

# Transactions

OF THE

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OLD MANSION HOUSE OF EDINGIGHT.

## THURSDAY, APRIL 22, 1937.

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A meeting of the Field Club was held this evening, Sheriff More in the chair. The chief business was a paper by Mr Thomas Innes of Learney on "The Old Mansion House of Edingight." Mr Innes's contribution was heard with high appreciation and a vote of thanks to him, proposed by the Chairman was warmly accorded.

The paper was in the following terms:—

### THE OLD MANSION HOUSE OF EDINGIGHT.

Whilst considerable attention is drawn to the example of Scottish baronial architecture, perhaps less interest has been taken in the remains of the "ha' hoose," or less pretensions, unfortified dwellings of the smaller lairds and "gudemen." Comparatively few of these buildings still survive, but of those whose external appearance at least has remained more or less unaltered, is the House of Edingight, in Strathisla, three miles north of Grange. In 1860, after having been for three centuries the dwelling of eleven lairds of Edingight, the old house was left for a new one upon another site, when Sir James Milne Innes, 11th Baronet of Balveny and Edingight, built himself the present classical mansion, half a mile down the brae. Since then, the old mansion house of Edingight has been the dwelling-house of the home farm, and to find material for his new mansion the Baronet demolished the two low symmetrical wings of the 1681 building, and another long block of the house stretching northward between the house and steading. There remains, however, the original mansion of Edingight and the main structure of the addition made in 1681, which it will be shown, replaced the earlier building, which must have been a house of some pretention before its destruction in the Civil Wars. The stanchioned windows that still survive, may indicate that part of its walls are incorporated in the surviving structure dated 1681.

The ha' hoose or earliest portion of the structure, which still survives upon the west, was presumably erected by the 1st Laird, John

Innes, younger son of Robert Innes 2nd of Innermarkie, who amongst other estates acquired the lands of Edingight from the Abbot of Kinloss in 1559, his charter bearing to be granted in return for large sums of money paid to the Abbot and Convent in their urgent necessity, and to relieve them from their creditors. It is a characteristic little building of a type which suited social conditions both in Scotland and in some parts of the Continent such as Normandy, where the small feudal *Sieurs* lived in similar buildings, not in the great baronial chateaux common to the greater lords of both nations. At Edingight, the windows look southwards across Strathisla, and although no 16th century trees now survive, their successors are still aligned upon the ha' hoose, and not upon the 17th century structure adjoining. They are small windows, and another row of three above them are tucked under the eaves of the roof, perhaps originally thatched but now covered with the old grey Banffshire slates. The upper chamber is simply a long sleeping loft, now—and perhaps always—approached by an outside wooden stair to a door in the west gable. Jumping off the steps of this stair formed one of the amusements of the numerous children of the 11th Baronet before the removal to the new house in 1860. The doorway of the ha' hoose is in the north elevation, and within there were, and still are, but two apartments, the hall upon the west, into which the door opens, and "ben," the room upon the east which would have served both as the withdrawing-room and bedroom of the laird and lady, whilst the rest of the household slept in the loft above, and the servants, as usual, upon the hall floor. Such was the domestic economy of smaller lairds in the 16th, and even in the 17th century, and in the hall of Edingight the old arrangements can still be traced, though alterations in 1914, unfortunately, changed some interesting features which had survived until then. In the north wall, there is, as well as the door, a broad window which has perhaps been enlarged. In the south wall are two of the small ground floor windows, and at the south-west corner, a

