

**DOMINUS FECIT. GENEALOGICAL
COLLECTIONS CONCERNING THE SIR-
NAME OF BAIRD, AND THE FAMILIRS
OF AUCHMEDDEN, NEWBYTH, AND
SAUGHTON HALL IN PARTICULAR**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649747979

Dominus Fecit. Genealogical Collections Concerning the Sir-Name of Baird, and the Familirs of Auchmedden, Newbyth, and Saughton Hall in Particular by William Baird

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Cover @ 2017

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WILLIAM BAIRD

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THE BAIRD FAMILY.

dominus fecit.

GENEALOGICAL COLLECTIONS

CONCERNING THE SIR-NAME

OF

BAIRD,

AND THE FAMILIES OF

AUCHMEDDEN, NEWBYTH, AND SAUGHTON HALL

IN PARTICULAR.

WITH COPIES OF OLD LETTERS AND PAPERS WORTH PRESERVING,
AND ACCOUNT OF SEVERAL TRANSACTIONS IN THIS COUNTRY
DURING THE LAST TWO CENTURIES.

Reprinted from the Original MS. of
WILLIAM BAIRD, ESQ. (LAST OF THE FAMILY), OF AUCHMEDDEN,
Now Preserved in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh.

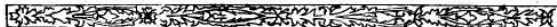


With Notes; and an Appendix containing a deduction of the Family of OSZDNNIVAS to the present day.

LONDON:
JOHN CAMDEN HOTTEN, PICCADILLY.

MDCCLXX.

218. d. 37.



PREFACE.

THE first edition of these "Collections," edited by W. N. Fraser, Esq., under the title of "*An Account of the Surname of Baird, particularly of the Families of Auchmedden, Newbyth, and Sauchtonhall,*" was published at Edinburgh in 1857, in 4to, but has been out of print for some years, and is now rarely to be met with. The present edition contains a good deal of additional genealogical matter, in Notes and an Appendix.

As many may glance at the preface of a work of this description without going deeper into its contents, attention may be here called to the fact that the second volume of the original MS., at one time in the Advocates' Library, Edinburgh, is now missing; in the hope that a public notice may lead to its recovery. In the notes to his text Auchmedden says:—

"The second volume of this Collection begins with a continuation of these notes, as they occur in looking over old papers or from new information."

This second volume was in all probability the one thus described in the Catalogue of the Genealogical MSS. :—

"34, 6, 17. Some Genealogical Collections of the name of Baird, by William Baird of Auchmedden. Pp. 208, 4to."

It has unfortunately been mislaid or lost. To assist in its identification, a facsimile of the title-page of the volume here reprinted (Genealog. MSS. no. 32, 6, 12) is subjoined, which it will be observed is marked *Vol. I.*

An equally vexatious loss may be referred to—viz., that of three ancient lead seals of the family, which were recently in possession of the Editor of the "*Account, &c.*," but which were stolen shortly before its publication. They were the three which are rudely sketched by Auchmedden on the title-page of this MS. (see *facsimile*); a description of them will be found in the present volume.

In addition to the MS. now reprinted there are three other MSS. relating to the family which may be mentioned.

1. A duplicate copy of the "Collections" in Auchmedden's handwriting, now in the possession of his representative, F. G. Fraser, Esq., of Findrack, Aberdeenshire.

2. A genealogical scrap-book of Auchmedden's, containing stray notices of his family, and others with whom they intermarried, now in the possession of W. N. Fraser, Esq., Editor of the "*Account, &c.*"

3. A MS. in the Advocates' Library (Genealog. MSS. 34, 6, 19), which is thus described in the Catalogue:—

"Genealogical Collections; a 4to volume, consisting of treatises on the Genealogies of the following families—viz., Seton, Arbuthnot, Campbell of Auchinbreck, Abercorn, Baird, and Innes, being copies of well-known MSS., and mostly published."

The notes in the present volume, initialled "W. B.," are Auchmedden's; those marked "W. N. F." are the Editor's of the "*Account, &c.*;" those now added are signed "Ed."

F. M. B. S.

14th Dec., 1868.



PREFACE TO THE "ACCOUNT," &c.

THE following short GENEALOGY of the FAMILY OF BAIRD has been printed for the first time, from a manuscript written by WILLIAM BAIRD, Esquire of Auchmedden, the last male representative of a family which, for several generations, filled the office of Lieutenant and Sheriff-Principal of the County of Banff, and for many years exercised considerable influence in the North of Scotland, particularly during the troublous reigns of the two Charles's.—(*Spalding's Memorials.*)

Mr. Baird was the eldest son of William Baird of Auchmedden, and Mary, daughter of Robert Gordon, of Straloch or Pislurg, and was born at Auchmedden about the year 1701. From some manuscripts of his which still remain, particularly a translation from the Greek of Thucydides, he appears to have had a taste for literary as well as genealogical and antiquarian pursuits, and to have been a gentleman of considerable accomplishments. He was the early patron of James Ferguson, the celebrated mechanist and astronomer, who mentions him in flattering terms in his Autobiography. In the prefix to his *Select Mechanical Exercises*, Mr. Ferguson says:—"Lady Dipple¹ had been but a few weeks there (at Durn) when William Baird, Esquire of Auchmedden, came on a visit. He was the husband of one of that Lady's daughters, and I found him to be very ingenious and communicative. He invited me to go to his house and stay some time with him, telling me that I should have free access to his library, which was a very large one, and that he would furnish me with all sorts of implements for drawing. I went thither, and stayed about eight months, but was much disappointed in finding no books of astronomy in his library except what was in the two volumes of Harris's *Lexicon Technicum*, although there were many books on geography and other sciences. Several of those indeed were in Latin, and more in French, which being languages I did not understand, I had recourse to him for what

¹ Lady Dipple was the youngest daughter of Sir William Dunbar, of Durn.

