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Robert Riddell manuscripts

Volume 8 (SAS 586)

A journal of a tour in Scotland in 1789, made by Captain Grose and Captain Riddell.

Transcribed by Jean Auld, 2008.

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A journal of a tour in Scotland in 1789, made by Captain Grose and Captain Riddell.

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Tour from Friars Carse to Edinburgh in 1789.

Upon Friday May 15th set out from Friars Carse along with Captain Grose to Edinburgh to attend as Elder from the Presbetry of Dumfries, at the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

In vol. VIIIth of my M:S:S: is a tour to Sanquhar, to which I refer for a minute account so far when stopped at Boatford, where Captain Grose made a drawing of the old cross there, reached Drumlanrig where Mr McMurdo paid every attention to Captain Grose I could wish for who made him a very fine drawing of the Palace

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from the garden. Next day we walked all over the park, when Captain Grose made Mr McMurdo a fine drawing of Drumlanrig Bridge, and at the same time, I caused his servant Tom, to make a drawing for me of a picturesque water fall upon the opposite side of the Nith, from a walk below the bridge.

This cascade, when swelled by rains is very fine, from the walk on the opposite side of the river. At present, very little water was in it, but the sketch on the other side will explain it better than words.

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[River scene, water-colour by Tom Cocking]

Upon Sunday morning, at Six of the Clock, May 17th left Drumlanrig, and took the road for Lead Hills up the Water of Mennick: Here we found a good

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road, made at the expence of Mr Meason's Company at Wanlockhead, It is carried through a most romantick, picturesque, and beautiful alpine scenery; and I know of no site in the South of Scotland, that in a fine summer's day, would give more pleasure to an English traveller than the ride up the water of Mennick. Reached Leadhills half after eleven, where we breakfasted and rested our horses 2 hours. There is a large village, inhabited by the miners and their families - who have a library, their own property of above 700 vols of History, Travels, Philosophy.etc. This noble Institution owes its origin to the late Mr

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Stirling, uncle to the present mannanger [sic] of that name; who many years ago sett it on foot - He when he took charge of the Great Mining Company here, found the miners, the most idle, drunken, ignorant sett, he had ever seen; But by setting this library on foot, they are now become a very sober, quiet, well informed people. Mr Stirling's house here is considered as the highest in Scotland, that is inhabited all the year round, the gardens and plantations are a curiosity in so barren and elevated a country, and the house, (a most excellent one,)

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is an agreeable retreat, to any of the London partners who make an excursion in summer to visit the works. When the great level that this company is making is completed, immense riches will be acquired by them from the Shufshana [?] vein. Below in the town stands the earl of Hopton's house, who is proprietor of the town and lands of Leadhills. Upon the spot where it is built, formerly stood a Tower or Fortalice, the seat of an old family of the surname of Fowlis, the last of which ancient race was Margaret Fowlis, the sole heiress- her only guardian and uncle was

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Sir William Baillie of Laminton, who attempted to defraud her of her estate – upon which she went to Edinburgh and applied for relief, and assistance, to Sir Charles Hope, then Lord Advocate for Scotland, who married her, and obtained a decreet against Sir William Baillie. But such was the miserable state of Scotland in the reign of Charles II that a warrant was necessary to be got from the Privy Councill and signed by the king, addressed to the Duke of Queensberry, as Sheriff of Nithsdale; and the Earl of Hyndford as

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Sheriff of Lanarkshire, to enable them to raise the country in arms, that they might expel Sir William Baillie from the Castle and estate, and put Margaret Fowlis and her husband in possession of it, which was done,- and from this marriage the present Earl of Hopton is descended, whose predecessors have got such great riches from this seemingly barren spot.

I have been told that one Dr Ross who first discovered the vein to the old Earl of Hopton (grandfather to the present) was never rewarded for the discovery but died at Lag Castle in pover

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poverty - Left Leadhills about one o'clock, (a very wet day) and at about ten miles distance saw on the left side of the road, Roberton Moat as it is called, which has been an old baronial fortalice. Capt. Grose made a sketch in the chaise of it from the road.

[Roberton Moat, pencil-drawing by Francis Grose]

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Passed Hardington, formerly called Begby, a seat of the present Lord Justice Clerk of Scotland; This place formerly belonged to a family of the name of Bailie, cadets of the House of Laminton,* the representative of whom is, James Bailie Esqr of Coulters Allers.

[* Sir James Dalrymple in his Collections seems to think that Laminton took its name from Lambinus, whose son James, got a charter from Richard Morville the Constable of Scotland, of the lands of Loudoun and others in Ayrshire which Charter Sir James Dalrymple saw.]

Saw on the left side of the road Laminton Castle, immortalized from being a Seat of the great Sir William Wallace of Ellerslie, the Glory of Scotland, and admiration of Europe; This place he got in right of his wife, who was herself of Laminton, and here stood a great oak chair with the **W:W:** carved upon it, called Sir Wm Wallace's chair which is now removed to Boninton House the Seat of the Lady of this Castle.

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Laminton has long been the Seat of a family of very old standing, called Bailie, the last of whom Sir Wm Bailie of Laminton, left an only daughter, the heiress, who married Mr Dundas of Arniston late Lord President of the Court of Session in Scotland – She had only a daughter, who married Sir John Ross Lockhart of Balnagowan, and is the present proprietor of this ancient baronial seat. Captain Grose made a drawing from the chaise of this ancient place.

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Passed Coultar, there are some good houses, pleasantly situated in a pretty vale highly improved, and adorned with wood and water.

Coultar House is at present rented by Mrs Bertram the Dowager of Nisbet, and her daughters; a Mr Dixon lives in one adjoining, and near it is the minister's house, all forming a picturesque group.

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The oldest proprietors of Coultar that I know of, were the Wachops, for Robertus De Walyhop (or Wachop) swore fealty to Edward the First. This family had a charter of the Lands of Coultar from Alexander II^d. They ended in an heiress who married – Cummin in whose name it remain'd untill it came to the Bailies, Cadets of the family of Laminton. The present Proprietor of Coultar House is James Bailie Esqr of Coultar allers.

