

## CHAPTER I.

### THE HOUSE OF FORBES.



THE earliest record we have of the family is that of the marriage of Solvathius Forbes to Maravilla, daughter of King Gregory the Great, A.D. 870.

The Forbes family and following ranked early among the strongest on the North-Eastern Coast of Scotland, and no one can reasonably doubt that the ancient Pictish Gael of the region in question constituted a large proportion (if not of the Forbesses), at least, of the followers of the house.

The traditions regarding the origin of the surname of Forbes are various, and some of them very fanciful. The principal of these, referred to by Sir Samuel Forbes in his "View of the Diocese of Aberdeen," states that the name was first assumed by one Ochonchar, from Ireland, who, having slain a ferocious bear in that district, took the name of Forbear, now spelled and pronounced For-bes, in two syllables; although the English, in pronunciation, makes it only one. In consequence of this feat, the Forbesses in their arms carry three bears' heads. A variation of this story says that the actor in this daring exploit was desirous of exhibiting his courage to the young and beautiful heiress of the adjoining castle, whose name being Bess; he, on receiving her hand as his reward, assumed it to commemorate his having killed the bear for "Bess." Another tradition states that the name of the founder of the family was originally Bois, a follower of an early Scottish King, and that, on granting him certain lauds for some extraordinary service, His Majesty observed that they were "for Boice." The surname, however, is territorial, and said to be Celtic, from the Gaelic word "Ferbash" or "Ferbasach," a bold man.

"On the whole," says Smibert, "the traditions of the family, as well as other authorities, countenanced with unusual strength the belief that the heads of the Forbesses belonged really to the Irish branch, and were amongst those strangers of that race whom the Lowland Kings planted in the North and North-East of Scotland to overawe the remaining primary population of Gaelic Picts."

JOHN DE FORBES possessed the lands of Forbes, in the reign of King William the Lion, and was father of—

FERGUS DE FORBES, who had a charter from Alexander, Earl of Buchan, "Fergusio, filio Joannis de Forbes, totum et integrum tenementum de Forbes, cum pertinent, jacent, in vicecomitatu de Aberdeen," to which charter William Cumyn, brother of the Earl, and John Cumyn, his eldest son, &c., are witnesses, about 1236.

DUNCAN DE FORBES, son of Fergus de Forbes, succeeded about 1242.

ALEXANDER DE FORBES, his son, defended the Castle of Urquhart, in Moray, in 1304, against King Edward I, who, taking it, put every person to the sword. The wife of the Governor, who escaped into Ireland, was delivered of a posthumous son—

ALEXANDER DE FORBES, who came from Ireland to Scotland, obtained a grant of the lands from King Robert Bruce, and was killed at the battle of Duplin, in 1332, fighting valiantly for King David, the son of Bruce. He also had a posthumous son—

SIR JOHN DE FORBES, who acquired from Thomas, Earl of Mar, several lands in Aberdeenshire, which King Robert II. ratified by his Charter in the third year of his reign. He also had a charter of the lands of Findrossie, to "John de Forbes, dominus ejusdem," and Margaret his wife, dated 19th July, 1378.

In the fifth year of the reign of King Robert III. he was constituted His Majesty's Justiciary within the bounds of Aberdeen, and Coroner of the said County. He is witness to a charter of Isabel, Countess of Marr, of the lands of Bonjedworth to Thomas Douglas, wherein he is designed "Joannes Forbes de eodem, miles," 1404. He married a daughter of Kennedy of Dunure, and died 1405, leaving four sons:—

1. SIR ALEXANDER.

2. SIR WILLIAM FORBES, ancestor of Lord Pitsligo.

3. SIR JOHN FORBES, who obtained the thanedom of Formartin, and lands of Tolquhoun, by marriage with Marjory, daughter and heir of Sir Henry Preston of Formartin, Knight, and was ancestor of the Forbeses of Tolquhoun, Foveran, Watertoun, Culloden, and others. (Sir Henry Preston was third son of Sir Simon de Preston, a person of great consequence in the reign of King Robert II.)

