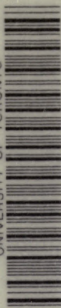


Stewart. The red and white book of Menzies.

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RED AND WHITE BOOK OF MENZIES:

A REVIEW.

BY

Charles
C. POYNTZ STEWART, F.S.A. SCOT.

“ NE SUTOR ULTRA CREPIDAM.”

Reprinted from *The Genealogist*, N.S., Vol. XXII, October, 1905.

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"THE RED AND WHITE BOOK OF MENZIES":
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By C. POYNTZ STEWART, F.S.A. Scot.

The title of this work is happily chosen, for it ought indeed to blush for its own existence. It would be difficult to find in the entire range of Family Histories anything to equal the wonderful statements it contains, unless, perhaps, those in the Coulthart, Bonar and Dearden Pedigrees. We can say with De Thou, "Nullum similis exemplum . . . evolutis gentium annalibus, reperiri."

Our Author has evidently the deepest reverence for his "Chief," as we find that title prefixed almost invariably to the Head of his Clan, so that we have it repeated on page after page; yet this devotion is exemplified in a curious way by the frontispiece facing the title page. There we should expect to see the grand, athletic form of the late "Chief," Sir Robert Menzies—but vain hope!—we only find *him* after searching through 432 pages, plus xiv pages of introduction and preface, etc., and it is a small photograph of six inches by four; whereas the frontispiece occupies the entire page and represents the compiler of the book in full Highland garb, with the words, "D. P. Menzies, F.S.A. Scot." But other surprises are in store for us, and as a new edition is announced, a review of the work may be of interest, and we would note in passing that on the circulars now being sent out, the writer still uses the letters "*F.S.A. Scot.*:" though he ceased to be a Fellow after 1899,¹ and we think it is high time that a protest be made, not only against this assumption, but against the work itself, if indeed anyone be found to take it seriously, even though it is described by the compiler, at p. xiv, as "an accomplished production" and (p. vii) "a work as near perfection as possible." We have termed it a compilation, for it is easy to identify the original part by its composition: in the introduction for example, we find "*Lord*" Robert the Menzies "*to be a man of high and learned culture*": as he lived temp. Alexander II, "to have been" would be more appropriate, and the adjectives are crowded.

Mr. Menzies says further on, "*It is very remarkable the numerous and different ways the name of Menzies has been spelt . . .*": "It was considered a mark of *great learning* to be able to spell a name in a great many ways and still to be recognized" (what? the name, the scribe, or the ways?) "as one and the same name." This is new to us. A translation is given at p. xii, "in modern British," presumably by Mr. D. P. Menzies, in which we get the following Grammar, ". . . with us *was he* and *they*"—then we find "oral history" (p. xiv), to us unheard of except as

¹ Elected December, 1892, as he proclaims, "along with the Marquess of Ailsa."

"tradition"—"a distinguishing difference" is also bad in heraldic parlance. But though these phrases might have been expressed more accurately and grammatically, it is, perhaps, heretical to think so, as we find that these "traditions handed down from one generation to another in the family of the author, and of which many have been verified by the records, combine to make the work as exhaustive as possible." Yes! to the serious reviewer and genealogist it is exhausting and melancholy to expose its glaring defects.

Moreover, he claims to be chieftain of the Comrie Sept, but at the annual meeting of the Menzies Society at Weem, in September, 1901, "it was agreed . . . to delete his name from the books of the Clan Society as Chieftain of the Comrie branch until he satisfy the Chief, Captain Niel Menzies, and the rest of the family that he is such." We have not heard that he has done so.

We now come to the commencement of the book, we may say to the beginning of all things, and certainly to "pre-historic times" as far as family history is seriously concerned.

To go back 333 years *before* the Christian era (mark, Gentle Reader, that it is not A.D. 333, but B.C. 333) absolutely staggers the strongest intellect, for let us just recall some contemporary names: Alexander the Great, Darius, Demosthenes, Aristotle, Apelles, Ptolemy I, Diogenes and Lyncurgus, are the first that occur to us. There was no writing in Scotland so early: Britain was not discovered by the Romans till about two centuries later: and authorities on the early history of Britain fix the reign of Fergus I from A.D. 503 to A.D. 506, *i.e.*, 800 years later than the era so jauntily assumed in this book, which in its first line also vouchsafes the startling information that he was "the first King of Scots who began to reign over *Albion*"! Yet it is to the year 300 *B.C.* we are referred for the "first founder" of the Menzies family, Manus; his elder brother Ferlegus having "fled from *Scota* (*sic*). From this mythical person, who we are told "*held the throne of Scots* (*sic*) about 300 B.C.," we have a pedigree of no less than thirty-nine generations before coming to Anketillus de Meyneis or Maynoers, who seems the first of the line respecting whom we have any semblance of documentary evidence, but he is stated to have lived A.D. 1120-90. No reference is given as to where the charter mentioned as witnessed by him is to be found, nor its date; and without verification we are not prepared to admit the evidence of this or any other deed mentioned in the earlier parts of this work. There is absolutely no proof of the identity of Maynus with Menzies, nor whether such a person ever existed. He does not appear in any one of the known chronicles of the Scots or of the Picts, though he does in the fabulous portion of Hector Boece's work, which no sane person accepts as history.

Yet he is here proclaimed to be the "Great Progenitor of the Clan Menzies which . . . has been acknowledged *by all writers* to have always been a peacefully disposed Clan!" The details given in this work do not support this view and we have not yet found one writer who does.

According to learned, experienced authors, we learn that “Manners, Mayneris, Meners, Maneris, which afterwards by vulgar transformation became Menzies, were originally the same. The armorial bearings of all these were the same.” (G. Chalmer’s “Caledonia,” vol. ii, p. 584; Nisbet’s “System of Heraldry,” p. 245, Appendix).