Observed up the water, on the left side of the road to Biggar, Coultar Mains, the seat of

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Mr Brown a writer in Edinburgh. A Number of young plantations embellish the country, from Coultar to Biggar. Crossed Biggar Moss. Here tradition says that Michael Scott of Balweirie, who was the greatest mathematician of his day, (and on that account consider'd by his ignorant and barbarous countrymen, as a warlock, and magician;) He it is said in one night Brigged Biggar Moss, and made a good road, where before a hare could not pass. Many equally foolish and absurd stories are handed down by the vulgar of this great and learned man, who lived in the end of the thirteenth century, a period of grossest ignorance.

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Arrived at Biggar,*

[* for a print of the town of Biggar, vid: page 269 of this vol.]

a burgh of barony, and Regallity, the property of Lord Elfinstone, and put up at the Earl of Wigtons Arms, a tolerable good inn kept by Wilson. –

The prospect from the room window pleased me, and I caused Tom make a drawing of it: It consited [sic] of the cross, the ruins of the Regallity prison, and a prospect of the distant countries – after dinner walked out and took a look of the town.

Upon Monday morning May 18^h got up at seven and went with Capt. Grose in the chaise to visit the castle which is seated in a morass below the town and has been

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Biggar Cross, water-colour by Tom Cocking

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once surrounded by water.

This ancient Castle and the Barony of Biggar formerly belonged to the Fleming family. They were originally from Flanders, and came to England at the Norman Conquest, when they got a grant of lands in Westmorland. The present Sir Michel Fleeming [sic] of Rydal Hall in Westmorland is the Chief of the English family – when the Flemings came to Scotland I don't at present recollect, but this family made a great figure in Scotland in the time of Robert Bruce. Malcolm Fleming de Bigare married Elizabeth Stewart, daughter of Robert Duke of Albany and governor of Scotland – Malcolm Fleming of that ilk, was the son of John Fleming, Chamberlain

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of Scotland who died in 1524.

This Malcolm Fleming was made Chamberlain of Scotland by James Vth whose bastard sister Joneta [sic] he had married. He fell at the Battle of Pinkie in 1547 – his son James Lord Fleming was made Chamberlain of Scotland by Queen Mary in 1553. In vol fourth page 117 of my mss is a copy of Queen Mary's Charter to James Lord Fleming. The family had estates in Galloway and were created Earls of Wigton. They ended in an heiress, who married a Lord Elfinstone, which family are proprietors

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of this place. – I have here made an eye draught of the ground plan of the Castle

[ink sketch of castle]

which stands on a swamp, surrounded by a wet ditch; the house opposite the gate has been built in 1670, and is the most modern part of the whole, the tower at the end seems very old, as does the pentagonal wall, and the two round towers, but the drawing of the

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Castle by Capt. Grose will explain the building.

Upon the front of the staircase are the arms of the Earl of Leigton, quartered with that of Primrose, viz. argent, a chevron gules, within the double tressure of the Scotts arms also gules. That of Primrose, six primroses, 3 and 3, Supporters two stags. Crest a stag.

Returned to Biggar, and breakfasted, then we sent for the Bell man, and went to visit the Church, which is a building of great antiquity, and singular curiosity

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Castle of Biggar, water colour by Frances Grose

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Here is the Cemetary of the Wigton family in an aile with a circular end.

This church was rebuilt in its present form by the Fleming family, as an expiation of some crime by order of the Pope, according to the tradition of the place. In one end, a small room is fitted up, for the Reception of the Presbitry of Biggar.

The Bellman brought for our inspection an ancient vesel of a kind of Pewther, which in times of popery was used in the service of the church, and its present use is for bringing the water for Baptism. Upon the other side is a drawing

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of this church taken by Captain Grose from Mr Watson the minister's window.

About 12 , we set out for Edinburgh. Passed Skirling Church , here I saw a village finely situated, in the wall of the minister's house is a singular figure built in. the road I found tolerably good. Passed Lochoard , a well improved house seated in a bottom upon the left side of the road. belonging to Mr Lawson.

Opposite to the Church of Kirkoard, saw upon the left side of the road in an improved field

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Church at Biggar, water colour by Francis Grose

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the remains of a druidical cromlech which Captain Grose made a slight sketch of in the chaise.

[Ink sketch by Francis Grose]

Saw Scotston , formerly the seat of Mr Telfer, now of Captain McKay. Upon the top of a green hill on the right side of the road a little way beyond Scotston is an old Roman or Scottish fortress of which I have made a sketch on

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[Ink sketch by Robert Riddell]

near this place on upon the same side of the road, are seats formed on the side of the hill, perhaps intended as for a kind of rude amphitheatre, by the inhabitants of the fortress, for the Exhibition of Shows, according to the custom of the Romans. I have remarked several of these turf seats or benches near Roman works in Scotland.

Passed Romana

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which formerly belonged to a family of Romana of that ilk, and perhaps took its name from the Roman station in its neighbourhood. It now belongs to a family of the name of Kennedy, descended from the family of Aughtifardle near Lismahago.

On the opposite side of the water is Spittal Ha, belonging to Mr Hamilton. Reached Noble House a good Inn, built by Sir William Montgomery, dined and set out for Edinburgh.

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Upon May 27th 1789, I left Edinburgh accompanied by Captain Grose, and my brother-in-law Gilbert Kennedy, Esq. Passed Craigmiller Castle, the seat of Sir Alexander Gilmour. This fine ruin has been both engraved by Hearn & Byrne, Grose & Sparrow, and etched by Cardonel. Saw Dalkeith, the favourite seat of the Duke of Buccleugh. Near the Palace is the village finely situated through which we passed.

Dalkeith House was formerly the seat of a branch of the Douglas family, it was then a strong Castle and during the Regent Morton's retreat, styled the Lion's den.

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In this house are a number of portraits mentioned by Mr Pennant in his first vol. of the tour in Scotland.

Beyond Dalkeith saw Newbattle, the seat of the Marquis of Lothian, charmingly seated in a hollow and embellished by wood and water.

Here was a Cistercian Abbey founded by David I in 1140 and in 1591 it was erected into a temporal lordship in favour of Sir Mark Ker, son of Sir Walter Ker of Cessford.

Here is also a very capital collection of pictures mentioned by Mr Pennant. When at Edinburgh Mr Nasmith showed me a beautiful view of Newbattle he was executing for Lord Ancrum.