4. ALEXANDER, ancestor of the Forbeses of Brux, and other families of that name.

SIR ALEXANDER DE FORBES, the eldest son, succeeded his father. Among the missing charters of King Robert III. is a confirmation of a charter by Isabel Douglas, Countess of Marr, to Alexander Forbes, son of John Forbes, Knight, of the lands of Edinbauchory and Craignogly. He had a charter, "Alexandro domino Forbes, militi," of the lands of Fothirbris, in the lordship of Obeyne, 24th May, 1417, from John, Earl of Buchan and Ross, Chamberlain of Scotland, and Lord of Obeyne. He had an assignation to certain lands, from William de Camera, dominus de Findoune, "Alexandro domino Forbes," dated 1419. He was among the Scottish forces sent to the assistance of Charles, Dauphin of France, afterwards King Charles VII., and had a share in the victory obtained over the English at Bauge, in Anjou, 22nd March, 1421, in which the Duke of Clarence, commander of the hostile army, was killed. Soon afterwards, at the desire of King James I. (then the prisoner of King Henry V.), he left the French service, with several other Scotsmen; the great body of the auxiliaries, however, adhered steadily to the Dauphin. He obtained a letter of safe-conduct, dated at Dover, 9th June, 1421, "Alexandro Forbes, militi, cum 40 lanceis, in comitiva sua, cum equis et armaturis eidem Alexandro et lanceis predictis, debite spectantibus, usque ad numerum centum," to come by water into England and remain there and go from thence. Also another, dated 14th October, 1421, permitting Alexander Forbes, Knight, Lord of Forbes, in Scotland, and forty men-at-arms, with their attendants, to the number of one hundred persons or under, videlicet, "præfatum Alexandrum cum duodecim in comitiva sua armatis sive non, cujuscumque gradus existant, usque ad civitatem Loudinum per terram viniendo et ibidem morando, et deinde pæces presentiam Regis et carissimi consanguinei sui Jacobi Regis Scotiæ," the remainder to go to Normandy.

He had a charter from John, Earl of Buchan, to him and Elizabeth Douglas, his wife, of the lands of Meikle Fintry, Blacktoun, and Balcross, 10th December, 1423; and on the 13th of the same month had a safe conduct to come into England, as far as Durham, to the presence of King James I., wherein he is designed Alexander Forbes, Knight.

A charter of the Barony of Forbes and Kearn, on his own resignation, and of the lands of Aufurd-Logy, Edinbandivy, Mukwell, &c., in the Earldom of Marr, on the resignation of Alexander, Earl of Marr, was granted 6th October, 1430, Alexandro Forbes, militi, and Elizabeth, his wife. He is designed, "ane nobill lord, Sir Alexander Forbes, Knight, lord of that ilk," in a letter by Andrew of Futhais, 12th December, 1436, and was soon after created a Peer of Parliament by precept from King James II., directed to the Lords of the Exchequer: 12th July, 1442.

ALEXANDER, FIRST LORD FORBES, married Lady Elizabeth Douglas, only daughter of George, Earl of Angus, GRANDDAUGHTER OF KING ROBERT II. of Scotland, and by her had five children, two sons and three daughters.

*Sons—*

1. James, second Lord Forbes.
2. John Forbes, Provost of St. Giles, Edinbro'.

*Daughters—*

1. Annabella, married Patrick, Master of Gray.
2. Margaret, married the Laird of Fyvie.
3. Elizabeth, married Irvine of Drum.

JAMES, SECOND LORD FORBES, was knighted by King James III. of Scotland. He married the beautiful Lady Egidia Keith, second daughter of William, first Earl Marischal, and by her had three sons and one daughter.

*Sons—*

1. William, third Lord Forbes.
2. Duncan Forbes of Corsindae, ancestor of the Forbes of Monymusk.
3. Patrick Forbes, first of the family of Corse, ancestor of the Forbes, Baronets of Craigievar and of the Earls of Granard.

