill-Duinn 's Cill-Donnain, na trì cilltean is sine an Albainn" (Killin, Kildun, and Kildonan, the three oldest cells (chapels) in Scotland").

At Garve the traveller by rail who intends visiting Braemore, Lochbroom, and Ullapool must leave the train. There is an excellent hotel. W. D. Mackenzie, who runs the Garve to Ullapool mail and motors, is proprietor.

Shortly after passing the hotel a good view is obtained of the Garve to Ullapool road, which branches off to the right at the commencement of the Dirriemore (Gaelic *An Diridh Mòr*, the great ascent).

About two and a half miles beyond Garve, Corriemoillie Lodge is passed on the right.

LOCHLUICHART.

The next station is called Lochluichart, from the loch of that name adjoining. Of Lochluichart, which is about five miles long, only a slight glimpse is obtained through the trees. Near the station is Lochluichart Lodge, a seat of the Marquis of Northampton.

About two centuries ago, so tradition records, the burn which falls into the west end of Lochluichart, from the north, swept away and drowned for their greed and impiety the inhabitants of a hamlet situated near its mouth.

A church was located near by, possibly where the present stands. During service the worshippers were accustomed to turn loose their ponies to graze, but the hamlet-folk abusively objected, hence as punishment came this local repetition of the Deluge. At the west gable of the church is the tomb of Lady Ashburton, a great friend of Thomas Carlyle's.

About a mile beyond the head of Lochluichart the Fannich or Grudie river discharges the water of Loch Fannich into the River Bran.

On the Grudie is *Leum Ruairidh* ("Rory's Leap"), so called after Rory Mor Mackenzie, First of Achilty, who overthrew an Italian wrestler at the Court of James V. He was one of the most powerful Highlanders physically of his day. He died in 1533. While one day hunting at the Grudie, accompanied his alleged natural son Murdoch, he said to the lad, "Ma's mac leams' thu lean mise" ("If you are a son of mine follow me"), and leapt across the stream in one bound from one rocky ledge to another. The lad, seizing two of the deerhounds, one under each arm, immediately followed, and in consequence was acknowledged as his son. Murdoch went to Court, and became a Gentleman of the Bedchamber to James V. He obtained letters of legitimation in 1539, and a grant of the lands of Fairburn in 1542.

ACHANALT.

Proceeding to Achanalt, first Loch Cullin and then Loch Achanalt, both good trout fishing lochs, are passed.

From Achanalt to Achnasheen, a distance of about six and a half miles, the course of the River Bran is closely followed. The strath is of the same name, which is said to be derived from Loch Bran, a very small loch below the railway line, about half a mile to the west of Achanalt Station.

The legendary account of the origin of the name Bran I gave in the *Celtic Review* of October, 1909, and is as follows:—The Feans were one day hunting in *Carn na Béiste* ("the cairn of the monster or beast"), a round high hill in the Achanalt Moor, opposite Aultdearg. In Cairn na Béiste dwelt a ferocious monster, after which the hill has been named, as well as a little loch, *Loch na Béiste*, "the loch of the monster", to the south of the hill. The Feans saw the beast in the distance, and Finn sent his dog Bran to attack the monster, but when Bran went near and saw its fearful and hideous aspect, his courage failed him and he fled, his tail between his legs. Finn urged him back a second time, but on again coming near the beast he feared to attack, and returned crouching through the heather full of fear and shame, and crept behind his master for protection. This unusual conduct on the part of his favourite dog aroused the wrath of Finn, and turning he kicked him with his foot. Astonished, insulted, and ashamed, Bran ran down the hillside until

the level ground of the strath was reached. There, near the river bank, he burrowed a hole and quickly disappeared out of sight. The Feans immediately followed in pursuit, but when they arrived at the hole he was beyond reach. They tried to coax him out, but he would not answer, not even Finn's endearing supplications would induce him to come out. The Feans finally decided to dig him out, but the deeper they dug the deeper he burrowed, till finally water rose in the hole, and they were compelled to desist. The hole filled with water, and there is a little loch there till this day, called Loch Bran, and the whole Strath received the name Strath Bran (in Gaelic, Strath of Bran) from that time.

Finn wept for Bran. Twice only in his lifetime did Finn weep, for his grandson Oscar, son of Ossian, killed at the battle of Gabhra, and for Bran. Bran is one of those strange hounds of Celtic myth, usually snow-white with red ears, but in the Heroic Gaelic Ballads, Bran is invariably described as having "yellow feet, two black flanks or sides, a white belly, a blue-black back, and two sharp-pointed, blood-red ears."

ACHNASHEEN.

The road and the railway line both follow the left bank of the River Bran for about six miles, until Achnasheen is reached; there the river is crossed, and they both turn southwards towards Loch Gowan. Immediately before the river is reached, the road to Gairloch, Poolewe and Aultbea branches off on the right, and at Achnasheen the traveller for those places must leave the train. There is a refreshment room and a first-class hotel, and good fishing can be obtained locally. Near the hotel is seen Ledgowan Lodge, while a little further on Loch Gowan is reached. About a mile beyond Loch Gowan the watershed is passed, and the descent to the western seaboard begun. The road here leaves the Parish of Contin, which is entered near Kilellan, Strathpeffer, some 27 miles back.

Soon Loch Scaven, or Sgamhain, with its two beautiful wooded islets, is reached and, if travelling by rail, passed on the right, while on the left is seen the towering mass of Moruisg (3026) and Glencarron entered. Both road and railway line now closely follow the course of the Carron river.

Loch Scaven is said to take its name from *Sgamhain*, "lungs or lights," all that was supposed to remain of a person devoured by a water-horse. The lungs for some reason were supposed to float ashore.

The water-horse lured his victims to their death in the following manner. He usually appeared as a sleek well-fed horse grazing peacefully by a loch side. On being approached, he quietly remained to be caught, or even mounted—frequently three or four children mounted him at the same time—but woe betide those who did. The water-horse immediately rushed into the loch, and there was no possible escape, for whoever touched him stuck immovably fast, and the liver, afterwards floating ashore, remained the only evidence of the disaster.

“ Alas! for the man who would clutch the mane—
There is no spell to help and no charm to save!
Who rides him will never return again,
Were he as strong, O were he as brave
As Finn-mac-Coul, of whom they’ll tell
He thrashed the devil and made him yell.”

Glencarron Lodge is soon reached and passed, and after a fairly sharp descent by road, Craig, on the Achnashellach estate of the Forestry Commission, comes into view, with its red-roofed bungalows, built for the Forestry workers, while on the hillside slopes can be seen countless young pine trees.

ACHNASHELLACH.

Two miles beyond Craig is Achnashellach Lodge, not far from Loch Dughail, “Dugald’s Loch,” in a lovely wooded spot at the foot of Fuar Tholl (2965 ft.), with the railway station nearby. The loch is passed on the left, and the valley gradually widens out till the head of Loch Carron is reached. About four miles from the east end of the loch the road and railway line diverge, the line following the south side and the road the north side of the loch.

STRATHCARRON.

Strathcarron Station is about three-quarters of a mile from the head of Loch Carron, which is an arm of the western sea. About fifteen minutes’ walk from Strathcarron Station is a fine double waterfall, in Glen Udale, on the Taodal river, called *Eas an Teampuill*, “Temple Waterfall,” near which at one time stood a chapel dedicated to St Maelruba of Applecross.