I wanted to know of these subjects, which he cheerfully read to me; and it was as easy for him to read English from a Greek, Latin, or French book, as from an English one. He furnished me with pencils and Indian ink, showing me how to draw with them; and although he had an indifferent hand at that work, yet he was a very acute judge, and consequently a very fit person for showing me how to correct my own work. He was the first who ever sat to me for a picture,¹ and I found it was much easier to draw from the life than from any picture whatever, as nature was more striking than any imitation of it."

Mr. Baird married Anne Duff, eldest daughter of William Duff, of Dipple, and sister of William, first Earl of Fife, by whom he had a numerous family, none of whose descendants now remain, with the exception of those of his youngest daughter, Henrietta, who married Mr. Francis Fraser, of Findrack, in the County of Aberdeen.

Mr. Baird, true to the traditions of his family, joined the rebellion in 1745, on the Stuart side, and was an officer of the Prince's Body Guard at the battle of Culloden. He continued in hiding for several years after that unfortunate affair,² but at length found an asylum at Echt House, Aberdeenshire, then the property of his relative, the late Earl of Fife, till his death, which took place in 1777. His property appears to have escaped confiscation, but it is said that, in consequence of the large sums of money he had borrowed to aid the Stuart cause, he was necessitated to alienate the family estate to Lord Haddo in 1750. At the time of this occurrence, a somewhat curious circumstance happened in connection with the family history, which, incredible as it may be thought, seems to be attested by authentic evidence. This was no less than the fulfilment of a prophecy, attributed to Thomas the Rhymer, that "There would be an eagle in the crags while there was a Baird in Auchmedden." When the estate passed out of the family at this time, the eagles³ disappeared from the rocks of Pennan, where they had built for ages.

¹ This interesting portrait is in the possession of Mr. Baird's great-grandson, Mr. Francis G. Fraser, of Findrack, Aberdeenshire.

² In *List of Rebels* (British Museum, Add. MSS., No. 19,796) occurs the name of William Baird of Auchmedden, Deputy-Lieutenant and Governor of Banffshire, under Lord Lewis Gordon: place of hiding not known.—Ed.

³ At one period there was a pair of eagles that regularly nested and brought forth their young in the rocks of Pennan; but, according to the tradition of the country, when the late Earl of Aberdeen purchased the estate from the Bairs, the former proprietors, the eagles disappeared, in fulfilment of a prophecy by Thomas the Rhymer—"That there should be an eagle in the crags while there was a Baird in Auchmedden." But the most remarkable circumstance, and what certainly appears incredible, is, that when Lord Haddo, eldest son of the Earl of Aberdeen, married

The Letters appended to the Genealogy will, it is hoped, be found interesting, as illustrating the style of writing which prevailed in private correspondence at that period. They are also calculated to throw some light on the social habits of the time, while the occasional references to events of historical interest are not without considerable value. They commence in 1595, and are continued down to 1720.

Those earliest in date are chiefly from Andrew Baird to his brother Gilbert Baird of Auchmedden. This Andrew was the second son of George Baird of Auchmedden, by his wife Elizabeth, daughter of Alexander Keith, of Troup, who was brother to the then Earl Marischall. After getting a University education, he was sent to France to finish his studies, and he became Professor of Philosophy at Lyons, but subsequently embraced a monastic life.

His letters from France throw considerable light on the difficulties which persons in his situation, who were then a numerous class, had in communicating with their friends in Scotland. In one instance, it appears that a letter written to him by his brother took two years to reach its destination, and in another he complains that it was "aucht" years since he had heard from home. A visit to his native country was an affair of still greater difficulty, and one which, after due consideration, he had made up his mind not to hazard. In Letter VII. he says:—"As to me to cum into Scotland, as be I haif assurance of the Kingis Majestie, and of the estates baith of England and Scotland, it schymis to be an thing impossible, gif that I will not put myself in danger, for the preists, monks, and friars are not very welcome amang you; but gif there were ony helth, I could wreat to my acquaintance, wha might do sumthing for me in case of necessity; quhairfore, luiking for sum letter, I am altogider resolvit as yit to remain in thir parts, as it sall pleis my superiors, or else into Italy or Spaine; for, thanks be to God, we haif many fair houses and boothings in thir parts—God in sa far has provyded for his

Miss Christian Baird of Newbyth, the eagles returned to the rocks and remained until the estate passed into the hands of the Hon. William Gordon, when they again fled, and have never since been seen in the country. Those facts, marvellous as they may appear, are attested by a cloud of living witnesses.—(*The New Statistical Account of Scotland*, No. XXV., pp. 261, 262.)

The estate of Auchmedden has again passed into the hands of a proprietor of the name of Baird, having recently been purchased by the late Mr. Robert Baird, of Gartaherrie, and is now the property of his brother, James Baird, Esq., M.P. We are curious to learn if the eagles, true to the prophecy, have once more returned to their eyrie.—(See Appendix, No. V.)

Auchmedden—a fair and old court. The name in Irish signifies a wood in a den.—(*Pitcairn's Ancient Criminal Trials*, Vol. ii., pp. 399, 400.—*Description of the Parish of Aberdour*, by William Baird of Auchmedden, *Collections for the Shires of Aberdeen and Banff*, printed by Spalding Club, p. 446.)