

ABERGELDIE CASTLE

By W. DOUGLAS SIMPSON

The picturesque old Highland castle of Abergeldie is situated on the right bank of the Dee, just below the point where the Geldie Burn enters the river—about six miles west of Ballater, or forty-eight miles from Aberdeen, and two miles below Balmoral. It is an ancient seat of the Gordon family now leased by Her Majesty the Queen, and since 1848, when Queen Victoria first came to Deeside, its history has been closely linked with that of the royal demesne of Balmoral. But this hoary and ancient tower has also a history of its own, older than that of Balmoral: moreover, it is a history replete with colourful incident, and linked, at more than one point, with critical events in the national annals.

HISTORICAL SKETCH

At the beginning of the fifteenth century the lands of Abergeldie were held by the Mowats as vassals of the Earls of Mar. The last Mowat laird was a ruthless character of whom it was said that his gallows-tree was never 'teem'. He was involved in a bitter feud with the Camerons of Brux, in Kildrummy on Donside. After much reciprocal devastation and slaughter, it was agreed that the matter should be settled by a pitched battle between 'twelve horse' on either side—the combat to take place in a glen behind Drumgowdrum Hill, in the parish of Kildrummy. On the appointed day, however, the treacherous Mowat appeared with two men mounted upon each horse. Notwithstanding this deceit, his opponent refused to shirk the combat, with the foregone result that the whole male line of the Camerons of Brux was wiped out on that disastrous day. Only a daughter, the fair Kate Cameron, was left. She fled to Kildrummy Castle, and placed herself under the protection of her feudal overlord, the Earl of Mar. From Kildrummy she issued a cartel offering her hand and the estate and Tower of Brux to the man who should avenge her father's and brothers' deaths upon the dastard Mowat. The challenge was taken up by Alexander Forbes, a brother of the first Lord Forbes; and the two antagonists, each with a fixed number of men, arranged to fight it out at Badaneoin, near the head of Glenbuchat. But at the last moment, to save wanton bloodshed, it was agreed to decide the matter in a single combat. After a long struggle Forbes prevailed, and brought his rival's head in triumph to Kildrummy, where, in the beautiful chapel of this celebrated castle, he was married to Kate Cameron, and so became the founder of the family of Forbes of Brux. At Badaneoin an inscribed stone, Clochmowat, still marks the place of the Homeric contest.¹

¹I have discussed the story of Kate Cameron of Brux—one of the famous old tales of Mar—in *The Book of Glenbuchat* (Third Spalding Club), 15-19, and *The Earldom of Mar*, 46-8. There

can be little doubt as to the substantial authenticity of the event, which took place in or before 1409.

After the downfall of the Mowats, the lands of Abergeldie reverted to the Crown; and on 26th December, 1482, they were granted by James III to Sir Alexander Gordon of Midmar, second son of the first Earl of Huntly.¹ The third laird, James Gordon, fell on the 'sair field' of Pinkie in 1547. His son, Black Alister, a picturesque character about whom many legends are current, took part as a Roman Catholic in the affair of the 'Spanish Blanks' in 1594, and lost a brother at the battle of Glenlivet. For this rebellion he was punished by having his castle condemned to destruction: but since the existing tower is plainly older than 1594, it appears that the order was not fully carried out.²

In the Civil War the Gordons of Abergeldie were staunch supporters of the King, and their castle was ordered to be demolished by the Covenanters in 1644: 'bot yit standis still' jubilantly reports the royalist chronicler, John Spalding.³ During the Jacobite rising of 1689 a garrison of 72 men was placed in Abergeldie by General Mackay, but was promptly blockaded by Farquharson of Inverey, so that in August, 1690, Mackay had to march in person to its relief. Inverey was beaten off in a brisk action in the Pass of Ballater, and the castle was relieved, just in time. Mackay reports that its garrison were at their last gasp, so that the place could not have held out another three days.⁴ According to the Aberdeenshire Poll Book of 1696 the household at Abergeldie in that year consisted of the laird and his lady, four men servants and one maid, and the gardener and his wife.