Both Achnashellach and Strathcarron are in the Parish of Lochcarron. Strathcarron is the station for Jeantown or Lochcarron village, Courthill, Kishorn, and Shieldaig; also for Applecross by road from Thornapress across Bealach nam Bo. There is a mail-car service to Jeantown and the others, with the exception of Applecross, to which the usual access is by sea from Kyle of Lochalsh.

Quite close to North Strome Hotel, about five miles beyond Jeantown, is the ruins of Strome Castle, blown up and destroyed in 1602 by the Mackenzies in their feuds with the Macdonalds. Perched on a rock, considerable portions of the walls are still standing.

At Lochan Aillseach, a small loch on the march between Lochcarron and Lochalsh parishes, an Earl of Sutherland was repulsed and slain by the Mathesons of Lochalsh, and his body was cast into the loch. It is said that James I. of Scotland hanged 40 of the Mathesons and their adherents near the spot. The Mathesons of old were a powerful clan, and as late as the middle

of the fifteenth century could muster about two thousand men, but they went down before the Mackenzies and the Macdonalds, and as a clan practically disappeared. The Gaelic for Matheson is *Mac-Mhathan*, "Son of the Bear," same as the Irish MacMahon.

Kishorn has a copper mine that is still occasionally worked.

ATTADALE.

A short run by rail of about two miles, along the south-eastern shore of Loch Carron, brings us to Attadale, near which is Attadale House, the seat of Captain Schroder. The estate of Attadale once formed part of the Lochalsh properties. The word Attadale is derived from the Norse.

STROME FERRY.

Stromeferry, the next station, was once the western terminus, the signs of former prosperity being now the derelict pier and the large Station Hotel, now a shooting lodge. Right across the ferry is the ruined Castle of Strome, with a most interesting history connected with the inter-clan feuds. From Stromeferry the public road leads to Balmacarra (8 miles), Dornie Ferry (8 miles), and Kyle (12 miles). As the traveller leaves the station he runs along at the foot of one of the finest raised beaches in the country. About two miles beyond Stromeferry, Fernaig is passed on the left. Here lived Duncan MacRae of Inverinate, chief of his name, who wrote the Fernaig Gaelic Manuscript about the year 1688. The MS. contains about 4200 lines of Gaelic poetry.

A short distance before arriving at Plockton by rail, the traveller, by looking up the face of the cutting, can see the roofs and turrets of Duncraig Castle, a beautifully situated and modern edifice belonging to Sir Daniel M. Hamilton of Balmacarra. Not far off is Loch Achnahinich, which had a lake dwelling where the Macdonalds of Lochalsh lived for several centuries. There is in existence a table constructed from the piles of this ancient building.

PLOCKTON.

Plockton (in Gaelic *Am Ploc*, "the lump," from the humpy promontory behind it) is an interesting place, sprawling along the one shore of a placid little bay, which at one time was the scene of great activity. Here schooners were built and owned, and Plockton sailors were noted. To-day it boasts of an excellent Higher Grade School, and the old school was famed throughout the West Coast. There are Church of Scotland and Free Churches.

DUIRINISH.

Duirinish, the next station, has the Norse name of *Dyranes* (deer point).

KYLE.

Kyle, Gaelic *An Caol*, "the narrow," the terminus of the Skye line, might be called a "mushroom village." Before the advent of the railway there were only three houses; to-day there is a population of about 400. The Kyle Hotel is probably the oldest licensed house in Ross-shire, while the Station Hotel was once the proprietor's house. The private chapel is now a dining-room.

Kyle has Church of Scotland and Free Churches. The Kyle Institute caters for the young people. Billiards and bagatelle tables and various other forms of recreation help to pass the winter nights. The Ross-shire Territorials have a fine Drill Hall. There are branches of the Commercial Bank and the Bank of Scotland. Across the ferry, in the Isle of Skye, is the village of Kyleakin, near which are the ruins of Castle Moyle (*Casteal Maol*, Bare Castle), which tradition asserts to have been the home of Norse princes in the dim past. Behind the Castle rises *Beinn na Caillich* (the Old Woman's Ben), 2396 ft., said to be so called after a Norse princess, Haughty Mary, who desired to be buried on the top in order that the winds from Norway might fan the scant herbage on her last resting-place.

Kyleakin (Gaelic *Cail Acaid*, the narrow or straits of Haco) takes its name from Haco, King of Norway, who anchored there with his fleet on his way to the Battle of Largs, 1263, where the Norse rovers were tamed once and for all by King Alexander III. As a result of this battle the Norse Kingdom of the Isles was ceded to Scotland three years later.

Along the shore between Kyle and Balmacara, on the road to Aird Ferry, is a monument erected to Donald Murchison, factor to the exiled Lord Seaforth, who, despite his master's outlawry, was able to see that the exile received his rents regularly. The monument was erected by Sir Roderick I. Murchison, the great geologist, to his gallant kinsman.

There are remains of ancient buildings not far from Balmacara Hotel—one above Achtertyre, another in Glenudalen (now uninhabited), but at one time turning out 60 armed men), and a third, Dunalistair, at Ceannamòine, while Creag an Tigh Mhóir has the remains of an ancient place of worship, and at Fernfield there was once a convent, while the name of Cnoc nam Bachall, above the present manse of Lochalsh, suggests the existence of a monastery not far distant. The church is dedicated to Saint Comgan, uncle of Saint Fillan.

About ten miles from Kyle is Aird Ferry Hotel, at Aird Ferry (one-eighth mile), at the mouth of Loch Long. On the south side is the village of Dornie, in the Parish of Kintail. This parish lies to the south of the Parish of Lochalsh. From Aird Point there is also a ferry to Totaig, in the Parish of Glenshiel.

PARISH OF KINTAIL.

About half-a-mile to the south of Aird Ferry is the island and Castle of Eilean Donnain. The Castle is said to have been built by Farquhar, II. Earl

of Ross, about 1220. It was one of the chief strongholds in the West from the thirteenth century onwards, and was held either by the Crown or the Earls of Ross. From the fifteenth century onwards it was usually in possession of the Mackenzies of Kintail, until it was blown up and demolished by orders of General Wightman, after the battle of Glenshiel, 1719. The Castle has been restored by Lieut.-Colonel MacRae-Gilstrap, who, as one of the claimants to the Chiefship of the Clan MacRae, purchased the island and castle, as well as the estate of Conchra on the north shore of Loch Long. Loch Long, "Ship Loch," is so called because St Fillan's body was brought in a vessel, considered large in those distant days (c. 750), to be buried in the place which has since borne his name, Killilan (*Cill-Fhaolain*, "Fillan's Church"), near the head of the loch. There is the site of a chapel, and the burying-ground is still in use.



Valentine

Shiel and Loch Duich

Dundee

The famous Loch Duich is named after Saint Duthac or Duthus, who also gave to Tain its Gaelic name of *Baile Dhubhthaich*; the old chapel and burying-ground here are also named after him.

The Falls of Glomach, near the head of Glen Elchaig, is the highest waterfall in Britain, about 350 feet high. The hill above the Falls is *Carnan Cruithneach*, "the little cairn of the Cruithne or Picts."