Dr. Forbes Skene, Historiographer of Scotland, in his “Highlanders of Scotland” (second ed., 1902, p. 377), begins his account of the Clan Menzies thus: “The original name of this family was Meyners, they appear to be of Lowland origin. Their arms and the resemblance of name point them out to be a branch of the English family of Manners, and consequently their Norman origin is undoubted.”

This is the evidence of sober, authentic history. But the evidence on which we are asked to believe in Mr. D. P. Menzies’ descent of thirty-nine generations is as remarkable as the genealogy itself.

Buchanan, Fordun, Boece, Holinshead (presumably Holingshed or Holinshed) are drawn on *en bloc*, as also “Hist. Eccl. Gents Scot.” (*sic*). All these may satisfy the “Gents,” though not the *gentlemen* of Scotland in the twentieth century. But to add stiffening to his buckram authorities, we find our author uses on every page phrases such as these:—

“Metellanus (fourteenth in descent) *is said* to have succeeded to the kingly office B.C. 13;” . . . “if the syllable *tell* be taken from Metellanus, we have Meanus . . .;” “Metellanus, Mainus¹ and Menzies are simply different ways of spelling the same name . . .;” again at p. viii, “. . . Take out the syllable *tell* inserted to make the difference between *he* (*sic*) and the first Menzies (Mainus), and we have Meanus almost the same as the first.” This is a delicious specimen of etymological criticism, and if this patent process were extensively applied, the results would be indeed interesting, for there has been no literary discovery equal to this plan during a thousand years at least! “Mansuetus (fifteenth) *was son or nephew* of Metellanus . . . he *may* have died A.D. 89 . . . The successor of Mansuetus (Menzies) *appears to be* Medanus (sixteenth) or Meanus *probably* his son . . . *is said* to have flourished about A.D. 100, but *may* have died about 150, *possibly* born about A.D. 69.”

“Meanus (seventeenth) *appears* to have been son of the former. . . Mellanius or Meanius, now Menzies of *Scotus* (please note the word “*Scotus!*”) was his successor and *possibly* his son (eighteenth): he is recorded to have belonged to . . . the Highlands of *Scotus*. . . Menna (nineteenth) *apparently* son of the above. . . Meinatus or Merinatus (twentieth) *possibly* the son of Menna”—and so forth down to (the twenty-second) Menzies, Menachus or Menalchus, for whom there is no pretence of filiation; the same misfortune happens

¹ Throughout this book there is hardly anything funnier than the embassy sent by Caesar Augustus to “King” Mainus; a fact for which Boece and Strabo are made answerable; but over and above this, “tradition says this ambassador was father of Pontius Pilate, who was accompanied by his wife, and who while sojourning in the land of the Menzies, bore the Roman Ambassador a son at Fortingall, this son afterwards becoming Pontius Pilate, the Governor of Judea in the time of our Lord.”

to the twenty-fourth Menzies, and the words "probably," "may have been," "possibly," "may have died," "appears to have been," are used to each "Menzies" down to Anketillus A.D. 1120, on every page.

Of Menerius, thirtieth in descent, "it is recorded that he was a bishop or pastor of the church in the country—which *must have been* his native highlands of Dull . . ." The boldness of unsupported inference should be noted, as also the wonderfully naive remark, "when the letter *d* is removed from the name Medanus, the name becomes very similar to the modern (Gaelic Meanrich) *Meanus*." Of course it does, for by cutting out, you may make any word "similar to" some other word: but why make Mackenzie ("Scots Writers") responsible for this pantomime transformation scene?

We have introduced to us *Rabanus Maurus*, alias Menrus or Maurus, "born possibly at Rabanus or Rarus near Dull in the appin of Menzies in the Highlands of Scotland where he doubtless was educated in the College of Dull." The exactitude of location leaves nothing to be desired, but that he came thence is a considerable surprise, as most of us associate him with Mayence, where he was born 766; with Fulda, where he was educated; and again with Mayence, of which See he became Archbishop. There is no evidence we know of for believing Rabanus was ever in Scotland or a Scotsman. He might have heard of Scotia through Alcuin.

We have already noticed our author's opinion that it is "a mark of great learning to spell a name in a great many ways and still to be recognised as one and the same name." Though the English is obscure, we think we understand what it is intended to convey, and must acknowledge that it would be difficult to find any work with such marvellous transmutations; the change from Menrus to Rabanus Maurus is, perhaps, the most wonderful, but whether such juggling shews "great learning," we leave to the reader to settle.

We soon arrive at the fight between Macduff and Macbeth "now so celebrated in *song*, story, play, and *poetry*," and the historian Holingshed or Holinshed is again quoted as *Holinshead*; while we are informed that ". . . there *was* in 1770 in the possession of Sir Robert Menzies other *Charters* of Anketillus," and that a preceding Sir Robert (1177) was one of the "*magnets of Scotland*"—a reference is given to an authority "Shdm. Lanark, p. 166, Regm., Glasgow, p. 15, vol. i," (possibly Sheriffdom) which we cannot explain, any more than "*justicrais*" probably intended for *justiciaris*. "Wילו de Ramesay, *Vicount of Forfar*" (why spell it *Vicount*?) is probably a bad translation of "*Vice Comes*," which meant Sheriff, of Forfar, as such a peerage is unknown to us. Our author naïvely, but ungrammatically remarks, "what wondrous *changes* has been wrought in Scotland . . .;" also that London Parliaments "do not appear to *have had almost if any attraction* or charm to the Menzies . . . as few have ever sat there . . . *much different* was it . . ."—"must have held his lands by Charter." Of course, how else could he?