piece of blank wall upon which had hung the "parrelling" or tapestry behind the laird's seat, whilst the long trestle table at meal-times stretched down the room and upon its centre would be the silver salt-fatt which marked the division between gentle and simple. In the west gable is still the great chimney, now modified to hold a large kitchen range, but which prior to 1914 was a broad arched (one informant said double arched) fireplace, at one of which the laird and household warmed themselves, and at which culinary operations also took place. In 1611, Thomas Innes 2nd of Edingight, conveyed the estate to John, his son and heir, on the occasion of the young man's marriage with Janet, daughter and at that time heiress of Robert Innes, burgess and bailie of Elgin. The 3rd Laird died a few years afterwards, leaving as heir a child, John Innes, 4th of Edingight. The 2nd Laird survived until 1625, but by 1618 he was in financial difficulties and had to borrow money from his cousin Sir Robert Innes 1st Baronet of Balveny, and after his death in 1625 the financial situation of his grandson became still more perilous. In the 17th as in the 20th century, there were many ways in which a county family could become impoverished, but until the recent examination of some old letters belonging to the 4th Laird, it had been difficult to see why Thomas Innes 2nd of Edingight should have got into debt. I think, however, that just as their chief, Sir Robert Innes of that ilk, laid the foundation of his family's ruin, by building his—then—colossal mansion at Innes, so the 2nd Laird of Edingight some time early in the 17th century, probably between 1611 and 1618, erected for himself, east of the ha' hoose—to which he no doubt relegated his son and heir, a mansion of which, if we have no details of the erection, we have, alas! a sorrowful narration of the destruction and the plenishings. This eastern block, from its size and importance, appears in later deeds to have been described as the "principal dwelling-house of Edingight" (*Marriage Contract*, 6 & 7 August, 1691, *John Innes younger of Edingight with Helen Strachan of Auchnagatt*), so that the practice appears to

have been for the old laird to live in one portion of the manor place (or "cheyff chymmes" of the estate), and the young laird in the other.

John Innes 4th of Edingight, from childhood until death, had a miserable life, punctuated with "alarums" and harrassments which must have made it very different from the evidently peaceable lives of most of the other lairds of Edingight. Born soon after 1611, and bereft of his father by 1618, he was on 12 October of that year, infeft in the estate on a special precept of *clare constat* from the Commissioners of Lord Bruce of Kinloss, the feudal superior. On 26 July 1621, his maternal grandfather the burghess in Elgin, in his capacity as Tutor-testamentar of the minor, raised Letters of Horning upon the 2nd Laird of Edingight for implement of the Marriage Contract, so there was apparently dissension between the young man's guardian and his grandfather the old Laird, who, however, died in 1625. I am afraid the young laird's mother also died early, and his maternal grandfather, Bailie Robert Innes, married 2ndly 7 August 1624, Jean Innes, daughter of John Innes of Coxton, and the bailie himself not living long, she as his widow, married 12 June 1633, John Ogilvy of Milton of Keith, and as Jean had an only daughter by the bailie, she endeavoured to disinherit her stepdaughter, Jean Innes, wife of the 3rd Laird of Edingight. As the bailie's widow and executrix, she had secured possession of some of the Edingight papers relating to the marriage settlement (whereby the Bailie had got custody as the young laird's "tutor"), and on 19 July 1634, the young laird raised an action against her for their recovery, and although the court found that he was entitled to get them, it is not clear that he ever succeeded in obtaining re-delivery. In this same year he fell into further trouble, owing to the money which his grandfather had borrowed (as I believe for building the addition to his mansion), from Sir Robert Innes of Balveny, for the Royalist Baronet was himself already getting into financial difficulties, apprehensive of "caption" and hard pressed by his own creditors so was in urgent need of the money. The young laird of

Edingight, being a minor, could, however, take no effective steps for paying off the wadset, whereupon Sir Robert Innes of that ilk, with what proved to be a "keen eye for the main chance" politically, stepped in to save Edingight by paying off Balveny, "from friendly care of his standing," the 3000 merks and taking an assignation of the wadset. By this means the Laird of Innes, who for private reasons (*Familie of Innes*, p. 200), was presently obliged to retire from the Court party and become a Covenanter, secured a somewhat unwilling recruit for his Regiment,—since the youthful laird of Edingight was naturally thereafter "on the string" financially. The connection thus established with Sir Robert Innes of that ilk and his political supporters, seems the circumstance which, when political acrimony became fiercer, led to the raiding of Edingight in 1644 by two Royalists, the Master of Banff and Andrew Hamilton, who probably regarded the laird as a renegade Royalist. The consequences of this incursion are learnt from a letter by the Laird to his Counsel in Edinburgh fourteen years later, when vainly endeavouring to recover damages. Annexed to this letter, 10 February 1658, is the following interesting memorandum:—