In the rising of 1715 Abergeldie Castle was again garrisoned on behalf of the Government: but by 1732 it had become ruinous.⁵ It appears, however, to have been habitable in 1735,⁶ and was much improved by the twelfth laird, Charles Gordon, who held the estate from 1733, when he succeeded at the age of nine years, until his death in 1796. On 24th May, 1816, the castle was badly damaged in a fire from which only the old tower escaped—thus dodging destruction for the fourth time⁷ in its eventful history. The following account of the disaster is quoted from the *Aberdeen Journal* of 5th June, 1816:—

'We are extremely sorry to learn that on Friday se'ennight the 24th ult., an accidental fire took place at Abergeldie House, the seat of P. Gordon, Esq., by which the principal part of that truly hospitable mansion was unfortunately burnt to the ground. The fire, we understand, took place in the housekeeper's room, and from thence communicating to the roof, had attained considerable strength before it was discovered, so that all efforts to save the lower part of the house proved ineffectual; and the only part of the building that remains is the Tower or

¹ For the Gordons of Abergeldie see the fully documented account in J. Malcolm Bulloch, *The House of Gordon* (New Spalding Club) i, 73-116. See also *Hist. Mss. Commission*, appendix to 6th report, 712-3.

² See *The Earldom of Mar*, 92, with authorities cited.

³ *Memorials of the Troubles*, ii, 395.

⁴ *Earldom of Mar*, 111. To the authorities

there cited, add *Highland Papers* (Scot. Hist. Soc.), iv, 112.

⁵ *Coll. Shires Aberdeen and Banff* (Spalding Club), 641.

⁶ Deed granted from Abergeldie, 22nd Nov., 1735, see Bulloch, *op. cit.*, 96.

⁷ In 1594, 1644, 1690 (when Inverey, had he captured it, would certainly have burnt it, as he burnt Braemar Castle), and 1816.

Castle, containing the Dining Room, Library, etc. The house and furniture were partly insured; and of the latter, we are sorry to say, but a very trifling portion has been saved.'

After this catastrophe the castle was restored and enlarged (Pl. XXVIII). Its resulting state is described to us in an advertisement in the *Aberdeen Journal*, 4th January, 1832, offering the castle and shootings to let. The account of the house is in the following terms:—

'The Castle, which is completely furnished, will afford sufficient accommodation to any family; containing excellent public rooms; billiard room; library; and eight principal bedrooms, dressing closets, water closet, etc.; servants' accommodation; kitchen; and scullery; with brewing and washing-houses detached; along with coach-houses, stable and kennel; there will be let, an excellent garden, with fruit trees and bushes in full bearing. The lawn and park which will afford pasturage for sheep and ponies; with any quantity arable ground, substantially enclosed, and in grass, that may be required.'

The present owner of Abergeldie, Mr. Bertram Fuller Gordon, is the twentieth laird of his line. Since 1848 the estate, with the castle, has been leased by the Royal Family, and many distinguished guests have stayed in the castle. As Prince of Wales, King Edward VII and King George V successively occupied Abergeldie during the shooting season; and in October, 1879, after the death of the Prince Imperial in Zululand, Queen Victoria lent the castle to the Empress Eugenie, who thereafter was a frequent visitor. A fine example of *Abies Nobilis* in front of the castle has a plate telling that it was planted by the Empress on 30th October, 1879. At the end of last century Abergeldie was occupied during the season by the late Duke of Connaught. Many improvements and additions to the castle buildings have been carried out during the century of royal occupation.

DESCRIPTION

The castle stands, at a height of 840 feet above sea level, on a haugh by the river side, facing the dark brow of a pine clad granite hill, Craignam-ban, rising to a height of 1,730 feet. The name of the hill means 'craig of the Women', and here it is said that witches in the barony of Abergeldie were burnt. The ghost of the last witch burnt here, Katie Rankine, is thought to haunt the castle, in the 'pit' of which she had been confined. A more pleasing association of Craignam-ban is recorded by Queen Victoria, who tells us how it was the finding of a sprig of white heather on this hill, on 29th September, 1855, which gave the Prussian Crown Prince, afterwards the Emperor Frederick II, the opportunity of making 'an allusion to his hopes and wishes' to the Princess Royal.

The surroundings of the castle present a scene of Highland grandeur; and nothing need be added to or subtracted from the verdict of Dr. George Skene Keith, published in 1811¹:—

¹ *General View of the Agriculture of Aberdeenshire*, 100.

'It abounds in so many natural beauties, as are seldom to be met with in one place; and it is at least doubtful whether the present venerable mansion would not in this highland district be preferred, by a person of taste and sensibility, to a modern house of the most correct architecture. Where nature is seen in her *sublime* aspects, the merely *beautiful* is less attractive.'