Dunan Diarmaid, near the Manse of Kintail, is where the Fingalian hero, Diarmad, is supposed to have lived. Nearby can be seen the mounds under which, according to tradition, lie himself and some of his fellow-heroes.

The mountains above Inverinate, Tulachàrd, gave their war-cry to the Clan Mackenzie.

Near Dornie was worked a copper mine in which small quantities of gold were once found. There is also a rock of asbestos, but it has not been commercially exploited.

PARISH OF GLENSHIEL.

As already mentioned, access to Glenshiel Parish from Lochalsh is by ferry to Totaig. From there a fairly good road leads up to Glenshiel and down Glenmoriston to Lochness-side (42 miles), and to Inverness (69 miles), or Fort-William (81 miles).

Near Totaig is the remains of a Broch known as Castle Grugaig. Glenshiel Church and Manse are passed about three miles beyond Totaig, and immediately after an old disused burying-ground, *Cill-Chaointeort*, dedicated to St Kentigerna (died 734). She came from Ireland, accompanied by her brother Comgan and her son Fillan, and is said to have died on *Inch Cailleach*, "Nuns' Isle," in Loch Lomond.

At the upper end of the Parish are five magnificent bens; one of these, the highest, *Sgurr Uran* (3505), gave their war-cry to the MacRaes. Two of General Wade's bridges exist, one near Shiel School, and the other at East Cluanie. A building erected by Wade, and for long a stage house, is still used as a dwelling-house.

In June, 1719, was fought the Battle of Glenshiel, between Jacobite forces, composed chiefly of the Earl of Seaforth's men, assisted by a body of some 300 Spaniards, and the famous Rob Roy with a party of Macgregors, and Hanoverian troops, assisted by Frasers, Munros, and Sutherlands, under General Wightman. After a sharp action of about three hours the Jacobite forces dispersed, and next day the Spaniards, numbering 274, surrendered.

In Gleann Lichd, at the foot of Ben Attow (3383), Beinn Fhada, "the long hill," is Ach-a-dhachd, one of the legendary sites of Diarmad's death. The well which burst forth at his dying wish for water is still known as *Tobar an Tuirc*, "the boar's well." Diarmad, as is well known, died of the wound caused by the boar's poisonous bristle, and, as already mentioned, is said to be buried in Dunan Diarmaid, near the Manse of Kintail. Diarmad was the Adonis of the Gael, and the scenes of his elopement with Grainne, the wife of his uncle Finn, the pursuit, and his death, has been localised in many places in Scotland and Ireland.

APPLECROSS.

The name Applecross comes from an earlier *Apor-crossan*, meaning the confluence of the Crossan, now Applecross river.

The Parish of Applecross, of which fully one-half is a peninsula, measures about 17 miles north to south and 16 east to west. The only way of access by

land to the peninsular portion is from Tornapress, through *Am Bealach* or *Bealach nam Bo*, "the pass of the kine," by a road which rises to a height of 2054 feet in about five miles. The most convenient way of getting there is by boat from Kyle of Lochalsh.

The Parish in Gaelic is called *A' Chomraich*, "the Sanctuary," from the right of sanctuary which was attached to the monastery founded by St Maelruba, Abbot of Bangor, Ulster, in 673, at the head of Applecross Bay. The Sanctuary is said to have extended six miles in each direction. We have already described the spot in the Parish of Urquhart where he is said to have been murdered by the Norsemen in 722. According to tradition, his body was carried to Applecross for burial, and several of the places where the bearers rested with the body for the night are still called *Suidhe Ma Ruibh*, "Maelruba's seat." Next to St Columba, he was the most famous saint of the Scots-Irish Church.

The site of the monastery is said to be that of the present Churchyard, in which there are at least two early Celtic sculptured stones. One cross-marked stone stands 9 feet 4 inches high, and is known as *Clach Ruairidh Mhóir Mhic Caoigean*. A Mac Oigi was promoted from Applecross to be Abbot of Bangor, and died there in 802.

Near the north end of the peninsular portion of the Parish is a place called *Arrin-a-chruinach*, which possibly means *Airidh nan Cruithneach*, "the Picts' sheiling."

In the mainland portion of the Parish are the villages of Shieldaig and Torridon.

The railway station for Shieldaig is Strathcarron (19 miles), as mentioned above, while that for Torridon is Achnasheen (20 miles). Tornapress, famous in motor hill-climbing records, is about ten miles from Strathcarron on the shieldaig road. From the summit at Bealach nam Bo a magnificent view is obtained of the islands of Rona, Raasay, and Skye, and the numerous islets adjoining them.

GARVE TO LOCHBROOM, COIGACH, AND DUNDONNELL.

From Garve the road follows the course of the Blackwater river up to Strath Garve. The long steep ascent is called the Dirriemore, "the great ascent." About five miles out Inchbae Lodge is passed on the left, and four miles further on Altguish Inn is reached. Loch Droma, the small loch passed on the left, six miles beyond Altguish, lies near the watershed, and drains into Loch Broom.

At the east end of Loch Droma the parishes of Contin and Lochbroom meet. They are two of the most extensive parishes in Britain: the former measures 25 miles from north to south, and 24 from east to west, while the latter similarly measures 29 and 22 miles.

The Corryhalloch Chasm, with the Falls of Measach (*Easan na Miasaich*, "the falls of the basins or bowls," from the pot-holes worn in the rock by the

pebbles swirling under the action of the current), about 20 miles from Garve, form one of the finest natural features in the county. The Dundonnell road here branches off to the left. Slightly further on is Braemore House, the residence of Sir Montague Fowler.

At the head of Loch Broom is situated the Church and Manse of Loch Broom. Leckmelm is reached 29 miles from Garve, and within 100 yards of Raonachroisg bridge (one-third of a mile east of Leckmelm House), on the west side of the burn, there is the remains of a broch. There is said to have been a desperate clan fight at Leckmelm about the year 1585, between the Mackays and the Gunns, in which the latter suffered severely.

On the other side of the loch are two brochs, one at Rhiroy, immediately opposite, and the other at Logic, slightly to the west. The former, which is about 40 feet diameter internally, is in a fair state of preservation, but the latter is in a ruinous condition.

The village of Ullapool, established by the British Fishery Society in 1788, is reached 32 miles from Garve. There are two hotels, Royal and Caledonian, a branch of the National Bank, an excellent new Secondary School, a Fishery Office, and a Coastguard Station. The name comes from the Norse *Ullibólstadr*, Ulli's home-stead (Gaelic *Ulabol*). The Ullapool river and lochs in the vicinity afford good angling, and bathing may be safely enjoyed. There is also a tennis green.

Rhidorroch, with a lodge on Loch Achall, and extensive deer forest, is an interesting place. The loch offers attraction to the fisher and the artist.

About seven miles beyond Ullapool, on the road to Coigach and Lochinver, the River Kanaird is crossed. About a mile above the bridge, on the south side of the stream, is the remains of a broch, while on the sea-shore, a mile to the North of the river mouth, is the ruins of another, Dun Canna. That the brochs were erected previous to the Norse invasions is evident from the fact that they called the bay *Kann fjordr* (Can-firth), whence Loch Kanaird (Gaelic *Loch Cainneart*), from the can-like appearance of the Canna Broch, seen from the sea. In the mouth of the bay lies Isle Martin, where there is an old burying-ground containing some ancient sculptured stones.

