

III.

NOTES ON AN ACCOUNT OF THE EXPENDITURE OF ARCHIBALD, NINTH EARL OF ARGYLL, IN THE MAINTENANCE OF HIS HOUSEHOLD, ETC. AT INVERARAY IN THE YEAR 1680. BY ALEXANDER O. CURLE, *Secretary*.

The volume which is the subject of these notes is an unbound MS. extending to thirty pages, containing an account of the expenditure incurred in the establishment of Archibald, ninth Earl of Argyll, at Inveraray in the year 1680. As in other household books, the entries are of a very varied character, and are of value as throwing light on the social usages of the period. This account unfortunately, though gaining in consequence from the historical importance of the household, lacks interest from having been kept by a servitor, ignorant often of the objects to which money disbursed to his employer was being applied, and never making entries to serve for memoranda of events, as is so frequently the case in the accounts kept by householders themselves. This is not the place to give a detailed account of the career of the ninth Earl of Argyll, but a short sketch may not be out of place. He was born in 1629, married (1) Lady Mary Stuart, eldest daughter of the fifth Earl of Moray, who died in 1668, leaving a considerable family; and (2) in 1670, Lady Anne Mackenzie, second daughter of the first Earl of Seaforth, widow of the first Earl of Balcarres, "my lady" of this account, by whom he had no issue. He suffered sundry vicissitudes of fortune during the Commonwealth time, as well as at the Restoration, and in 1661 was actually condemned to death on a trumped-up charge of leasing-making, though the execution of the sentence was deferred and allowed to lapse. He was restored to his grandfather's titles and estates in 1663, whence till 1681 he enjoyed a period of comparative prosperity. In that year, however, for refusing to take the test without qualification, he was tried and again condemned to death, but on the eve of his execution made good his escape to Holland, whence, four years later, on the accession of James

II., he returned with a band of fugitives, who, in circumstances which need no relation here, raised the standard of rebellion in the West. This attempt, largely through the vanity and vacillation of Argyll, ended in a miserable failure. He was captured and finally executed at Edinburgh on 30th June 1685.

I think we may accept this account as an accurate and more or less complete record of the whole expenditure of the Earl at Inveraray during this particular year. It includes such items as servants' wages, sums advanced to the Countess for necessaries for the children, charity, etc., money paid to Argyll himself for objects not disclosed, labourers' wages, groceries, payments to merchants, fishermen, etc., even the outlays for the children's education. Though, on the other hand, there is not a single entry for butcher-meat, there are a few for eggs, herring, and wild-fowl, and it is likely that home-grown produce and the rents paid in kind would suffice to keep the establishment in meat without having to buy any. Of drink, small quantities of ale are purchased, and on two occasions hogsheads of sack—an expensive item—

Feb. 17. To Archibald Campbell in Ormadaill in full satisfaction of ane hogshead of seck gotten by him and Silvercraigs fra Walter Gibsone for my lord to Mull 17 Feb. 1620, £162 0 0¹

and payment is later on made to Robert Ross for another hogshead got in 1679. There are frequent purchases of vinegar entered in such context as suggests a beverage, probably a light, sour wine; an assumption strengthened by the purchase of vinegar glasses, *e.g.* "the night my lord came home for vinegar, 0 6 8." "Brandie" is also mentioned.

Of fish, herring are laid in in June,—570 at 7s. per 100,—and "a quarter hunder of hard fish" costs £9. Of shellfish, oysters are mentioned. As there are frequent references, however, to the "galley," the "gabbert,"² and the "birling,"³ it is highly probable the house was well supplied with fish.

¹ Throughout this article all sums are stated in Scots currency.

² A lighter.

³ A rowing-boat of the largest size with six or eight oars.

The galley seems only to have been hired, as there is a payment in September to Wm. Campbell for £692, 19s. for "paying her freight, canvas, and seamen's wages." Some boat building or repairing must have gone on, for there is a repayment to the carpenter of £3, 13s. 4d. for 100 "saimand roove"¹ and 200 great garran² nails; and a payment "to Andrew Litch in Rugland for 1100 seaman roove at 2 mark per 100, £14 13 4." "Tows," *i.e.* ropes, are bought for the "colaise," probably also a boat (Gaelic *Culaidh*).

