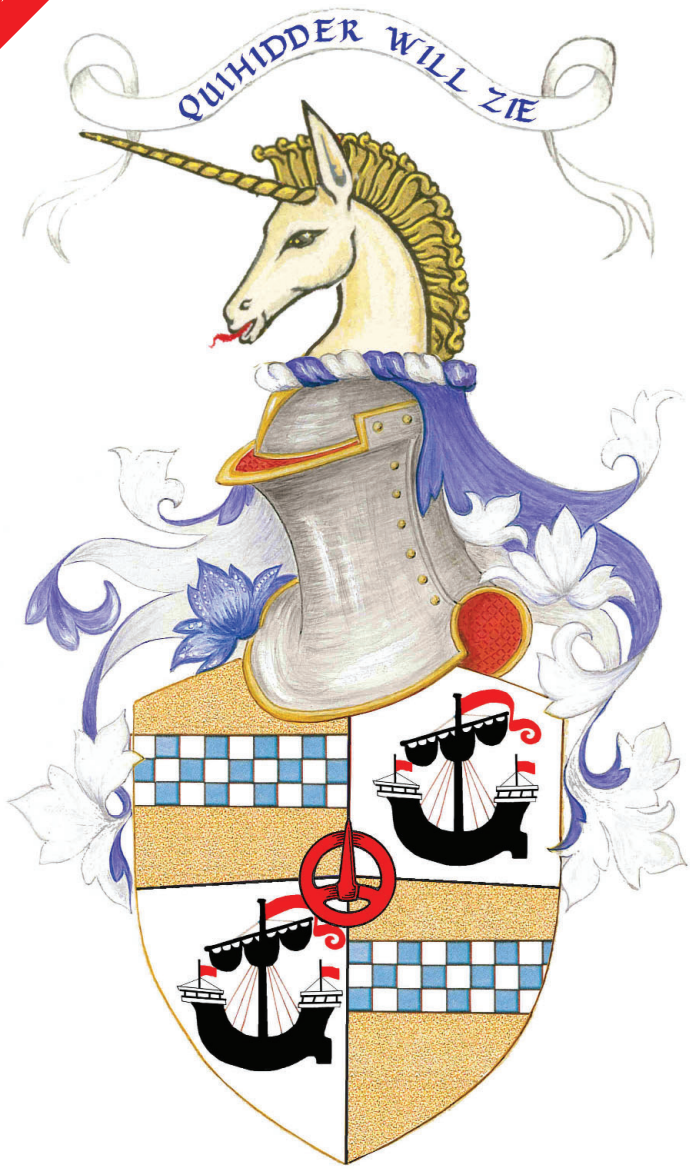

Alan Breck's Prestonpans Volunteer Regiment

Raised September 20th 2007

Colonel-in-Chief – Martin Margulies

Allan Breck: The Man with the Belt of Gold

An Essay by Ian Nimmo

Introduction

The statue from Corstophine of Alan Breck & David Balfour

Alexander Stoddart's magnificent, larger-than-life size bronze of Alan Breck with David Balfour that now graces the Corstorphine Hill in Edinburgh where they parted at the conclusion of Robert Louis Stevenson's Kidnapped.

Our Regiment was raised on the Command of HRH Prince Charles Edward, Prince Regent, at Holyroodhouse Palace on September 20th 2007 being the commencement of the first re-enactments by the Battle of Prestonpans 1745 Heritage Trust of events surrounding the Prince's Victory on September 21st in 1745.

The Regiment's role for the Trust is to provide supernumerary support to the visiting Regiments which shall act each year as re-enactment 'hosts'. In so acting we have the support as our band the Pipes and Drums of the Royal British Legion in Prestonpans.

It was clear from the outset that being supernumeraries could require participation as Highlanders, on behalf of the Elector of Hanover, the Hanoverian King George II or as French officers and men and since Allan Breck had played all these roles during his military career it seemed particularly appropriate to raise the Regiment under his name. Yet since the role to be played was at best factitious it seemed most appropriate to adopt the spelling of Alan given by Robert Louis Stevenson in *Kidnapped* and *Catriona* rather than the real life Allan Breck's two 'l's.