"In anno 1644 in January thair (was) takine by Androw Hamiltoune from me 30 oxine at 24 libs a piece, 6 key at 20 libs a piece, 14 thrie yier old key at 12 libs a piece, ten 3 yier old steirs at 10 libs a piece, some yeir old steirs worth 30 lib., nyntie scor and eleivene scoir off sheip at 2 libs 13/4 a piece, 12 standing bedds a 4 libs a pice, ane short wanscott bed at 20 libs, ane closs wainscott bedd at 33 libs, 6/8. 14 pair of sheitts at 8 lib. a pair, 18 pair plaids at 5 libs, 6/8 a pair, 14 pair blankets at 6 libs. a pair, 14 coverings some at 5 libs. a piece and aucht of them at 10 lib a piece, ane brewing caldrone at 80 lbs, two litill Ketills at 20 libs a piece, tuo *aqua vite* potts at 60 libs a pice, ane wainscott tabill maid at Delft at 24 libs. tuo wainscott tabills at 12 libs a piece, 6 tafflis at 4 lib a piece. In a word though I should give up tabill clothes cusings, gilt chairs — stills, fedder beds, bolsters, codd

wenscott presses, portell doors, plaids, truncheers, boord cloths serviets, washing towells, and the destroying of my hous and monie things moir thair war non that upliftit anie of these things bot by his comand and some himself qr he done all and brak the stons and took the yren stenchels of the windows snikes of doors and brak 14 glesine windows which was most lairge."

The "14 glesine windows" show that the damage was done in the principal dwelling-house, and not in the little ha' house to the west, which for some reason, seems to have escaped serious damage. Perhaps it was, and is, too simple to suffer seriously. In any case it was over his fine dwelling that the laird was especially grieved. At anyrate the Ha' hoose seems to have escaped, as I think the wadsetters occupied it from 1653-1659. How we could wish that the "wainscot table made at Delft," the gilt chairs, and wainscot presses, had survived, though for John's sake the "two *aqua vite* pots" were probably no loss. The financial stringency is indicated, however, from the absence of any "silver wark," which had no doubt already been "liquidated." Such an inventory of the furnishings of a lesser Banffshire mansion in the middle of the 17th century, is historically of much interest. It does not appear that the laird ever recovered his loss against the Master of Banff, whose own Palace of Banff was later on sacked by Montrose in the course of the Civil War. but good-natured imprudence led presently to a still more serious blow.

By marriage contract dated 29 June 1637, (*Edingight Charter Chest*), John had married Christian, daughter of Sir John Bruce of Airth, and widow of Thomas Urquhart of Kinowdie. By her first marriage this lady had three children, a son and two daughters.

Notwithstanding the laird's own losses and embarrassment, he had on 2 March 1648, become cautioner for the dowry of his step-daughter Margaret Urquhart, who married (contract reg. 6 Aug. 1650) James Mercer in Glendonyng, son of John Mercer, Baillie of Perth. Before long Edingight was faced with a demand for implement of his guarantee, as

the Urquhart finances were not good for the dowry. Edingight's were no better, and this led to long and costly proceedings, culminating in the issue of a caption, 17 March 1657, in which the laird of Edingight and John Innes of Garbells his cautioner, having been put to the horn, were ordained to be apprehended and put "in sure waird, firmance, and captivity" and this document is endorsed with a personal order from the celebrated General Monk in these terms:—

"Edinburgh, 30 March 1657.—I desire the Governor of Inverness to be assisting with a section to such messenger as shall be employed by James Mercer, in seeing the peace kept while the within written letters from the judges are put in execution."

From another document it appears that Mercer did not proceed with his Warrant for imprisonment, though whether this was because he feared the laird of Edingight and his supporters might vanquish Monk's company of soldiers (when Mercer might anyhow have had to compensate for any casualties) or whether he had discovered that the principal interest in Edingight had already in 1653 been transferred by wadsett to a kinsman of the laird is not stated. At all events for 9000 merks (which was not paid to the Mercers, but was perhaps contributory to loans made by Edingight to certain Highland friends, such as Macgillivray of Dunmaglass, who would no doubt have been useful in an emergency) Edingight was wadsett to Mr John Innes, a son of the Minister of Fyvie, by contract dated 1 July 1653 (*Edingight Charter Chest*.)

