



Victoria R

1866

VISIT TO BROXMOUTH.

Friday, August 23, 1878.

Had to dine at half-past five. At six o'clock, with much regret, left dear *Osborne*, with Beatrice and Leopold, and embarked on board the "Alberta" at *Trinity Pier*. We had a delightful passage, but the weather looked very threatening behind us. Passing close to the "Osborne," we saw Bertie, Alix, the boys, and the King of Denmark standing on the paddle-box. As we steamed across we saw the poor "Eurydice" lying close off what is called "*No Man's Land*" as we had seen her the day of the Review, in fearful contrast to the beautiful fleet! We at once entered the railway train; poor Sir J. Garvock (who has resigned) was too ill to appear. We stopped at *Banbury* for refreshments, and I lay down after eleven o'clock. At *Carlisle* (at five or six in the morning) Lord

Bridport, Harriet Phipps, and Mary Lascelles (who had joined at *Banbury*), Fräulein Bauer, and two of my maids left us to go to *Balmoral*, while Janie Ely, General Ponsonby, Sir W. Jenner, Mr. Yorke, Brown, Emilie, Annie, and three footmen went on with us to *Broxmouth*.

Saturday, August 23.

Had not a very good night, and was suffering from a rather stiff shoulder. It was a very wet morning. At *Dunbar*, which we reached at a quarter to nine (where the station was very prettily decorated), were the Duke and Duchess of Roxburghe, the Grant-Sutties, the Provost, and Lord Haddington, Lord-Lieutenant of the county. We got into one of my closed landaus—Beatrice, Leopold, the Duchess of Roxburghe, and I—the others following; and drove through a small portion of *Dunbar*, Lord Haddington riding to *Broxmouth*, about a mile and a quarter from *Dunbar*. People all along the road, arches and decorations on the few cottages, and very loyal greetings.

The park is fine, with noble trees and avenues. It is only a quarter of a mile from the sea, which we could see dimly as we drove from *Dunbar*. The house is an unpretending one, the exterior something like *Claremont*, only not so handsome, and without any steps leading up to the entrance. It has been added to at different times, and was much improved and furnished by the Duke's mother, who lived there. It is built on a slope; consequently on one side there is a story more than on the other. The house is entered by a small hall, beyond which is a narrow corridor with windows on one side and doors on the other. Turning to the left and going straight on, we came to my sitting-room (the Duchess's own sitting-room), with bow-windows down to the ground, and very comfortably arranged. Next to it, but not opening into it, was Beatrice's sitting-room, a very handsomely furnished room—in fact, the drawing-room. On the other side of the hall is the dining-room—very nice and well furnished, but not large. Just opposite Beatrice's room is the staircase, also not large, and below it you turn to where Leopold had a room. The staircase lands on a corridor like the lower one. My bedroom is just over the

sitting-room, with a nice little dressing-room to the right next to it (the Duchess's room). Next to the bedroom on the other side my two maids' rooms, then Janie Ely's, and beyond Beatrice's, and the maids' at the end ; just outside the corridor, Brown's. All most comfortable. We came down almost directly again, and had (we three) an excellent breakfast in the dining-room. Brown waited on us with a footman, Cannon, who had gone on before. Charlie Thomson, Lockwood, and Shorter (a new footman) came with us.

As it was raining I did not go out, but soon afterwards went upstairs. After dressing, came down and rested, and read and wrote. Saw Lady Susan Suttie and her two very pretty daughters, Harriet (Haddie), like Susan Dalrymple, only much darker. Rested on the sofa, and while there received the very startling and distressing account of dear Madame Van de Weyer's death, which affected me much. It came direct and was given me straight, there being no telegraph in the house. At home this would not have happened. Sent to tell Brown, who was very much shocked.

She was not, of course, the friend her beloved

and honoured husband was ; but we saw so much of her with him ever since 1840, and so much of them both when they were at *Abergeldie* in 1867, 1868, and 1870. They were always most kind to us and to our children, who grew up with theirs; and when my great sorrow came, who was kinder and more ready to help than dear M. Van de Weyer? Then, after his and his poor son Albert's death, she talked so openly to me, and I tried to comfort her. Dear pretty *New Lodge*,* kept just as he left it, was ever a pleasure for us to go to, as there was still a sort of reflected light from former times, when he charmed every one. To feel that for us it is gone for ever is dreadful, and upset me very much. Another link with the past gone!—with my beloved one, with dearest Uncle Leopold, and with *Belgium*! I feel ever more and more alone! Poor Louise Van de Weyer, who has been everything to her mother since Albert's death, and Nellie, how I feel for them! It was only on the 16th that their sister Alice was married to the youngest brother of poor Victoria's husband, Mr. Brand.