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Passed Preston Hall, the seat of Lord Adam Gordon, beyond which is Ormiston belonging to the Earl of Hopton. Saw Crichton, a well laid out place, formerly belonging to Mr Pringle, since purchased by Mr Callender, who has also lately purchased Preston Hall. Reached Black Shields 14 miles from Edinburgh, a tolerable good Inn where we dined.

After dinner set out for Lauder, passed the house of Fala, now called Hamilton Hall, belonging to Lady Dalrymple who was heiress of this place.

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I remember to have heard Mr Syme tell a droll story of the Ladle of Fala. Lost our road, and passed an old house called Oxton. Reached the town of Lauder where I lighted. I went in search of the Bridge, famous for being the place where our King James's worthless minions were hanged by the Nobles of Scotland, but it is now no more. Then went to visit the Castle, a seat of the Earl of Lauderdale, which was repaired and modernized by the great

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Duke of Lauderdale, and whose arms are over the door, supported by the horn's of Plenty , which he might well do, as he boasted, he had the Command of all the purses in Scotland. There are several portraits of the period of Charles 11nd . An avenue of old elms are in the front of the Castle. The Town of Lauder is a Royal Burgh and with four others sends a member to the British Parliament The Sett of the Burgh is, two Baillies the eldest of whom acts as Provost, a Treasurer and Clerk. Lauder 11 miles from Bishulds [?]

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Upon May 28 left Lauder and travelled along a very dreary country until we came to Earlstone , a finely situated village upon Leader water. Passed Cowdienows, immortalized by the fine plaintive tune of the Broom of the Cowdienows. It belongs to Mr Home a professor in the University of Edinburgh. Beyond it saw Drygrange, the seat of Mr Tod, Writer to the Signet, near it is Kirklands belonging also to Mr Tod. Reached the fine bridge lately thrown across the Tweed, which with the Toll house is a fine object. Passed Newstead and reached Melrose.

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Went to the house of my friend William Riddell of Laurieston at Friar's Bank, from whence is a charming prospect of the fine ruins of the abbey, which was refounded by King David the first in 1136 for Cistercians brought from Reivaulx in Yorkshire. Went down to visit the abbey, and purchased a little Book from the Sexton with an account of the Building to which I refer, as also to an account in vol.VIth Page 20 of my ms collections.

Captain Grose made a fine drawing of the abbey from Mr Riddell's drawing room at Friars Bank before dinner. After dinner returned again to the abbey to examine the fine

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sculpture.

[Engraving of ruins of Melrose Abbey by Francis Grose]

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Next morning I set out from Friars Bank at 6 o'clock, passed Dryburgh Abbey* on our left, finely seated upon the Tweed also. It was founded by Hugh Morville, Constable of Scotland in the time of David the first for monks of the Praemonstatensian Order;

* Vid: Page 260 of this vol. for a painting accompanied with an account of Dryburgh Abbey.

At the Reformation James VIth granted it to the Mar family, and it is now the property of the Earl of Buchan; Saw the House of Ancrum on our right hand, finely seated, and surrounded by large timber. The House seems old, it is the seat of Sir John Scott of Ancrum Bart. A mile further on, upon our left hand passed Mount Tiviot, the

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seat of Admiral Elliot. Went through the pretty village of Cleeland, near which is a house, the seat of Mr Hunter.

Saw on my left hand the House of Floors, the seat of the Duke of Roxburgh, near which are the ruins of the old Royal Castle of Roxburgh so often mentioned in the Border History.

The ancient name of this Castle was Marchidune, or the Hill of Marches; Here a treaty was concluded between David the First, and Stephen, King of England, (by Thurstan, archbishop of York) in 1132.

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[drawing of ruins of old Roxburgh Castle]

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In 1174 when William the Lion was taken prisoner, Roxburgh Castle with four others, were delivered up to Henry the 2d King of England, for his release. It was restored to Scotland by his successor. In 1296 Roxburgh Castle was taken by Edward 1st . In 1342 the year that David II returned from France, Sir Alex Ramsay took this Castle from the English, and was appointed Governor of it. This so enraged the Earl of Douglas, that he surprised him and took him prisoner and hanged him to death in the castle of Hermitage. The Scots lost this fortress in Edward III's reign who here twice celebrated his birth day

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It was put into the hands of Lord H. Percy after the defeat and captivity of David the 2nd at the Battle of Nevils Cross. But the most distinguished siege here was that in 1560 which was fatal to James the 2nd. who here lost his life by the bursting of a cannon. A large Holly inclosed with a wall, marks the spot where he fell. His Queen, Mary of Guelders carried on the attack, took and demolished the Castle. A few fragments of walls are now all that exist of this once mighty fortress which had been also defended by a

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great foss. The Southside impends over the water of Tiviot, some of whose waters have been diverted in former times into the foss.

Arrived at Kelso, a burgh of barony the property of the Duke of Roxburgh, drove to the Cross Keys Inn, a good house built by Mr Dixon who also built the fine villa here which he called Havanna house . Went to visit the remains of the abbey here, founded by David the first in 1120 for Tyrocensian [sic] monks. Its abbot had a mitre and pontifical robes, was exempt from Episcopal Jurisdiction, and had a place at all General Councils

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Councils, at the Reformation. It was granted by James the 6th in 1605 to Sir Robert Ker of Cessford upon the forfeiture of the Earl of Bothwell and it now belongs to the Duke of Roxburgh. From the abbey went to visit Havanna House, a most compleat elegant seat built, built by a Mr Dixon a native of Kelso – after his death it was purchased by a Nabob, one Mr Cuthbert who is also dead : the house is kept in good order, from the shrubbery behind, is one of the finest prospects I ever saw. It

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Illustration of Springwood Park

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is now called Ednam House. Left Kelso after dinner in a shower of rain and reached Jedburgh, a royal burgh finely seated on a fine inland river. Here is the remains of a religious house, which I had not time to examine. Upon Sunday morning, May 31st set out for Hawick. Saw a house finely situated above the town, I forget to whom it belongs, passed Mount Tiviot again this morning; came in sight of Minto Craig, upon which is a square tower, formerly the seat of the Stewart family, then of the Riddell's, and

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at present of the Elliots .In the genealogy of the Riddell family is a drawing of Minto Tower taken by Captain Grose. Passed through a beautiful strath, sprinkled with good houses, the seats of the Tiviotdale Gentry, and reached Cavers, the seat of Mr Douglas; This family (next to Mr Douglas of Douglas) is considered as the Chief of that ancient and illustrious House. They were notable Sheriffs of Tiviotdale until the year 1746 when these jurisdictions were abolished by act of Parliament. In this family is preserved

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The Rock of Minto, black and white illustration by Francis Grose.