It was considered a matter of honour that all who join the Muster Roll of the Regiment for the annual re-enactments each September, and such other events as may take place during the year, should be comprehensively briefed on both the history of Allan Breck and Stevenson's characterisation of Alan Breck. And there was never any doubt that the right choice to create that for the Regiment was Ian Nimmo. In 2005 he wrote and Berlinn published *Walking with Murder*, telling how he had personally retraced the footsteps of David Balfour and Alan Breck throughout the saga which is *Kidnapped*; then in 2006 he wrote for the Prestoungrange Arts Festival *The Greening of David Balfour* which was performed by the Meanwhile Players both at the former home of the Lord Advocate in 1751/52, William Grant, Baron of Prestoungrange, and at the Edinburgh Festival Fringe in 2007.

The Regiment and the Trust are delighted to publish Ian Nimmo's Essay, and here confirm that Ian retains his copyright for any other uses which will require his permission.

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Allan Breck

The Man with the Belt of Gold

by Ian Nimmo

Who was the real Allan Breck Stewart?

Most people meet Alan Breck for the first time as the swashbuckling hero with the dancing eyes in Robert Louis Stevenson's novel *Kidnapped* or sword-in-hand on radio or in one of the many films based on the book. They assume Alan Breck was a fictional character, a dashing figment of Stevenson's hyper-active imagination – yet not only was there a real life Allan Breck [with two 'l's to his name]. He was centre stage during a vivid period of Scotland's history, a Jacobite heathercat who enraged the Hanoverian government and topped their 'most wanted' list. A hangman's rope awaited him should ever he fall into the hands of the redcoat soldiers.

Sometimes it is forgotten all the main characters in *Kidnapped* – apart from the young David Balfour himself – were real people who played out a dramatic event in the aftermath of Bonnie Prince Charlie's 1745 Highland uprising, which came to a red end on the battlefield at Culloden. Robert Louis Stevenson focused on the historical events in the aftermath of the Prince's defeat and turned Allan Breck Stewart into one of the most colourful characters in Scottish literature.

The real Allan Breck – Stevenson's 'Man with the Belt of Gold' – became a kind of Jacobite James Bond of his day, entrusted to flit in and out of Scotland from France to collect clandestine rents from the oppressed and poverty-stricken Stewarts of Appin in Argyll. After the Battle of Culloden, when Prince Charles Edward Stuart's high adventure to return a Stuart to the British throne ended ingloriously, indiscriminate killings, burnings and looting took place right across the Highlands. The Duke of Cumberland, nick-named 'The Butcher', ruthlessly ensured the Stuart threat was over for ever. Clan chiefs who were caught were unceremoniously hanged, and the lands of those who escaped to France were forfeited.

In Appin, the Stewart clan captain, Ardshiel, had been hunted relentlessly before he, too, reached safety in France. As he was pursued he hid in caves around the flanks of the twin-peaked Beinn a' Beithir, narrowly evading capture on too many occasions, with redcoat soldiers hot on his heels. He had by his side throughout one particular follower, a brave and loyal man, a soldier skilled in mountaincraft and the sword – Allan Breck.

It was this loyalty to his chief that won Allan Breck justified respect among his fellow clansmen and his courage and dexterity with the sword brought admiration from his friends but notoriety from his enemies. It was hardly surprising that after Culloden Allan Breck became the Stewart courier between France and Appin, collecting the rents to keep the clan chief in some kind of decent exile in Paris. Taking care of the chief's interests through thick and thin was part of clan tradition.

It is not known how many times Allan Breck spirited himself in and out of Scotland, but he had freedom of movement among the Stewarts in Appin, safe in the knowledge his whereabouts would never be revealed. During these forays in and out of Europe, Allan Breck also carried messages between exiled clansmen and their loved ones in Appin, and he was even able to persuade a few young men to become recruits in the French army.

Allan Breck's Childhood and Military Career

Allan Breck was born around 1726 in Rannoch in north Perthshire, a wild, hostile area of moor, mountains and lochs, inhabited by people almost as wild. At the head of Loch Rannoch, the redcoat soldiers had built a thatched-roofed barracks at Bridge of Gaur, as part of the process of taming the Highlands and breaking the clans once and for all. An infantry and cavalry unit were part of this outpost to block future Jacobite excursions southwards, should there be any, and to hunt down elements of the Prince's shattered army after Culloden.