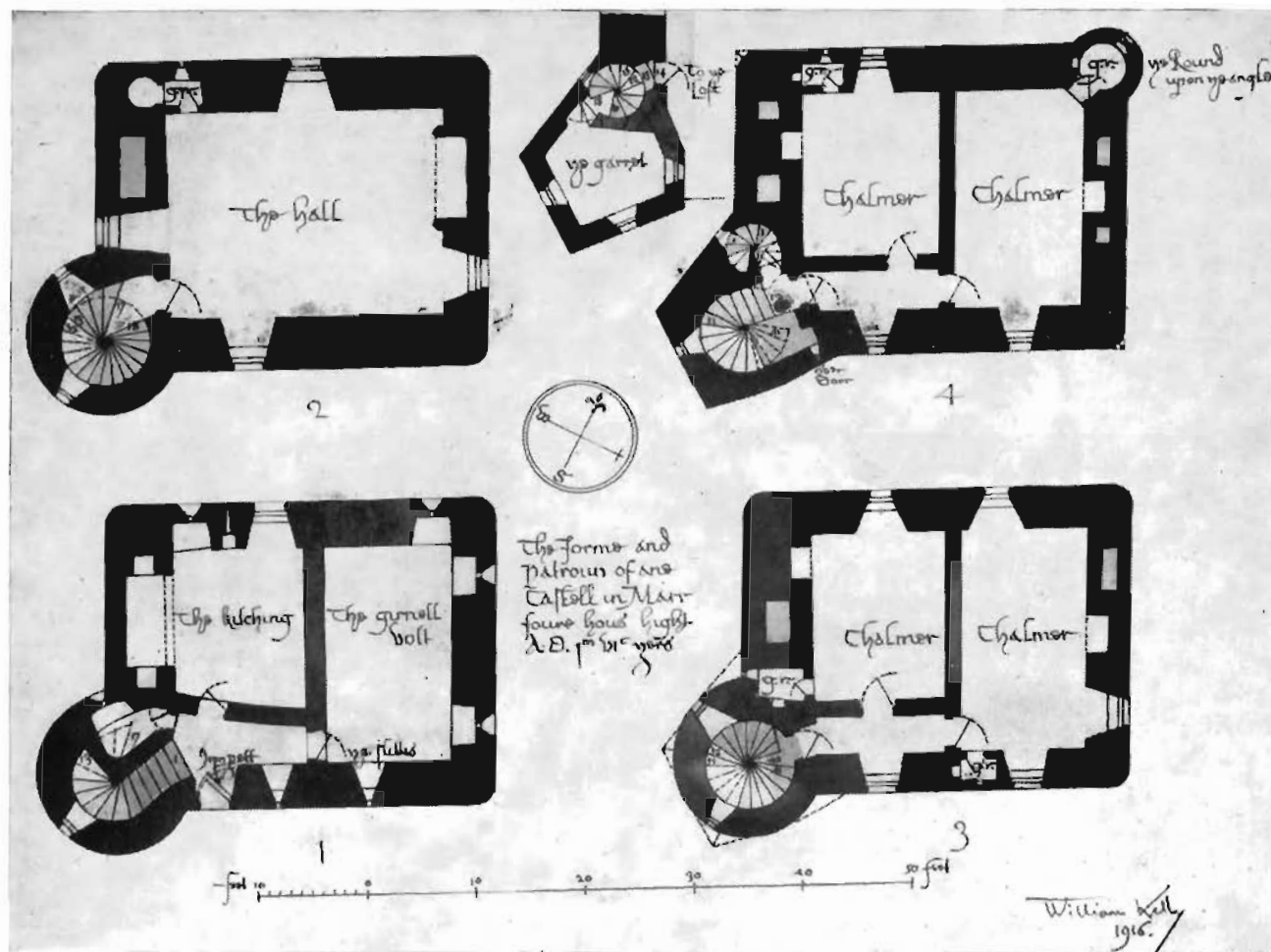
It is said that the castle was defended by a moat, but of this no trace now remains. Old as is the castle, a monument of much greater antiquity may be seen upon the lawn in front. This is a solitary, grey and massive standing stone, 6 feet 6 inches high, 2 feet 6 inches in breadth at the base, and 1 foot 3 inches thick at that point (Pl. XXXIB). The stone is totally overgrown with lichen, and no cup-marks or other sculpturings are visible. A vertical fragment has been broken off at the top. This hoary monolith, which seems to mock us with the muteness of its forgotten purpose, is probably a relic of the later Bronze Age. A burnt burial of that period was found in 1840 on the east side of the road up Glen Geldie, about a third of a mile above the castle. Across the road from the castle is the fine farm of Mains of Abergeldie, representing the demesne land (*terra mensalis*) which the lord of the castle retained in his own hands to furnish his table.