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perhaps the oldest banner, or pennon, now to be seen in Scotland (shown at Heraldic exhibition, Edinburgh, 1891); it is said it was displayed at the Battle of Otterburn.

Near this place, saw the most beautiful village I ever saw in Scotland. Called Denholm, it is the property of Mr Douglas of Cavers. Passed the extensive nursery of Mr Dixon near Hawick, who has made a handsome fortune in this line. Reached Hawick, where we dined. There is carried on a manufacture of carpets, hats. And worsted hose.

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After dinner, left Hawick, passed Langlands prittely [sic] situated in a Hollow. Saw the old tower of Goldielands which now belongs to the Duke of Buccleugh. It formerly belonged to Sir James Scott of Goldielands who married a daughter of the Laird of Riddell. Passed the House of Branxholm, the residence of the D. of Buccleugh's factor. The country now becomes wild, and all belongs to the D. of Buccleugh, who has here a great estate. Stopped at Mass Pauls Green to feed our

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Horses - This place was formerly the station where one of the monks of Melrose stopped upon St Pauls Day, when on his way to Nithsdale to collect the Abbey rents, and here all the People in the neighbourhood waited for his coming, to hear mass, to be married, and have their children baptised, after which a fair was held, and because it was always on St Pauls day, the place obtained the name of Mass Paul's Green. The name by which the Monk went by here was Buikabreast from his carrying the Mass book

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in his breast.

The road from Mass Paul's Green to Langholm is very good, tho' the country is very wild. Reached Langholm late at night, here is a good inn. Next morning at six, set out for Annan. Passed Broomholm, the house of a Mr Maxwell, finely situated. Saw Springkell, the seat of Sir Wm Maxwell, who has improved the country round by his plantations, the soil here is cold and wet, but, draining and lime has much mended it.

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Observed near Springkell the old tower of Blacket, now a ruin. Passed a neat Box at Langham, built by a Captain Smith, near which saw the tower at Woodhouse, and Bonshaw, the seat of the Irvings. Mr Irving here disputes the chieftanship, with the land of Drum in Aberdeenshire. In vol. II, Page 100 of my M.S. Collection is the genealogy of the Irving family, to which I refer. Arrived at Annan where we breakfasted.

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Left Annan, passed Kelhead, the seat of a branch of the Queensberry family, now represented by Sir Charles Douglas a minor. Saw the church of Ruthvale, where is to be seen in the churchyard, the famous Runick obelisk of which a drawing is preserved in vol. VI, Page 136 of my M.S. Collections. Passed Comlongan Castle, the ancient seat of the Murrays of Cockpool, Earls of Annandale. In vol. I, Page 211 is the genealogy of this ancient family.

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Comlongan Castle in Annandale, the seat of the Viscount Stormont. Water-colour by Alexander Reid, 1792.

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Comlongan is now the seat of the Lord Viscount Stormont. Saw in ruins the old tower of Mouswald, formerly the seat of Sir Simon Carruthers of Mouswold, a man of consequence in this place. Passed Rockhall the seat of Sir Robert Grierson Bart of Lag. Crossed Lochan Moss. In 1684 The Privy Council of Scotland by their act, granted a voluntary contribution to be gathered at all the church doors South of the Forth, to make a highway through Lochan Moss here, which of late has been much repaired and widened and is a safe commodious road.

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Reached Dumfries where I dined. After dinner, set out for Friars Carse where I arrived in the evening. In vol. VII is an account of the country from Dumfries to Friars Carse to which I refer.

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Upon June 18th 1789 set out from Friars Carse along with Captain Grose. Dined at Carlingwark and in the evening went to Greenlaw, the seat of Alexander Gordon, Esquire, Stewart depute of the Stewarty of Galloway. This place is finely situated, having in front the old castle of Thrieve, surrounded by the Water of Dee, which meanders through an extensive track of rich meadows and pastureland. Greenlaw formerly belonged to the Lords Viscounts of Kinmore, and the present house was begun by the late Robert, Lord Kinmore, who died before it was finished. His brother John Lord Kinmore

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who succeeded him, sold it to Mr Thomas Gordon of the Earlston family, (and father to the present laird) who finished the house. He married Miss McCulloch daughter to the money making Laird of Basholme. This old lady at present lives at Kelton House. The evening was very wet, so only walked through the gardens which are well laid out. Observed a machine by which the spit is turned, and the churn churned, by a water wheel and a crank.

June 19th, next morning after breakfast, set out to visit the old Castle of Thrieve. Passed Kelton House at present the

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habitation of Mr Gordon's mother, old Lady Greenlaw. Here we got a guide who conducted the chaise cross the Dee, to the island on which the castle stands, which seems to contain about 20 acres of ground or thereby. The Castle consists of a very large and strong square tower built of rubble stone strongly cemented with lime; and surrounded by a wall, flanked with round towers and perforated with loopholes, for the discharge of firearms; the fate of this outer wall has been secured by a drawbridge.

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The inside of the Castle is strongly vaulted, but now very ruinous, and filled with Jackdaws nests. This place was one of the fastnesses or strongholds of the ancient Princes or Regulii of Galloway who were totally independent of the Scottish Kings. When that ancient line ended in Alan, last Lord of Galloway, this place fell into the hands of the Balliol, the Cummyng, and the Douglas family's as they succeeded each other in the Lordship of Galloway

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and the Earls of Douglas, when Lords of Galloway, built the present Castle as it now stands , in the beginning of he fifteenth century. In the year 1455 the Lordship of Galloway was annexed to the Scottish Crown, upon the ruin of of the Earls of Douglas, after which, this castle was often set in tack by the Kings of Scotland , along with the office of Stewart of Galloway. In 1502 it was set in tack for nine years to John Dunbar of Mochrum, for one hundred pounds a year.