On the left towers the mass of Ben More Coigach (2438). Ten miles beyond Ullapool the road forks, the Coigach road branching to the left (west), while the Lochinver road goes straight ahead, and three miles further on enters Sutherlandshire. The Coigach road follows the north shores of Loch Lurgainn and Loch Bad a' Ghail for six miles. Coigach (Gaelic *a chóigeach*), "the place of fifths," referring to the division of land into fifths, an ancient practice among the Gael.

Loch Lurgainn ("Shank Loch") has a quaint Fean tale attached, explanatory of the name. One day, while in his youth, Finn, accompanied by his grandmother, was chased by his foes, and finding the old woman unable to escape from their pursuers, he threw her over his shoulder, holding her by the legs. The pursuit was long and fast and furious, as he fled from the east

coast of Ross to the west, through dense forests choked with fallen trees, underwood, and thickets. Over mountain and ben, down valley and glen, he sped till, throwing off all pursuit, he rested at Loch Lurgainn, there only to discover that the various obstacles and obstructions through which he had forced his way left him of his grandmother only the *lurgainn* (the shank or leg). It was no time for vain regret, so he pitched them into the loch, hence the name Loch Lurgainn.

Eighteen and a half miles from Ullapool the road again forks. The road to the north leads to Inverpolly Lodge, while the main road passes along the north side of Loch Osgaig, bending south at the west end of Badentarbet (23 miles) and Achiltibuie (25 miles). At Badenscallie (26 miles) is the site of an old chapel on the sea-shore.

Off Coigach are the Summer Isles, well worth a visit, with the well-known safe anchorage on the eastern side of Tanera More, in Badentarbet Bay.

Reiff, towards Coigach Point (*Rudha na Coigich*), takes its name from the reef adjoining (Norse *rif*, a reef).

As already mentioned, the Dundonnell Road branches off to the left at the Falls of Measach, on the Garve to Ullapool road. Some magnificent views of mountain and sea are obtained on the way to Dundonnell Inn, at the head of Little Loch Broom, some 13 miles from the junction. Near Dundonnell there is a fine waterfall and gorge that no one who visits Dundonnell should miss, while about three miles to the west, on the way to Gruinard, are Ardessie Falls.

High above Dundonnell rises the mountain mass of An Teallach, with its twin peaks, the highest in Ross-shire (3483, 3474).

Gruinard House, nine miles beyond Dundonnell Inn, is finely situated on the lovely Bay of Gruinard, with Gruinard Island in front. From Gruinard to Gairloch Hotel by Aultbea and Poolewe is 21 miles.

ACHNASHEEN TO TORRIDON, GAIRLOCH, POOLEWE, AND AULTBEA.

A motor mail runs daily from Achnasheen to Gairloch and Poolewe by Loch Maree. About a mile from Achnasheen is Loch Rosque House, the residence of Mrs Hanbury. The grounds are nicely laid out, and can be well seen off the road. The plantation of a large tract here has turned a bleak moor into an attractive landscape. For three miles the road follows the north shore of Loch Rosque. From there, near the west end of the loch, the road gradually rises till the summit (815 feet high) is reached.

About six miles from the station, at a curve in the road during the steep descent of Glen Docharty, the traveller comes in view of Loch Maree, in the valley below. This magnificent loch is here seen in bird's eye, with the mighty Slioch rising apparently sheer from the water's edge to 3217 feet. Loch Maree, with its numerous islands, and encircled by mighty bens, all of them about 3000 feet high, is a view which if once seen will never be forgotten.

There are remains of an ancient iron works near the head and also at the foot of Glen Docharty. Here Ben Eay (*Beinn Eighe*) File peak, so called from its serrated outline, comes in view. Its peaks of white quartz rock and its shapely form make it a most effective sight. Kinlochewe Hotel is reached ten miles from Achnasheen, and is about a mile and a half from the head of Loch Maree. Kinlochewe means the head of Loch Ewe, from which it would appear that this was the former name for Loch Maree. Near Kinlochewe is the old burial-ground of Culinellan, while further down the river is a ford called *Ath nan ceann* (the ford of the heads), from the circumstance of the heads of the slain, thrown after a battle into the river further up, stranding there.

The Torridon road strikes off to the left shortly after leaving the village.

The waterfall on the face of Beinn a' Mhùinidh is seen on the right behind Taagan Farm, but is not noticeable except in wet weather.

Ru Nohar Pier (Gaelic *Rudh' 'n Fhomhair*, Giant Point), near the head of Loch Maree, is 12 miles from Achnasheen. The road follows the loch side through Glas-leitire Wood, with its mingled foliage of firs and birches. Before reaching Grudie Bridge a magnificent view can be got of Glen Grudie, with Ruadh Stac (3309 feet), one of the peaks of Beinn Eighe, and the highest in the Parish of Gairloch, in the background. A mile further on, Eileen Gruidh (Grudie Island) is seen on the right, where formerly was a stronghold, first held by the Macbeaths and then by the Macleods during the thirteenth to sixteenth centuries, when the Macleods were finally ousted by the Mackenzies.

Soon Talladale, where there are remains of old ironworks, and Loch Maree Hotel are reached, 19½ miles from Achnasheen. Queen Victoria stayed in this hotel from the 12th to the 18th September, 1877, and a stone opposite the front door bears an inscription to that effect.

After passing the hotel the Gairloch road follows the loch for about a mile before it strikes to the south. On the Garavaig River is Victoria Falls, which received their name from the Queen's visit. They are situated about half-a-mile to the right of the bridge. On nearing Gairloch the road enters the Pass of Kerrysdale, and follows the course of the Kerry river, which flows through some magnificent gorges on the left. The Kerry Falls, four miles from Gairloch, should not be missed. At the foot of Kerrysdale is Charleston, and Gairloch Post Office stands at the head of the little bay where the steamers discharge cargo and passengers.

Flowerdale House, the Gairloch residence of Sir Hector Mackenzie of Gairloch, Bart., is on the right, about a quarter of a mile off the public road. Near it may be seen the garden walls of the former house, called *Tighe Dige* (Moat House), from its being surrounded by a ditch. Mounting the "brae," the Bank of Scotland is passed on the right.