1 July 1653. He had sasine 23 July (*Banff Sas.* VI. 218) and was evidently a clergyman, being thereafter designed "ane reverend man Mr John Innes of Edingight"—in connection with the marriage contract of his sister Margaret, widow of Patrick Leith of Kirkton of Rayne, on her second marriage with Mr John Logie of Boddam, 29 Nov. 1654. (*Aberdeen Sas.* XVII. 386.) Mr John Innes, wadsetter of Edingight, died without issue February 1658, when his three sisters Isobel (Gudewife of Ardlogie), Margaret (Gudewife of Boddam-Logie), and Janet (Gudewife of Asleid-Bannerman), were

retoured heirs portioners to him in his wadset over the lands of Edingight (*Banff Retours, l. ib. 25, f. 204*), and on 29 May 1659 they had sasine on Edingight in wadset. (*Banff Sas. IX. 118.*) He had left £3930 11s 7d of movable estate, as well as the wadset, and left £40 to the Kirk Session of Fyvie, discharged 10 June 1668, and a legacy of 500 mks. to his sister the Gudewife of Ardlogie, discharged 16 April 1662. The Laird of Edingight was also owing him £1000 on a sealed docket which the defunct alleged was left in his "pockmantel" in custody of Adam Ruddoch of Fortrie, which however Ruddoch denied, so what became of the old laird's I.O.U. remains unexplained!

Meantime the laird himself was negotiating a marriage for his son and heir, John, afterwards 5th of Edingight, with the wadsetter's niece, Elizabeth, daughter of John Gordon 2nd of Ardlogie, brother of Nathaniel Gordon, the celebrated Cavalier. The Gordons of Ardlogie were a cadet branch of the notorious Gordons of Gight, and Elizabeth was the daughter and heiress of the second laird of Ardlogie, who indeed had already died, after the more or less sensational career usual to a Gight-Gordon. The contract accordingly was made with consent of Isobel Innes, Elizabeth Gordon's mother, one of the heirs portioners in the wadset which the 4th Laird had granted over the lands of Edingight, and by means of his marriage, which the consequent sasine states to have been thereafter duly "solemnisat." (*Banff Sas. 20 Nov. 1663, 1, 201*), the young laird obtained a discharge of one-third of the 9500 mks. wadset.

It appears from a letter of 25 August 1658 that he "adwysit with my Lord Brodie" in "respect the sisters of the dissessit Mr Jon Innes will not condescend with me" because he was at the horn. Apparently, therefore, as a preliminary step to the alliance (or was this an expedient for saving the situation notwithstanding the laird's own desperate position?), the old laird, as the contract narrates, arranged to transfer his reversionary right on Edingight to his son, the bridegroom, who was still under age.

Accordingly, by a Disposition dated at Banff

4 July 1659, John Innes 4th of Edingight disponed the estate and right to obtain reversion of the wadset, to John Innes, his eldest lawful son, the deed bearing to be "for the fatherly love and affection which I have and bear to him, and for certain other reasons and causes moving me" (presumably his own impending bankruptcy), and the transactions thereafter proceeds as a deed of sale. (*Edingight Charter Chest, Principal bundle of paper writs, No. 29 (d).*) What seems actually to have preceded these family transactions was certain steps taken by the Mercers in Spring 1659.

After the destruction of Edingight House, the old laird had made his home at his wife's jointure-house of Kinowdie, in the county of Nairn.

Here, on 22 April 1659, came the Mercers' factor, Rorie Mackenzie, brother german of Colin Mackenzie of Kilcoy, Robert Rutherford, Chamberlain of Kilcoy, and John Innes, notary in Auldearne, with a lengthy Bond of Corroboaration narrating the whole proceedings and how the laird had "upon certain frivolous reasones raisit suspensionne" which led to the Mercers having to raise fresh letters, and the captiona already referred to, which, it transpires, through the influence of Rorie Mackenzie, was "suspendit personall executione" (during pleasure only); and on this ground required the Laird to grant a Bond of Corroboration, with John Innes, his eldest son, as cautioner, and that *they* should not henceforth "purchase ask nor procure any warrant or protection" directly or indirectly, under penalty of a further 1000 merks "in caice wee contraveine, bot any defalcatione, upon *our* words of honour, faith and credit" and if any such warrant or protection should nevertheless be obtained, they hereby "discharge and renunce the samync with all legall benefit we may claime be wertew therof in any maner of way." Old Laird John had no option but to sign, and did so; but the young laird's signature is conspicuous by its absence. (*Deeds, Mackenzie, III., 39, reg. 12 Aug. 1661.*) Presumably he was away courting the lass of Ardlogie! At any rate his discreet absence saved the family of Edingight, and forthwith

the conveyance of the estate and marriage of the young laird proceeded during the Summer.