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and in 1524, it was granted to the Lord Maxwell, in which family it continued until the year 1746, when Government purchased the office of Stewart from the Nithsdalr family, since which they sold the Castle Grange, which now makes the Estate of Kelton the property of the late Mr Gibson, and on the other side of the Dee is Thrieve Grange , belonging to a brother of Mr Gordon of Greenlaw, also part of the Castle Grange. Captain Grose made two drawings of the Castle,

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after which we returned to Carlinwark, where we baited our horses; Here is a lough filled with Marle, which is fished up by the help of boats, and a canal carries it to the River of Dee, which is navigable 20 miles up the countrie so that this Marle can be rendered of very general use. Mr Gordon shewed me a Roman Sword found in this Lough. Set out from Carlinwark to visit the Moat of Urr, a remarkable artificial Mount upon the West side of the water of Urr near the church of that name

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This singular antiquity was the ancient seat of Judicature, and the spot from whence the Ancient Princes, or Regulii of Galloway, promulgated their laws, at stated periods, to their vassals and followers, and here their Doomsters tryd Capital offences by Jury, agreeable to the auld laws of Galloway. In the Isle of Man the Tinwald Court is there kept up, which is the only instance I now know of, in this part of Europe. It is there held upon a Mount similar to this one. The Governor, attended by the Doomsters of the Island,

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and the other inferior judges, reads over all the Civil & Criminal law to the People and takes them bound to obey the same.

This old celtick custom continued longer in Galloway than any other part of Scotland. Robert Bruce granted a charter to the Men of Galloway confirming to them their ancient laws, according to the custom and usage of Galloway. A copy of this charter is in the Haddington Collection from whence I had it coppied, and in the Regiam Majestatem mention is made

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of the Judges of Galloway, as separate and independent of the other Judges of Scotland. I don't know of any other, now to be seen in Scotland similar to this one, as it is probable that this ancient Celtick Custom fell into total disuse in Scotland, when Malcolm Canmore abolished the Dignity of Thane for that of Earl, and moddeled our constitution, more like to that of England and France. Captain Grose made several drawings of this remarkable antiquity

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Black and white drawing of Buittle Castle

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Went to visit Bootle [sic] Castle, a hunting seat of John Baliol, sometime King of Scotland. Here it is probable was formerly a fortress of the old Lords of Galloway, to which Baliol is said to have often repaired to. It is now a compleat ruin, and nothing but the mount it stood upon, the foundations of walls, and the remains of the drawwell remains, to inform the traveller here stood a proud Castle. An old unroffed Square Tower has been built with the stones of the older Castle

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I carried Captain Grose to the House of George Maxwell of Muncheus Esqr. Where we staid all night – He was much pleased with the alpine scenery. He saw round Muncheus House.

Next day, after breakfast we left Mr Maxwell and dined at Hollance the Seat of Wm Copland of Collieston Esqr where we spent the evening and the next day returned by the same road we came to Friars Carse.

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Upon Thursday July 30th 1789, set out from Friars Carse – Breakfasted at the Burgh of Sanquhar and proceed for Ayr. The road from Sanquhar to Old Cumnock very wild. Dined at old Cumnock , and after dinner set out for Ayr. Passed Dumfries house: the country full of thriving plantations. I admired the village of Ochletree, and the old house, which with the estate is the property of the Earl of Glencairn.

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Arrived in Ayr* about six in the evening where I remained until Saturday, August the first, 1789.

* For a print of the old cross at Ayr, vid. P. 269 of this vol.

When Captain Grose and I set out, we passed the raceground, and saw on our righthand upon a cliff, the castle of Greenan, which belongs to the Earl of Cassils, near it is a good house at present occupied by Mr Kennedy of Dunoone, who is building a most elegant house at Dalquharran and resides here until it is finished. We ascended a hill, at the top of which saw the Rock of Ailsa, the property of the Earl of Cassils,

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which with great majesty stands like a pillar in the sea, and is singularly picturesque. In Pennant's Tour is a print of this rock. Passed the old unroofed house of Dunduff, now the property of Sir John Whitford's second son; Came to the old Churchyard of Kirkbride, (now no more a parish) , but annexed to the Parish of Maybole; Here is the ruins of the church, and Pedestal of a crop, the whole is well enclosed, and the gate locked, In the church yard saw some very grotesque figures on some tombstones which Captain Grose made drawings of.

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Reached the Castle of Dunoon, most romantically seated on a Rock that overhangs the Sea, This has been a Place of great extent , and strength, before the use of Field Artillery, and was the ancient seat of the Earls of Cassils*

* The surname of Kennedy (says Sir James Dalrymple in his Historical collections) came from a christened name viz Kenede. For he found in a charter to the Nuns of North Berwick, granted by Nicolaus , the son of Duncan, first Earl of Carrick; a witness of the name of Murchau Mack Kenede. This Charter was about the year 1200. For Gilbert, Lord of Galloway died in 1185, and William the Lion created his son Duncan, Earl of Carrick.

From it is a fine prospect of the Hills in Arran, particularly Lamlash makes a fine appearance here. Went down upon the sea beach below the castle, which looks from this point of view very grand and lofty, observes a Cave

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Black and white drawing of Castle by Grose

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Black and white drawing of Castle and view of Arran by Grose

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much filled up, which I dare say was once a sallyport from the Castle to the Sea. Captain Grose made 3 drawings of this Castle, which has long been the Property of Mr Kennedy of Dunoon. In vol VI of this ms. collection page 268 is a Print of the hills of Lamlash in Arran.

Captain Kennedy of Dunjarg informed me, that John Earl of Cassils, grandfather to the present Earl, sold Dunoon to the predecessor of John Kennedy of Dunoon, Esqr, the present Laird, he died about 1603. The Earl of Rutherglen of the Hamilton family was tutor dative to John Earl of Cassils at the time of the sale.

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Reached Cullzean, the favourite seat of the present Earl of Cassils, who laid out an immense sum here, and has made this Place the Alnwick of Scotland. In vol. VI of this ms. Collection is a Print of the old castle, which has been taken away to give place to this most superb castellated mansion, the design of Mr Robert Adams. Captain Grose made a good drawing of this fine place, which he means to engrave, and his servant Tom made the drawing here inserted of the farm office houses.

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[Water-colour of farmstead at Culzean by Tom Cocking].

