

the fact, which are both immoral and unprofitable, but the bright emanations from the pen of the author of *Waverley* must not be ranked among the number. His novels are of a different kind; and while purity of language, accurate delineation of human nature, or the productions of a comprehensive genius and cultivated understanding are prized in the land, so long will they rank among the brightest gems which this or any other age has bequeathed to posterity.

J. C.

## STANZAS.

“*The heart is deceitful above all things.*”—JEREMIAH.

AMIDST the gay and vulgar crowd,  
Where busy life is seen;  
Where hollow laughter rings aloud,  
As woe had never been  
The tenant of those joyous hearts,  
Which spread their mirth around,—  
’Tis sad to wander, and to feel  
That joy—that mirth unsound.

But looking on the smiling face  
Tells nought that works below;  
The *youthful* heart can never trace  
The secret springs of woe;  
’Tis left unto the *seared* heart,  
Grown old amid distress,  
To mark, beneath a seeming joy,  
A smiling wretchedness.

And I have wander’d ’midst the crowd  
And seen some smile in pain,—  
Beheld the humble, mark’d the proud—  
Each struggle, but in vain,  
To wear an outward show of joy—  
Veiling the heart within;  
It is a melancholy sight,  
The bitter fruit of sin.

Manchester.

N. GARDNER.

## A SHORT HISTORIC NOTICE OF THE CLAN OF THE ARMSTRONGS.

WE need hardly observe that, whilst the predatory and marauding system of warfare prevailed, the Armstrongs had for a considerable number of years the greatest sway and influence over all the other clans in the western districts of the Borders, and particularly in the south-east quarter of the county of Dumfries. A short history therefore, of them, we presume, cannot fail to interest the feelings of those

under whose view it may chance to come, and who are no strangers to the name of Armstrong, nor to the country wherein, even at this day, it so greatly abounds; nor, possibly, may prove altogether barren of information to others. Hence hath our attempt its appearance, with the approbation of the Editor, in the Border Magazine.

THE name of *Fortinbras*, signifying in English *Strong in Arm*, but more neatly by our Saxon ancestors translated *Armstrong*, is—if not indeed of a much earlier date—coeval with Charlemagne in France. We say of an *earlier date*, for we have seen an old French history, edited in the fifteenth century, of the Duke of Normandy's ancestors, which mentions a gentleman of that name of high consideration. In the year 787 he had fled with his family, and with what property he could carry with him, into Denmark—the people of which country were then called Normans—for refuge from prosecution, on account of some treasonable practices against his sovereign and the laws of his country; and he was, of course, outlawed. The same history records, that a descendant of this gentleman, in the tenth century, being in the reign of Charles the Simple of France, joined the Norman Rolf, or Rolla, the leader of an invading army that proved successful against Neustræ, now Normandy, and there settled himself with his Danish comrades. It also tells us that a descendant of the latter person, in the eleventh century, followed the fortune of William the Bastard of Normandy in his conquest of England; and, shortly after, joined the English and Saxon nobles, and Norman men of power, become disaffected to William's government,—the former, in consequence of their being arbitrarily dispossessed by William of their lands and manors,—the latter, probably, for their not being rewarded by him to the extent they might think themselves entitled for their services—who fled for safety from the vengeance of his arm to the fastnesses of the border districts of England and Scotland. It is doubtless from these refugees, and their immediate descendants, that the several clanships of the Borderers first sprang up. Other clanships followed, but of a considerable later date, as the Maxwells, the Jardins, the Kers, the Scots and the Grahams, which became, in truth, more formidable than the earlier ones to both kingdoms. Their power of annoyance was established on a depredatory system of warfare against their neighbours on each side of them, and occasionally, as their jealousy might operate, against each other; and this system they maintained with the most determined spirit, it is known, for many centuries, even as low down as the accession of James VI. of Scotland to the English throne.