In the course of its stormy history the original castle has been a good deal altered, and a long low building was added to it by the twelfth laird in the eighteenth century. The old portion consists of a tall rectangular tower-house, measuring about 35 feet 6 inches by 28 feet 6 inches, over walls some 4 feet thick in the basement, with a round stair tower, 15 feet in diameter, attached to the south-west corner. The main building (Pls. XXIX and XXX) has rounded angles and crow-stepped gables, with a corbelled turret diagonally opposite to the stair tower, which at this level is developed into a hexagonal cap-house, at present crowned with an iron balustrade and a belfry. The castle contains four storeys, the vaulted basement comprising a kitchen and cellar, both well furnished with gun-loops; while on the first floor is the hall, also vaulted, and above are chambers, two on each floor. In the cap-house is a garret chamber entered by a subsidiary corbelled stair. Such, at all events, were the original arrangements, still quite distinct, although the tower-house has been altered in various ways to suit modern conditions. Underneath the foot of the stair is a small 'pit' or prison. The arched door is in the re-entrant angle of the main building, and was secured by the usual double defence of an outer wooden door and an inner iron 'yett'

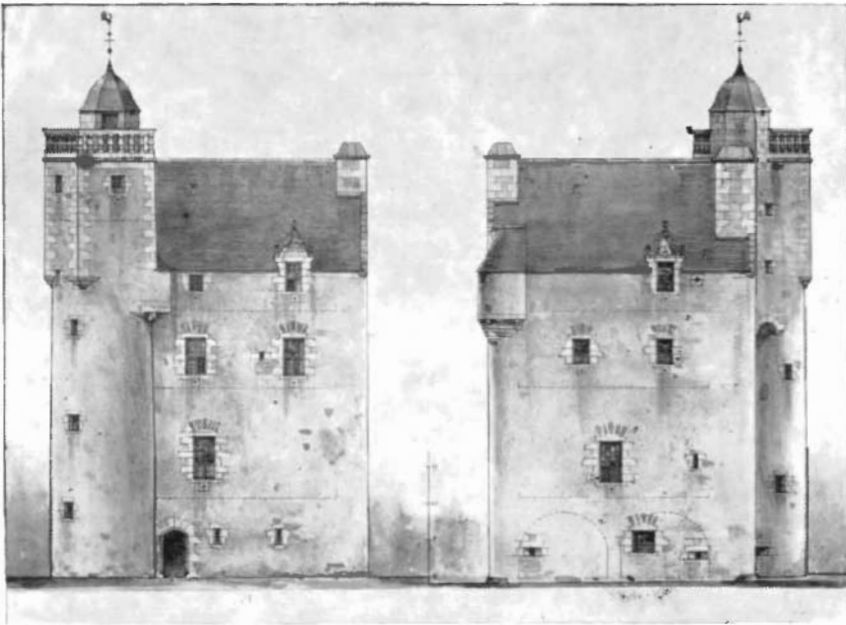
Coming now to details, the tower-house is built upon a foundation of projecting boulders, and its masonry, though masked by 'harl' appears to consist of field gatherings. All the dressed work is in granite. The main gables are crow-stepped, with curved skew-putts, and the chimneys have a tall, sloped cope, overhanging the stack. The cap-house is set diagonally to the main structure, and is developed at the angles by corbelling of three continuous rounded members, all now



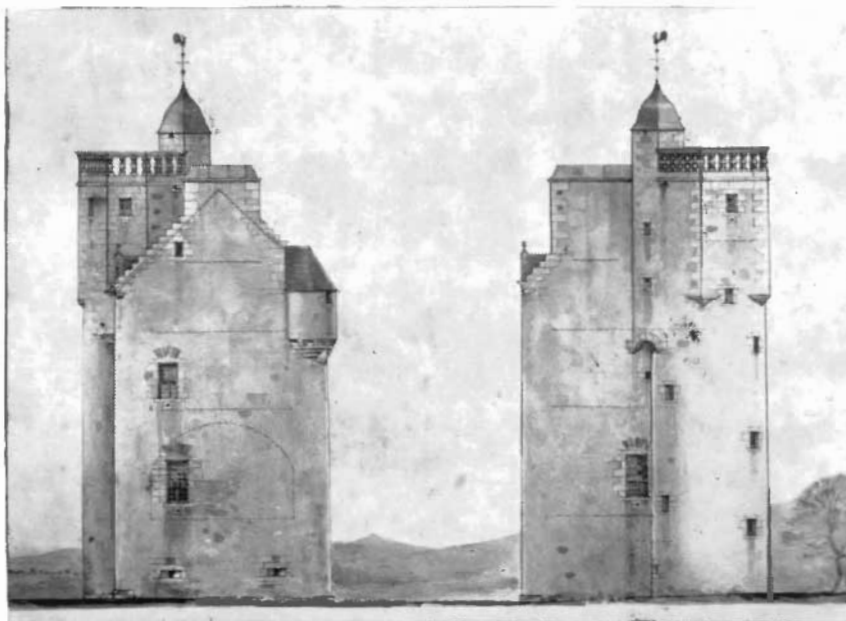
Abergeldie Castle : View from E. in 1839. Drawn by James Giles, R.S.A.