Mr. Menzies speaks (p. 24) of the lands in Athole, “Loch Tay, then called Discher and Toyer,” but this is an *office* which he has himself *attempted* to explain elsewhere (p. 49)—as spelt by him “Tosach Dorership,” he alone can elucidate it: but its usual form is Toscheoch Doraach or Deorach, viz., an office equivalent to that of Thane, and with the additional word meaning, the chief officer of the King in that region—at a later period the Earl. The office was frequently sold, like many such posts, but the emoluments were never considerable.

Our author states (p. 31) that this “*Lord*” Robert was appointed Regent, and he so dubs him at the beginning of the chapter, but the real purport of the document given (a letter from King Alexander to his father-in-law Henry of England) declares that at the instance of the King of England and Alexander’s own Council, he had dismissed certain bishops and councillors and appointed others, *one* being “Robert of Meyners, who should be appointed by the Council, Regents of the Kingdom and Guardians of the King and Queen.” The King was in his minority, and the term Regent is not taken in the usual sense, as when applied to one person (see Bain’s “Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland,” vol. i, 386-7).

Equally faulty is the summary (p. 32) of another document from the same source, the gist of which is that the King of England accredited certain nobles to act with the Scottish Councillors, to counteract certain Scots rebellious against the Queen of Scots.

Our author repeatedly says “the *signature* of Robert de Meyners (or other ‘Chiefs’) is appended to charters by the King,” but this could not be so, for Royal Charters contain only the names of witnesses as *written by the scribe* in the testing clause; the witnesses did not themselves sign.

Because Robert de Mayners is termed *Dominus*, which did not mean a Peer in 1247, he is ever after called *Lord Robert Menzies* and *Lord Menzies* by our author, and still worse he entirely omits a most important word (Knights) in his transcription of an entry of 1266 in Exchequer Rolls of Scotland, where after the signatures of Robert de Meyners and John de Cambrun, the appellation “*Knights*” distinctly appears. This should have blown “the baseless fabric” of a peerage to atoms. But there is mis-statement and also mistranslation as to this quotation (pp. 33-34). The “audit” referred to was *not* instituted “into the accounts of Gameline and Richard Bishops of St. Andrews and Dunkeld, the abbots of Dunfermline, Lindors, Holyrood, Scone and Cupar,” but they and “R. de Meyneris and John de Cambrun Knights have audited this account,” and the account was not that of Churchmen, but that of the Earl of Mar, Chamberlain, and Robert de Meyneris was not sole auditor, but one of several!

Yet on the same page, poor Sir Robert is again hoisted into the peerage as Lord Menzies and a little further on as Lord Robert, leaving us to wonder whether he was a Peer or the son of a Duke or Marquess! This accounts for the incriminating word “Knight” being dropped out, though used the very year in which this Sir

Robert died, but we can give no reason for the extraordinary phrase:—"The record of such entries shows *how careful and business-like* the affairs of the Crown were managed by Lord Menzies in his time." More carefully we hope than grammar and composition have been attended to in this wondrous compilation!

But we now come to the crowning absurdity which surpasses even the statements we have already animadverted on, possibly at too great length.

At page 35 we read Sir Alexander Menzies (1235-1320) is "acknowledged as *Earl Menzies in an Act of Parliament* of Scotland on the 29th October, 1312, at Inverness."

Our readers will be as surprised as we were when, on investigating the reference, we found there was no such "*Act of Parliament*;" that on the date and occasion referred to, King Robert I and his Council met at Inverness on 29th October, 1312, to confirm with Haco V, King of Norway, the "Agreement" entered into at Perth in 1266 between Alexander III and Magnus IV of Norway, anent the Isles. The original Agreement had been sealed with the royal seal; also with those of certain Bishops, and of Alexander Comyn, Earl of Buchan, Patrick of Dunbar, William of Mar, Adam of Carryk, Earls; and Robert de Meygners, Baron, but not Earl, nor necessarily a Peer. No entry is found therein of Sir Alexander and of his son Robert de Meygners as "*Comes et Earl Menzies and Robert de Menygners barronis . . .*" viz., of two different persons, father and son, as stated by our author, but of one Menzies only, and he not a Peer, simply Robert de Meygners, *baronis* (laird).

Let us investigate the transcription by our author (p. 48) of this "Act of Parliament," 29th October, 1312, and compare it with the original as given in the "Acts of Parliament of Scotland," vol. i, 103.

He distinctly asserts that the following signatures and wording are to be found there, viz.:—"Alexi Comyn Earl Comitiss de Buchan, Patricij de Dunbar, Willi de Marre, Ade de Carr, *Comitun* (*sic*), *et Earl Menzies*, and Robtj. de Menygners *barronis est appointum*."

To the Confirmation dated 29th October, 1312, are appended ("appositum," not *appointum*, as given twice by Mr. Menzies) the seals of the King; of Henry, David, Thomas and Ferquhard, Bishops of Aberdeen, Murray, Ross and Caithness, and of William, David and Thomas Ranulphus, Earls of Ross, Athole and Murray. There is no seal of any Menzies.

Robert, who sealed the previous Agreement of July, 1266, was father of the so called "Earl Menzies," and died the latter end of the same year (p. 34).

We prove, therefore, that in neither of these documents is there any mention of a Comes or Earl Menzies, nor of Sir Alexander, falsely called Earl, but only of his father Robert, baron or laird (not a Peer), in the earlier deed.

No trace of the words Comes or Earl, or peerage of any degree as applied to Sir Alexander or to his son, Robert de Meyners, exists in this or any other deed.

Moreover our Author says (p. 48), “Sir Alexander the Menzies and his son Sir Robert of Menzies appears (*sic*) on the list of barons where the Chief was acknowledged as *Earl Menzies, Comitum*” (29 October, 1312).