Allan Breck's father, Duncan Stewart, a Rannoch man, had his own troubles with the law and handed the young Allan to James Stewart of Glenduror, who took him in as a foster son. James was Ardshiel's right-hand man after Culloden and managed the Stewart estate on behalf of Lady Isobel Stewart and her young family, with her husband in exile. In Gaelic James was known as Seumas a' Ghlinne, James of the Glen.

These were harsh, uneasy times in the Highland areas. Poverty and hate for the Hanoverian soldiers glared from every doorway. Weapons were buried in thatches and hillsides ready for the call that never came. The Hanoverian government's rule was vengeful and designed to ensure Jacobite arms were never lifted in war again.

James Stewart treated Allan Breck as one of the family. But in the hopeless, poverty-stricken circumstances of the vanquished, with Appin on its knees, Allan Breck took the soldiering road and joined the Hanoverian army. His natural loyalties, of course, remained with the Stewarts and Jacobites, but like so many other Scots before him –

and as many since – the British Army offered employment, food and clothes. For many of the thousands of Scots who took the king's shilling it was raw economics and not warlike tendencies that brought them into the arms of the military.

It should be remembered, too, for the historical record, that at Culloden it was the British Army that defeated Prince Charles Edward Stewart. This was not Scotland versus England, it was also Scot against Scot, with a number of Scottish regiments fighting on the government side.

Allan Breck first came to attention when General Sir John Cope's ill-prepared Hanoverian army were routed at Prestonspans in September, 1745, a battle that lasted scarcely 15 minutes. As Bonnie Princes Charlie's Highland army drove southwards, Allan Breck had been dismayed to find himself, as he saw it, on the wrong side. Allan was captured at Prestonpans, but quickly joined the Prince's cause. Back where he belonged with his own people he felt his conscience was clear. From the British army's standpoint, however, this was an act of desertion in face of the enemy – and punishable by death.

Among Jacobites, Allan Breck's clandestine forays to his homeland, in the shadow of the gallows, gave him a perspective of courage, guile, loyalty and devil-may-care audacity. Allan Breck's defiance of danger was the stuff of legend. He would make his way from France by boat, covertly put ashore in Scotland, possibly in the Edinburgh area, East Lothian, or maybe the west coast, then strike across country to Appin, threading his way through Hanoverian forces, all the way to the shores of Loch Linnhe. Had he fallen into the hands of the redcoats at any time Allan Breck would have been given short shrift.

The Appin Murder of Colin Campbell of Glenure, Stevenson's 'Red Fox'

It was during one of these visits the event occurred that made Allan Breck almost a household name. It was the infamous murder of government agent Colin Campbell of Glenure – Stevenson's 'Red Fox' – in the little wood of Lettermore near Ballachulish, Argyll, in 1752. The assassination has been written into Scottish history as the infamous Appin Murder.

Overnight Allan Breck became the most wanted man in Britain, the target of an intense nation-wide hunt. The gunning down of the 'Red Fox' led to the trial and subsequent hanging of Allan Breck's innocent foster father, James Stewart of the Glen. James's hanging has been described as arguably a judicial murder and one of the blackest marks on Scottish legal history.

The countdown to the Appin Murder began six years previously after Culloden. But as the Highlands began to settle down under a vindictive rule, one of the government's key objectives remained constant – to smash the threat of the Jacobite clans forever. The Campbells were an exception, of course, because throughout the Forty Five they had remained loyal to the government – and now they began to reap the rewards.

In Appin, the Campbells took over Stewart farms and properties. Colin Campbell of Glenure, laird of a small estate up nearby Glen Creran, was appointed government agent to administer the forfeited lands, set and collect official rents from remaining Stewart tenants. Glenure was a decent and able man, but his task was thankless. The Campbells were the sworn enemies of the Stewarts, a feud that had spanned centuries, and the Stewarts were witnessing their beloved Appin being usurped, as they saw it, by their hated Campbell foes, with Campbells or friends of Campbells displacing Stewarts.

