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The Wife of Craigencallie and the Battle of Raploch Moss by Tony Bonning

After Bruce had killed the three men in the cottage, he headed towards Craigencallie alongside what is now Clatteringshaws Loch. Craigencallie, the word itself is Craig na Cailleach, which means the Hill of the Woman or the Craig of the Woman. The woman at this particular time lived there was sometimes called the Wife of Craigencallie and that's where Bruce went. She herself was sympathetic to the Bruce's cause and welcomed the King into her place. She gave him food, oatmeal, milk to drink and he said,

'By the way, do you have any sons that could come and help me in my battles against the English?'

She said 'I've got three boys. They're by three different husbands. One's called McKie. One is Murdoch and one is McLurg'.

'Are they any good?'

'Well, see for yourself' she said and called the boys in from the hill where they were looking after the sheep.

He said 'Are you any good with a weapon?'

They said 'Ah, with the bow, sir. That's what we can use.' McLurg, the youngest, picked up a bow and above him was flying a raven and he fired at it and took off a tail feather. Bruce was suitably impressed.

Murdoch said 'Ach, I can do better than that'. And he fired at the raven and killed it.

Now those who are sympathetic to birds, as I am myself, would say that this is not a nice thing to do but these were farming boys looking after the sheep and the raven is known to take away lambs so they had no sympathy for the bird.

McKey himself pointed out two ravens sitting on a rock and said 'You see those up there sir?'

'Aye. I do indeed.'

He put an arrow on his bow, fired it and killed the two with one arrow, Bruce saying 'I'm glad you're not pointing that thing at me'.

A bit later on, Aymer de Valens of the English was moving down with soldiers from Carrick, and Gallovidian soldiers were heading in from the west, heading towards Bruce who at that time happened to be near Craigenallie on the Raploch Moss and he had gathered himself about 300 soldiers.

Now between them, the English and the Galovidians had about 300 warriors so here was an equal battle that was going to be fought on the Raploch Moor or the Raploch Moss beside Clatteringshaws.

The battle started. Let's called it a skirmish, more so. But these were determined people fighting hard against each other, some for a cause, some for their life. As they battled on through the day, killing on and on and on, neither one side or the other had the advantage but our three worthy heros - McKie, Murdoch and McLurg - happened to gathered up some horses off the hill and begun to herd

wild goats. They herded them and other wild horses towards the battle. The English and the Gallovidians, seeing these coming over the hill, assumed it to be more warriors coming to help Bruce and his men. The English turned and fled. Bruce won the day.

If you go by Clatteringshaws, you'll find another Bruce's stone, other than the one in Glentool, which marks the victory of Bruce on Raploch Moss.

After the battle, he went to the wife at Craigencallie and he remarked what good boys they were and she says

'Aye. They are.' she says.

'You can have a reward if you'd like, a bit of land if you'd like'.

She said 'Aye, I wouldnae mind sir. Could I hae just hae that wee bit hassock atween the Palmuir Burn and the Penkiln'.

'Whatever you wish' said Bruce.

And indeed that was what she got and it was divided between McKie, Murdoch and McLurg and that land, of course, includes Kirroughtree.

This is the transcript of the audio file available at
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