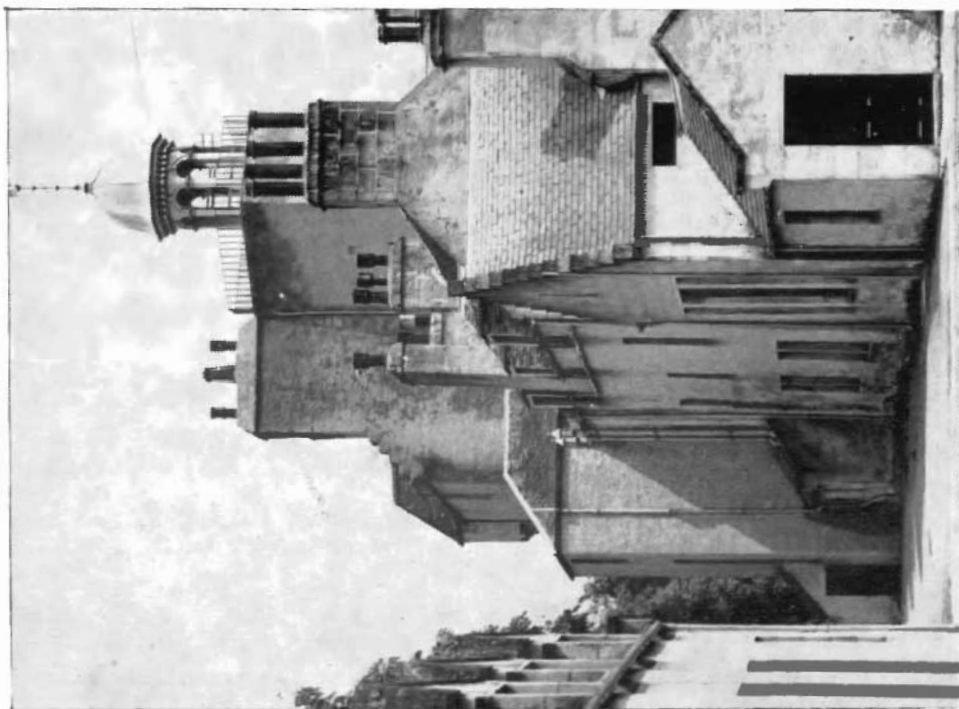
Abergeldie Castle : Plans of Tower



A. Abergeldie Castle : S. and N. Elevations of Tower



B. Abergeldie Castle : E. and W. Elevations of Tower



A. Abergeldie Castle : View from W.

(Photo : Reid, Ballater)



B. Abergeldie Castle : View from S., with Standing Stone

(Photo : Reid, Ballater)

masked in harling. It is surmounted with an iron railing, within which rises an octagonal pavilion bell-cot, with a leaded roof and weathercock. The bell is plain and well proportioned; it bears the date 1812. On the south side of the cap-house is a clock dated 1813. The staircase to the cap-house forms a flat diagonal projection carried on a squinch arch; while in the other re-entrant is a similar but smaller projection, resting on a single corbel of one rounded member.

The cylindrical turret at the north-east corner is wholly depressed below the skew-putt. This turret spreads out as it rises, instead of being ingathered in the usual way. The corbelling is ingenious and highly effective. The rounded angle of the tower-house is brought out to the square by a single corbel, above which the arris mitres into three rows of continuous corbelling. Over this is a further row of separate corbels, each of two rounded courses. The turret has one small window at the eaves level, looking north-east. It is crowned with a half-coned roof passing back into a ridge which runs diagonally into the slope of the main roof.

The slates of the roof are small and thick, and doubtless came from the quarry at Meall Dubh, one of the Coyles of Muick. In the garret of the main building, on the south side, a Venetian window, of local granite, has been inserted.

Two gunloops remain in the basement on the north side, and two more at the same level in the east gable. Their external splay is oblong, measuring about 2 feet 5 inches by 1 foot 1 inch, and the opening is about 1 foot 6 inches deep to the narrow throat, which in all four gunloops is blocked.