Fortinbras, who had now taken up the Saxon translation of his name—Armstrong, sought for a domicile, and soon settled at Manger-ton on the Roxburgh side of the river Liddel, in which vicinity also one of his Roman comrades, *Elliot*, had fixed himself; and here we will take occasion to remark, that we know of no ancestors of the clans of the Borderers, except those of the Armstrongs and Elliots, coming over to England with the Conqueror. The *Jardins*, no doubt, are of French extraction, but at what period they became a Border clan, we know not.

*Mangerton*—for by this name he was now and ever after known—having settled himself to his liking, was fortunate enough very shortly, by his maraudings, to acquire no inconsiderable possession of lands in Dumfries-shire; and thus became the first chief of the clan of the Armstrongs. From thence branched off, in after times, Gilnochy the second chief, and Kinmount the third, each having subordinate chiefs, generally selected from their own relations, under them, somewhat similar to the knights under the great Barons of England, conformably to the Norman feudal system of government as introduced, and finally constituted, by the Conqueror William himself.

Whilst the two nations of England and Scotland were each under the rule of its respective sovereign, it ever continued the policy of their governments but seldom to disturb the Borderers in their usurped dominion over the country in which they had fixed themselves. The reason was that these marauders or free-boaters,—for they could be considered no other than a bandit of such,—generally became auxiliaries, as suited either their humour or emergency at the time, to one or other of those nations in their wars with each other; or sometimes, uniting their strength, lent themselves to either, to disturb the peace of its neighbour whilst waging war abroad. But when the crowns of the two kingdoms were united by the accession of James VI. of Scotland to the English throne, the administration of the two kingdoms, agreeing together, resolved on the complete subjugation of the Borderers; which measure they soon in a great degree effected. Those on the south side the Eak gave them no trouble; hence they quickly drew over, by promises and bribes, all the leading chiefs on the Scotch side, excepting only Gilnochy and Kinmount with their subordinates. *Harielaw*, the subordinate of Mangerton, had attached himself, some years before, to the Grahams of the southern border, and was on that account held in utter contempt by the rest of the clan of his name; nor less, too, on account of his treachery in betraying and giving up the Duke of Northumberland to the English government, when he had taken refuge in Scotland from the vengeance of the laws of his country, which he had offended by his treasons in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. What had become of Mangerton at this period, we can give no account; his name was never mentioned; and it is possible he was not in existence, for we recollect once seeing in our perambulations a very elegant cross near his castle, which we were told had been erected over the spot where one of his name had been assassinated,—perhaps he was the last of the chiefs of his name, and his lands had fallen to the lot of Harielaw who was descended from him.

*Christie*, the son of John of Gilnochy, so famed in Border history and its ballads, and in Buchanan's history, was at this time the most powerful, the most enterprising, proud, and resolute of all the chiefs of the Borderers; determined on resistance, desperate as it could not fail to have been considered, to which he was excited probably by the recollection of the fate of his father recently and treacherously put to death by the mandate of James V\*.; and holding in abhorrence the mean and dastardly yielding, as he might naturally be supposed, from his high

\* It was an Earl of Morton, by name a Maxwell (originally Maccoms), at this time warder of the Scotch Marches,—jealous, in his *riiser* character, of the great

and undaunted spirit, to estimate it, of the other Border chiefs, who could so calmly surrender an independency that had been for such a length of time maintained in the Borders,—and that, too, by a perseverance and bravery that had no example in history.