Here is a picture of Sir Thomas Kennedy of Cullzean, drawn in 1512, who was a son of the Earl of Cassils, and the first of this branch of the family, who succeeded to the Earldom in 1760. This Sir Thomas Kennedy was murdered by the More's of Auchindrain, who fled to Ireland, and being pursued by his Sons, was discovered there and slain in retaliation, when they brought his heart to Culzean.

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Left Culzean and went to Maybole, where Captain Kennedy of Dungarg Dined with us, he gave me much information, and a copy of the Charter of Erection of Maybole into a Burgh of Barony, which is copied in vol. IV Page 198 of my MS Collections . Maybole is a Burgh of Barony and Regallity, the date of the Charter of Erection is 1516 to Gilbert, Earl of Cassils.

At the lower end of the town stands the castle, now inhabited by Captain Kennedy of Dungarg his Lordship's

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Black and white drawing of old ruined church " the Colledge" by F. Grose.

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factor, tradition says that in this House, the Lady of the Earl of Casills, who went off with John Faa, the Leader of the Gipsies, was afterwards confined until she died.

At the upper end of the Town is the Tollbooth, with a steeple and clock; the chief antiquity here is the old ruined church, called the Colledge, which is now, and has long been the Cemetary of the Cassils family. In the Charter of Erection of this burgh formerly mentioned, mention is made of the Vicar and Prebends of the Colledge Kirk of Maybole.

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Captain Grose made a drawing of this ancient church.

Next morning set out for to visit Dalquharran, the seat of Mr Kennedy of Dunoore. Passed Kilhinnie belonging to Sir Adam Fergusson of Kilkerran Bart . Ascended a hill, when I saw Kilkerran the seat of Sir Adam Fergusson surrounded by thriving plantations. It stands in a Bottom, through which the Water of Girvan runns. Reached Drumillan a neat Box on the roadside belonging Capt. Kennedy of Drumillan. Reached the new house

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of Dalquharran , a most Elegant Pile of Building in the Gothick taste, planned by Mr Robert Adams. The Dining Room, and a Library are each a compleat circle. In short, this house when finished will honour to the taste of the owner, & the architect. Capt. Grose made a near drawing of this elegant house, which is seated on a fine wooded Bank, overhanging the water of Girvan, and has every advantage that wood and water can afford it.

Went to visit the old house which stands on the very brink of the River.

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Here is a square Tower or Fortalice, to which has since been added a modern house. It is surrounded by the Garden and Court, before which are some fine trees. Capt. Grose went into the Garden to make a drawing of the tower, when I went to look at the house, attended by Mr Kennedy's Land Steward. He took me first into the Drawing Room, where I saw some good portraits , viz General James Kennedy, uncle to the present Laird; also Baron Kennedy, and his lady, brother to the General; an another brother in Mr Kennedy's bedroom

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Black and white illustration of the Old House at Dalquharran by F. Grose

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is a picture of Sir William Wallace , I observed over the chimney in this room, a singular carving of a hound and hare. In the Dining Room is a picture of Colonel Wm Kennedy, freeman of Fortgeorge and Inverness, also an old man reading, vastly well done. Went up to the battlements of the Tower, from whence I had a charming prospect of the windings of the Girvan. When I came down was taken into the Parlour, where I saw a good portrait of Mr Kennedy's father, who was many years secretary at the Court of St Germans. He afterwards obtained his Pardon and came home.

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Left Dalquharran, where the utmost attention was paid to us by Mr Kennedy's land steward, he had a dinner provided , and in his Master's name pressed us to wine, and beds , if we chose to stay. Passed the village of New Daily , here is a handsome church. In the churchyard observed a handsome tomb belonging to Sir Adam Fergusson. Half a mile beyond the village, had a most charming prospect of the two houses of Dalquharran, here Captain Grose stopped the chaise, and made a

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View of Dalquharran, water colour by Tom Cocking after Francis Grose

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drawing of this uncommonly fine prospect, of which I have here a Copy by his manservant Thomas Cocking.

Passes near Kilkerran House and returned to Maybole to dinner. Captain Kennedy of Dunfarg dined with us and in the evening we supped with him at the Castle of Maybole. This gentleman's civility I cannot pass over, he paid us every attention, and gave Captain Grose much information as to the objects of his pursuit. Next morning Monday August 3rd went to visit the old abbey of Corseregal [Crossraguel] near Maybole.

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This abby was founded by Duncan first Earl of Carrick, soon after that Earldom was disjoined from the Great Lordship of Galloway, about the year 1244 for monks of the Cluniacenses order, so called from the abby of Cluny in Burgundy. At the Reformation it continued in the hands of the Crown, who left it in tack to Sir Adam Fergusson of Kilkerran Bart.

On our way to Corseregal (Crossraguel), we passed a large unroofed square tower called Baltarson. Reached the abbey, which I found of a very singular construction. The church has consisted of one long

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aisle divided across the middle by a wall with a pointed top. On which is a belfry for 2 bells; The office houses of this abbey are more entire than any I have seen in Scotland, from the top of the Gatehouse Tower , which is very entire, I made a birdseye sketch of the ground plan of the whole abbey and all its appendages now to be seen. I just entered the Porter's lodge, on one side of the principal entry, within which, was an outer court of offices, in one corner stands the Pidgeon house very entire. From this apparently outer court, I

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next went into a Square, the area of which is now a Cale yard, one side of it is formed by the church, a second by the chapterhouse, a beautiful room, the fine roof of which is supported by a single pillar, round the sides are stone benches, and two elegant Gothick windows, richly ornamented, light it. The other two sides of this square Court are now in Ruins, only the lower vaults are now to be seen. Came next to an other enclosure, on one corner of which stands the large square Tower, formerly the residence of the abbot.

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This place seems to have been a Pleasure Garden, or Bowling green, the windows of the chapter house, and part of the church windows look into it. I next entered the Church, which is shamefully neglected, here amidst rank weeds and Cow Dung, I saw several Tombstones, with crosses, and other ornaments upon them. In the wall of the western division of the church, are two niched tombs, one of which is ornamented with very elegant carved work, I regretted much that want of time prevented my procuring a drawing of it.