*Daughter—*

1. Egidia Forbes, married to Malcolm Forbes of Tolquhoun.

WILLIAM, THIRD LORD FORBES, married Lady Christian Gordon, third daughter of Alexander, first Earl of Huntly, and by her had three sons and one daughter.

*Sons—*

1. Alexander, fourth Lord Forbes.
2. Arthur, fifth Lord Forbes.
3. John, sixth Lord Forbes.

*Daughter—*

Christian, married William, first Lord Ruthven.

ALEXANDER, FOURTH LORD FORBES, married Lady Grizel Boyd, daughter of Thomas, Earl of Arran, and GRANDDAUGHTER OF KING JAMES II. OF SCOTLAND, and died without issue, being succeeded by his brother—

ARTHUR, FIFTH LORD FORBES, who married Elizabeth, daughter of John, Lord Glamis, and died without issue, being succeeded by his brother—

JOHN, SIXTH LORD FORBES, who married three times: firstly, Lady Catherine Stewart, second daughter of John, Earl of Atholl and UTERINE BROTHER TO KING JAMES II., and by her had two children.

1. James, who died in infancy.
2. Elizabeth, who married James Grant of Grant.

Secondly, Christian, daughter of Sir John Lundin of Lundin, by whom he had five children, two sons and three daughters.

*Sons—*

1. John, Master of Forbes, accused of treason 12th June, 1536, found guilty, and executed 17th July, 1537.
2. William, seventh Lord Forbes.

*Daughters—*

1. Margaret, married Andrew Fraser of Muchil.
2. Elizabeth, married, first, Gilbert Keith of Troup, and, second, Alexander Innes of Innes.
3. Marjory, married Gilbert Forbes of Brux.

Thirdly, Elizabeth Barclay, relict of Alexander, first Lord Elphinstone, who was killed at Flodden, and by her had one son and one daughter.

*Son—*

Arthur Forbes of Putachie.

*Daughter—*

Janet, married John, third Earl of Atholl.

WILLIAM, SEVENTH LORD FORBES, Gentleman of the Bedchamber to King James V., died in 1593. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Sir William Keith of Inverugie, and by her had fourteen children, six sons and eight daughters.

*Sons—*

1. John, eighth Lord Forbes.
2. William Forbes of Foderhouse.
3. James Forbes of Lethinty.
4. Robert Forbes, a monk, Prior of Monymusk.
5. Arthur Forbes of Logie, known as BLACK ARTHUR.
6. Abraham Forbes of Blacktoun.

*Daughters—*

1. Jean, married James, Lord Ogilvy.
2. Elizabeth, married Henry, third Lord Sinclair.
3. Christian, married George Johnson of Caskieben.
4. Isabel, married John Gordon of Pillurg.
5. Catharine, married Barclay of Gartly.
6. Margaret, married George Sinclair of Mey.
7. Barbara, married Robert Allardyce.
8. Anne, married Sir John Seton of Barns.

JOHN, EIGHTH LORD FORBES, was second in command of the King's Forces, under the Earl of Argyll, at the Battle of Glenlivet, 3rd October, 1594. He married twice: firstly, Lady Margaret Gordon, eldest daughter of George, fourth Earl of Huntly, by whom he had two children, a son and a daughter.

*Son—*

1. John Forbes, a monk, who entered a religious order on the Continent.

*Daughter—*

2. Jean, married to William Cumyn of Earnside.

Secondly, Janet, daughter of James Seton of Touch, by whom he had three children, two sons and one daughter.

*Sons—*

1. Arthur, ninth Lord Forbes.
2. David Forbes.

*Daughter—*

1. Catherine, married Gordon of Rothemay.

ARTHUR, NINTH LORD FORBES, who, on 1st February, 1600, married Jean, second daughter of Alexander, fourth Lord Elphinstone, and by her had five sons and three daughters.

