

8.

THE HUNTING

OF

HEVY-CHASE,

A BLOODY BATTLE,

FIGHT BY EARLS DOUGLAS AND PERCY.

WHERE ABOVE

SEVENTEEN HUNDRED SCOTSMEN, AND NEAR TWO THOUSAND ENGLISHMEN, WERE SLAIN IN ONE DAY.



GLASGOW:

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CHEVY-CHASE.

God prosper long our Noble King,
Our lives and safeties all—
A woeful hunting once there did
In Chevy-Chase befall.
To drive the deer with hound and horn
Earl Percy took the way,
The child may rue that was unborn,
The hunting of that day.
The stout Earl of Northumberland
A vow to God did make,
His pleasure in the Scottish woods,
Three summer days to take;
The choicest harts in Chevy-chase
To kill and bear away.
These tidings to Earl Douglas came,
In Scotland where he lay;
Who sent Earl Percy present word,
He would prevent the sport.
The English Earl not fearing him,
Did to the wood resort,
With twenty hundred bowmen bold,
All chosen men of might—
Who knew full well in time of need
To aim their shafts aright.
The gallant grey-hounds swiftly ran,
To chase the fallow deer,
On Monday they began to hunt,
When day-light did appear;
And long before high noon they had
An hundred fat bucks slain.
Then having dined, the rovers went
To rouse them up again,
Earl Percy to the quarry went
To view the fallow deer,

Quoth he, Earl Douglas promised
 This day to meet me here ;
 But if I thought he would not come,
 No longer would I stay.
 With that a brave young gentleman,
 Thus to the Earl did say—
 Lo! yonder doth Earl Douglas come,
 His men in armour bright ;
 Full fifteen hundred Scottish spears,
 All marching in our sight ;
 All pleasant men of Teviotdale,
 Dwell on the river Tweed.
 Then cease your sport, Earl Percy said,
 And take your arms with speed,
 And now with me my countrymen,
 Your courage to advance ;
 For there was ne'er a champion yet,
 In Scotland or in France,
 That ever did on horseback come,
 But if my hap it were,
 I durst encounter man for man,
 With him to break a spear.
 Lord Douglas on a milk-white steed,
 Most like a Baron bold,
 Rode foremost of his company,
 His armour shone like gold.
 Shew me, said he, whose men ye be,
 That hunt so boldly here ;
 That without my consent do chase
 And kill my fallow deer.
 The first man that did answer make
 Was noble Percy he,
 Who said, we list not to declare
 Nor show whose men we be ;

Yet we will spend our dearest blood,
 The choicest harts to slay.
 Then Douglas swore a solemn oath,
 And thus in rage did say—
 E'er thus I will outbraved be,
 One of us two shall die.
 I know thee well, an Earl thou art—
 Lord Percy—so am I:
 But trust me, Percy, pity it were,
 And great offence to kill
 Any of these our harmless men,
 For they have done no ill.
 Let thee and me the battle try,
 And set our men aside;
 Accurs'd be he, said Earl Percy,
 By whom this is denied.
 Then stept a gallant squire forth,
 Witherington by name;
 Who said he would not have it told
 To Henry his king for shame—
 That e'er my captain fought on foot,
 And I stood looking on.
 Ye be two Earls, said Witherington,
 And I a 'squire alone,
 I'll do the best that I may do,
 Whilst I have power to stand—
 Whilst I have power to wield my sword,
 I'll fight with heart and hand.
 Our Scottish archers bent their bows,
 Their hearts were good and true;
 At the first flight of arrows sent,
 They fourscore English slew.
 To drive the deer with hound and horn,
 Douglas bade on the bent,