But Sir Alexander’s name does *not* appear in this document at all. Yet it is unblushingly stated that “the chief,” viz., Sir Alexander, was by this document acknowledged as Earl Menzies, and that the names of *two* of the Menzies, Sir Alexander and Sir Robert are there, which is not the case. In fact the insertion of “*Alexander*” and of the word “Earl (or Comes)” as applied to him, are misreadings of the original record.

“Earl” Menzies is termed only “Sir Alexander” in several places, and forgetful that he had, according to our author, become a Peer in 1312, his name (or signature) as *Alexander de Meyners* is given in subsequent deeds of 30th October 1313 (p. 50) in 1314 (pp. 55 and 56), and in 1315 (p. 57).

But the “ruling passion strong in death” re-appears, and the unfortunate Sir Alexander Menzies goes to his grave with the mendacious notice “*Earl Alexander the Menzies must have died about the year 1320, being born (not having been born) about 1235.*” Why the poor Knight should be made away with in that year because of “being born about 1235,” is not apparent, and the only thing certain about his obituary notice is that he was never an Earl, nor was any one of his successors ever a Peer.

We now come to the son of our pseudo “Earl,” viz., Sir Robert, whose titles have evidently proved a great puzzle to our compiler, who in the heading to this chapter confers on him the following honours, “Lord Robert the Meyhneis, knight, Viscount or Earl Menzies, Fifth ‘Baron’ of Menzies, Lord High Sheriff of Edinburgh.”

Of course had his father been an Earl, his son would have inherited the title, but as his father was not an Earl, Robert had no Earldom to inherit: neither was he *Lord* Robert, the term *Dominus* not implying a peerage, any more than “Baron” does, nor was he “Viscount,” as we shall presently shew. Therefore of his five titles, “Knight” is the only real one.

But of all the appalling historic blunders in this work, the most terrific is the one at page 64, where it is stated that “we find the Chief Sir Robert the Menzies designated as Vi-Count or Earl Menzies of Edinburgh,” and “Viscount or Earl of Edinburgh.”

There is no such word as “Vi-Count,” but Sir Robert was *Sheriff* of Edinburgh, the Latin for which was then Vicecomes, an official dignity only, having nothing whatever to do with our modern title of Viscount. Sir Robert is repeatedly designated in this work as “Sheriff” or Vice-comes of Edinburgh, but how in the name of common sense he could be “Earl or Viscount” (*utrumque mavis accipe*) “staggers humanity” and lands our compiler into a jumble of titles, such as Earl Robert, Viscount Robert, Vice-Comitis (not even Vicecomes) and Sheriff all on one page (65), and on page 66, the humbler ones of “*Commissirat or Purveyor*” as late as 1329, and merely *Knight* in many deeds down to the year of his death, 1346.

Mr. Menzies has misread the deed he gives at page 28, line 3. The witnesses are "Will^o [for William] de Ramsay, Vicecomite [Sheriff] of Forfar, et Dn^o [for *domino*] Roberto de Mayners" [for Sir Robert of Meyners not "Lord" Robert]. Moreover, Sir Robert was only appointed "Chamberlain" in 1249, not "re-appointed Lord High Chamberlain," and the mightiness of the post is beautifully fanciful.

Our compiler says (p. 26), "We find Sir Robert of Menzies a witness to a Charter confirming a grant of land by the King to the then Earl of Athole—*terris de Imanth*—dated 1232." This is a total misrepresentation: the document is a Charter of Confirmation to the Monks of Cupar Abbey, of the lands of *Imauth*, which the late William of Olifard gave to them. There is no date.

On the next page there is a quotation from a Latin writ, which, as here given, can only be translated by the Editor, for it surpasses the abilities of mere ordinary Latin scholars, who are put to a standstill by such terms as:—" . . . Uxtri de Perth habentem, in quadram quator pollices." Again at page 29 we find a grand display of ignorance, for Mr. Menzies desecrates an Act of Parliament by mis-spelling "tynsal" as "tynfal," and translating it as "title," whereas it means loss!

Mr. Menzies is not satisfied with having created and bestowed on his "Chiefs" two Peerages (an Earldom and a Viscounty), besides throwing in a "*Saint David Menzies*," but says (p. 413), "the genealogy of the House of Bothwell . . . clearly shews that the present Chief is entitled to the title of Lord Holyroodhouse."

To prove this he says Niel Menzies, a Doctor in Perth, "married his cousin Mary Bothwell, *only child* of Henry Lord Holyroodhouse, by whom he had an only son Robert . . . fifth Bart." (p. 366). Had Mary been "only child" of Henry Bothwell, it is not apparent that the title of Holyroodhouse, which he claimed (but did not obtain), was to pass to females: but she was *not* "only child," though she was "*only daughter*," which is acknowledged at page 414: she had several brothers, the youngest of whom, Robert Bothwell, married and had a daughter Margaret, who married a Colin Drummond (M.D.) and left descendants, amongst whom the heir to the title might be found,

- (1) if the title were transmissible through females,
- (2) if the male line of Bishop Adam Bothwell be extinct.

Under these circumstances it is as well that the Menzies Baronets have not assumed this or any of the other titles conferred on them by the "Fountain of Honor," the author of this book.

The successor of the false "Viscount" Menzies, was Sir John Menzies, and though our author is pretty liberal in the conferring of peerages, he has not conferred one on this Knight, fortunately for the reputation of both.

This is unspeakably modest, for both the father and grandfather of Sir John were created peers—by Mr. D. P. Menzies—and peerages were then hereditary, yet no explanation is vouchsafed as to their cessation.