One unaltered ground floor loophole remains on the south side. The daylight measurements are 2 feet 2 inches by 5½ inches, within a 5 inch chamfer. There are grooves for glass.

Where not altered, the upper windows in general have a 2½ inch chamfer, but all the dressings are obscured by harl. The windows have once had grilles.

The doorway measures 6 feet 5½ inches in height and 2 feet 10½ inches in width. It has a segmental arched head, and voussoirs and jambs are moulded with a stout, half-engaged, quirked edge-roll, 6 inches in diameter. The wooden door appears to be modern, but retains an ancient tirling-pin plate, of obelisk shape, ending above in a fleur-de-lys. It shows the initials A. G., below them E. G., then successively a plain Latin cross and two Maltese crosses, all pierced through in the iron. The initials are those of Alexander Gordon, the eighth laird, and his wife, Euphemia Graham. He succeeded in 1655, and apparently was dead at the time of his son's marriage in 1694.¹ The height of the plate is 1 foot 8 inches, and its breadth at base 3½ inches. Behind the wooden door the check and iron hinge-crooks for the yett remain.

¹ Bulloch, *op. cit.*, 92-3.

A short corridor gives access to the two compartments in the basement. The east cellar is fitted up with stone wine bins. Two iron cleeks hang from its vault. The gun-loops here have a rectangular internal splay, similar to that outside. The masonry is typically Aberdeenshire sixteenth-century rubble of boulders roughly coursed, with a free use of pinnings. The arched ingoing of the loophole on the south side shows the marks of the centering boards.

The west cellar, formerly the kitchen, is now plastered over, and the fireplace is no longer in evidence. The cellar also has two cleeks.

The pit under the newel stair has two iron shackle rings attached to the wall.

Where not altered, the internal basement doors are lintelled, and display a $2\frac{1}{2}$ inch chamfer.

The main newel stair is 4 feet wide, and the diameter of the newel is 8 inches. The steps are now cased in wood.

The hall has measured about 25 feet by 19 feet, and was about 13 feet in height to the crown of its barrel vault. It has a garde-robe, now modernised, at the north-west corner. There are two large windows on the south side, one in the east gable and one in the north wall. The fireplace is in the east gable. All details are modernised, and the walls and vault are plastered over. The windows have arched bays, those in the side walls rising into the haunches of the vault.

The second floor is divided into two bedrooms and is wholly modernised. There are two windows in the north wall, two in the south wall, and one in the east gable. The west gable now shows no window. In the south wall between the windows is a mural closet, with a locker.

The third floor likewise now forms two rooms, and displays no ancient features. From here opens the north-west turret chamber, 4 feet 7 inches in diameter.

A rough and steep flight of stone steps, becoming a spiral stair above, leads up to the cap-house chamber and to the open platform above. The clock in the cap-house chamber is inscribed: 'Jno. Gartly, Aberdeen, 1813'. From the cap-house platform the view, up and down the river, is extremely fine. The old river terraces on the north side, behind the turnpike road, are very conspicuous.

The plan and architectural detail of the tower-house point to a mid-sixteenth-century date. The plan is an interesting one, for the hanging turret of the north-east corner foreshadows, in a tentative way, the fully developed 'three-stepped' or 'Z' plan, in which the main building is provided with a flanking tower at each of two diagonally opposite corners. By this ingenious device each tower flanks two sides of the same building, and the main building in its turn covers the tower, so that the defensive arrangement is complete.¹

There is evidently an architectural connexion between Abergeldie Castle and the Castle of Balflugh at Alford on Donside. The design of

¹ For this type of castle, see *The Earldom of Mar*, 122-8.

Balfluig is rather more elaborate, with a 'jamb' or wing attached to the main building, as well as the stair tower: but if this jamb be omitted then the two plans are very similar. The position of the round angle turret at Abergeldie exactly corresponds to that formerly on Balfluig, and shown in Giles' drawing.¹ The 'bull-nosed' angles of the main structure, and the unusual rectangular splay of the gunloops, are features common to both. The small turret stairs to the cap-house are also very similar in both castles. It looks very much as if Balfluig and Abergeldie were designed by the same master mason. Balfluig bears the date 1556, and a similar date must without doubt be assigned to Abergeldie.²

Although most of the old furniture was destroyed in the fire of 1816, a number of the family portraits remain, also the massive and richly carved oaken charter chest, which displays the family arms.³

From this ancient tower buildings, in some cases of wood, have been extended westwards along the river bank at various periods. These form two rows, with a kind of street between them. Although of no architectural pretensions, these annexes do not lack a certain picturesqueness; and the view looking eastward along the 'street' towards the old tower has a rather unusual and exotic appearance, reminding one, almost, of an *allée* in a small Provençal town.