*Christie* had made several successful raids into England, long after the other chiefs had submitted; and being greatly inspirited thereby, at length, with an infatuation little, if at all, short of insanity, carried his depredations as far as Doncaster in Yorkshire, not less than two hundred and sixty miles distant from his domicile in the Borders, where he was met by the King's troops, surrounded, and after some vain efforts at resistance, was taken with all the other chiefs of his clan that had followed his fortune, and with them instantly hanged. Their castellated towers and houses, being first ransacked, were now all dismantled, and their lands forfeited and suffered to be taken possession of, to their own private benefit, principally by the chiefs of the Scots, the *Grahams*, and the *Elliot*s, excepting such portion of them as was bestowed for his services on the Lord Clifford, at that time Lord Warden of the English Marches. The chief of *Harielaw* was permitted to keep his lands, having joined himself, as we have already noticed, to the southern Borderers; but these lands, of whatever extent they were, had become reduced by the extravagance of his successors in the middle of the last century to so few as sixty acres, and these acres, we have heard it insinuated, were wrested in no honourable way from their rightful owner, by *Henry*, late Duke of Buccleuch, grandfather of the present Duke—an insinuation this we can, from the knowledge we had of that nobleman acquired by frequent intercourse with him, repel with indignation. The Acres, however, have fallen into the great mass of the Buccleuch property in the Border districts, so that there is not, we believe, an individual of the name of *Armstrong* at the present day in possession of a single rood of land in fee-simple that was possessed by any of their ancestors previous to the defeat we have just now recorded; how much were once possessed by them, is not easily, for a certainty, to be brought together—we dare only name the whole parish of *Canobie*, in which is now comprehended what were the parishes of *Sark* and *Half Morton*; the largest portion, if not the whole, of the parish of *Langholm*, and the same of what is now the parish of *Kirk-Andrews*, which at the period in question, constituted a portion, we think, of the parish of *Nichol forest*;—the lands of *Ellerbeck*, now—if we are not wrong informed—in the possession of *Francis Jeffery*, Esq. Lord Advocate of Scotland;

wealth that *Gilnoch* had now acquired, and, in his *NEET*, of the increasing power and consequence of that chief over those of the other clans,—who contemplated *Gilnoch's* ruin, which he effected, by inducing him, under a promise of forgiveness, to present himself with a train of his retainers before his sovereign and yield him homage. *Gilnoch* unfortunately listened to *Maxwell*, and approached *James* with forty, some historians say but thirty, of his followers all costly attired and well mounted, at *Fiddleton* at the entrance into *Ewesdale*; but ere he came within any moderate distance of him, he gave the signal for a body of Military lying in ambush, who instantly surrounded *Gilnoch* and his followers, and conducted them to *Calrienrigg*, near the confluence of the *Tiviot* and *Frosty-lee*, and there hanged them on the trees, and interred their bodies beneath them, where their graves are visible at this day.

—and some portion of the lands of Moffat, belonging to Lord Hopetoun.

All the chiefs of the clan of the Armstrongs may be said, too, to have possessed very respectable residences,—Gilnochy the castellated towers of Langholm, Canobie, and Kirk-Andrews, all superior edifices, as their remains testify at this day, most particularly the one at Gilnochy; Kinmount had a residence in Canobie called Woodslee, now the property and the residence of one of the Elliots, besides his castellated mansion at Kinmount, the site of which is now covered by an extensive farmstead called Sark-Tower, in the possession of Mr. Church the tenant of the lands.

But to return to some account of the individuals of the clan in general:—and what I am now going to observe of them is from an intercourse I have had with several of them. Lowered as numbers of them are in rank in the world now, as far as wealth and valour bestowed, and reduced as many of them must necessarily be almost to absolute poverty, yet have they, for such they absolutely betray, the consolation of reflecting that the *honour* of those of their ancestors who resisted, though unsuccessfully, to the last extremity, the annihilation of the Border compact of freedom and independency for so many centuries maintained with every possible effort that men are capable of, remains *unsullied*. In truth it is almost marvellous with what equanimity of mind and temper, it is observable, they frequently can advert to and contemplate their present state consequent from their ancestors' noble and undaunted spirit in risking as they did, and in the end losing, wealth, power and rank in the world.