Confusion in titles is “twice confounded” by a lordship or a barony or *Dominus* being taken throughout this volume as a Peerage.

The *barony* ascribed (A.D. 1061) to one Menyeis (1043-1132), solely on the authority of Boece and Holinshead (*sic*), does not answer to the definitions of a Peerage given in the “Complete Peerage,” vol. ii, 423, where the whole matter is clearly explained; nor do we find any charter quoted by Mr. Menzies conforming to such definitions.

Notwithstanding this, each successive Chief is dubbed Baron, “writ large,” so we have twenty-four of them, all mentioned in such a way as to lead the unwary to believe they were Peers, beside calling a certain Chief, “*Lord Robert the Menzies*,” Lord High Chamberlain, because he was “*Chamericus!*”¹ Yet we find Mr. Menzies mentions (pp. 90-91, *et passim*) numerous grants of baronies without any claim to peerages founded thereon.

A striking word occurs at page 91 where, in a Charter A.D. 1385, by Robert II, Robert Meigners is termed “his Beloved Shield-Bearer,” and the deed is referred to as “transumpt of 1439 Castle Menzies Charters No. 13.”

But five lines further down we are favoured by the original Latin words, “*speciali armigero nostro*,” said to be contained in another Transumpt of a Charter 1387 (now at Castle Menzies) of a grant of lands by Robert II to the same Robert Menzies.

The term “Shield bearer” sounds strange to us and recalls the time of “Saul and his armour bearer,” Greeks and Romans.

The word means a man of war and bearing weapons, or a man entitled to bear the heraldic shield of his family. This is the interpretation put by Chief Justice, Sir Edward Coke on the “*Statutum de Militibus anno primo Edwd. II*,” viz., as early as 1307. He says, “They are noble who bear the gentle (hence ‘Gentleman’) arms of their Ancestors. Therefore they are called *Scutiferi, armigeri*,” and Du Cange says, “*Scutifer* (a shield bearer) apud Anglos penultima est nobilitatis descriptio inter Equitem et Generosum.” How *shield-bearer* can be got out of *Armiger*, not *Scutifer*, is a conundrum we will not discuss, but let it join the Peerages and myths we are sending to “limbo.”

Our author,² not content with creating three Menzies Peers (*Vires acquirit eundo!*), canonizes Sir David as a *Saint*, only on the evidence that the church at Weem is called “St. Davids,” that he is locally known as such, and that a large trough, hewn out of the rock, is known as “St. David’s Well.” We find no trace of him in any “Hagiology.”

¹ The reference at page 25 to the Deed of King Alexander (1216) is a blunder, as usual. It should read thus:—“*Litera protectionis per Alexandrum II. Regem Willielmo Episcopo Glasguensi concessa.*” “*Roberto de Meyners Chamerico*,” should, of course, be “*Camerario*” = chamberlain, and the date of this writ is not 1216. Robert de Meyners was not, however, appointed Chamberlain by Alexander III till 1249, so that “*Chamerico*” must be an interpolation. (See Nisbet’s “*Heraldry*,” app. 245, and Chalmer’s “*Caledonia*,” vol. i, 285, note.)

² He terms the *daughters* of the Earls of Huntly and Athole, who respectively married Menzies Chiefs—“*Countesses!*” (picture at p. 113).

But we must pass over minor inflations of Menzies pride and note some wonderful blunders in the deciphering of Monumental Inscriptions, and also in their translations for those supposed to be as ignorant as their translator.

"Quid. Quid. Fit. Sine Pinde. Est. Pacc. A T V. M" (p. 113).

This no doubt is meant for the words of St. Paul, though the copy of the inscription is all wrong, and should run, "Whatsoever is not of Faith, is Sin."

The translation given is, "Verily, verily faith will bring peace!"

Above this "is the figure of a *rude* Highlander," which suggests terrible ideas of impropriety, while "the awakening trump of the spirit" is, to say the least, confusing.

But further comes an absolutely undecipherable riddle: "Viev. & Venite. A.D. Judi," rendered for us most kindly, "Have power and preach of the death of Christ!" Then "Gloria Deo Pax // C Minibus," "Glory to God and Peace to Man," and "Trivni Deo . . ." is rendered "To the three-in-one-God . . ."

The inscription on Lady Christina Menzies's¹ tomb has ". . . atavia *digiti* conditoris," signifying ancestress of a founder already named; as there is no question of "digits" or fingers, the word should doubtless be "dicti," or "before mentioned" This is bad enough, but the translation is worse, viz., "Alas! this chronicles her death!" The same translation for the identical words is also given page 146 and page 364.

This, however, is surprised by the rendering of the familiar words, "Sancti (here spelt *santis*) mors janua vitae est: memento mori," viz., "The death of the righteous is entrance into Life: Remember thou must die." Our F.S.A. Scot. boldly renders this "a saintly death lives in living memory of the dead." This is a magnificent proof of the inventive faculty, for we are not aware that the "living memory of the Dead" has been thought of before, any more than "Cherubims!" (page 113).

An equally astounding transcription and translation are found at page 276, constituting ten lines of mis-spelt nonsense. The well known letters D(eo) O(ptimo) M(aximo) S(acrum) being also condensed into the one word "Lordly," and "Stirps Alta" into "stripsalta."

A part of this inscription is said to be "the composition of Chief Sir Alexander Menzies, who for his attainments as a composer of Latin verse in his youth, at the University of Glasgow, was created Poet Laureate." The authority for this is an extract from the "Registrum Glasguense" 1582, in which the word "Poet" does not occur, for though wrongly given by Mr. Menzies, it is intended for the usual form of granting a Degree or Laureating—indeed it is so mutilated as to be untranslatable—the words "Poet Laureate" are our author's own invention and insertion, who also turns Glasgeua into Glaseugna.