Abergeldie is one of those ancient houses, like Crathes, Craig and Muchalls, also in the north, where the old Scottish practice of having the garden immediately adjoining has, fortunately, escaped the eighteenth-century craze for shifting it out half a mile away. And the garden is itself full of old world charm 'with a spreading copper beech and delicious old gean trees, broad grass walks, and sweet old-fashioned flowers'.⁴

The iron suspension bridge that communicates across the river between the castle and the north Deeside road was built by Queen Victoria in 1885. It succeeded a contrivance on the 'cradle' and pulley system,⁵ which was associated with two tragic mishaps. The first took place about 1745, when an exciseman named Brown, on his way across to grapple with some smugglers, was drowned by the breaking of the rope. The second accident occurred in 1824, and is thus feelingly described in the *Aberdeen Journal* of 1st December in that year:—

'On Sunday the 21st ult. an accident of a very melancholy and distressing nature occurred at Abergeldie, about seven o'clock in the evening. As Barbara Brown, a very beautiful and interesting young woman, in company with her husband, Peter Frank, was crossing the Dee on their way home, in the fly-boat or *cradle*, as it is called, at Abergeldie. When about the middle of the river, the rope, on which the boat was, slackened, owing to a piece of wood, which acted as a catch, giving way, when they were precipitated into the river; and, melancholy

¹ James Giles, *Aberdeenshire Castles* (Third Spalding Club), pl. LXVII.

² For Balfluig Castle, see *Proc. Soc. Ant. Scot.*, lv, 142-6.

³ These portraits and the 'kist' are illustrated in the Rev. Dr. John Stirton's *Crathie and*

Braemar.

⁴ Patricia Lindsay, *Records of a Royal Parish*, 75.

⁵ Described in Lindsay, *op. cit.*, 76, with illustration.

to relate, both perished. The alarm was immediately given; but owing to the darkness of the night, and the rapidity of the stream, no assistance could be afforded them. Her body was found the same evening, with what was imagined some faint signs of life; it was immediately removed to the House of Abergeldie, but the most persevering exertions to restore animation proved ineffectual. His body was not found till Tuesday evening, about three miles lower down the river. On Thursday, one grave received them both, laid side by side, in the churchyard of Crathie. Thus perished, by an untimely fate, a happy couple, in the bloom and vigour of youth, who had been only a few short weeks united: an awful example of the uncertainty of human life and happiness. They were both at church on Sunday forenoon, full of hope, with the prospect of many happy days before them. She was dressed in her bridal gown, the same she had four weeks before entered the church with as a blushing bride—destined soon, alas! to be changed for her winding sheet; and those eyes that beamed in the morning with health and with beauty, were, ere night, dim in the cold collapse of death. Frank was, from his infancy, brought up about the House of Abergeldie; and has been for several years gamekeeper to that family; he was an upright, honest lad, and of a most obliging disposition.

As registered in the Lyon Court of 1676, the arms of the Gordons of Abergeldie are as follows:—Quarterly, 1st *azure*, three boars' heads couped *or*; 2nd *or*, three lions' heads erased *gules*; 3rd *or*, three crescents within a double tressure flory counter flory *gules*; 4th *azure* three fraises *argent*; the whole within a bordure quarterly *argent* and *gules*. Crest: a deerhound *argent* collared *gules*. Motto: 'GOD FOR US'.

Abergeldie, like Braemar in general, is famous for its beautiful birches. The loveliness of these graceful trees has inspired one of the most eloquent writers on Deeside to perhaps his finest passage, from which the concluding sentences may be quoted¹:—

'Gladness, and patient endurance, and quiet sorrow find sympathy in the birch, or emanate from it. The pine is a gloomy and stubborn tree; but the birch responds in its graces to the gentler emotions.'

The 'birks of Abergeldie' form the theme of an old Scotch song and air, which, as it is now seldom met with, it seems worth while to set down in full:—

THE BIRKS O' ABERGELDIE

'Bonny lassie, will ye go,
Will ye go, will ye go
Bonny lassie, will ye go
To the Birks o' Abergeldie?
Ye shall get a gown of silk,
A gown of silk, a gown of silk,
Ye shall get a gown of silk
And coat of calimancoe.²

Na, kind sir, I dare nae gang,
I dare nae gang, I dare nae gang,
Na, kind sir, I dare nae gang,
My minnie she'll be angry;
Sair, sair, wad she flyte,
Wad she flyte, wad she flyte,
Sair, sair, wad she flyte,
And sair wad she ban me.³

¹ W. MacGillivray, *Natural History of Deeside*, 166-7.

