

# Transactions

OF THE

## BANFFSHIRE FIELD CLUB.



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[www.banffshirefieldclub.org.uk](http://www.banffshirefieldclub.org.uk)

On Saturday there was enjoyed an excursion to the ruins of Urquhart Castle, by the shores of Loch Ness. It is one of the oldest and was one of the strongest castles in the Highlands, and has had an exceedingly stormy history. It played a great part in the War of Independence, the story of its siege by the English forces in 1303 being one of the most stirring episodes in the annals of the time. When Wallace raised the standard of revolt, Andrew de Moray, son of Sir Andrew Moray, the proprietor of castles and lands at Petty and Avoch, hurried to raise the North for the Scottish patriot. The Castles of Urquhart and Inverness were both garrisoned by English troops. Sir Reginald le Chen, the Constable of Inverness Castle, alarmed at the rapidity with which the spirit of rebellion spread, summoned Fitzwarine, the Constable of Urquhart Castle, to a conference at Inverness. Moray and his chief lieutenant, Alexander Pilche, a courageous burgher of Inverness, were informed of the conference, and, lying in wait for Fitzwarine, surprised him on his return journey, slew a number of his men, and captured two of his principal followers. Moray proceeded to besiege Urquhart Castle, once endeavouring to carry it by a night attack, and, though failing then, inflicted considerable losses on the garrison. Soon, however, by the pressure of Wallace's successes in the South, an English army sent against Moray had to leave the district; Urquhart was speedily captured, and other northern castles falling into the hands of the Scots, no English garrison was left in the province of Moray.

The visit to this historic seat, close by the placid waters of Loch Ness, was much enjoyed and the outing was a great success. In course of the proceedings the party were entertained at luncheon at the castle by the members of the Inverness Field Club.