¹ She is persistently called "Lady Campbell," and her arms are said to be *halved* with those of Menzies "in token of marriage." We were taught in our youth to use the word "impaled."

We believe this to be the first and only instance of a *University* creating a Poet Laureate, and then by the grace of Mr. D. P. Menzies!

As to bad composition, grammar and spelling, we find a fine specimen (p. 145) of *nine* lines, without any termination for the nominative, except a full stop; the author forgot the beginning of his phrase and has made nonsense of it—paragraphs end with prepositions—“Visconut” for Viscount—“the *cure* of insanity and other diseases *were* wrought”—a bell “was stolen by an Englishman to England”—A Deed “to which is appended 27 *small signets*,” presumably seals—“*who*, after insulting him they marched . . .”—“*tresure*” for the heraldic tressure, and the anachronism “*Miss*” Menzies of Menzies, as early as 1546 (p. 175 and p. 189)—another unfinished phrase of five lines (p. 179); and another equally unfinished phrase of seven lines (p. 201).

An escutcheon is described as shewing the “male” arms “on the *right*” and the “female on the *left*,” though *dexter* and *sinister* are the only appropriate heraldic words, and the error is repeated (p. 204). Barbara, daughter of the Earl of Atholl, though called “Countess” in this work, page 113, is on page 204 styled “the Honourable Barbara Stewart,” both being wrong, as she was “Lady Barbara.”

Because Sir James Menzies is termed “ane honorable man” in a receipt, and “traist friend” by Queen Mary, he is ever after called “The Honourable” and “The traist friend of Queen Mary,” but both these were the ordinary terms of courtesy then in use. Indeed the latter is found in several government letters to other persons, a little further on. A similar use is made of the equally ordinary greeting, “trusty and well-beloved” (p. 295); at page 247 we read of “MacGregor’s Leap” being so called “from *he* being chieftain of a band of MacGregors,” and also of a coat of arms “*gyronny* of 8 pieces,” intended probably for “gyronny.”

Then we get Christian, daughter of Lord Niel Campbell (p. 339) styled “*the Honble*” Christian Campbell at page 343—“The Commission who adjudged . . .”—“the *Classic* Highland dress”—the daughter of the Duke of Athole is styled “*the Honble* Charlotte Stewart”—“*Miss*” Menzies in 1530 is painful—“a funeral escutcheon” should be “hatchment”—“the marchioness was *non plus* . . .”—“The fame of the young chief’s and his brothers prowess still *linger* . . .”—“Red and White . . . conjectured to have been the colors adopted by the first King Maynus . . .” Heraldic tinctures 300 *B.C.*, in the days of Euclid and the Punic Wars, constitute a deeply interesting discovery!

Exception must also be taken to the statement about the late Sir Robert, “not only is he Chief of Clan Menzies but the Chief of almost all the men of Strath Tay . . .” As he had no property in the district properly so called, for it ends where his property begins (viz., at the west boundary of Killiechassie, which is in the parish of Logierait) it is impossible that either he or any of his predecessors could have ever been designated as “Chief of Strath Tay.”

It is strange that "The Chief" should have signed himself "*Sir Robert Menzies*" at the close of his letter of 18th May 1892 (p. 448), and we should like to see the original!

Such, however, are some of the chief defects of this curious product of Menzies glorification and adulation, of which we have only selected the most prominent examples.

We trust the forthcoming edition will be an improvement on the first and—if so—would suggest that the latter be "called in" and exchanged for the new one, or for some volumes of "Punch" and "Baron Munchhausen."

ADDENDA.

(1). We referred at p. 4 to the prehistoric character of this Menzies book.

In the Preface to vol. i, "Acts of Parliament of Scotland," we read, "There is probably no Scotch writing extant whether of Charter, Record or Chronicle, so old as the reign of Malcolm Canmore who died 1093. And there is no good reason to believe that writing was practised at a much earlier period in the country. The scanty notices of partially informed foreigners, or the still more fallacious native traditions are therefore our only guides to the civil history of the earlier period."

This view has been modified by the discovery about 1869 of "The Book of Deer," which is believed to be of the ninth century—though still correct as a general statement of fact.

(2). At p. 20 we read that "from 30th April 1061 dates the possession and foundation of Castle Menzies and the lands of Menzies as a barony . . ." But this was only effected on 2nd October 1510, and Mr. Menzies forgetful of his previous assertion, quotes this charter of 1510, at p. 145 in full, as "erecting Sir Robert's whole possessions into the one free barony of Menzies" at that date. (See also Nisbet's "Heraldry," vol. xi. Appendix, p. 248, and Hist. Com. Report, vi, 689.)

(3). An extract is given (p. 22) from a donation to the Abbacy of Holyroodhouse "pro salute Domini meis (*sic*) Regis Williemi (*sic*) et Reginae *Emegardae*."

Our author's wondrous translation is "For a greeting to the Lord and Song which *King* William the *King* has given;" but it should be "For the salvation of my Lord King William and Queen *Ermengarde*," and the proper version is given by Nisbet ("pro salute Domini *mei* . . .") who says, vol. ii, 245, "This donation was made by Willielmus de Vetere Ponte;" *not* by King William.

Moreover, Mr. Menzies himself lets out on the same page that this was amongst the "private grants" and "by Willielmus de Vetere Ponte," consequently *not by* the King, but for his soul and that of the Queen.

(4). At p. 11 we shewed how a "Letter of Protection" should read: as given by Mr. Menzies it is so curious that we now give in *italics* the six blunders in his nine words quoted, "*Listerd Protectionis per Alexander Regens Willimo Episcopo Glasguensi concessia*" (p. 25).