Before we proceed further with our narrative, let it be permitted us to ask, where, with perhaps the exception of the highland clan of the Campbells, will be found a name so numerously abounding in any other district at home, where their first ancestor settled himself, or so spread over the surface of the globe, or at least over those parts of it where the government, under the shadow of whose wings they have hitherto been protected, has any kind of sway, authority, or commercial intercourse, as is the *name* of *Armstrong*?—And here we will remark a circumstance which, we are persuaded, will not a little surprise many of our readers—that notwithstanding so great a number of the descendants of this once formidable Border clan is yet remaining amongst us; and notwithstanding also, as it is well known, many, *many* individuals of them have by their talents and industry raised themselves to wealth, nor less to respectability of character, yet but few, very *few* have found their way into *court*, or into any of the different employments under government, nor even in the various professions, that of the *medical* only excepted in the kingdom—for it is a fact, the truth of which we had, seven years ago, opportunity of ascertaining beyond all dispute, by careful examination into the lists published in the Royal Calendars,—the Almanacks,—and various other public registers that we might depend on of the year of that period 1825—That not one of the name of Armstrong was to be found in the Imperial parliament;—not one among the higher offices at Court;—not one among the Peers of the three kingdoms;—not one among the Governors of our Colonies, nor in the Diplomacy, nor among the Consuls; nor among the Baronets; nor in the knights of the different orders, or

knight Bachelors;—nor among the professors of the different universities of the three kingdoms;—neither among the dignitaries and proctors of the English Church; nor among the Stipended Clergy of the Kirk of Scotland; nor among the Judges, the Advocates, Writers of the signet, or Solicitors in the Scotch Law Courts; neither among the Judges, Masters in Chancery, and Sergeants in the English Law Courts; and not even in the different grades of our Admirals; and but two were found in the grades of our Generals; and three only registered among the Colonels and Lieutenant Colonels in our Army. An inquisitive stranger to our country, to notice this observation or rather remark of ours, might be led, and naturally enough too, to imagine this large body of men in a manner interdicted by the constitution and laws of the kingdom from any share in its government, however competent in abilities of mind thereto: and he might become strengthened in this conjecture when informed that several of the Scots, the Johnstons and the Elliots, sprang from ancestors, who were held in as little estimation as those of the Armstrongs at one period of time by the government of the country, have been intrusted in offices of the highest importance, and some of them ennobled by the Peerage. We are indeed aware but of one individual of the Armstrongs, who has made any figure in the Annals of Britain since the Border compact was annihilated,—we allude to Archy Armstrong, who resided at the Stubholm, immediately below the junction of the Wauchope and the Esk, and was a subjugated individual of the last Moss-trooping marauders of any consequence in numbers or terror in the country, especially about Bew Castle in Cumberland, commanded by a William Armstrong, called for distinction sake *Christie's Will*. This Archy was distinguished for his wit, and became a celebrated Jester in the court of Charles I., but was soon dismissed in disgrace from this dignified office for his “insolent wit,” as it was termed, on Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury. For, one day, when this prelate was about, as was his duty at the king's table, when he chanced to be of his sovereign's dinner party, to say grace, Archy intruded, and begged permission of the king to perform that duty; and it being granted him, proceeded with great gravity, “All praise to God, and little *laud* to the deil.” After his dismissal from court, he retired to the parish of Arthuret in Cumberland, where he died at an advanced age, and was buried within the church of the parish where may be now seen a tablet to his memory. His name, it can hardly be doubted, will go down to posterity so long as that of Laud shall have place in British history, and that, no doubt, will be, till annals of our Island are no more.

It is not difficult to conceive how the families, and of course the name, of the Armstrongs, had so greatly increased, particularly towards the close of the Border compact, when we call to mind that every male born under it was registered a *retainer* to one or other of the chiefs, to whom they became attached, in after life, so strongly, that it was rare to hear of any one leaving his home to seek for other protection. But how are we to account for their continuance in such great numbers, notwithstanding so many of them must have spread themselves abroad to seek for bread, immediately on the dissolution of the clanship in the manner we have already described it? Only two causes occur to us as likely to have thus operated; to wit, the Handy-

first marriages\* which had so long obtained in the Border districts, as they had always done in the Highland districts of Scotland, and against which there was no law that either of the parties might not covenant again, however frequently prior contracts had been broken by them;—and the indelicate—to give it no worse a name—promiscuous intercourse of the sexes so notoriously prevailing now, as it had done for centuries, among all the clans of the Border districts, both on the north and south side the Eak, though we are obliged to confess, from our own observance, we think with less reserve on the northern side.