There is little mention of utensils. The tinkler is entrusted with the mending of "the silver lawier," and gets for money and workmanship 13s. 4d. There is an elaborate transaction in pewter:—

Item for fyfteen pund and twelve unces of bristo pewther in two new great quart flagones	£14 3 6
and for ane basone of English pewther	2 16 0
<i>inde</i> £16 19 6—rebat as the pryce of fourtein pund of old English pewther in two great flagones sold at 9s. per pound £6 6—rests to be allowed to the comptar	£10 3 6
Item in exchange betwixt twentie two pundis of Scots pewther in thrie quart and ane pynt stoupes and 22 pund in two quart and two new pynt stoups at 2/ per pound	£2 8 0

It may be well here to mention that even in those days the plumber was a necessary evil:—

15th Sept. To Alex. Thom, Plumber, in pairt payment of ane account of	
£101, 5s.	£24 0 0

Of commodities purchased, "flour and bisket" comes from Harie Donaldsone the baxter in Glasgow; the soap is of Holland make; candles are of two sorts, "ordinary" and "cotton," the latter a superior article, probably with cotton wicks, costing £3, 6s. per stone, while the former cost but a dollar (£2, 18s.). Glasses are bought in Glasgow, "three vinigar glasses at 6/ each," and at the same time a dozen and a half of ordinary drinking-glasses at 4s. a piece and a creel to put them in, apparently to bring them home. A few months later other three drinking-glasses are bought for £1.

¹ Seamen's rivets.

² Nails used in shipbuilding.

Drinking-glasses were at that period coming into fashion—solid-looking vessels, with heavy moulded baluster stems.

For the making of ink, galls are procured. Rozat is occasionally purchased at the same time as vinegar, and perhaps used for putting into it as “mastic” at the present day is into light wine in Greece and Turkey; and there are the usual purchases of figs and prunes, and once of a ham.

At the beginning of February, for reasons not apparent, there is some outfitting. Ribbons are procured for my lady’s petticoat, and ribbons for Mr John’s velvet cap, while the latter is also furnished with a pair of new “fill” boots, a pair of new shoes from Edinburgh at a cost of £2, 4s., and a pair of stockings “q^{ch} belonged to the comptar,” and which the latter enters at £3. Mr Charles’s share is a pair of single¹ shoes at £1, and gloves which cost 11s.

Peats are only used in an emergency when coals run out.

It, for peates bought at several times since the fifth of February qⁿ there was no coals q^r of some at 2/6 per load, some at 3/ per load, and some at 40^d per load.

Coals, a serious expense then as now, were purchased by the barrel at the rate of about 10s.

1 Ap. To Wm. Ewine for 133 barrells of coales at 10/9 per barrell	£71 9 9
12 Ap. To Adam Lorimer for 150 barrells	97 10 0
14 May. To Wm. Montgomerie for 85 barrells	42 10 0
23 May. To Wm. Montgomerie for 72 barrells	36 0 0
18 June. To Wm. Montgomerie for 87 barrells	43 0 0
Oct. To John Brown for 150 barrells	75 0 0

Total 677 barrels, costing £365, 19s. 9d. This is apparently the supply for the year, laid in during summer.

It is interesting to note that on 8th June—May being safely “out”—my lady “sends to Edinburgh to Mrs Jean Campbell” for linen, etc., “to be drawers to my Lord, £17 8 0.”

When the late autumn comes chestnuts are much in request, vege-

¹ Single-soled.

tables and fruit being then scarce. They are bought at 5s. the hundred and in large quantities—600 on one occasion, 1400 on another.

Here is an interesting entry :—"To the man that brought purslane from Sir Geo. Maxwell." Porcelain at this period was a scarce commodity, a product only of the far East, and no doubt rarely to be found in Scottish mansions.

Mr James is supplied with a "worm" at a cost of 6s., which must have been for distilling.

Except in the case of the cook, who is a man, the coachman, gardener, and carpenter, the employment of the various servants is not stated, and as their wages are, as usual, paid irregularly and by instalments, it is difficult to ascertain the annual amounts. There appear only the names of two women who get "fealls," viz., Agnes Marshall and Margaret Aichesone, whose wages are respectively at the rates of £18 and £20 per annum ; but as one is paid for 5½ years' service, less one year's payment to account in 1678, and the other for that of a year and a half, it is quite possible there were other female domestics whose wages, by arrangement or otherwise, were running on unpaid. John Dysert, who attended on "Mr John," got £30 a year ; Neil Fisher, whatever he was, had £20 ; and Malcolm M'Kerras only £13, 6s. 8d.

A "fencer"—for in those days swordsmanship was too valuable a part of a gentleman's education to be neglected—was retained in the establishment, and to him "in satisfaction of his wages," for what period is not stated, was paid £117, 8s., and further, my lady rewards him with a couple of dollars (£5, 16s.) in addition. All these payments are made in June. George Deavie, the coachman, whose wages come to him at odd times, gets £54 per annum. Wm. Hendrie, the carpenter, had payments of £33, 6s. 8d. on 20th May and 19th November, making for the year £66, 13s. 4d. The cook, George Brown, and the gardener, Robert Kirkland, unfortunately only get payments to account, while there are several other men similarly paid, whose occupations are not stated. It will be noticed that all these servants bear lowland names. Contrary to a custom then prevalent in humbler households, none of them appear to

have received "bountith shoon" or "victual" as part of their wages. The outdoor servants, however, probably received their "keep," as the following entry, which also exemplifies the cost of living, shows:—

To Mary M'Vicar, for Wm Hendrie's (the carpenter) tabling for eight weeks at £1 13 4 weeklie, £13 6 8

The employment of labour and its cost is recorded: an outdoor labourer got 10p. a day.