We cannot identify exactly this Letter of Protection to William, Bishop of Glasgow, as no authority is given, but it appears to be the one mentioned in the "Regis: Glasguense," vol. i, 162, under the Charters of Alexander III, and given at Roxburgh, 13th April in the second year of his reign, viz., 1251.

There are only three witnesses mentioned, the second being "Alexander Senescallus," but Mr. Menzies does not seem to have known who he was or what "Senescallus" meant, for he contemptuously dismisses him with modern slang ". . . another."

He was, however, no less a person than Lord High Steward of Scotland: here precedes Sir Robert Menzies: was grandfather of Walter Stewart who married Lady Marjory (daughter of King Robert I) and became father of Robert II.

This letter is mentioned again at p. 30 with its correct date (April 1251) and authority, viz., "Regis: Glas: vol. i, 162." We have not found any other such letter in that Collection of the date given (13th April 1216), with Robert de Menzies' name as witness.

Mr. Menzies also errs in saying "To this document is attached the signature of *Meyrs Chamberar* Lord High Chamberland of Scotland."

He did not sign—witnesses' names were inserted by the scribe—as we have already stated (p. 7). His name is given as "*Meyners Camerarius*," which is correct—not *Chamerar*, as quoted; neither is he termed "*Chamberland*," a new office created by Mr. Menzies.

(5). At p. 26 there is a fearful transcription of a Charter "to Matthaes de Moncrief pro *homagis et sus*"—the words given by Nisbet (vol. ii, 245) are grammatical and comprehensible, viz., "pro homagio et servitio suo," but these are not.

We stated at p. 10 that Sir Robert Menzies was not reappointed Chamberlain as asserted by Mr. Menzies (p. 28). Crawford in his "Officers of State," vol. i, p. 262, says Robert "was appointed 1249," and there was no Chamberlain of the name previous to him. (See also "Fordoun Lib., x, e. ix.)

(6). Also at pp. 23 and 24 our Antiquary says that the office of Lord Chamberlain was a position which only those of Royal descent or connection were exalted to or permitted to hold. We will not argue the point here, but refer him to Crawford's "Great Officers of State," pp. 252-353 for enlightenment on this subject.

(7). At p. 25 "We find Sir Robert of *Mengyes* in active office immediately on the accession to the throne of King Alexander II in 1214. When the King visited Edinburgh, 11th September 1214, he granted a Charter in favour of the monks of Holyrood . . ."—leading us to believe that this King was Alexander II, who only came to the throne on 4th December of that year, and the deed was but a *Confirmation* of an original Donation by one R. de Quency, not by the Sovereign, and the date given therein is "Septimo die febr: anno regni ejusdem Nono decimo." This would make the date 1233, not 1214! (*Liber Cartarum Sancti Crucis*, p. 50). Had it been the nineteenth year of his predecessor William the Lion, it would make the date 1184. He proceeds, ". . . the King went to Glasgow *October 1214* and the monks of Glasgow had a charter . . ." but as we have just stated, Alexander II only ascended the throne on 4th *December* of that year, two months later.

(8). At p. 26 it is stated that "in 1232 Sir Robert witnessed a Charter confirming a grant of land *by the King* to the then Earl of Athole, terris de Imanth."

Referring to the "Register of Cupar Abbey," vol. i, p. 332 (not 333 as quoted) we find it is *not* a Confirmation *by the King*, but by David of Hastings, Earl of Athole, of the lands of Imanth, which the late William of Olifard gave to the monks in alms. There is no date in this Charter as given in the "Cupar Register," but David of Hastings acquired right to the Earldom of Athole only in 1242 in right of his wife Fernelith, daughter of the last Celtic Earl of Athole in the direct male line (Chalmer's "Caledonia," ii, 292; "Complete Peerage," etc.). Mr. Menzies seems to have taken the date from another Charter on the same page.

(9). At p. 28 we read "it was Alexander II who first introduced Government by Parliaments into Scotland. The first Scottish Parliament was held at Berwick," and at p. 29 "these Parliaments of Alexander II are the first we have any record of."

But there was a National Council as early as 1107; a Convention of Prelates and Earls in 1160, by Malcolm IV at Perth; another by King William at Scone 1165; and there was no material constitutional change during the reigns of the two Alexanders (*vide supra*).

The first instance of "Parliaments" as applied to a deliberative Assembly is believed to occur in reference to the Parliament held by King William in 1174 (see Dunbar's "Scottish Kings," p. 77, note 11).

Alexander II is stated (p. 28) to have conferred further grants of land upon the Priory of St. Andrew's about 1245—witnessed by Robert de Mayners, no authority is given: we can only trace him in a pious donation by a Hugo Giffard (without date), not by the King (p. 284, Liber Cart. Sanc. Andr.) and at p. 294, where he and David de Meyners witness a "Confirmation" by Alexander II of a similar pious donation of lands in Kathlac by one Simon de Kyn—*not by the King*, and it is dated second year of Alexander's reign, viz., 1216—at Haddington.

(10). At p. 10 of this Review we acknowledged having been brought to a standstill by the words "uxtri de Perth" stated to be in a Charter "still preserved at King James's Hospital, Perth," where, however, a search just made has failed to discover it or mention of it in their Inventory.

Through the kindness of the Rev. John Ferguson, B.D., of Aberdalgie, we have been furnished with a full copy of this document which was given by the Rev. R. Milne, D.D., in his work on the Blackfriars of Perth, privately printed in 1893 for circulation amongst friends, and consequently scarce. By this we can now elucidate the otherwise inexplicable word "uxtri" as a deformed version of "nostri": that "Strangno" with a capital S is not—as Mr. Menzies seems to think—a name, but should be "stagnno," viz., "the pool or pond of our mill": that "quator" should be "quatwor"—all three are nonsense as they stand at present in

the book. (See also Hist. MSS. Commissioners' Report vi and Appendix, p. 713, published 1877.)