The *first* custom we have named has passed away since the beginning, though not sooner, of the last century—but the latter, we lament to say, is in no degree diminishing—we will not, however, soil our pages with describing this intercourse, but content ourselves with noticing, it has doubtless tended to the corruption of morals, and most assuredly to the increase of bastardy. Traverse these districts, and particularly that immediately around Canobie, and you will want no further proof of the evil arising from these wretched customs,—must we proceed?—It is hardly to be believed how few individuals you meet with, if you enquire of them from what chief of their clan they are descended, or who were their fathers, can satisfy your curiosity. That there are, notwithstanding, numbers of the clan of the Armstrongs from the original tree in a lineal legitimate male descent remaining, there can be no reasonable doubt. We have heard of a great-great-grandson of John of Gilnochy, who kept the principal Inn at Hawick in the memory of several yet living in that neighbourhood; and we saw about forty years ago in that Inn a large Oaken Cradle, which was known to have been brought from Gilnochy tower, in which the boisterous chief was accustomed to be rocked asleep by his valets.

We knew also two sons of the Host of Hawick Inn, tenanting a farm at Gilnochy under his Grace Henry of Buccleuch. There was likewise, to our knowledge, an old gentleman at Glensier in Sark parish, known under the designed name of “John O’ the Garden,” who had proof, he averred, in his possession of a legitimate lineal descent from *Kinmount Willie* of notorious memory; and we once had personal acquaintance with a gentleman near Edinburgh—who had been in the service of Henry Duke of Buccleuch, who in his cups was used to boast he was a Firebrass, a corruption of the French *Fier-à-bras*, signifying *Hector*, intimating thereby he was descended truly from Hector of *Harielaw*; and that he came certainly from the town of *Harielaw*, we had the means of ascertaining beyond all dispute. Hence, then, we have a genealogical line of legitimate descent of these men, from Fortinbras’s ancestor flying for refuge into Denmark

\* The parties intending to enter into these depraved contracts, met at a particular place, on a certain day, most commonly at the return of an Annual Fair or Wake, when they joined hands in the presence of witnesses, and agreed to cohabit together for one year, to prove whether they should like one another well enough to become man and wife, and if at the expiry of that period they were satisfied with each other, the nuptial knot was tied by a regular priest; if otherwise, they separated, the man becoming burthened with the child, should one have been born to him within the year of trial, or the woman pregnant at the moment of separation,—unless, however, the woman should agree to take the charge upon herself, which it was optional in her to do, in preference to the man, and then he became exonerated from having any thing more to do with either mother or child.

A. D. 787, to the present year 1833, a period of one thousand and forty-five years, comprising, short only of five years, thirty-five generations, reckoning thirty years to a generation; is there, it may be asked, a family in the united kingdoms of England, Scotland and Ireland, however long it may have been ennobled, or otherwise dignified by the Sovereigns of either of the kingdoms, that can boast of a descent, uninterrupted on the male side, of greater, or even of equal length?

J. T.

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SONG.—TUNE—“*Gramachree*.”

BY ROBERT GILFILLAN.

FAIR maiden with the bright blue eye,  
 Thou’st stol’n my heart away;  
 Thou’rt mingled with my dreams by night  
 And in my thoughts by day!—  
 And oft thy name steals from my lip  
 Or falters on my tongue—  
 O! ne’er was I beguil’d before  
 By one so fair and young!—

Thy image, lovely as the morn,  
 Appears in all I see,  
 For nature in her fairest forms  
 But breathes and speaks of thee!—  
 Thy voice is in the song that falls  
 On ev’ning calm and fair;  
 And in the rose’s op’ning tints—  
 Thy beauty’s pictur’d there!—

O! welcome love, if this be love—  
 —Aught else it cannot be—  
 To think that all my joy or woe  
 Finds sympathy with thee!—  
 To wander ’mong the buds of spring  
 Or flow’rs of summer gay,  
 And sing—‘O! maiden ever fair,  
 Thou’st stol’n my heart away!’—