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Went into the Eastern division of the church, a vaulted room, under the same roof with the chapter house, communicates with this part of the church, the East end is circular, and on one side of the place where I suppose the high altar formerly stood, is a niche for the Holy Water. Captain Grose made several drawings of the Abbey and I have here given drawings of the most curious of the ornaments in the Chapter house, and other room under the same roof that communicated with the

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Drawings of sculptured bosses. Wash drawing by Robert Riddell.

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Quire or Eastern End of the abbey church. It is a great pity that an accurate grand plan of the whole, was not made out, in geometrical proportion, and the tombs, and curious ornaments engraved, before they fall entirely to ruin. Mr Hetzen's print, (tho' very stiff) gives a just idea of many parts then entire, but now no more. Returned to Maybole, and repassed Baltersan Tower, of which I could learn nothing. Proceeded for Ayr by way of the old house of Casillis.

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About a mile from Maybole, passed Machermore, a neat snug situation. Arrived at the House of Cassillis, a huge square Tower surrounded with wood, and watered by the River of Dun. A sett of lower buildings along with the Tower form a Court, entered the Tower, the lower story of which is cellars, ascended a very excellent stair, for an old one. Came into a very large unfinished room called the chapel, above which is the Drawing room, a lofty apartment, hung on two sides with arras hangings, and lighted by a very large window.

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The portraits in this room are, Lord Belhaven, who made the great figure in the union Parliament. Lord Rutherglen, Lord Dare, brother to the late Lady Cassillis,

A Duchess of Hamilton and her sister. Next to the Drawing room is a Bedroom, in which are the portraits of Lord and Lady Cassillis in the same picture, the dress of both singular, Lord March, now Duke of Queensberry, Mr David Kennedy and his Lady, of the Culzean family. Two portraits of Ladies, I could not learn who they were, by the gold keys in their girdles, they seem to have been Lady's of the Bedchamber, The Late Duke of Hamilton. Over the chimney

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is a picture of St Marks Palace at Venice, a night pice, all illuminated, the painting and light fine. Above the Drawing room is the Dining room, here I saw a number of good prints, in an adjoining Bedchamber, is an old picture of George Buchannan, one of one of Mr David Kennedy, and a Boy writing by candlelight very fine. In a small room over the Dining room saw a good Picture of James VI a: aet: 58, anno 1623. This I took for an original, also Lady Cunningham in a Widows dress, William, Earl of March 1754: now Duke of Queensberry. His very curious carridge running over the course at Newmarket

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painted in oyl, the horses and drivers are likenesses, this is a very curious picture. An Earl of Selkirk, Mary Magdalane, Mary, Queen of Scotts, seems to be done by Sir John Medina's son, who made a trade of painting pictures of Queen Mary. A Sea pice, the late Thomas, Earl of Cassilis, over the chimney is a Diana, a Miss Lockhart of Carnwath, and a fine old picture of one of the family. In another room is Lady Cassilis, a Miss Hutchinson, Calvin draped in black with a book in his hand, a morose sourish looking fellow, and Lord Forbes.

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The walls of this old Castle are very thick, at the third floor they measured sixteen feet thick, allowing for the bevel of the windows. Opposite the gate is a fine old spreading tree, and a number of old trees are scattered round about, besides a great quantity of young wood. Left this venerable mansion, and rode through a good country which improves the nearer we approach Ayr. Passed Donholm belonging to Mr Ferguson, saw Donside, the seat of Mr Crawford, beyond which is Newark Tower, an old house the property of the

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Earl of Cassilis, passed Rozell, the House of the Countess of Crawford. Reached Ayr, and dined at the Black Bull. This was the day of the Contested Election betwixt Sir David Cathcart, and Mr McDowal of Southland. After Dinner, left Ayr, rode over sandy ground, until we reached the house of Mr Dalrymple of Orangefield, surrounded by good hedges, and thriving plantations, beyond which is Rosemount, the Seat of Dr Fullarton, his land seems highly improved, and upon the opposite side of the road from his house saw his farm offices, I am told at present he has 500 acres of his land, in his own hand, what he has let brings him in £1:5 per acre

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but I was told he was offered £ 1=8= for some he keeps in his own hand. His land on the roadside seems in good condition. Half a mile on the right hand from the road, saw the Castle of Craigie, a seat of the Wallace family, upon the opposite side of the road saw Dundon, an old castle a fine ruin. Farther on upon the left, saw the Houses of the Laird of Fairly, and Sir Wm Cunningham of Carrington Bart. Here the country much improves, until I reached Kilmarnock. This Place was formerly the property of the Boyds, Earls of Kilmarnock, who

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are the descendants of Robert, the son of Simon, who was the third son of Alan, the second Lord High Steward of Scotland, by the Lady Margaret, daughter of Fergus, Regulus of Galloway. This Robert from his fair hair & complexion, was called Boyt or Boidh, which in the Gaelic signifies fair or yellow. This ancient and noble family were engaged in the Rebellion in 1745, when they were ruined and the estate sold to the late Earl of Glencairn, his son the present Earl lately sold it to Miss Scott, the daughter of the famous General Scott, who made a fortune at Play.

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Near the Town is the Dean Castle, the family seat formerly of the Earls of Kilmarnock. Next morning Tuesday, Aug 4th 1789, set out to visit the Dean Castle, which Capt. Grose drew. The large square tower appears to have been built about the end of the 13th century, and is all vaulted, the other buildings that surround the Court are much more modern. Saw over some coats of arms, the only Inscription I saw, was under a quartered Coat much defaced James Lord Boyd of Kilmarnock Dame Katherine Grey Lady Boyd

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Black and white illustration of Dean Castle by F.Grose.

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In this Castle, was the Lady Margaret, Sister to James the Third, King of Scotland, and wife to Thomas Lord Boyd. Confined, until by an arbitrary act of the King her Brother, she was divorced from her beloved husband, to marry James, Lord Hamilton, then created Earl of Arran. Left this once Great Castle, with much regret to see it so much neglected, and took the road for Paisley. Passed the site of the Castle of Kilmaurs, now only marked by a lump of unformed stone and lime, as hard as flint. This was the ancient Castle of the Barons of Kilmaurs, afterwards Earls of Glencairn.