I had tea with Beatrice, and at a quarter-past

* It is close to Windsor.

five, the weather having cleared, drove out with her, the Duke of Roxburghe, and Leopold ; Lady Ely, the Duke, General Ponsonby, and Mr. Yorke in the second carriage, and Lord Haddington on horseback in his uniform. We drove to and through *Dunbar*, escorted by the *East Lothian* Yeomanry. The town was beautifully decorated and admirably kept. There were triumphal arches, and many very kind inscriptions. We turned into the park in front of the house, formerly occupied by the Lord Lauderdale of that day, facing the old *Castle of Dunbar* (of which very little remains) to which Queen Mary was carried as a prisoner by Bothwell after the murder of Darnley, and where lies the harbour—a very small one. Thence past the old watch-tower hill, called *Knockenhair*, where some gipsies—in fact, the “gipsy queen”—from *Norwood* had encamped ; and where we saw several women, very dark and rather handsome and well dressed, standing close to the wall.

On through the small villages of *Belhaven* and *West Barns* by the paper mills, a large and rather handsome building, turning from the high road to the west lodge of *Biel*, Lady Mary Nisbet Hamil-

ton's (dear Lady Augusta Stanley's elder sister), and past the house (a dull-looking stone one, but the park is fine), and by *Belton*, Mr. Baird Hay's, to *Broxburn*. Home by seven. There was a thick fog (or "haar," as they call it in *Scotland*) from the sea, which obscured all the distance, with occasionally some rain, but nothing to signify.

Only ourselves, the Duke and Duchess, and Janie Ely to dinner, in the same dining-room. One of the Duke's people attended, besides Brown and one of our footmen. Went to my room soon after. Wrote a letter, but went early to bed—by twelve o'clock.

Sunday, August 25.

A fine hot morning. After breakfast, walked with Beatrice down under the trees to the left, along a broad walk next to the *Broxburn*, on to the end of the walk which led to the garden wall, on which roses were growing, and which is quite on the sea, which was of a deep blue. The rocks are very bad for boats. There is a walk along the top of the rocks that overhang the sea—the *Links*. This road goes on to *Dunbar*, which, with its fine

church that stands so high as to be a landmark, is well seen from here. We walked back again, and I sat out near the house on the grass, under one of the small canopies which we had brought with us, and signed papers and wrote. At twelve there was service in the dining-room, performed by Mr. Buchanan of *Dunbar*, who had been for some little time tutor to Lord Charles Ker. Beatrice, Janie Ely, the Duke and Duchess, General Ponsonby, Mr. Yorke, and the Duke's upper servants were present. It was very well performed. Afterwards wrote and rested. Selected presents for the servants in the house, and things from *Dunbar* for my people.

At a quarter-past five, after tea, drove out with Beatrice, the Duchess, and Janie Ely, in the landau and four. The afternoon very bright and fine. We drove on towards *England*, in the opposite direction from yesterday's drive and parallel to the sea, though well inland. The sea of a deep blue, but a haze so dense that the distance could hardly be seen. We drove past *Baring Hill* (Sir William Miller's) to *Dunglass* (Sir Basil Hall's), a most beautiful place with splendid trees, firs like those near the *Belvidere* in *Windsor Park*,

sycamores, beech, oak, etc. The road passes above a deep ravine, at the bottom of which flows the *Brox*, and past the ruins of an old abbey or castle. The house itself (at the door of which we stopped for a few minutes to speak to Sir Basil and Lady Hall) is a large, rather dreary-looking stone house with columns. It must formerly have belonged to the Home family. The distance was so hazy that, as we drove there, we could with great difficulty faintly discern *St. Abb's Head*,* and the point on the *Wolf's Craig* mentioned in the "Bride of Lammermoor." Coming back we took a long round inland, down steepish hills, through the very picturesque villages of *Brankeston* and *Innerwick*.

Home at half-past seven. Dinner as yesterday with the Duke and Duchess of Roxburghe, with the addition of Lord Haddington and General Ponsonby. Lord Haddington's father (who was for a short time one of my lords in waiting, but never took a waiting) was brother to the late beautiful Marchioness of Breadalbane (wife of my dear old Lord Breadalbane), to the present Dowager Lady Aberdeen, to the late Lady

* Belonging to Mr. Home Drummond Moray of Blair Drummond and Abercairny.

Polwarth, and the present Dowager Lady Ashburnham.

After dinner the other gentlemen were presented, including Mr. Buchanan, who seems a very nice person. Then went to my room, and Janie Ely stayed with me a short while.

Monday, August 26.

Again this dear and blessed anniversary returns, and again without my beloved blessed One! But he is ever with me in spirit.

When I came down to breakfast, I gave Beatrice a mounted enamelled photograph of our dear Mausoleum, and a silver belt of Montenegrin workmanship. After breakfast I gave my faithful Brown an oxidised silver biscuit-box, and some onyx studs. He was greatly pleased with the former, and the tears came to his eyes, and he said "It is too much." God knows, it is not, for one so devoted and faithful. I gave my maids also trifles from *Dunbar*; and to Janie Ely, the gentlemen, and the servants a trifle each, in remembrance of the dear day and of the place.