The wrath of the Mercers was no doubt great, and what became of the old laird and his wife at this time, we don't know—(they took good care, I fancy, that nobody should)—for by Autumn, the Mercers had heard, and were on their track. On 14 October 1659, a Messenger-at-Arms proceeded at Mercer's instance to the laird of Edingight's house of Kinowdie "where he, his wife and bairns mak their natural dwellingplace" but found they were not in residence, but the messenger could find no poindable goods at the house, nor plate of any sort, even after diligent searching in all the rooms to which he could get access (!), so after leaving the usual schedule the old laird of Edingight was put to the horn at the Mercat Cross of Banff on 17 October, and on 20 December 1661, a Decree of Apprising was produced against his estate of Edingight, which however had been safely transferred eighteen months earlier under the Deed of Sale, to his son and heir. The Mercers had been baffled!

By 23 February 1663, the old couple were back at Kinowdie, where Christian Bruce, with consent of John Innes of Edingight her husband, granted a deed on the narrative that "they have no other way nor means to defray the said debts, and are noways able to pay to the laird's stepson, Alexander Urquhart of Kinowdie, the sum and redemption of Kinowdie." Christian's son Alexander had evidently come of age. The Mercers were presumably attacking the estate of Kinowdie, and had ceased to trouble with the impecunious old laird of Edingight, who was, with his wife, however, now evicted from her jointure house. Christian Bruce accordingly renounced her liferent, and obliged herself and her bairns to flit and remove from the manor place of Kinowdie at Whitsunday 1663. (*Moray Sasines*, 1, 42.) Elizabeth Gordon (she is called "Christian" on the backing of the contract, but "Elizabeth" in the deed itself), the young heiress of Ardlogie, had already died. She left her husband one son, John, afterwards 6th Laird of Edingight, and it appears that the Laird's aged and un-

fortunate parents may have returned to the old ha' hoose of Edingight, for on 16 October 1662, John 5th Laird had redeemed the second third of the wadset from Janet Innes and her husband William Bannerman of Asleid. Incidentally, the Gudeman of Asleid was himself in financial difficulties, and young Edingight settled their claims for £1,110 Scots. (*Edingight Paper Writs*, No. 9; *Banff Sas.* 1, 204.) Prior to 4 November 1663, the 5th Laird married as his second wife, Isobel Hamilton, younger daughter of John Hamilton of Corse of Kinnoir—another Royalist and Jacobite family—and they were living at Edingight when he granted her an annuity of £240, out of Mosstown, otherwise called New Crannoch, on which sasine followed, 20 November 1663. (*Banff Sas.*, I. 207.) In September 1665, the last third of the wadset was transferred by Margaret Innes, widow of Patrick Leith of Kirkton of Rayne, and spouse of Mr John Logie of Boddam, to her son by the first marriage, George Leith, and it appears that the widowed Margaret was living in a house at Westerton of Edingight. (*Ib.*, IV., 380.) George Leith's third of the wadset was finally cleared off 29 July 1669, as appears from letters of horning in 1773, ordaining him to warrant the discharge. (*Edingight Charter Chest. Miscellaneous writs*, No. 14.) The old laird continued to live with his son who was respectfully designated "younger of Edingight" though he was the actual laird. Both father and son matriculated arms in 1672 (*Lyon Register*, Vol. I.), and what was perhaps the last debt the old Laird contracted, is preserved in the following old letter. (*Edingight Charter Chest. Misc. writs*, No. 30 (d).) "Letter from the Laird of Edingight elder, to George M'Crie in New-Milne":—

"Loving friend,

These are desiring you to answer my father 5 ells stuff and 8 ells of 2 broad lining, and what price is the ell? and he doth condescend upon by these. I oblige myself to satisfy you upon my love of yourself and bedfellow. I rest your loving friend,

J. I.

Edingight, 7 March 1674."