*Sons—*

1. Alexander, tenth Lord Forbes.
2. Colonel John Forbes.
3. Colonel William Forbes.
4. Captain Arthur Forbes (killed in battle).
5. Captain James Forbes (killed in battle).

*Daughters—*

1. Barbara, married George, second Earl of Seaforth.
2. Anne, married Forbes of Echt.
3. Elizabeth, married James Skene of Skene.

ALEXANDER, TENTH LORD FORBES, fought under Gustavus Adolphus, who made him Lieutenant-General. He married twice: firstly, Anne, eldest daughter of Sir John Forbes of Pitsligo, by whom he had a son.

1. William, eleventh Lord Forbes.

Secondly, Elizabeth, daughter of Robert Forbes of Rires, in Fife, and by her had (besides eight children who died young) two sons and three daughters.

*Sons—*

1. Colonel James Forbes.
2. Arthur Forbes.

*Daughters—*

Christian, Mary, and Anne.

WILLIAM, ELEVENTH LORD FORBES, who died in 1691, married, firstly, Jean, daughter of Sir John Campbell of Calder, and, secondly, Margaret Erskine, daughter of Viscount Fentoun (by whom no issue). By his first marriage he had three sons and a daughter.

*Sons—*

1. William, twelfth Lord Forbes.
2. Arthur Forbes. (Died without issue.)
3. Archibald Forbes of Putachie.

*Daughter—*

Margaret, married Alexander, Lord Duffus.

WILLIAM, TWELFTH LORD FORBES, died in 1716. He married Anne, daughter of James Brodie of Brodie, by whom he had three sons and a daughter.

*Sons—*

1. William, thirteenth Lord Forbes.
2. James, fifteenth Lord Forbes.
3. Archibald Forbes.

*Daughter—*

Mary.

WILLIAM, THIRTEENTH LORD FORBES, died 26th June, 1730. He married Dorothy, daughter of William Dale of Westminster, by whom he had one son and four daughters.

*Son—*

Francis, fourteenth Lord Forbes.

*Daughters—*

1. Anne (died young).
2. Mary (died young).
3. Elizabeth, married John Gregory, M.D., F.R.S., and was mother of the celebrated Dr. James Gregory.
4. Jean, married Colonel James Dundas.

FRANCIS, FOURTEENTH LORD FORBES, was born 19th December, 1721, and died 8th August, 1734, being succeeded by his uncle—

JAMES, FIFTEENTH LORD FORBES, who died on 20th February, 1761. He married Mary, daughter of Alexander, Lord Forbes of Pitsligo, and had by her one son and three daughters.

*Son—*

1. James, sixteenth Lord Forbes.

*Daughters—*

- Sophia, Mary, and Anne.

JAMES, SIXTEENTH LORD FORBES, Deputy-Governor of Fort William, died 29th July, 1804, aged 80. He married Catharine, only daughter of Sir Robert Innes, and by her had four sons and two daughters.

*Sons—*

1. James Ochoncar, seventeenth Lord Forbes.
2. Robert Alaster Cam Forbes, who died unmarried.
3. Andrew Forbes, who died unmarried, 12th June, 1808.
4. William Forbes, who died unmarried, 1st February, 1792.

*Daughters—*

1. Marjory, married, first, John, Lord Macleod, and, second, John, fourth Duke of Atholl.
2. Mary Elizabeth, married Sir John Hay.

JAMES OCHONCAR, SEVENTEENTH LORD FORBES, was born 7th March, 1765, and died in 1843. He married Elizabeth, daughter of Walter Hunter of Polmood, by whom he had six sons and four daughters.

*Sons—*

1. James, eighteenth Lord Forbes.
2. Walter Forbes.
3. Frederick Forbes.
4. William Forbes, died, aged two years.
5. John Forbes.
6. Robert Forbes.

