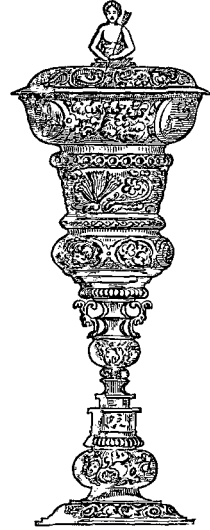


## II.

NOTICE OF A SILVER CUP, FORMERLY BELONGING TO THE FAMILY OF CALDER OF ASSUANLEY, IN STRATHBOGIE. BY CHARLES E. DALRYMPLE, Esq.

In giving some account of this relic (which was exhibited to the Meeting, see woodcut), it must be explained that it has, for some generations, been mistaken for *another* cup, said by tradition to have been carried off from the Earl of Crawford's castle of Finhaven by Calder of Assuanley, a vassal of the Earl of Huntly, on the day of the battle of Brechin, May the 18th, 1453.

The romantic adventure of Calder has at different times appeared in print, though with some variations. Thus Pitseottie, who first notices it, makes no mention of *the cup*. He says:—"So the Earle of Crawford being vanquished in this manner, it is said that ane Gentleman followed him so ferclie, that he drew him in the midis of the press of the folkis that war gathered about thair maister to be his saif-gaird in the middle of the flight; and so was compelled to pass with thame as he had beine ane man of thair awin to the place of Phenevin, quhair he heard the Earle say, that he wisched himself to be sewin zeires in hell for the honorabill victorie that had befallen to the Earle of Huntlie that day: considering the great favour that he had conquest of his prince for his releiffe and repressing of his rebellis."<sup>1</sup>



In Macfarlane's "Geographical Collections for Scotland," written 1726, as printed for the Spalding Club in the volume of "Antiquities of the Shires of Aberdeen and Banff," p. 183, the story is thus given:—"There was one Hutcheon Calder in company with Huntley, when he went to the batell of Brichen against the Earle of Crawford, who by his cunning and courage got into the camp of Earle Beardy, and likewise into his tent, who, after supper, brought away the said Earle's drinking-cup (which cup Calder of Asswanlie keeps to this day), being a large silver cup, overlaid with gold, holding a Scots pint and two

Pitseottie, vol i., pp. 106-7, Edin., 1814.

gills, of fine engraven and carved work, and with a cape, upon which there is an inscription, which is now lost; wherewith returning to the camp in the silence of the night, he gave account to Huntley of the situation of Earle Beardy's camp and number of his forces; and as a testimony of his being there, produced the said cup; upon which intelligence they attacked Crawford in the morning and defeated his forces; for which service the said Hutcheon Calder obtained the lands of Aswanlie, whose posterity possess it to this day."

In Gordon's "History of the Family of Gordon," after narrating the carrying off of the cup, the author adds,—“George Duke of Gordon had a cup made of silver, and gilded and embossed as like to the original as a workman could do, and gave it to this Mr Calder of Assuanlee, to be kept in his family by him and his successors, under penalty of paying double the feu-duty of his lands that he then paid to the Duke and his successors; and out of this cup have I of late drunk. It weighs 12 lb. : 13 sh. : sterling.”

Lord Lindsay, who takes some pains to sift this story, remarks (“Lives of the Lindsays,” vol. i. p. 138.),—“The adventure at Finhaven may possibly be true, but the estate of Assuanlie was granted to the Calders twelve years before the battle of Brechin. It may probably have been re-granted, with additional privileges, by Huntley on that occasion.”

The whole story thus appears confused and contradictory. Macfarlane holds this to be the original cup, while the historian of the Gordons declares it to have been made by order of George first Duke of Gordon, but implies that it was made fac-simile *from* the original cup.

The discovery of several documents, however, showing the date at which the cup was acquired by the Calders, has for ever disposed of its claims to be the Cup of Finhaven, as it is by them shown to have been, as stated in the “History of the Gordons,” the gift of George Duke of Gordon to George Calder of Asswanley in the beginning of the last century. Copies of these documents are appended at the end of this paper.

Although intended by the donor to be handed down as an heir-loom in the Calder family, they did not retain the cup for more than three or four generations at most; as about the middle of the last century it came into the possession of James Gordon, Esq. of Cobairdy, in Banffshire, who purchased it from the landlord of an inn, to whom the Laird of Assuanley had pledged it in security for a debt he owed him. From Mr Gordon it passed by inheritance to his son Sir Ernest Gordon of Park, whose daughter and sole heiress left it at her death to her relative, the writer of this paper.

## COPIES OF THE DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO.

## No. I.—1704.

Be it known to all men by thir present letters, Me George Calder of Asswanlie fforasmuch as it has pleased his Grace George Duke of Gordon, in commemoration of some singular service performed by my predecessors in the King's service, under his Grace's ancestors, especially att the Batle of Breichen, To gratify me with three hundreth merks contained in ane bond of five hundreth merks I was addebted to his grace, having performed somewhat at his Grace's desyre in contemplatione of the other two hundreth marks it is His Grace will and pleassur that the same be made in ane Cup, representing that Cup q<sup>lk</sup> one of my ansestors took from Earle Beardie at the Batle of Breichen, and q<sup>lk</sup> cup is to be kept and preserved by me and my representatives As ane testimony of his Grace favour. Therefore Witt ze me the s<sup>d</sup> George Calder to be bound and oblidged Lykeas be the tenour hereof I faithfully bind and oblidge me my aires ex<sup>ts</sup> and successors to provyd the fors<sup>d</sup> soume of Three hundreth merks Scotts betwyxt the Date heiroff & the terme of Whytsonday next, J<sup>m</sup> vj<sup>c</sup> and five zears And to deliver the same to a sufficient responsible workman for framing of the s<sup>d</sup> Cup According to his grace the Duke of Gordon or his successors their pleasure and directions to be givin th<sup>re</sup>anent, and that under the failzie of ane hundreth merks money fors<sup>d</sup> in case of failzie and that by and attour performance consenting to the registratiōne hereof in the Books of Counsell and Sessioun Regality Court books of Huntly or other Judges competent that all execution needful may pass heiron in forme as effeirs & to that effect constitut . . . . . my Procurators. In witness q<sup>re</sup>off thir presents written be Mr George Gordon of Sanshaw (?) are subscribed with my hand at Gordon Castle the seventeenth day of May J<sup>m</sup> vj<sup>c</sup> and four zears, before thir witnesses Patrick Stewart of Tannachie, Mr John Scot Parson at Diple, and the said Mr George Gordon writer fforasaid.