It is pleasant to note the kindly regard between the laird and the local tailor.

John Innes 4th of Edingight died the following month as appears from the extract testament in the Edingight charter chest.

His possessions consisted of a white pony, a few small coffers, and some articles of apparel, whereof the following are of some interest: A sword and belt worth 10 merks; an whinger with knives worth 40s; a bag, and buckles, and certain small domicells, and back and bed-clothes, valued in cumulo at 20 merks. The "whinger with knives" is obviously a dirk, the sword-belt would be the usual shoulder belt, and we can hardly doubt that the "bag" was something in the nature of a sporran. No doubt his clothes consisted of a plaid and trews, whereof the latter were likely enough of grey, whilst his plaid, like that of his kinsmen in Upper Banffshire, was, no doubt, of tartan—like one which survived at Cowie in the early 19th century. His coat, as we see, was of "stuff", blue, no doubt, and lining.

We can thus to some extent picture the old laird of Edingight ambling towards Keith on his white "powney" arrayed with pouch, dirk, shoulder-belt, sword, and "buckled sheen." A couthie figure, no doubt, although that pouch was, I fear, empty.

John Innes 5th of Edingight, the re-builder of the house, had a long and successful career. He paid off the whole burdens on the estate and evidently made some money in various directions, and seems, from an account 10 July 1682, to have acted as Commissariat Accountant for the Earl of Airlie's Regiment of Cavalry, quartered in Banffshire. Perhaps it was a fairly profitable appointment! He set about re-building the ruins of the principal block of the house at Edingight, being that which forms the larger portion of the building to-day. It consisted of a symmetrical building of two storeys, and originally a garret. From the front two low wings projected forward, enclosing a small courtyard, though whether this was, as usual, closed by a wall and arch and "yett" of a forecourt, I do not know. Very likely it was. The little wings were removed about 1860, when Sir James M. Innes, 11th

Baronet, was building the new house of Edingight half-a-mile southward. The south wall of the principal block, weakened by removal of the wings, was re-built about 1913-14, when the fenestration and internal fittings of the house were, unfortunately, completely altered. The east upper chamber was the new hall, and above its ample fireplace was a long lintel of carved stone elaborately decorated with the armorial bearings of John Innes 5th of Edingight and his second wife, Isobel Hamilton of Corse of Kinnoir, and their initials, two hearts, a couple of roses, and the date 1681. The shield is impaled dexter, the three stars of Innes within the bordure chequy, and sinister the cinquefoils of Hamilton with a Highland targe at the fess point, which are also, perhaps by mistake, placed within the bordure.

The north-west and south-west spur-stones are decorated with classical heads. The north-east skewputt is lacking, because it appears a long north wing stretched towards the farm, and may have enclosed a back close, through which a little burn trickles. The south-west skewputt is decorated with a strange device showing the Innes stars upon what appears to be a helm, but which may be an inverted shield, parted per fess, though, if so, I am at a loss to distinguish the arms with which it has been intended to be joined. The old laird propelled the estate to the eldest son by his first wife, Elizabeth Gordon of Ardlogie, on the young laird's marriage contract 6 and 7 August 1691, with Helen (daughter of Michael Strachan of Auchnagatt (*Edingight Charter Chest*, No. 16), and the old laird conveyed, subject to his liferent, "the mains and manor place and principal dwelling-house of Edingight," though one presumes that the young couple were actually transferred to the older but less pretentious ha' hoose. John 6th laird of Edingight followed the canny example of his father, followed the path of righteousness and became Sheriff Clerk of Banff. Although invested in the estate, he predeceased his father, in June 1719 (*Mortcloth, Grange Session Records*, W. Cramond), and was succeeded by his eldest son, John Innes 7th of Edingight, married at

