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The King's Evil

by Sheena Blackhall

In 1760, a wimmin called Isobel Michie was stricken with the scrofula. Well it was kent then as the King's Evil. It wis a horrible skin complaint and she wis driven by dreams to come across the Dee to Dalmochie. It was the cobbleton of Dalmochie, a place where Pannanich is now. And she went to the bog, the boggy area around about Tulloch and she bathed in the mud and the mud cured her because it was full of medicinal properties and folk heard about this and a short while after that the Baron Barn, that's the fair haired Monaltrie, of Monaltrie in Ballater, one of the Farquharson lairds, he had bin caught after Culloden, he was fighting as a Jacobite, and he wis taken to England - he wis imprisoned doon in England - he'd obviously heard about spas doon there and being a bit of an entrepreneur, when he come back, he got his henchmen to tak a plough and he set oot the streets of Ballater very straight, using the plough, up and doon, up and doon, across and across, and across and across and then he set up the spa at Pannanich and it was very popular at Queen Victoria's time, folk would all be coming up to take the waters at Pannanich and it all come about because of the dreams and the King's Evil that this woman suffered frae.

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