Walked out at half-past ten with Beatrice and

the Duchess to the very fine kitchen-garden, and into the splendid hothouse where they have magnificent grapes. The peaches are also beautiful. From here we walked again along the burnside to the sea, the Duchess's pretty and very amiable collie (smaller than Noble, but with a very handsome head), Rex, going with us. We looked at the "Lord Warden" (Captain Freemantle) which arrived yesterday from *Spithead*, where we saw her in the Fleet. She had been guardship last year.

There is a pretty view from this walk to the sea over a small lake, with trees, beyond which *Dunbar* is seen in the distance. Then I sat out in the garden and wrote. After that, when Beatrice returned from a walk near the sea with the Duchess, I went to look at the gravestone of Sir William Douglas, which is quite concealed amongst the bushes near the lawn. The battle of *Dunbar* took place (September 3, 1650) close to *Broxmouth*, and Sir Walter Scott says Cromwell's camp was in the park; but this is doubtful, as it is described as on the north of the *Broxburn*. Leslie's camp was on *Doune Hill*, conspicuous for miles round. When the Scottish army left their strong position on the

hill, they came to the low ground near the park wall. Cromwell is said to have stood on the hillock where the tower in the grounds has been built, and the battle must have been fought close to the present park gate. I afterwards planted a deodara on the lawn, in the presence of the Duke and Duchess.

Indoors near one o'clock. Directly after our usual luncheon we saw Lady Susan Suttie with her two youngest children—Victoria, eleven years, and a boy of nine—and afterwards Lord and Lady Bowmont and their two fine children—the eldest, Margaret, three, and the youngest, Victoria, nine months. The boy did not come.

At half-past three started with Beatrice, Leopold, and the Duchess in the landau and four, the Duke, Lady Ely, General Ponsonby, and Mr. Yorke going in the second carriage, and Lord Haddington riding the whole way. We drove through the west part of *Dunbar*, which was very full, and where we were literally pelted with small nosegays, till the carriage was full of them, by a number of young ladies and girls; then on for some distance past the village of *Belhaven, Knochindale Hill*, where were stationed, in their best

attire, the queen of the gipsies, an oldish woman with a yellow handkerchief on her head, and a youngish, very dark, and truly gipsy-like woman in velvet and a red shawl, and another woman. The queen is a thorough gipsy, with a scarlet cloak and yellow handkerchief round her head. Men in red hunting-coats, all very dark, and all standing on a platform here, bowed and waved their handkerchiefs. It was the English queen of the gipsies from *Norwood*, and not the Scottish border one.

We next passed the paper mills, where there were many people, as indeed there were at every little village and in every direction. We turned to the right, leaving the *Traprain Law*, a prominent hill, to the left, crossed the *Tyne*, and entered the really beautiful park of *Tynningham*—Lord Haddington's. More splendid trees and avenues of beech and sycamore, and one very high holly hedge. The drive under the avenues is very fine, and at the end of them you see the sea (we could, however, see it but faintly because of the haze). We passed close to the house, a handsome one, half Elizabethan, with small Scotch towers, and a very pretty terrace garden, but did

not get out. Driving on through the park, which reminded me of *Windsor* and *Windsor Forest*, we again came upon the high road and passed by *Whitekirk*, a very fine old church, where numbers of people were assembled, and very soon after we saw through the haze the high hill of *North Berwick Law*, looking as though it rose up out of the sea, and another turn or two brought us to *Tantallon*, which is close to and overhangs the sea. We drove along the grass to the old ruins, which are very extensive. Sir Hew Dalrymple, to whom it belongs, received us, and took us over the old remains of the moat, including the old gateway, on which the royal standard had been hoisted. Lady Dalrymple (a Miss Arkwright) received us. No one else was there but Sir David Baird, who had joined us on the way on horseback. Sir Hew Dalrymple showed me about the ruins of this very ancient castle, the stronghold of the Douglases. It belonged once to the Earl of Angus, second husband to Queen Margaret (wife of James IV.), and was finally taken by the Covenanters.

It was unfortunately so hazy that we could not distinguish the *Bass Rock*, though usually it is

quite distinctly seen, being so near; and all the fine surrounding coast was quite invisible. There was a telescope, but we could see nothing through it; it was, besides, placed too low. Seated on sofas near the ledge of the rock, we had some tea, and the scene was extremely wild. After this we left, being a good deal hurried to get back (as it was already past six), and returned partly the same way, by *Binning Wood*, also belonging to Lord Haddington (which reminds one of *Windsor Forest*), but which we could not drive through, through *Tynningham* village to *Bellowford*, where the cross-road turned off. This brought us sooner back, and we reached *Broxmouth* by twenty-five minutes to eight, Lord Haddington riding the whole way.

We dined at half-past eight, only the Duke and Duchess of Roxburghe with ourselves. At ten or eleven o'clock we left *Broxmouth* with regret, as we had spent a most pleasant time there. We went in the same carriage (a landau), the Duchess of Roxburghe with us, and were driven by the same horses which had been out each day, including this day's long drive, the postilion Thomson riding admirably. *Dunbar*

was very prettily illuminated, and the paper mills also. We took leave of the kind Duke* and Duchess with real regret, having enjoyed our visit greatly. All had gone off so well.

* He died April 23, 1879.