On the left, by the sea-shore, is the site of *An Dun*, the ancient Castle of Gairloch, some traces of the foundations of which still remain, with signs of vitrification, which may possibly belong to an earlier fort. Slightly further on the Parish Church is passed on the right, while on the opposite side of the road

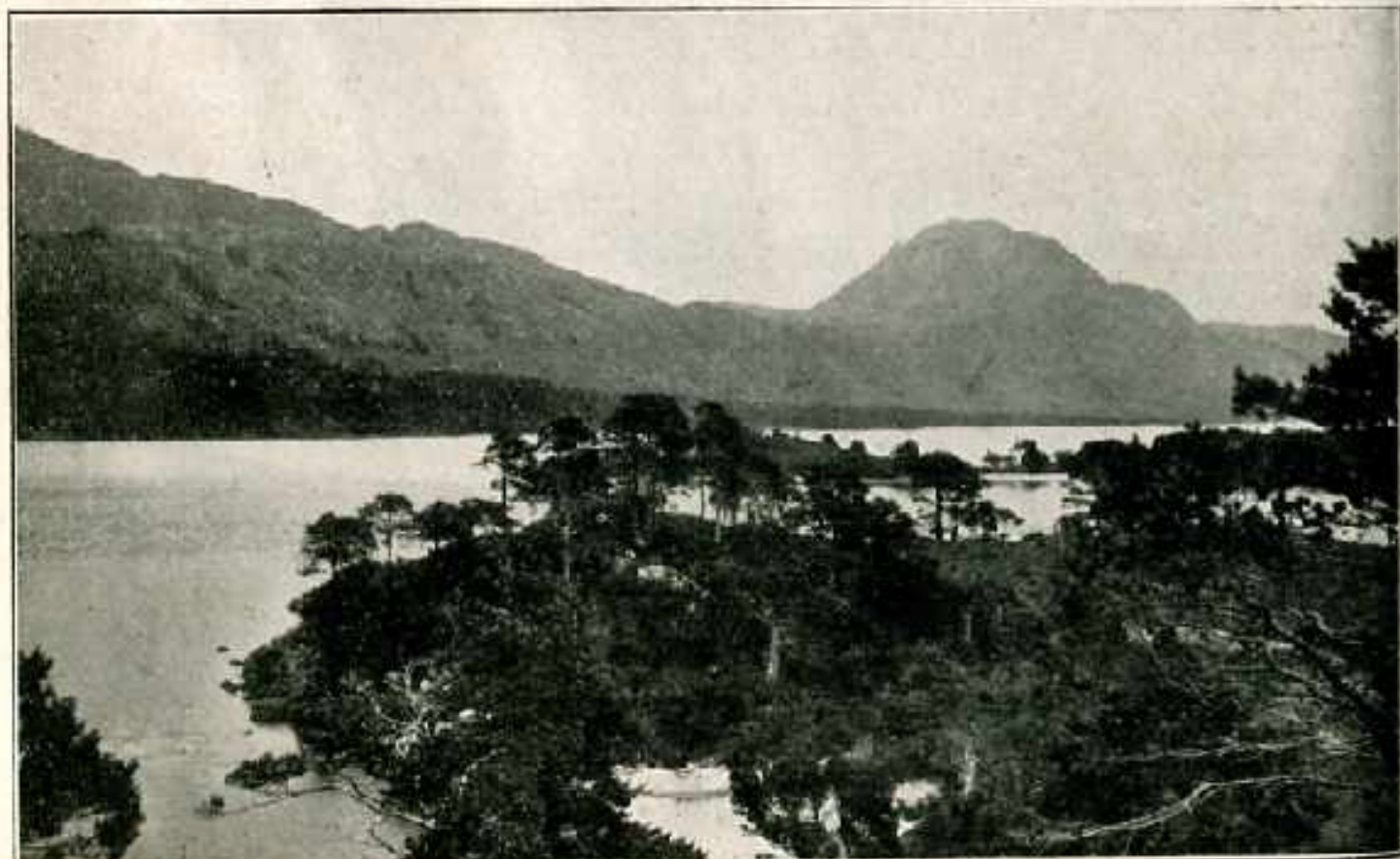
is the famous natural bowl-shaped hollow known as *Leabaidh na ba baine* (the bed of the white cow), scooped out by Finn to enable his white cow to calve. The *Leabaidh* is used during the Communion season, and large congregations worship there. It is also included in the grounds of an excellent nine-hole Golf Course.

Slightly to the west, on the same side of the road, is the burying-ground, where once stood a chapel dedicated to St Maelruba, who founded the Monastery of Applecross. Next comes the Free Church, a handsome structure, and Gairloch Hotel, 29 miles from Achnasheen—one of the most commodious hotels in the Highlands. It has a magnificent view, Skye, Harris, and Lewis being visible in clear weather. Fishing, boating, and bathing facilities are provided. The bay abounds in a great variety of fish, affording good sport, while there are three excellent trout lochs free to visitors to the hotel.

At Achtercairn, so called from the cairn on the sea-shore, the road to Strath, Big Sand, and Melvaig strikes off to the left. On the west side of the burn is seen the Manse of Gairloch, which was partly built when Hugh Miller was a youth, and the famous geologist worked at the building in 1823.

About three miles beyond Gairloch Hotel Loch Tollie, a mile in length, is reached and passed on the right. It has an artificial island on which was a stronghold of the Macbeaths, and afterwards of the Macleods.

A little further on the road to Tollie Pier strikes off on the right. At this point a grand view of Loch Maree presents itself. The whole length of the loch, with its lovely wooded islands, and Glen Docharty beyond, a distance of some



seventeen to eighteen miles, can be seen on any tolerably clear day, while, in the far distance, are seen the peaks of the Strathconon and Monar hills, some thirty miles away, and in the immediate foreground the natural woods at the base of Craig Tollie. The Poolewe road now turns sharply to the left and descends Croft Brae. To the left of the high road, two hundred yards beyond Cruive End, is a green hillock, *Cnoc na mi-chomhairle*, "Hill of evil counsel," where Allan Macleod, who owned Gairloch and lived on the island in Loch Tollie, was killed about 1480 by his two brothers for marrying a Mackenzie, a daughter of Alastair Ionraic. As a result of this murder Hector Roy Mackenzie, the first of the Mackenzies of Gairloch, third son of Alastair Ionraic, received a Crown charter to the lands of Gairloch in 1494.

Six miles from Gairloch Hotel and thirty-five from Achnasheen we arrive at the village of Poolewe, situated on the River Ewe at the head of Loch Ewe. At the Inn boats can be hired for sea-fishing, and trout fishing can generally be had on some fresh-water lochs.

To reach Poolewe by motor-boat from Kinlochewe we embark at Ru Nohar Pier, as already mentioned, but before proceeding down the loch it will be well to give some particulars regarding it. Its length, including the navigable portion of the River Ewe, which is really a continuation of the loch is $13\frac{1}{2}$ miles, and its maximum breadth at the islands is $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles. Its waters cover an area of over 11 square miles, and the islands, said to be twenty-four in all, but the number vary according to the height of the water, cover an area of nearly one square mile. The loch surface is only 29 feet above sea level, while its greatest depth is 367 feet to the south-west of Rudh' a Ghiubhais, near the head of the loch. At the deepest portion the bottom of the loch is therefore 338 feet below sea level. Setting out from the pier, the Glas-leitre Wood is seen on the left of the loch, and Fasagh on the right. On the east side of Fasagh burn are extensive remains of an old ironworks, while slightly to the west of the burn is *Cladh nan Sasunnach*, "the burying-ground of the Englishmen," where the workmen at the ironworks were probably buried. Soon lordly Slioch (3217 feet), its sides furrowed with water-worn gullies, is reached on the right, while on the opposite side of the loch a fine view can be obtained up Glen Grudie, with Ruadh Stack in the background. Five miles from the head of the loch Eilean Grudidh (Grudie Island) is passed, formerly a stronghold. Furness, alongside the stream of the same name, is seen on the right. It takes its name (Gaelic *An Fhùirneis*, "the furnace") from the iron smelting works established there by Sir George Hay, afterwards first Earl of Kinnoull, about 1607. Slightly to the west is Letterewe House, belonging to the Marquis of Zetland. On rounding a promontory, which considerably narrows the loch, the islands come into view. The names of the principal ones, commencing with the nearest and taking them in order, are Eilean Mhic an Fhùlaraich, Eilean Eachainn, Eilean Ma-rui' (Isle Maree), Eilean Subhainn, the largest of the group, has a small loch 64 feet deep, and as the loch surface is about 30 feet above Loch Maree, while Loch Maree is