(11). The long f for s, in old printing, has proved a regular Pons Asinorum; it is constantly given as f—Ramfay for Ramsay, Maynerf for Mayners (p. 28), tynfal for tynsal, etc. (p. 29).

(12). The authority (p. 29) for the "safe-conduct" to Sir David Menzies on 16th October 1248 is at p. 323 of vol. i, "Calendar of Documents relating to Scotland," and not p. 333 as stated: indeed indefinite and inaccurate references have rendered their identification most laborious, and in many cases impossible.

This was not an Embassy: Sir David and others merely went to France to escort thence to Scotland, the daughter of the Count de Soissons, niece of the Queen of Scotland. Our compiler inflates this simple transaction as follows: "this Embassy . . . Sir David discharged with great honour and commendation to his country, and the satisfaction of all Scotsmen." This is indeed most gratifying.

(13) Mr. Menzies says of Sir Alexander (p. 35) "The King renewed the Charters held by his Father Sir Robert to him, and that, through the representative of the Crown in Perthshire, John Earl of Athol . . . as acting for the King Alexander III."

This was not the case. In the Hist. MSS. Commission, Report vi, vol. ii, pp. 688-90, we find that this *John, Earl of Athol*, granted the Charter of these lands in consideration of an annual payment by Sir Alexander to him and his heirs; to the Earl and his heirs was also reserved the patronage of the Church of Weem.

The Earl was *not* "acting for the King."

(14). At page 41 is a most extraordinary transcription—"Constras hient muliers subscripte videlicet Agnes uxor Alex: de Meiners de quinquaginta mercatis *thre plegem* extentam &c. ut s^d. (Exchequer Rolls Scot. vol. ii, 28.)"

The abbreviations have been too much for our transcriber, who has made nonsense of the extract.

In full it should be—"Consideratio terras habentes mulieres subscriptae, videlicet Agnes Uxor Alexandri de Meiners, de quinquaginta Marcatis terrae per *legalem* extentem, ut supra," viz.: In consideration of certain undermentioned ladies (amongst whom was Agnes, wife of Alexander de Meiners) having land, they were to receive allowances while captives of Edward I.¹

No one would recognise this from the copy above quoted, and, moreover, the reference should be to p. 28, "Rotuli Scotiae," vol. i, *not* vol. ii.

In the margin the original Roll is referred to as "Membr: 9 dorso Berwic 4 Sep. 1296," viz., membrane (or skin), 9, on the back of which was the Grant, made at Berwick on that date.

¹ "Extent" is the valuation of property for fiscal purposes; the "legal extent" is the rate fixed by law for the time being.

Mr. Menzies, however, has not understood either the abbreviation or the word "membrane," and hashes it up as "mempte . . ." ! What does he think this word means ?

(15). Sir David Menzies, canonized by our compiler, is called (p. 108) "lord dominus," and "above his well rises vertically ledges of rock" (p. 115), while in it were found "coins of various value."

(16). There is a portrait of Ann Sandilands, wife of Captain Robert Menzies, eldest son of Sir Alexander, first Baronet.

According to Mr. Menzies this Robert died April 1692, two years before his father : never succeeded to the Baronetcy, was not even a Knight, yet she is ignorantly styled "Lady Menzies" (p. 324), though Mr. Menzies actually says that on *the back of the portrait* are the words "Mrs. Ann Sandilands. . ."

(17). At p. 46 we are treated to the following mis-statement : "On the 5th October 1309 Bruce granted a Charter *confirming Sir Gilbert Hay as Chief Constable of Scotland* to which Sir Alexander Menzies is a witness, which reads 'Carta confirmationis predictis monachis quarundem *elimosuram* [of] Gilbertus de Haia Constabularius Scotiae. . .'"

We searched the "Cupar Register" and at p. 286, vol. ii (though no vol. is quoted) found this deed had nothing to do with confirming Gilbert de Hay's appointment, but was a *notification to him* of a donation of lands by Robert Bruce in charity, to the abbey of Cupar in 1309, and the very docket on the Charter says "Carta . . . *elemosinarum*" (not "*elimosuram*" as quoted), viz., Charter of Alms.

Space did not admit of these precious specimens in the original Review, but though

"Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear,"

these at least must be rescued from oblivion, though many more should be added.

Possibly portions of his book were intended as a hoax on the learned Society of which the author somehow became a member only twenty-two months before his work was *issued* (though he says it was "a seven years' labour"), and which Society he left five years after, though he *still* uses the honourable qualification "F.S.A. Scot.," to which he has not been entitled for six years, and notwithstanding that he has been warned by the Council that he has no right to use those letters.

Possibly he may himself have been hoaxed by facetious advisers—we are willing to make every allowance—but under any circumstances his book can never rank among serious genealogical works, for it is defective in grammar, composition, dates, courtesy titles, translations and transcriptions of epitaphs and charters, consequently throws disrepute on a valuable adjunct to History and will cause sceptics "to blaspheme."

Though Mr. Menzies has "exhibited at Art Exhibitions" of Forfar, Stirling and even . . . Glasgow (p. 367) he cannot have ever taken part in any more striking than this blushing "Red and White" one, but his Clan should retrieve its literary mishap and vindicate its really interesting, ancient annals without delay.

Meanwhile Mr. Menzies should reserve his energies for sanitary engineering, painting, romance writing, in fact anything but manipulating national and ecclesiastical records, sepulchral inscriptions, and the conferring of non-existent pedigrees, and peerages.

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Stewart, Charles Poyntz
The Red and white book of
Menzies

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