

bell, and it was a sore task to keep in mind the exact relationship of each to his neighbor. It would have been impossible, but that each man had a surname. The laird went by the name of Black, although he was a grand-nephew of the Earl himself. In all the country he was called Black Jamie, and I think he must have earned the name. Anyhow, his son and grandson deserved it long after the old laird was deid.

Until Don John, the Spaniard, came to Kilellan, my father was the one stranger who ever saved his neck in Black Jamie's country. And that was because he was related to the laird, having married Margaret Campbell, his sister. For the same reason, my father, Angus Maclean, was master of the laird's lands, for the laird was owerfond of fight in his young days, and too decrepit in his old to mind about such matters.

We lived in the big farmhouse about a mile to the west of the castle, and close by the Loch Striven shore, from which our house was sheltered only by a burn and a strip of fir. From the clachan at the point, the shore swept past our house to the burn by the woods in the shape of a crescent moon. This was called Kilellan Bay.

Up to the year 1588, when I was eight years old, I remember little of my life; but that year is vividly noted as the beginning of the strange things that I am going to set down.

It was our custom in winter to lock up the cows