about 29 feet above sea level, the bottom of this loch is therefore 34 feet below the surface of Loch Maree and 5 feet below sea level. The Mackenzie Lairds of Gairloch lived on this island in the early part of the seventeenth century. Next comes Eilean Dubh na sroine ("Black island or the promontory or nose"), Garbh Eilean ("Rough Island"), Eilean Ruairidh Mòr and Eilean Ruairidh Beag ("Rory's big island and Rory's little island"). Both these latter islands were occupied by the Macleod and Mackenzie Lairds of Gairloch in former days. The most interesting island, of course, is Isle Maree, with its holy well and ancient burying-ground, containing the ruins of a small chapel. It takes its name from St Maelruba, who, doubtless, founded the chapel on the island, and whence came the change in the name of the loch from Ewe to Maree.



Valentine

Flowerdale, Gairloch

Dundas

As the centuries passed and the memory of his personality became dim, the devotions paid to Maelruba as a saint elevated him to a god. We learn from the Records of the Presbytery of Dingwall for 5th and 9th September, 1656, that bulls were sacrificed to him on the 25th of August each year, while under date 6th August, 1678, Hector Mackenzie, his two sons, and grandson, are summoned "for sacrificing a bull in an heathenish manner in the island of St Ruffus, commonly called Ellan Moury in Lochew, for the recovering of the health of Cristane Mackenzie, spouse to the said Hector Mackenzie, who was formerlie sicke and valetudinairie," but they did not appear.

The Well was resorted to for the cure of lunacy in particular, the usual

offerings being money or coloured cloth, the former driven into, the latter fastened to, the oak tree overhanging the well.

There is also a tragic legend attached to the isle. It concerns a Norse prince and his bride, who lived and are buried there, with their feet placed towards each other. Two undressed stones, each having the outlines of a mediæval cross incised thereon, cover their graves. Related very shortly, the main incidents are as follows:—The prince, after a brief married life, was called away to lead his men on an expedition. To hasten the knowledge of each other's welfare on his return, it was agreed between them that he was to hoist a white sail on his barge if all was well, and a black one if it were ill; the princess to do likewise.

In due course he returned and sailed down the loch with a white sail hoisted, but she, having become jealous and doubtful of his fidelity in his absence, to test him had a black sail hoisted on her barge, and herself laid out on board as if dead, with her maidens around her simulating sorrow. When the barges met, frantic with grief and despair, he leaped on board where his loved one lay shrouded. After one hurried glance at her still, pale face and motionless form, which seemed to confirm his worst fear and shatter all his hopes, he plunged his dagger into his heart. Too late convinced of her husband's passionate love, she hastened to the place where he had fallen, drew the dirk reeking red from his heart, and drove it through her own.

On a wooded knoll opposite Isle Maree there is an artificial cave, called *Uaimh an Oir* ("the cave of gold"). It is said to have been made by miners searching for silver or gold.

Loch Maree Hotel is at Talladale, opposite Eilean Subhainn. This is a first-class hotel, and residence either there or at Kinlochewe Hotel carries the right to fish 10 miles of the loch. Both sea trout and yellow trout give good sport, but although salmon get freely into the loch, they are seldom caught.

Leaving Talladale Pier, Talladale Wood is passed on the left, and soon the mouth of the Garavaig stream is reached. Victoria Falls, about half-a-mile from the shore, may be seen through the trees. At Slatadale are the remains of old iron smeltings. Soon the islands are rounded, and on the beach to the south of Ardlair may be seen a large boulder called *Clach a' mháil* ("the stone of the rent"), where the proprietors of the Letterewe estate at one time gathered their rents.

Between *Clach a' mháil* and Ardlair House is *Uaimh mhic an righ* ("the cave of the king's son"), in a natural cairn of enormous rocks, about one hundred and fifty yards from the shore. There is a legend attached of the son of a king or a great chief having taken refuge there. Having passed Ardlair, the rocky heights of Craig Tollie are seen rising sheer from the water's edge, on the left. This dark precipitous cliff is about 300 feet high, while the loch at this point is about 180 feet deep. A little further on is Tollie Pier, where we go ashore. It is in a small bay formed by Fox Point, behind which it is the outlet of Loch Maree to the River Ewe.

The large stones in the loch, in line with the base of Fox Point, near the outlet, were, according to tradition, placed there by Finn to enable him to cross the loch to go a-courting without getting his feet wet.

Close by is Inveran House, where lived for many years John H. Dixon who wrote a particularly fine and exhaustive account of the Parish of Gairloch.

On the right bank of the River Ewe, about half a mile from Poolewe, are the remains of *A' Cheardach Ruadh* ("the Red Smiddy"); probably it was also part of Sir George Hay's undertaking. The old furnace, about six feet square, can still be traced.

It is stated that cannon were cast here as late as the end of the seventeenth century.

Leaving Poolewe for Aultbea, the road follows the shore of the bay at the head of Loch Ewe. On the right is seen the Londubh or Inverewe burial ground, while on the left are Inverewe House and grounds, the property of Mrs Hanbury, whose father, the late Mr Osgood H. Mackenzie of Inverewe, wrote a most interesting book, "A Hundred Years in the Highlands." At Inverewe are magnificent gardens, in which are to be found the most cosmopolitan collection of plants in the north-west.

Proceeding, Loch nan Dailthean is skirted and Tournaig reached. About two miles north-east of Tournaig is a cave in the hills known as *Uaimh Mhic 'Ille Riabhaich* ("the cave of the son of the brindled lad"), near a loch bearing the same name. In the loch are two small islands, one of them a crannog. Mac Gille Riabhaich was a Macdonald, but on account of an exploit with an oak club he got the name of Darach ("oak"). From him are descended the Darrochs. He was a famous warrior and fought at Flodden; he was also noted as a freebooter. At Tournaig the road bends to the left round the loch, and ascends gradually until Drumchork is reached. On the way a very fine view of Loch Ewe is obtained. In the far distance, in line with the mouth of the loch, the Lews may be seen, while in the immediate foreground lies Isle Ewe. Slightly beyond Drumchork is the village of Aultbea, $6\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Poolewe and $18\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Dundonnell Hotel. There is a good hotel, and excellent fishing can be obtained, both on Loch Ewe and on several fresh water lochs. There is a Post Office and Church of Scotland. The road from Gruinard from Aultbea strikes off to the right, leading north-east across a moor until Laide is reached, $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles out, and passed on the left. Near Laide is the ruined chapel of Sand of Udrigle, seen to the left on the seashore. Locally it is said to be one of the earliest Christian churches on the West coast. A little beyond Sand, in a cove by the sea-shore, are two caves and some curiously-shaped rocks. The hamlets of First and Second Coast are soon passed, and the Little Gruinard river reached, 18 miles from Gairloch Hotel and 47 from Achnasheen.