A captain mov'd with meikle pride,
 The spears in shivers went.
 They closed full fast on every side,
 No slackness there was found,
 And many a gallant gentleman
 Lay gasping on the ground.
 O! but it was a grief to see,
 And likewise for to hear,
 The cries of men lying in their gore,
 All scattered here and there.
 At last these two Earls did meet,
 Like chieftains of great might;
 Like lions mov'd, they fear'd no lord,
 They made a cruel fight,
 They fought until they both did sweat,
 With swords of temper'd steel—
 Until the blood like drops of rain,
 They trickling down did feel.
 Yield thee, Percy, Douglas said,
 In faith I will thee bring
 Where thou shall high advanced be,
 By James our Scottish King;
 Thy ransom I will freely give,
 And this report of thee—
 Thou art the most courageous knight
 That ever I did see.
 Nay, Douglas, quoth Lord Percy then,
 Thy proffer I do scorn;
 I will not yield to any Scot
 That ever yet was born.
 With that there came an arrow keen,
 Out of the English bow,
 Which struck Lord Douglas to the heart,
 A deep and deadly blow.—

Who never spoke more words than these,
 Fight on my merry men all—
 For why, my life is at an end,
 Lord Percy sees me fall.
 Then leaving off, Lord Percy took
 The dead man by the hand,
 And said, Lord Douglas, for thy life
 I would have lost my land ;
 O! but my very heart doth bleed
 With sorrow for thy sake,
 For sure a more renowned knight
 Mischance did never take.
 A knight among the Scots there was,
 Who saw Earl Douglas die,
 Who straight in wrath did vow revenge
 Upon the Earl Percy.
 Sir Hugh Montgomery he was call'd,
 Who with a spear full bright,
 Well mounted on a gallant steed,
 Rode fiercely through the fight.
 He pass'd the English archers all,
 Without e'er dread or fear,
 And through Earl Percy's body then
 He thrust his hateful spear.
 With a vehement force and might
 He did his body gore—
 The spear went through the other side,
 A long cloth yard and more.
 So thus did these two nobles die,
 Whose courage none could stain,
 An English archer then perceived
 His noble lord was slain.
 He had a bow bent in his hand,
 Made of a trusty tree,

An arrow of a cloth yard's length,
 Unto the head he drew—
 Against Sir Hugh Montgomery then
 So right his shaft he set,
 The grey goose wings that were therein
 In his heart's blood were wet.
 The fight did last from break of day
 till setting of the sun ;
 For when they rung the evening bell,
 The battle scarce was done.
 With the Earl Percy there was slain—
 Sir John of Ogerton ;
 Sir Robert Ratcliffe and Sir John,
 Sir James the bold baron :
 Sir George and also good Sir Hugh,
 Both knights of good account ;
 Good Sir Ralph Raby there was slain,
 Whose powers did surmount ;
 For Witherington I needs must wail,
 As one in woeful dumps—
 For when his legs were smitten off,
 He fought upon his stumps.
 And with Earl Douglas there was slain—
 Sir Hugh Montgomery ;
 Sir Charles Murray that from the field
 One foot would never fly ;
 Sir Charles Murray of Ratcliffe too
 His sister's son was he :
 Sir David Lamb so well esteemed,
 Yet saved could he not be ;
 And Lord Maxwell e'en likewise,
 Did with Earl Douglas die.
 Of fifteen hundred Scottish men,
 Went home but fifty-three ;

Of twenty hundred Englishmen,
 Scarce fifty-five did flee;
 The rest were slain at Chevy-chase.
 Under the green-wood tree.
 Next day did many widows come
 Their husbands to bewail—
 They washed their wounds with brinished tears,
 But all could not prevail.
 Their bodies bathed in purple blood,
 They carried them away;
 They kissed them dead a thousand times,
 When they were cold as clay.
 The news were brought to Edinburgh,
 Where Scotland's king did reign,
 That brave Earl Douglas suddenly,
 Was by an arrow slain.
 Now God be with him, said the king,
 Sith 'twill no better be—
 I trust I have in my realm
 Five hundred good as he.
 Like tidings to king Henry came,
 Within as short a space,
 That Percy of Northumberland,
 Was slain at Chevy-chase.
 O heavy news, king Henry said,
 England can witness be—
 I have not any captain more
 Of such account as he.
 Now of the rest of small account,
 Did many hundreds die;
 Thus ends the battle of Chevy-chase,
 Made by the Earl Percy.