

CHAPTER XVI

NOTE ON THE CHAMBERLAIN TO THE EARL OF ANNANDALE

MENTION has already been made ¹ of James Carruthers who figures variously as servitor, factor and Chamberlain to the Earl of Annandale. His lineage has not been ascertained, but he undoubtedly claimed descent from Holmains, for in the Register of Grants of Arms in the Lyon Office occurs the following undated entry:

“James Carruthers of [], Steward Depute of Annandale and factor to the Earl of Annandale, descended from the family of Howmains, bears two chevrons engrailed betwixt three flowers de lis, or, with a bordure argent. Above the shield one helmet befitting his degree mantled gules doubled argent, next is placed on a torse for his crest, a seraphim standing vested proper. The motto is *Paratus et fidelis*.”

James Murray, second Earl of Annandale, died in 1658 without issue, the peerage becoming extinct. Two years later the Crown revived it in favour of James Johnstone, first Earl of Annandale, created in 1660, who died 1672. It was to the latter that James Carruthers acted as Chamberlain. He seems to have been appointed shortly after Johnstone's accession. From 1665 onwards there are frequent references to him in various financial transactions relating to land both on his own account or on behalf of the Earl. Thus in 1665 he was infeft in an annual-rent by Hugh Scott of Beddockholm furth of some land in Hutton parish,² and in 1667 lands in Corrie parish.³

In 1666 he made the first of two acquisitions that caused serious complications between himself and the Laird of Holmains, receiving a disposition from George Carruthers, youngest son of the deceased George Carruthers of (Over) Denbie, of the 40/- lands of Denbie, the £5 land of Ecclefechan

¹ See chapter on “The Families of Over Denbie”.

² Gen. Reg. Sas., Vol. xi, fo. 274, and Vol. xxi, fo. 256, renounced in 1670 (*ibid.*, Vol. xxvi, fo. 157).

³ *Ibid.*, Vol. xviii, fo. 145.

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possest by William Irving elder and younger, the $\frac{1}{2}$ -merk land of Raffles and the $\frac{1}{2}$ -merk land of Howthat.⁴ For the troubles which this infeftment caused and the way in which they were overcome see the Chapter on “The Families of Over Denbie”.

On November 24, 1686, he was admitted as a Burgess and Guildbrother of Edinburgh without having to pay the usual fees.⁵ On the Earl's death in 1672 James Carruthers does not seem to have been reappointed by his successor. He must have retired to Lanarkshire, becoming tenant of Harperfield in Lesmahago parish, where he died in September 1687. His estate was worth £11,191 and his list of debtors amply proves his Dumfriesshire connection.⁶ Two years later his widow, Margaret Sinclair, was infeft by James Bannatyne of Corhouse in an annual-rent furth of his lands in favour of herself for life and her seven children.⁷ Their issue was:

- (i) James, a writer in Edinburgh who disposed a Dumfriesshire annual-rent in 1690 to Mr. John Carruthers of Denbie.⁸ He was dead by 1710.⁹
- (ii) William, executor to his father in 1701, when the belated Testament was recorded. It has been suspected that William might be identified with William Carruthers of Brecansyde, who is known to have had two brothers named John and James, but this cannot be as James, brother of Brecansyde, did not die until 1736.
- (iii) John.
- (iv) Hendretta.
- (v) Mary, apparently dead by 1690.¹⁰
- (vi) Margaret.
- (vii) Anna.

Margaret Sinclair, relict of James Carruthers, died in Edinburgh and was interred at Greyfriars on August 20, 1698.¹¹

⁴ Gen. Reg. Sas., Vol. xv, fo. 432.

⁵ Edinburgh Burgess Roll.

⁶ Lanarkshire Testaments, Vol. xiv. He was not the first member of the clan to settle in Lesmahago. On December 17, 1625, the Testament of John Carruthers in Nether Birkwood in parish of Lesmahago was recorded. He died in November 1625 and his wife Agnes Sherer on April 16, 1625. They do not seem to have left issue as he left everything to his brother-in-law Robert Steill in Goishill (Lanarkshire Testaments, Vol. ii).

⁷ Gen. Reg. Sas., Vol. lix, fo. 314.

⁸ *Ibid.*, Vol. lxxviii, fo. 65.

⁹ Dumfries Reg. Sas., 2nd Ser., Vol. viii, fo. 2.

¹⁰ Gen. Reg. Sas., Vol. lxi, fo. 438.

¹¹ Reg. of Greyfriars Burials.