Two miles beyond Laide, close to the Mellon Udrigle road, is *Loch na Beisté* ("the loch of the monster"). As several parties, including two Free Church elders, reported having seen it, an attempt was made in 1840 to drain the loch and kill or capture the creature. After two years' pumping, without

materially lowering the level of the loch, the project was abandoned, and, instead, fourteen barrels of lime were poured into the deepest part, since when the *beisté* has not been heard of.

At Cove, 8 miles from Poolewe, are caves, one being of interest as having been for a long time a place of worship. A cave at Stirkill, said to contain arms and weapons, is charmed, and can only be seen once in seven years.

There is also a keg of gold, part of Prince Charlie's war chest, hid in the Fedan Mor, two miles to the west of Cove, and it also is only visible once in seven years. Those places are protected by the *seun* or "charm" of invisibility having been placed upon them. This charm also enabled its possessor to become invisible at will, but the charm had this distinction, that the person desirous of becoming invisible had to sight the other party first, or, if already seen, he had to get out of sight momentarily. For instance, to throw oneself in the heather was quite sufficient concealment to enable the charm to act.

A man who had frequently exercised this charm while engaged in smuggling, in discussing a certain exciseman with my grandfather, remarked, "He was the heaviest man who ever stepped on me." Evidently the exciseman had stepped over him without seeing him.

The Gael had charms for many other occasions, and all equally effective, if all tales be true. The commonest charm is for a sprain or bruised sinew. I have worn it, but I cannot say I obtained any special relief. I fear the incantation was not properly performed. Another well-known charm was to stop bleeding, effective on human beings or horses, but not so on cattle. Or rather it was effective on cattle, but the power of the charm left for seven years the individual who so used it. Less common were charms which took particles out of the eye, and for colic, while possessors of the charms for invisibility and for protection against steel and lead were rare.

All charms had this peculiarity, that they had to be transmitted from a male to a female, or *vice versa*. They could not be taught direct by a male to a male, or a female to a female.

BEN WYVIS.

By WILLIAM MACKENZIE, Procurator-Fiscal.

No young or vigorous visitor should leave Dingwall or its neighbourhood without ascending Ben Wyvis. This broad-based mountain, under the shadow of which Strathpeffer so cosily nestles, attains at its highest elevation a height of 3429 feet, and forms the most prominent object in the eastern landscape of Ross. Next to Ben Nevis, it is perhaps the best known of all the Highland hills, although, on account of the easiness of ascent, its name may not be found on the lists of the Scottish Mountaineering Club. The best and shortest route to the top passes upwards from Achterneed Station. Diverging to the left through the crofts, and rounding the western shoulder of Cnoc Vannie, the broad valley of the Skiach comes into view, upon crossing which the base of the mountain is reached. Ascending in an easterly direction, and

winding round the shoulder that looks into Corrie Choin Odhar (the brown dog corry), the Big Well may be found at an elevation of 2700 feet. Before starting on the final stage of his journey, the traveller will pause here to drink of the sparkling spring and view the enlarging prospect. Passing upwards from the well, following the line of the deer fence to Corrie na Feòla, and continuing round its edge, he soon reaches the cairn looking down on one side into the depths of the Corrie and on the other into the valley of the Black Water.

On the way the geologist may find some interest in passing from the Old Red Sandstone at Achterneed into the region of the schists, and may perhaps in the lower parts stumble across some specimens of the latter studded with innumerable garnets, while near the top he will see blocks of crystalline quartz appearing in the distance like masses of frozen snow. The rich and varied Alpine flora will no doubt attract the notice of the botanist, while he who is neither geologist nor botanist will not fail to admire between the two and three thousand feet level the luscious-looking cloudberry as it ripens in all the glory of scarlet and gold. And as one rises above the heather line it will be found that no carpet ever made by human hand offers a softer surface to the tread than the bleached and dry old moss that forms the headgear of this hoary hill.

The view from the summit, embracing a circle within the circumference of which there lie the Ord of Caithness, the Moray Firth and the coast of Aberdeenshire in the east, Ben Nevis in the south, and in the north and west the varied forms of countless hills, is the most extensive and majestic within a single day's excursion. Rivers, glens, lakes, mountains, towns, homesteads, green pastures, brown heather, and land and sea, all combine to impress upon the mind a scene that, once observed, can never be forgotten.

It is best to reach the Cairn in the early morning or in the evening, when the sun is low and the light is soft and mellow. The atmospheric conditions are seldom the same on two consecutive days in summer, and good weather is, of course, essential to the proper enjoyment of the ascent. Dense vapours may sometimes encircle the hill and obscure the view; or it may be that the mist is of that drifting, transparent quality when evanescent strips of land and water are seen as through a gossamer veil on which the sunlight plays, and through which the sombre heath appears as if painted in tints of indescribable depth and beauty. Or one may be fortunate enough to reach the Cairn at sunrise, and breathe the crisp and purified air a thousand feet above the clouds. Far down below, these clouds may lie in the form of a mist, dense and palpable as a rolling ocean, through the surface of which arise like islands the hilltops of lower heights. Suddenly the rising sun strikes a light on the eastern horizon, which is immediately reflected on the tip of the southmost mountain; then in regular succession one after another it touches, as with a lighted torch, the tops of the crowded peaks that bound the west, until passing round in a few brief moments this phase of the illumination terminates on the hills in the distant north. Thus does night beget the morn, and a new day is

added to the Calendar of Time. And when the sunrise is complete, and the great orb appears,

“Round as the shield of my fathers,”

the grey billows of the misty ocean in the valleys below are slowly transformed into waves of the deepest crimson and gold. Ptarmigan flutter around, resenting the unaccustomed intrusion. Red deer in the Corry sniff the tainted air, and, leaping from their dewy bed, bound upward to the nearest skyline. Motionless, in attitudes of surprise, silhouetted against the rosy sky, they curiously inspect their human disturbers, and gracefully scamper off to the shelter of another sanctuary. The whole scene is an enchantment—a silent performance of

“Hail, smiling morn!

That tips the hills with gold.”

And as one inhales the exhilarating air, and wonders how the sleeping world below can live and breathe underneath that smothering sea of cloud, he realises the truth of Byron's words—

“Oh, there is sweetness in the mountain air,

And joy that bloated ease can never hope to share.”

*Those who appreciate
the distinction
of being well-dressed
go to*



MACLENNAN & CO.

For many years MacleNNAN & Co. have been recognized by the ladies and gentlemen of Dingwall and District as the tailor to rely on for first class clothes for both the outdoor wear. They specialise in complete figures' suits.

**72 HIGH STREET
DINGWALL . . .**

TELEPHONE: 149

SADDLERY

FOR DEER FORESTS AND GROUSE MOORS

JAMES FRASER'S

PATENT

COMBINATION DEER AND RIDING SADDLES



Is used by many deer forests in
England and is recommended by the
RIFLES and ARMY.

“**RECOMMENDED DEER SADDLE**
used by many deer forests and
used by the ARMY.”