It was almost more than the Stewarts could bear. Appin was seething. There was a sense of premonition that something awful might happen – and much of the Stewarts' outrage focused on the 'Red Fox', government representative Colin Campbell. One voice raised against the Appin land grab, of course, inevitably was Allan Breck's. In various Appin drinking dens he had been heard to make threats against Glenure.

In this tinderbox situation, with feelings running so high, James of the Glen spoke for the Stewarts. He was an able man, respected by all sides, a good businessman and deeply religious. He and Colin Campbell had even once been friends.

Glenure had tried to be fair in his dealings with them, but as a clansman himself with a Jacobite mother, his political masters doubted his loyalty and gave him no leeway in his dealings with the Stewarts. In the end, Glenure was forced to turn to evictions where rents were being withheld.

The sheer unfairness of the evictions infuriated James. Yet to the end he sought justice only from the law and even travelled all the way to Edinburgh on horseback to try to stay the process by legal argument. Always James talked down violence, not only because he was against it but because he could see the hopelessness of the Stewarts' position. James knew only too well that Hanoverian retribution would return to Appin accompanied by extreme agony. But when the law failed him, and a small number of Stewart evictions were set to take place on May 15, 1752, any previous friendship between James and Colin Campbell ended abruptly.

On May 14, 1752, Colin Campbell and three companions crossed the Ballachulish ferry into Appin after travelling from Fort William. With Glenure were his lawyer nephew Mungo Campbell, his young servant John Mackenzie, and sheriff officer Donald Kennedy up from Inveraray with the necessary eviction papers. Kennedy was on foot, striding out in front while the others followed slowly on horseback, picking their way carefully over the rough terrain.

As they entered the wood of Lettermore a shot suddenly rang from the hillside. With the very sound of it Colin Campbell slumped in the saddle. Then shouted: "Oh, I am dead," several times over. "Take care of yourselves", he called, "He's going to shoot you." Or words to that effect. A few hours later Colin Campbell was dead.

It was the perfect ambush point. Clearly the killing was carried out as a professional, no-nonsense assassination with a shot in the back. The killer or killers knew Campbell's precise route and had plenty of time to choose an advantageous position. Seconds after the shooting Mungo Campbell saw a figure on the hillside wearing a

short, dark coat and carrying a gun, but his first thought was that this figure could not have been the murderer because he was at too great a range.

The Appin Murder was all over in under a minute. But that single shot in the wood of Lettermore, on the flank of a remote Argyll hillside, brought an extraordinary government reaction. The king was advised. The government, of course, was still fearful about any report of Jacobite activity. Only six years previously Bonnie Prince Charlie and his wild Highland army had come clanging out of the mountains and almost toppled the throne. Not surprisingly the government reaction was immediate, vicious, and carried out at speed. It was so apprehensive about further Jacobite rebellion that it misread the killing of Glenure as possibly the first shot in a new uprising. In fact, it was no more than a local feud between two proud clans.

But the command went out from the highest levels in the realm: hunt down the perpetrators and string them up. Fast. Arrest Allan Breck – a thorn in the government's side for too long – and execute him. Use whatever force and means necessary. Once and for all, was the order, smash the clans.

On the day of the Appin Murder, Allan Breck had been sighted several times fishing the burn beside Ballachulish House near the wooden ferry pier. Indeed, at one point he walked down to speak to the ferryman to ask if Glenure had crossed. What with this blatant inquiry, and exposure of his identity and location so close to the murder scene, and the threats he had been heard to utter against Glenure, Allan Breck was immediately made prime suspect.

James Stewart of Appin Tried and Hanged

Glenure's brother, John Campbell, of the Barcaldine estate, threw himself into the murder hunt fuelled by vengeance and hate for the Stewarts. The day after the murder James Stewart was arrested and cast into jail. He was given no access to legal help or even to his family. He was the only senior Stewart handy. There was not a shred of evidence against him.

Barcaldine represented the government as well as his clan and acted as a private prosecutor throughout. But at a time when Scotland took pride in the fairness of its justice system, the processes of law were given scant regard. Allan Breck was already regarded as an outlaw but now the hunt became a frenzy of government loathing and Campbell revenge.