*Daughters—*

1. Caroline Elizabeth.
2. Catherine, died, aged nine years.
3. Charlotte.
4. Mary Stuart.

JAMES OCHONCAR, EIGHTEENTH LORD FORBES, died in 1843, leaving one son as his successor—

WALTER, NINETEENTH LORD FORBES, who fought at Waterloo; born 1798, married to Horatia, daughter of Sir John Gregory Shaw, Bart., by whom he had two sons.

*Sons—*

1. Horace Courtenay Gammell, twentieth Lord Forbes.
2. Hon. Atholl Mouson Forbes, born 15th February, 1841; married Alice, daughter of Sir W. H. Dick-Cunyngham, and has issue—

*Son—*

1. Atholl Laurence Cunyngham, born 1882, Lieutenant in the Grenadier Guards.

*Daughter—*

2. Marjory Winifred, married to Captain Hugh Edward Walker.

HORACE COURTENAY GAMMELL, TWENTIETH LORD FORBES, was born 24th February, 1829, and is now living, unmarried, aged 85.

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The Barony of Forbes is first on the Union Roll, and as such takes rank before all the Lords of Parliament.

*Arms of Forbes—*

Azure, three Bears' Heads, couped, argent, muzzled, gules.

*Crest of Forbes—*

A Stag's Head, attired, proper.

*Supporters—*

Two Greyhounds, argent, each having a plain collar, gules.

*Motto—*

"Grace me guide."

*Badge—*

Common Broom.

*Cath-ghairn (Gathering Shout)—*

"Loanach"—the name of a noted hill in the district of Strathdon.

*Piobaireachd—*

The groundwork, or urlar, only seems to be preserved in the popular rallying tune, "Ca Glennan gather Glenochtie," the names of valleys in the same district.

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#### THE FEUD BETWEEN THE FORBESSES AND THE GORDONS.

John, eighth Lord Forbes, repudiated his first wife, Lady Margaret Gordon, daughter of George, fourth Earl of Huntly, and in consequence a sanguinary contest took place, in 1572, in the parish of Clatt, Aberdeenshire, between the two rival Clans. The Gordons, under the command of two of the Earl's brothers, attacked the Forbesses within a rude entrenchment which they had formed on the white hill of Tillyangus, in the South-Western extremity of the parish, and, after a severe contest, the Gordons prevailed, having carried the entrenchment, and slain the Master's brother, Black Arthur.

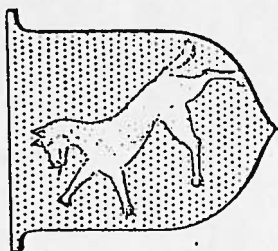
The pursuit of the Forbesses was continued to the very gates of Druminnor, the seat of their Chief. A number of cairns are still pointed out where the slain on this occasion are said to have been buried.

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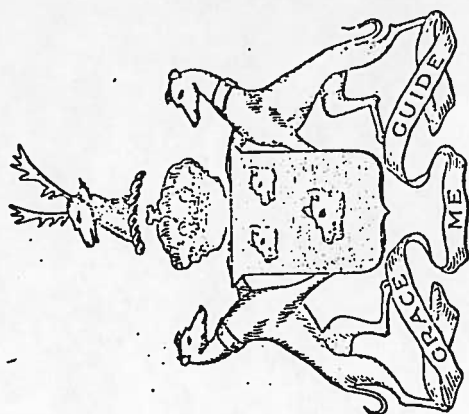
#### BUMPER JOHN.

John, fourth Laird of Culloden, who took an active part on the side of the Government, in 1715, with the afterwards celebrated Lord Lovat, and narrowly escaped being apprehended at Aberdeen by Lord Saltoun, was named "Bumper John." He earned the title through the ability he possessed, even in those convivial times, of excelling most of his friends in the quantity of claret he could drink.

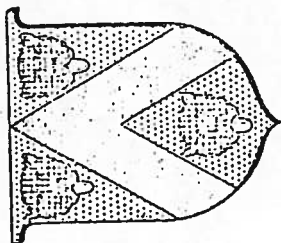




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