² Calimanco, a silken cloth. See Customs and valuation of Merchandises, A.D. 1612, printed in *Ledger of Andrew Halyburton*, 327, where under 'silks wrought' is listed 'Calimanco, the eln £4'.

³ From J. Johnson, *Scots Musical Museum*, i (1787), 116. A broadside version, circa 1700,

longer and in lower taste, will be found in James Maidment's *Scottish Ballads and Songs* (1859), 59. It contains the following stanza:—

'Abergeldie Birks are very cold,
Are very cold, are very cold,
The weather very frostie.'

For Burns's song, see *The Centenary Burns*, ed. W. E. Henley and T. F. Henderson, iii, 7 and 306.

It was this olden Aberdeenshire air which Burns borrowed and to which he wrote a song of his own, changing the name to the 'Birks of Aberfeldy', 'which', so a patriotic Aberdeenshire historian claims, 'are nowise comparable to the noble and beauteous birks of Abergeldie'.¹

From the birks the lairds of Abergeldie used to distil their own wine, the secret of which is now lost. Some enthusiasts declared it 'superior to the finest champagne': it is said to have tasted like a particularly good cider. 'The last occasion on which there is record of its use at the Castle was at the funeral of the laird who died in 1831: but so late as 1845 it was sold at Birkhall at the modest price of a shilling per bottle.'²

ST. COLUMBA'S CHAPEL

About half a mile above the castle, on the left bank of the Geldie Burn, is the site of St. Columba's Chapel. Only the overgrown boulder foundations of the little building now remain, indicating a structure measuring about 35 feet by 15 feet with the walls. The small dimensions and relative width are suggestive of a Celtic origin. No dressed work now survives, nor are any gravestones visible in the little enclosure, which is surrounded by a ruined wall, and planted with pine and ash trees. This plantation was made shortly before 1819³ at the orders of the laird's wife, after the ruined chapel had been pulled down by some of the tenants, without leave given, for the sake of its materials.

In the Dee close by is *Poll-ma-chalmag*, St. Colmoc's Pool. This rather suggests that the real dedication of the chapel was to the north-eastern St. Colmoc or Colm, of Buchan and Caithness, whose fame has been very largely overlaid by the greater name of St. Columba.⁴

But according to the *View of the Diocese of Aberdeen*, a tract dated 1732, this chapel at Abergeldie was under the invocation of St. Valentine.⁵ This statement is not necessarily incompatible with the ascription to St. Colmoc, as there are plenty of parallels to such a supercession of the primary commemoration of an obscure Celtic missionary-founder by a medieval dedication to some saint in the Roman calendar. It would seem that this is the only dedication to this Italian saint in Britain. It is worth recalling that in Aberdeenshire there is also another unique Italian dedication, St. Apollinarius' Church (Polnarkirk) the mother church of Inverurie, the capital of the Garioch. I have elsewhere suggested that this dedication may have been due to David, Earl of Huntingdon and of the Garioch, the brother of William the Lion, who is said to have taken part in the Third Crusade and to have sojourned in Venice on his adventurous return journey.⁶ Is it possible that we ought to recognise a similar influence in our Abergeldie dedication?

¹ 'James Brown' (i.e. Dr. Joseph Robertson), *The New Deeside Guide*, 1860, 82-3.

² A. I. McConochie, *Deeside*, 3rd Edition, 172.

³ A. Laing, *Caledonian Itinerary*, i, 88.

⁴ For this, see my *Historical Saint Columba*, 36-9.

⁵ *Coll. Shires Aberdeen and Banff*, 641.

⁶ See *The Earldom of Mar*, 12-14.

I gratefully record my indebtedness to His Late Majesty, King George VI, who graciously granted me permission to study the castle ; to Major A. W. Haig, M.V.O., Commissioner for the Balmoral Estate, and the Rev. John Lamb, C.B.E., D.D., Minister at Crathie and Domestic Chaplain to the Queen, for courteous assistance ; to Mr. Bertram Gordon of Abergeldie for information on various matters ; and to Miss Robertson, Housekeeper at Abergeldie, for her assistance on the site.

The measured drawings published herewith were prepared in 1916 by the late Mr. William Kelly, LL.D., A.R.S.A., who placed them at my disposal for the purposes of this paper. They show the old tower divested of its modern insertions and accretions.