The imperative for Barcaldine was the hanging of a Stewart. Barcaldine raged and justice flew out of the window. Suppression, perjury and threat played key parts in the preparation of the case against James Stewart. William Grant, Baron of Prestoungrange, was Lord Advocate and the time and personally led the prosecution, whose lego-political dilemma becomes the basis for much of Stevenson's *Catriona* as he argues it through with David Balfour. Of the 15-man jury which sat in judgement on him 11 of the jurors were named Campbell, some even selected by Barcaldine himself. The final insult to justice was that the presiding judge was no less than the Duke of Argyll himself, the Clan Chief of the Campbells. There was no surprise, therefore, when James of the Glen was found guilty.

James was strung high on a 30-foot scaffold erected at Cnap a Chaolais at the southern end of today's Ballachulish Bridge. The location was chosen because it was near the ferry at the most prominent and busy part of the area. The hanging was designed to shock, awe and generate fear. A section of redcoat soldiers guarded James's rotting body night and day for almost two years until only wired bones were left. There was no misreading the message conveyed by that twirling obscenity: this is what happens to those who stand against the government. The days of the clans are over.

But they did not catch Allan Breck. Allan took to the heather – and simply vanished. Around ten months later he re-appeared in Paris. The last sighting in Scotland was in a dram house in Rannoch before he was seen marching southwards. He would have crossed the vast expanse of Rannoch Moor, the biggest and wildest badland in Britain, cocking a snoot at the redcoat cavalry under orders to intercept him. He is known to have stayed for a few days in a relative's house in Rannoch only a short distance from their barracks.

The hunt for Allan Breck was country wide. Even east coast shipping was intercepted. Two mistaken identity 'Allan Brecks' were arrested, one in Annan and another in Leith, but on further investigation the authorities reluctantly had to release them. The real Allan Breck once more had slipped the net and was no doubt enjoying the government's anger and frustration.

Did Allan Breck really shoot the 'Red Fox'?

The answer is unknown, but probably not. Almost certainly he would have known who did or was even part of a Stewart assassination plot. To his dying day Allan Breck maintained his innocence. On several occasions, when in the safety of Paris he could have boasted of his prowess with a gun as well as his sword, he swore his was not the hand that fired the shot.

His words have the ring of truth. For instance, had Allan Breck been the hit man his military training and experience would have ensured he planned the murder in advance. He would have watched Glenure crumple in the saddle as the shot rang out, then as a true professional he would have lifted his pre-packed get-away knapsack and left the area immediately to make his escape over moors and mountains. He would not have advertised his presence near the murder scene. His trade was to remain unseen.

As it was, Allan Breck had to hide near Caolasnacoan above Loch Leven for several days waiting for money, provisions and his French clothes to be brought to him. Such unpreparedness was out of character. He knew Appin would be flooded with soldiers and that the Campbell's hunt would be intense and thorough and every hour that passed would increase the chances of his capture.

If it was not Allan Breck, then who did kill Glenure?

The Appin Murder is the last great Scottish mystery. It has remained a contentious, hotly-disputed issue for two-and-a-half centuries. All the old clan rivalries are still raw. There is no shortage of suspects – but there is no firm evidence against anyone. The suspects range from Stewarts to Camerons, even Rob Roy MacGregor's murderous son Robin, or a disaffected Campbell.

One possible explanation is handed down in an Appin tale recorded a century after Glenure's death. It tells of a shooting match in a lonely part of Appin beside Lochan Blar nan Lochan where a number of Stewarts, incensed by the Campbells takeover – and with assassination on their minds – tried to match the best gun to the surest shot. It is said Allan Breck was part of this group which also included a number of young, hot-blooded gentry Stewarts. According to the story the most accurate gun belonged to one of James Stewart's workers and the best shot turned out to be Donald Stewart of Ballachulish House. The legend suggests it was Donald Stewart's finger on the trigger on that fatal day. Of course, it remains no more than a story and there is no evidence against Donald Stewart or even if the shooting match took place.