2 April to Adam Marshall for four scoir & eighteen days work £49 0 0
To Thomas Deor for 218 days 109 0 0

This seems a high rate, relative to the purchasing power of money, to exemplify which it may be mentioned that the grey horse which the "comptar" got from Hector Dow M'Neill cost £44, the Isla cow purchased for my lord's use £7, and a hen 3s. 4d. John More M'Vicar and Donald M'Bean, in part payment of the dyke they are to build at Bellintyre, are to receive £45, 18s. 4d.; this implies an enclosure of considerable extent.

From these somewhat dry details, let us turn and see what can be gathered from the account as to the amenities of life. There is not much to aid us. The harper still swept his strings in the hall: sometimes a wandering bard, at other times the poor blind minstrel, who with the coming of the New Year receives a dole,—a leg dollar and two merks (£4, 2s. 8d.). There are two violers—Donald M'Gibbon and Patrick Campbell—whose services are in request, earning a dollar now and again, but only once does a piper appear, and he a casual stranger, in company with a nameless violer—a couple of vagrant musicians, more welcome then than now. From time to time we catch faint glimpses of children in the household. Their clothing has to be purchased, and for their education Mr John Campbell, Doctor of the Grammar School at Glasgow, attends them, and is paid £40 for his pains. Fishing-lines for their use are brought back by the messenger from Greenock, and to distant Edinburgh is sent an order for "ane dussone and a halfe of goofe balls." My lady signs a precept for "pulver

and lead for Mr James," and "Mr Charles" gets his arrows, and for their "haundsell" at the New Year Mr John and Mr James get a dollar between them.

There is a garden under the charge of Robert Kirkland, wherein he plants in the spring 700 bowkail,¹ and in the winter, after his return from the Lowlands, "hollies, gusberries, and current setts." His account for the latter plants, amounting to £21, 12s., includes a charge for "edge looms," which probably mean edge tools, perhaps pruning implements.

In the park around the castle grows timber, for some of it has to be cut down or taken up by the labourers Thomas Deor and Duncan M'Kenochie, who are making a path through it, to whom £10, 13s. 4d. is allowed as part of the price thereof. It is probably oak coppice, whose bark is of value to the tanner.

19 Aug. to John More M'Vicar and Donald M'Brain, as full payment of six scoir six bolls oaken bark cut in the year 1680 (besyd six bolls and ane half they delivered by condition w^tout peyment), at 13^s 4^d per boll, £84 0 0

Coin was too scarce in those days for much of it to be carried about in the pocket, hence the payment of small sums in charity, etc. passed through the accounts. Those evidences of an endeavour to lighten the hard lot of their poorer neighbours bear testimony to the kindness of the heads of the household.

To a poor tenant called Red in Kilmaglach	£5 16 0
To a poor woman that had her husband killed	5 16 0
To my lady, to a poor man	0 6 8
To Malcolm M'Kerras for <i>Loch leeches</i>	0 7 0

perhaps explained by the entry that follows—

To my lady, to a poor man that had a sore leg	0 12 0
To a straquir man in charity	0 12 0
To my lady, to give a woman in the tounheid that had her chyld cut of the gravell	2 17 0

To charity perhaps we may also attribute the employment of "Archibald Campbell with the *lame* hand."

¹ Curly cabbages.

There are numerous contributions to the church box, whose contents were probably also for the poor—the sum most frequently given being 13s. 4d.

Much money was expended in sending messengers hither and thither, conveying letters to distant correspondents. Two other entries seem to merit remark: the first, on 21st January, recalls the sanguinary struggle existing for some years prior to this period between Argyll and the Macleans in Mull, and relates to the occupation of the latter clan's stronghold of Duart.

It. to Ard. Campbell of Inveraw in satisfaction of what he could crave for keeping the house of Duart preceeding the 18 Oct. 1678, conform to precept and receipt, £266 13 4

the other,

It. to thrie men sent to the thrie divisiones w^t letters from the Sheriffe to advertise the gentlemen of the Duke's stay £4 6 8

refers, of course, to the long remembered visit of the Duke of York; afterwards James II., to Scotland.

Finally, the total expenditure disclosed in the account is £18,417, 14s. 4d., no inconsiderable sum; but it must be noted that this includes large payments, such as £1866, 13s. 4d. on one occasion to the Earl himself, for purposes not stated. The MS. concludes with a docquet signed by Argyll at Inveraray, discharging the "comptar," Mr Wm. Spenss, of his intromissions, and dated 11th June 1681.