Craigston, 30 April 1720 (having, tradition says, fallen in love at a Christmas party—at the Yuletide preceding)—Jean, eldest daughter of Patrick Duff of Hatton and Craigston, and their contract obliges them “to entertain one another as becomes married persons of their rank and quality,” and it appears from the contract that John Innes of Edingight still retained the principal dwelling-house, and there is a provision that if the bridegroom shall commit treason or any other crime involving forfeiture (*i.e.*, become a Jacobite), his wife *ipse facto*, becomes vested in the provision. Along with the contract (*Edingight Charter Chest, principal bundle of paper writs, No. 22*), is put up a certificate from the Session Clerk of Grange, 12 December 1789, of the baptisms of the 3 sons of this couple,

1. John (afterwards 8th of Edingight), baptised 22 February 1721. 2. Alexander (afterwards of Cowie and Breda), baptised 12th July 1727. 3. James (ancestor of the Ramsays of Straloch), baptised 1st November 1729.

So the old laird lived to see himself a great-grandfather and died in February 1726, aged about 88, the mortcloth of Grange being requisitioned for his funeral 6 February 1726. (*W. Cramond, Grange Session Records*).

Certain proceedings between the Heritors of Grange and the Minister in 1814 give us a glimpse of the accommodation in the old house as it stood at the commencement of the nineteenth century. The ninth laird (afterwards Sir John, 9th Baronet), had gone to reside in Aberdeen for a couple of years, and accordingly offered the occupancy of the mansion to the Minister pending a settlement regarding the future of the manse.

Court of Session, 1st Division, 19 Dec. 1814.—Thomas Wharton and others, defenders for the Trustees of the Earl of Fife and John Innes of Edingight, heritors of the Parish of Grange; agt. the Rev. Francis Forbes, Minister of Grange.

The points at issue were (1) Whether the Manse and offices admitted of being repaired; (2) Whether the new manse proposed was on a scale greatly too large and expensive.

“On 12 Nov. 1812, the Minister intimated he

intended leaving on 26th inst. and that in consequence of such removal he would be obliged, to his great hurt and prejudice, to dispose of his household furniture, farm stock, &c., and to throw himself and his family on a friend for accommodation, there not being a house in anywise suitable for him within the parish, to let."

"It fortunately happened that the Defender Mr Innes of Edingight, and his family, had some time before, gone to reside in the town of Aberdeen, and had no intention of occupying the Mansion house on his estate in the pursuer's parish, for some length of time. It immediately occurred to Mr Innes that the Pursuer could nowhere be more comfortably accommodated. Mr Innes accordingly not only offered the possession of his house and offices to the Pursuer, rent-free for 2 years, but also offered to supply him with grass for his cattle. The Defenders beg leave to transcribe the words of the offer:—"

"That the said John Innes, taking under his serious consideration these things" (that is, the matters contained in the Pursuer's notarial intimation), "with a view solely to the health and accommodation of yourself and family, hereby makes offer to you of his mansion-house of Edingight, lying within said parish, and perfectly in repair, and quite suitable for a clergyman, or any gentleman in the county, consisting of two public rooms, five bedrooms, an attic storey, kitchen, dairy, and cellars, with sufficient barns, byres and stables for accommodation of your two horses and cows, with an excellent garden, well-filled with fruit-trees, and walled in; moreover, he will accommodate you with grass in summer for your horses, &c. And as it may be of service to your health, and a recreation to you, he will also let to you, at a reasonable rent, any number of acres of land, under 50, as can be agreed on: That solely with a view to serve you, the said John Innes will give you the mansion-house of Edingight, and office-house, as above, for your accommodation, for one or two years, with fixtures and grates, *rent free*, and entry to possession on 26th November current," &c.

"The Pursuer declined the foresaid offer, and has now instituted the present Action."

The two public rooms were presumably large rooms on the first floor, no doubt approached by a straight flight of stairs from a central doorway. The five bedrooms must have been on the ground floor of the 1681 building—two of them presumably in the wings. The kitchen and dairy were no doubt as now, the old Hall and "room" of the west building—the original house. Where the "cellars", and fifth bedroom were, we cannot now tell. They may have been in the back wing now removed.

Although Sir John retained a town house—in Silver Street, Aberdeen—he did not long remain absent from Edingight whence many of his letters to his son, the 10th Bt., are dated. The old mansion house remained the home of his descendants until 1860 when Sir James Milne Innes, 11th Baronet, built the present classical mansion in a more sheltered spot in the valley below.