James of the Glen, it was stated, knew nothing of the plot and those involved were at pains to keep him ignorant because he would almost certainly have tried to stop the shooting. James was an honest, deeply-religious man and a man of the law, although as it turned out his faith in the law was misplaced.

But if there is truth in the legend of the shooting match, it would turn Allan Breck into a clan hero. As a deserter, Allan Breck knew his life was forfeited anyway if government troops laid hands upon him. He knew that after the murder Appin and surrounding escape routes would immediately be flooded with redcoat soldiers and sealed. As soon as the shot was fired Allan Breck knew he would have to quit Appin as fast as possible. So in an act of courage and loyalty to his clan, so the proposition is made, Allan Breck allowed himself to be the Stewart's hunted hare pursued by the Government's baying hounds. His plan would be to draw attention away from the real killer. That is why, it is suggested, Allan made himself so conspicuous near the murder scene, why he even walked down to the ferry point to inquire about Glenure. He wanted to be cast as the assassin.

If this is true, then the plan worked perfectly because once Allan Breck had been identified as the main suspect, John Campbell and the government authorities looked no further for the killer. In the end, however, Allan would pay a high price for his loyalty because he knew he would never see Appin again.

How Stevenson came to write Kidnapped

Much of the detail about the Appin Murder is contained in a small volume published in 1753 titled *The Trial of James Stewart*. It was the official record of the court proceedings that convicted James "as an accomplice". A century later Robert Louis Stevenson read this little book by chance. He had returned from America in 1870 and was keen to write a history of the Highlands. His father found *The Trial of James Stewart* in a second-hand bookshop and promptly bought it for his son as background reading for his history.

Stevenson was fascinated. The on-going mystery, the clan feud, the Appin and Glencoe landscapes and the character of Allan Breck ran riot with his imagination. As a trained advocate, Stevenson was disgusted and angered at the treatment of poor James Stewart and how the law had been twisted to achieve a hanging of, as he saw it, an innocent man. Stevenson had always been a supporter of the underdog as well as a keen historian. He began to weave his fiction into the Appin Murder fact, using the real people as his characters and sticking closely to the history as recounted in the *The Trial of James Stewart*. The result was *Kidnapped*, one of Stevenson's all-time best sellers.

Stevenson's account of the events is so accurate, his characters so realistic and finely drawn and the tale so gripping that it is not always possible to know fact from fiction. Stevenson is therefore at pains to point out that *Kidnapped* is essentially a story, not to be taken too seriously by readers or historians, and to this end he gives a number of pointers to readers. As already mentioned, he spelt his Alan Breck with one 'l' rather than two, although he knew well enough how the real Allan spelt his name; he sets the year in 1751 and not 1752; he makes his 'Alan' Breck into a short, stocky, agile man while in fact the real Allan Breck was tall and gaunt. He introduces a platoon of soldiers at the murder scene, although Glenure and his three companions at the time were on their own and unarmed.

Remember David Balfour's description of Alan Breck as he clapped eyes on him for the first time in the round-house aboard the brig *Covenant* after running down a boat in the fog:

> *"He was smallish in stature, but well set and as nimble as a goat; his face was of a good open expression, but sunburnt very dark, and heavily freckled and pitted with the smallpox; his eyes were unusually light and had a kind of dancing madness in them, that was both engaging and alarming; and when he took off his greatcoat, he laid a pair of fine, silver-mounted pistols on the table, and I saw he was belted with a great sword. His manners, besides, were elegant, and he pledged the captain handsomely. Altogether I thought of him, at the first sight, that here was a man I would rather call my friend than my enemy."*

When Alan Breck and David Balfour were 'papered' after the murder, Stevenson composed a wanted bill that reflected descriptions of Alan's dress: "A small, pocked-marked, active man of thirty-five or thereby, dressed in a feathered hat, a French side-coat of blue with silver buttons, and lace a good deal tarnished, a red waistcoat and breeches of black shag."

During James Stewart's trial the prosecution painted an altogether different picture of Allan Breck in his absence. He was depicted as a dark, drunken, sinister figure, an irresponsible n'er-do-well not to be trusted.