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Reached the village of Stewarton, near which is the Seat of the Great Glasgow Tobacco Merchant Mr Cunningham, who is here building a town house for Justice Courts, and a Tolbooth. Dined at a tolerable good inn. After dinner set out and passed Corshill, now the property of Lord Lisle, the last inhabitant of this place was Sir David Cunningham, grandfather to the present noble proprietor. From this place. on the right hand, saw Robertland, the Seat of Sir Wm Cunningham of Livingstone Bart. Who lately sold it to Sir James Hunter Blair. Captain Grose made a drawing of the Ruins at Corschill. Passed Dunlop House finely wooded, and seated

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in a Hollow. Soon after the country turns wild and hilly, until we reached Neilston, a beautiful village, beyond which the country becomes finely cultivated. Saw the House of Hawkhead, now the seat of the Earl of Glasgow. This place was formerly the Seat of the Lords Ross, who were descendants of the Great Earls of Ross. They ended in an Heiress who married John Ross McKie, Esqr. of Dalnagowan in Galloway, who leaving no issue, it went to her sister Lady Glasgow. Reached Paisley the most thriving manufacturing Town in Scotland. Here was an

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abby founded by Walter, the son of Alan, Dapifer Regis Scotiae, in 1160, first for Cluniacs who were afterwards changed for Cistercians, and then for Cluniacs again. The name of the old abby church remains, and some arches of the cross aisles, on which I observed the Stewards arms. This church is now undergoing a most compleat repair, which I think is executed with taste, and when finished will be the Handsomest gothick church in Scotland. In the Churchyard I saw an old Tombstone lately removed out of the old abby church on it was the annexed coat of arms.

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the old abby garden wall still remains, a very expensive one of Cut stone by an inscription it was built by George Shaw abbot, in 1484. The monks of this house wrote a Scotch Chronicle, called The Blackbook of Paisley, and I believe the chartulary is still to be met with, brought down to the year 1548. John Hamilton, the last abbot, was natural brother to the Duke of Hamilton, and in 1546 resigned it into the hands of Lord Claud Hamilton, 3rd son of that Duke. The descendant of this temporal abbot, is the Earl of Abercorn, who has had here lately built a very fine Inn, where we lodged. Upon Wednesday the 5th of August left Paisley, and sett out for Glasgow.

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Passed Crooxton Castle, the ancient Seat of the Earls of Lennox. In vol. III Page 179 of my M.S. Collections is a print of this castle accompanied with some account of it. And in Vol. VI Page 14th of the same M.S. is another print accompanied with an account of Crooxton Castle.

Near it is Longside, where Queen Mary lost the Battle that proved so fatal to her interests, Reached Glasgow where I only stopped to dine, and left after dinner for Hamilton. Passed the Castle of Bothwell, at present the favourite residence of Mr Douglas of Douglass, near it is the ruins of the old Castle of Bothwell. In Vol. V

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Page 23rd of my M.S. Collections is a print, accompanied with an account of this ancient Castle. As also at Page 98 of the same Vol. and in Vol. VI, Page 10th of the same M.S. Collections is another of the same to all of which I refer.

Crossed Bothwell Bridge, noted for the victory there, by the Duke of Monmouth in 1679. At the Palace of Hamilton is a painting of this battle. In the abridgement of the life of Mr Vetch, in this Vol., a picture of the times at that period may be seen. Saw Bothwell Church which was Collegiate, and founded by Archbold the Grim, Earl of Douglas in 1398 for a Provost and 8 Prebendaries. In it are interred the founder and his Lady, who was daughter of Andrew Murray, son to King David Bruce, by her he got the Lordship of Bothwell.

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Reached Hamilton, after tea went to view the Pallace.

The ancient name of this Place was, Cadzow, it was granted to the ancestor of the Duke of Hamilton on the following occasion. In the reign of Edward II, King of England, lived a Sir Gilbert de Hamilton or Hampton, a Leicestershire Knight, who was happning at the English Court, to praise Robert Bruce, King of Scotland, he was insulted by John de Spencer, Chamberlain of England, whom he slew, and fled to Scotland, where Bruce received him with open arms, and gave him this place in 1445. The Lands were erected into a Lordship for the then owner Sir James called Lord Hamilton

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Hamilton Palace, water colour, by Robert Riddell [?]/Tom Cocking

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as the Duke and Duchess were not returned from Edinburgh Races I had an opportunity of examining the Picture gallery. As Mr Pennant has so fully and I think ably described the Collection of Pictures here, I shall only take notice of Mary Queen of Scotts, an original sent by that unfortunate Queen, a little before her execution, to this family. It is dated 1586 aet. 43 . I have a copy, taken from her picture at Versailles, which was painted when she married the Dolfin [sic] ; making the proper allowance for age, and misfortune there is a great resemblance betwixt the two.

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The only original Pictures I know of, of Queen Mary, are, the one painted by Zuccharo in the possession of J. Hodges Esqr. The one that formerly belonged to Dr Mead. The one at Allowa House, belonging to Mr Erskine of Marr. The one at Castle Braan and the one at Hamilton. For I am told the one in the French king's Collection is now spoiled, and the one she gave to Lord Herries is lost or destroyed. The picture at the Trinity House at Leith is her Mother, Queen to James Vth.

I caused Tom make a drawing of the old front of Hamilton Palace, which is in this book.

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The fine park behind the house (I was told) , was let into the very door, on a lease of 19 years to an Edinburgh Butcher for £1.3 per acre. Next morning sett out for Edinburgh. Passed the Palace and saw the whimsical building af Chatelherault. Crossed the Clyde by a handsome bridge , saw the Ross, a beautiful place the property of John Aikman Esqr . Rode through a well cultivated country, until I reached the Newhouse where it becomes more wild, and gradually rises until I passed Kirk o' Shotts, the highest inhabited land between Glasgow and Edinburgh. At the highest had a fine view terminated by the Castle of Edinburgh, Arthur Seat and Pentland Hills. Reached Whitburn where we stopped to feed the horses.

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Here I saw the Dukes of Hamilton and Argyle, the Marquis of Lorn, coming from Edinburgh Races. Set out and dined at Mid-Calder, from whence sett out after dinner, passed Hatton, the Seat of Lord Lauderdale and reached Edinburgh.

Mr Allan the Painter then shewed me two historical pictures of his composition. The one Mary Queen of Scotland a prisoner in Lochleven Castle, forced by Lindsay to sign her abdication of the Crown. The other her escape from thence.