Being fitted with 1500 and 400 lbs. of
Rifle, Hunter, Game and Hunt Bags.

See pattern and price
on page 10.

James Fraser

Saddler and Leather Goods Merchant

10 HIGH STREET - DINGWALL

Trifling and
"Mortuary"
Cabinets, etc.

Established
1846

Telephone
Dingwall 26.

JAMES MACKENZIE & SONS

COMPLETE HOUSE FURNISHERS

33 HIGH STREET, DINGWALL

INVITATION

We invite you to call on our Showrooms where we have on show the finest specimens of furniture in the North, and the most up-to-date designs at competitive prices.

WOOD WORKING—

Light Ovens, Gas Lamps, Picture's Fixed Carpets cut and sewn on the premises by expert Workmen.

ANTIQUES—

All items restored by expert Craftsmen.

INTERIOR—

Valuable and beautiful carried out in any part of the Country by experts in this work.

ESTIMATES—

Issued free and well verified on request.

FURNISHING CONTRACTORS in any part of the country.

ESTIMATES FREE

A. SIMPSON

Fruiterer, Florist
and Confectioner



LAURELS

CRAIG ROAD, DINGWALL and
BRAHAN CONON BRIDGE

Choice Home and Foreign Fruits in their Season.



Specialties of all kinds and
Delights Home or Office
and distant notice.

Telephone - 5111 17

HIGH-CLASS CONFECTIONS
ALL GOODS OF FINEST QUALITY

Home-grown Fruit, Flowers and Vegetables from
our own extensive gardens, ensuring freshness.
Hires and Basting - Ladies specially trained for.



**3 High Street
DINGWALL**

STATION HOTEL

MUIR OF ORD

ROSS-SHIRE

1867

ORD ARMS HOTEL

Muir of Ord



Fully Licensed
Garry 15 Cans

Moderate Terms
Residing Required

Every Convenience
Parlour, Bill, Tents

Most convenient house for travellers visiting
the Scenic Spot of Northern Highlands

18-HOLE GOLF COURSE ADJOINING HOTEL

Electric Light throughout

E. MACDONALD, Proprietor

CENTRAL HOTEL AVOCH



Three Miles from the Coast, First on the Main Road,
Beautiful Scenery, Views, High Mountains, Fine Sea
Views, Perfect Food.

Modern Kitchen - Hot and Cold Water.

Electric Concessions.

Close to the Railway, Goodly, Airy, Bright.

Call on us at 12 noon.

J. A. Macpherson

Phone 402/403, 404

1117-1120th, August 1917

Ironmonger and Hardware Merchant

CHINA GLASS

Windows Decorated H.L. & L.T.

Radio Sets Installed

JAS. J. SHANKS

42 HIGH STREET - - DINGWALL

Guns and
Ammunition

Fishing Tackle



Sporting Goods

Garden Seeds
& Implements

Yates, Wood Head, Hibberd's Emulsion, Lancing Ointment, French Sticks, Fox
Sporting Goods, Guns, Rifles, Ammunition, Shotguns, Saddles, Chisels, and
Tally Lamps. Cutlery, Clocks, Glass and Stoneware

All Dog Regiments a Specialty.

DISTINCTIVE PRINTING

THE NORTH STAR, a specialist in Printing, is a business and operation in Printing, Book Binding, Stationery, and fully equipped to offer you a choice of Printing, Stationery or Distribution to Custom and to Federal Clients.

LET US SHOW YOUR REQUIREMENTS

THE NORTH STAR OFFICE, DINGWALL

Telephone: 469214

Fraser's Auction Rooms Tulloch Street • Dingwall

Weekly Sales : Wednesdays at noon
Beating and Table Property, Farm Matters, Eggs, Hens, Rabbits, Vegetables, Flowers, Fruit from Newburgh Gardens, Potatoes, Grain, etc., Poultry and Dairy Appliances.

Monthly Sales on Saturdays
As Advertised—Furniture, Glass, etc.

Real Estate and other sales conducted in any part of the counties and parishes governed.

Valuations and appraisals. Mineral and timber. Government, railway, insurance, for parties seeking to secure sales.

Specialist Purchase always on hand.



TARBAT

PRIVATE
HOTEL

STRATHPEFFER SPA

Excellent position, commanding
one of the finest views of the Grampians.
2 Minutes from Bute and Wells,
Near Golf Course. Hot and Cold
Running Water in all Bedrooms.
Excellent Cuisine. Under Personal
Supervision.

TERMS: 2 Gns. to 5 Gns. **Roomy
MANAGEMENT.**

A. S. SPENCER & SONS, Ltd
MANCHESTER, ENGLAND
Telephone: 70624-4-5



DUNRAVEN GUEST HOUSE

Beautifully situated in lovely surroundings with a
-ruffled lawn, Close to Golf. Heating fires. Hot water
Cold Running Water in all floor rooms. Separate Toilets
Excellent Cuisine. Tables for 200. Travelling accom-
modation. Wonderful for those who have to follow a pro-
gram of treatment. Puller Bath and Shower.

MISS CAMERON

Telephone 444444

WINDSOR LODGE



Southern Exposure. Over Ground
New Golf Course and Pump Room.
Really Comfortable. Modern Interiors.

STRATHPEFFER SPA

Telephone 444444

Telephone 444444



An ideal holiday resort

PORTMAHOMACK ROSS-SHIRE

stay at

CALEDONIAN HOTEL

Fully licensed. You are invited to our
dinner. Teatime and Luncheon
Lightness and the note of Billie. Our
music charming. Away on the Dornoch
Firth. Nothing from Clary since heath
and fishing and golfing.

J. RIDDOCH - - - Proprietor

FOR YOUR ELECTRICAL
& RADIO REQUIREMENTS

PHONE: T-5128



REPAIRS
AND
REPLACEMENTS
SERVICED

SUNNY, 100% in Radio Dept.
SUNNY, 100% in Radio Dept.
SUNNY, 100% in Radio Dept.

ALL REPAIRS CAREFULLY CHECKED

LET US KNOW YOUR REQUIREMENTS
WE WILL SERVE YOU
WITH THE BEST
AND AT THE LOWEST PRICES

D. W. SHIVAS, Electrical and
Radio Contractor
8121 STREET - TAIN, ALABAMA

ROSS-SHIRE for beautiful scenery with **TAIN**
the Centre of it

For the traveler it has a wealth of beauty in food and for all who come
at least of the most beautiful weather in Great Britain in situation a
paradise.

But what are the things without a paid price when you get all supplied
for the lower part.

There is none better than **ALEXANDER'S** where we supply quality and value
that is not seen.

For largest order call 8121 right through your package shop at—

ALEXANDER'S BAKERY

8121 STREET - TAIN

JOHN R. STRACHAN & CO.

BAKER and CONFECTIONER

High Street
Tain



Telephone
TAIN 81

FRESH CREAM CAKES - A SPECIALTY
Quality - Service - Satisfaction

*General Store - Provisions
Confections - Fruit - Cigarettes
Petrol and Oils - Cars for Hire
Free Camping Ground and
Tea Rooms with Home Baking*

R. MACLENNAN

Post Office, LAIDE, ACHNASHEEN

Telephone: Laide 1