One of the descriptions of Allan Breck, dated May 26, 1752, issued as a warrant for his arrest only 12 days after the murder, read:

> *"He is about five feet ten Inches, long visage very much marked with the small pox, Black Bushy Hair, a little Innkneed, round shoulder'd, about 30 years of Age, came to this country in February last, from Ogilvy's Regiment in France.*
>
> *"His Dress when last seen, which was upon the 18 Inst, was a blue Bonnet, a blue coat (Lowland Dress) with red Lynning, Breeches, and a brownish colour'd great coat over all, and with no visible Arms."*

Stevenson's Alan Breck was intelligent, practical, witty, courageous, honest, impervious to hardship or discomfort, vain, an expert with the sword as well as the bagpipes, who would take umbrage quickly and was slow to forgive. He was a loyal, true friend – and everyone's favourite uncle.

The government, as could be expected at such a trial, presented the main suspect as irresponsible, debauched, a dirty deserter, reckless, disloyal, a man filled with hate and revenge. Both government and Stevenson described him as being heavily marked by the smallpox. Indeed, in Gaelic the word 'breck' means pitted or pockmarked.

So who was the real Allan Breck?

The truth is probably somewhere between these two descriptions. As a trusted Jacobite courier carrying money, surreptitiously being put ashore in Scotland, where the gallows awaited him, moving unseen throughout the country, then returning to France in the same manner, undoubtedly called for courage, guile, loyalty, stamina and trust.

In fact, Allan Breck must have been a man of some calibre. His army service for France saw him receive the Cross of Military Merit, awarded to non-Catholic foreigners (like many other Highlanders Allan Breck was a member of the much persecuted Episcopal Church of Scotland). He was also decorated as a Chevalier of Military Merit which provided a small pension and he received a further pension from his time with Bouillon's Regiment. It was enough to set himself up in reasonable accommodation in his later years in the Rue de la Harpe in Paris.

There is little else known about Allan Breck. Two accounts exist of encounters with him in Paris in the 1790s when he would be approaching 70 years of age. They refer to a "*gaunt, severe, ugly man*" who said he came from Appin and stood accused of murdering Colin Campbell of Glenure. He still continued to maintain his innocence and swore by all that was sacred he played no part in the murder, although he confirmed he knew who was responsible. He was bound by an oath of secrecy to keep the secret, he said, but the truth was in his papers and it would come out on his death. Allan Breck's papers, however, were never found or, if they were, the secret name was first removed.

Robert Louis Stevenson, who had studied the Appin Murder so thoroughly, and continued his researches in the area and by correspondence with a number of local people, did not believe Allan Breck fired the shot. He guessed, however, Allan knew more than he ever gave away.

