

THE

BATTLE

OF

CHEVY-CHACE.

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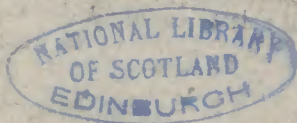
Excellent Old Ballad.



GLASGOW;

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# The Battle of Chevy-Chace

God prosper long our noble king,  
— our lives and safeties all:  
A woeful hunting once there did  
in Chevy Chace befall.  
To drive the deer, with hound and horn;  
Lord Percy took his way:  
The child may rue that is 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-Chace  
to kill and bear away;  
The tidings to Earl Douglas came  
in Scotland, where he lay:  
Who sent Earl Percy present word,  
he would prevent his sport,  
The English Earl not fearing this,  
did to the woods resort:  
With full twenty hundred bowmen bold,  
all chosen men of might,  
Who know full well, in time of need,  
to aim their shafts aright.  
The gallant greyhounds swiftly ran  
to chace the fallow deer;  
On Monday they began to hunt,  
when daylight did appear;  
And, long before high noon, they had  
a hundred fat bucks slain;  
Then having din'd, the rovers went  
to rouse them up again.  
The bowmen muster'd on the hills,  
well able to endure;

their backsides all, with special care,  
 that day were guarded sure.  
 The hounds ran swiftly through the woods;  
 the nimble deer to take,  
 and with their cries the hills and dales  
 an echo shrill did make.

Lord Percy to the quarry went  
 to view the slaughter'd deer;  
 when lo! Earl Douglas promised  
 this day to meet me here:  
 that if I thought he would not come,  
 no longer would I stay,—  
 With that a brave young gentleman,  
 thus to the Earl did say:

O! yonder doth Earl Douglas come,  
 his men in armour bright;  
 all fifteen hundred Scottish spears  
 are marching in our sight.  
 All men of pleasant Tiviotdale,  
 sail by the river Tweed —  
 when cease your sport; Earl Percy said,  
 and take your bows with speed:

and now with me, my countrymen,  
 your courage forth advance;  
 for never was there a champion yet  
 in Scotland or in France,  
 that ever did on horseback come,  
 but, if my hap it were,  
 durst encounter, man for man,  
 with him to break a spear.

Earl Douglas, on a milk-white steed,  
 most like a baron bold,  
 rode foremost of the company,  
 his armour shone like gold.  
 "Hew me," said he, "whose men you be,  
 that hunt so boldly here;"

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And, without my consent, do chace,  
and kill my fallow-deer?

The first that him did answer make,  
was noble Percy, he

Did say, we list not to declare,  
or shew whose men we be :

For we will spend our dearest blood,  
the chiefest hearts to slay,

Then Douglas swore a solemn oath,  
and thus in rage did say :

Ere thus I will out-braved 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 'twere,  
and great offence, to kill

Any of these our harmless men,  
for they have done no ill.

Let thou and I the battle try,  
and set our men aside.

Accurst be he, Lord Percy said,  
by whom this is denied.

Then stept a gallant squire forth,  
Witherington was his name,

Who said, I would not have it told  
to Henry, our king, for shame.

That e'er my captain fought on foot,  
and I stood looking on ;

You are two earls, said Witherington,  
and I a squire alone :

I'll do the best that I can do,  
while I have strength to stand,

Or I have power to wield my sword,  
I'll fight with heart and hand,

The English archers bent their bows,  
 their hearts were good and true;  
 At the first flight of arrows sent,  
 full threëcore Scots they slew.

To drive the deer with hound and horn,  
 Earl Percy had been bent;  
 The captains mov'd with meikle pride,  
 The spears to shivers sent.

They closed fall fast on ev'ry side,  
 no slackness there was found;  
 And many a gallant gentleman  
 lay gasping on the ground.

Oh, dear! it was a grief to see,  
 and likewise for to hear,  
 The groans of men lying in their gore,  
 and scatter'd here and there.

At last these two bold earls met,  
 like captains of great might;  
 Like lions mov'd, they laid on blows,  
 and made a bloody 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, Earl Percy, Douglas said,  
 in faith I will thee bring,  
 Where thou shalt high advanced be  
 by James, our Scottish king;

Thy ransom I will freely give,  
 and thus report of thee:

Thou art the most couragious knight  
 that ever I did see.

No, Douglas, quoth Earl Percy then,  
 thy proffers I do scorn:

I will not yeild to any Scot  
that ever yet was born.

With that there came an arrow keen  
out of an English bow,  
which struck Earl Douglas to the heart,  
a deep and deadly blow.

He 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 strife—Earl Percy took  
the dead man by the hand,

And said, Earl Douglas, for thy life,  
would I have lost my land.

O dear! my very heart doth bleed  
with sorrow for thy sake;

For sure a more renowned knight  
misfchance did never take!

A knight amongst the Scots there was,  
who saw Earl Douglas die;

And straight in wrath did vow revenge  
upon the Lord Percy.

Sir Hugh Montgomery he was call'd;  
who, with a spear most bright,

Well mounted on a gallant steed,  
Rode fiercely through the fight;

He passed the English archers all,  
without all dread or fear;

And through Earl Percy's body then  
he thrust his hateful spear;

With such a vehement force and might  
he did his body gore,

The spear went through the other side  
a full cloth yard and more.

So thus did both these nobles die,  
 whose courage none could stain;  
 An English archer then perceived,  
 The noble earl was slain.  
 He had a bow bent in his hand,  
 made of a trusty yew;  
 An arrow of a cloth-yard long,  
 unto the head he drew.  
 Against Sir Hugh Montgomery,  
 So right the shaft he set,  
 The grey-goose wing that was theron  
 in his heart's blood was wet.  
 This 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 Earl Percy there was slain  
 Sir John of Ogerton,  
 Sir Roger Ratcliff, and Sir John,  
 Sir James, that bold baron;  
 And with Sir George, and good Sir James,  
 Both knights of good account,  
 Good Sir Ralph Raby, there was slain,  
 whose prowess did surmount.  
 For Witherington I needs must wail,  
 as one in doleful dumps,  
 For when his legs were smitten off,  
 he fought upon his stumps.  
 Of twenty hundred bowmen bold,  
 Scarce fifty five did flee;  
 The rest were slain in Chevy-Chace,  
 Under the green-wood tree.  
 And with Earl Douglas there was slain  
 Sir Hugh Montgomery;  
 Sir Charles Currel, that from the field,  
 one foot would never fly.

Sir Charles Currel, of Ratcliff, too,  
 his sister's son was he ;  
 Sir David Lamb, tho' so esteem'd,  
 he saved could not be.

The brave Lord Maxwell likewise fell,  
 with others of high degree ;  
 O fifteen hundred Scottish spears,  
 went home but fifty three.

Next day did many widows come  
 their husbands to bewail ;  
 They wash'd their wounds in briny tears,  
 Yet all could not avail.

Their bodies, bath'd in purple gore,  
 with them they bore away ;  
 And kiss'd them — dead, a thousand times,  
 when they were cold as clay.

The news was brought to London town,  
 where England's king did reign,  
 That Percy of Northumberland,  
 at Chevy-Chace was slain.

Oh! heavy news, King Henry said,  
 England can witness be,  
 I have not another captain  
 of such account as he.

Like tidings to King James did come,  
 which caused him much pain,  
 That the Earl Douglas suddenly  
 was with arrow slain.

Then God be with him, said the King,  
 Since twill no better be,  
 I trust I have in my realm  
 five hundred as good as he.

God save the King, and bless the land,  
 in plenty, joy, and peace ;  
 And grant, henceforth, that foul debates  
 'twixt noblemen may cease.