(Signed). JOHN SCOT witness.  
P. STEWART witness.

G. CALDER.

## No. II.—1710.

Att Gordon Castle the twentie fift day of February One thousand seuen hundred and ten zears in presence of Patrick Stewart of Tannachie Bailzie of the Regality of Huntly compeired Norman Hutcheson in ffochabris as pr<sup>or</sup> speciallie constitut be George Calder afternamed & designed who gaue in the bond and obligatione underwritten desyring the same might be insert and registrat in the

said Regality books that all executione nessare might pass thereon conform to the clause of registratiōne therein contained. Whilk desire the said Judge thought reasonable and therfor desyred and ordained the same to be insert and registrat in the s<sup>d</sup> Regality books to the effect qu<sup>ro</sup>f the tenor fol-  
lowes and is thus—Be it kend to all men be thir presents Mee George Calder of Assuanley fforasmuch as Hutcheon Calder on of my ansestors first heritor of Assuanley at the Battle of Breichen, serving the Family of Huntly did so far pursewe the Victory obtained by the Earle of Huntly ouer Earle Beardy that the said Hutcheon Calder went to the house of Ffinheauen and brought with him Earle Beardy's Cupe for a testimony of his valoure qk for many zears remained in my family and now seeing his Grace George D. of Gordon has presented me and my family ane silver cupe double overgilt to the value of three hundreth merks and his Grace the Duke being desirous to have the said Cupe hencefurth preserved in my family *ad futuram rei memoriam* Therefor I the said George Calder faithfullie binds & obliges me my heirs and successours to preserve and keep entire the said Cupe for evir in my family in asse good conditione evry maner of way as I had rec<sup>d</sup> it at the granting heirof, and that under the failzie of three hundreth merks Scots. And I consent thir presents be insert and registrat in any competent Register within this Kyngdome, that all executione necessarie on ane charge of ten days may pass heirupon in forme as effeirs. And thereto Constitut Normand Hutcheon in Fochabris my Pro<sup>r</sup> in wjtnes q<sup>o</sup>f I have subscribed thir presents with my hand at Rawes of Huntly the sixt of October seventeen hundred and eight zeirs before thir witnesses John Neveill attending the Earle of Huntley and Norman Hutcheon Mess<sup>r</sup> at Fochabris writer heirof. (Sic subscribitur) G. CALDER. Jo : Neville wjtnes. N. Hutcheon wjtnes. Registrat in the said Regality books and extract by me Pa : Stewart Cl<sup>k</sup>. (Clerk.)

## No. III.—1715.

I Alexander Calder younger of Aswanly fforasmuch as a high and mightie prince George Duke of Gordone my Superior was pleased to bestow upon George Calder my father and me the soume of three houndred merks for bying ane big Silver Cup to remain in our family and be transmitted from hand to hand down to posterity for preserving and reviving the memory of our first predecessor upon whom on of his Grace's progenitours bestowed the hails lands of Aswanly as a recompense of his loyalty and Courage in the King's Service under the Command of the family of Huntly And seeing a potent and noble Lord Alexander Marquis of Huntly my present Superior is desirous that the forsaid Cup should be safely kepted and transmitted to my descendants. Therfor witt zee mee the

the said Alex<sup>r</sup> Calder and with and for me George Petry in the Raws of Huntly to be bound and oblidge Likeas we by the tenor hereof bind and oblidge us Conjunctly and Severally our heirs and successors to deliver the forsaid Cup with the Cover thereof into the hands of Alex<sup>r</sup> Ogulvie of Forglain one of the Senatours of the Colledge of Justice and to procure his receipt thereone bearing ane oblidge to make the same furth comeing to my heirs whatsomever and that betwixt and the first day of November next to come under the failzie of one hundred pounds Scots money by and attour performance and I the said Alex<sup>r</sup> Calder bind and oblidge me and my foresaids to free and releive the said George Petry and his foresaids of this his obligatione and ingadgment and of all cost skaith dammage and interest he or they may Sustain or Incurr thereupon through consenting to the registratiōe hereof in the books of Counsell and Session or others competent within this Kingdom that all execution needful may pass hereon in form as effeirs and yr<sup>to</sup> wee Constitute . . . . .  
 Our pro<sup>s</sup>. In witness wherof wee have subscribed the (written  
 be Alex<sup>r</sup> Ranken son to James Ranken in Fochabers) At Gordone Castle the  
 twenty third day of May one thousand seuen hundred and fifteen zears before  
 witnesses William forbes of Edincliack Alex<sup>r</sup> Abercromie of Bruntstone and  
 the said writer.

WILL : FORBES, witness.  
 ALEXR. ABERCROMY witness.

ALEX<sup>R</sup> CALDER.  
 G. PETRIE.