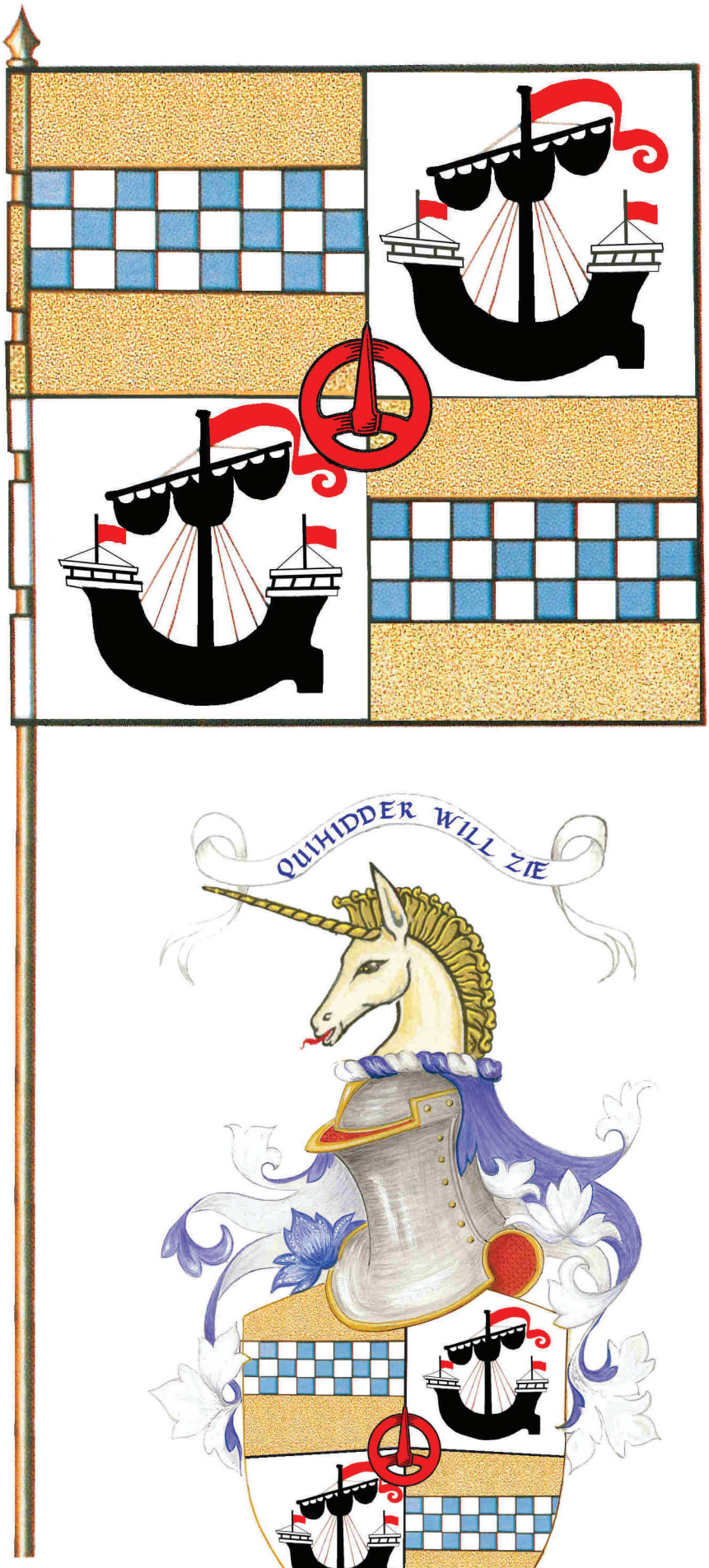
To the end Stevenson himself remained loyal to his portrayal. When we meet Alan Breck again in Catriona, the sequel to Kidnapped, he is the same bold adventurer, sword at the ready, a sagacious quip at his command, resourceful, good humoured and David Balfour's guiding star. As Alan leaves Scotland for the last time the pair make a final desperate dash together, with their enemies closing in, from the black centre of Alan's haystack hideway in Silverknowes, by Broughton, the Figgate Whins, Musselburgh and Prestonpans, they raced all the way to Gullane sands where The Thistle, Alan's getaway ship, was hiding behind the little island of Fidra to take him into exiled safety.

In Alan Breck Stevenson created a character that may not be an entirely accurate reflection of the original, but is one of Scottish literature's most vibrant and likeable heroes. Alan and David Balfour have now continued their adventuring and engaged our rapt attention through *Kidnapped* and *Catriona* for almost a century-and-a half. They have travelled the world on air, stage and screen and they never seem to lose their appeal. The raw material for Stevenson's Alan Breck was, of course, drawn from that little volume which was the official account of poor James Stewart's murder trial. At least some of what Stevenson found out about Allan Breck between its covers is included in the character he created in *Kidnapped*.

In turn, it was Stevenson's Alan Breck that inspired the classical sculptor Alexander Stoddart to create the magnificent, larger-than-life size bronzes of Alan and David Balfour that now grace the Corstorphine Hill in Edinburgh, where the two friends parted company at the end of *Kidnapped* which is captured as the frontispiece of this essay. This is the image of the old Stewart warrior now recognised internationally.

Of course, what makes Allan Breck and the Appin Murder so intriguing is that it is a vivid part of Scottish history – which has its echoes to this day. For the last 250 years the name of the real Appin murderer has been handed down secretly among senior Stewarts in the area. It is known as the 'Stewart Secret' – but it will never be revealed unless a Stewart decides to tell. And that also is a fact.

The Regimental motto *Quihhider Will Zie* translates as *Whither Will Ye*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